

## CONFLICT AND COOPERATION IN WILDERNESS WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT<sup>TWS</sup>

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Although wildlife is an integral part of the definition and understanding of wilderness, there is significant conflict between federal wilderness managers and state wildlife managers. Our presentation examines the reasons for this conflict and offers a case study illustrating federal and state cooperation and coordination that improves the management of both wilderness and wildlife. There are biological, legislative, administrative, and personal reasons for this conflict. Many wildlife populations have been negatively affected by human activities, and actions taken by state managers to survey and manipulate these populations may directly conflict with wilderness values. Even within an agency, different goals may conflict, such as maintaining recreation that conflicts with broader stewardship goals. Legislative acts may contain wording that allows different interpretations depending on agency philosophies and cultures. Administratively, different missions of the agencies compel them to establish different goals. Agency policies, guidelines, and MOUs developed to prevent conflict are often inadequate, or ambiguous and open to interpretation. Further, states traditionally hold the authority for managing wildlife populations, while federal agencies hold the authority for managing wildlife habitat, adding considerable tension. Personal experiences, attitudes, and philosophies can create long-lasting conflict. The philosophy and actions of the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks to improve cooperation and coordination with federal managers in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex is examined as a case study illustrating the mechanisms and benefits of this cooperation.