

## FAIR CHASE, THE NORTH AMERICAN HUNTING ETHIC AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY<sup>TWS</sup>

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The North American hunting community has an exceptional *collective hunter ethic*. It is an ethic of wildlife restoration and conservation that fits nicely within the Leopold definition of a land ethic. Teaching ourselves the substance of this collective ethic, our hunting heritage, is a positive way of addressing the need to improve individual hunter behavior. This heritage teaching approach is being used to address individual ethics by placing each hunter in the context of the achievement of all hunters. Making individuals proud to be hunters creates a positive learning environment where ethical choices can be addressed. This teaching method is part of the training hunter educators are receiving through seminars held by Orion the Hunters Institute all across North America. The menu of training opportunities now available reaches from material for entry level hunters to a graduate level course offering at Montana State University, *The History, Philosophy, and Ethics of the Hunt*. If ethical teaching is to be successful, resource managers will be challenged to contribute by providing hunting opportunities conducive to fair chase concepts that encourage ethical choices. In addition to managing wildlife population, consideration of the hunter's relationship with the individual animal will become part of the 21st Century management standard. Early evidence of this social need was seen in The Montana Hunter Behavior Advisory Council's findings. The council recognized a need to retool both land and wildlife managers so fair chase concepts and ethical hunting environments can become a part of the art of wildlife management.