

PUTTING THE ADVOCACY TIGER TO SLEEP— A MONTANA CASE HISTORY^{TWS}

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Professional ethics and advocacy are timely topics to be addressed by this society. Ethics, as a subject, rarely penetrates the educational curriculums preparing natural scientists for professional lives. Advocacy, one a traditional role of fish and wildlife biologists, became a rare commodity within government as political favor replaced it as the currency of career advancement and leadership. Taken together, ethics and advocacy, pose a powerful question. Are there ethical responsibilities we have as fish and wildlife biologists to be advocates for fish, wildlife and the public interest in those resources? To address this question fish and wildlife professionals need to develop an awareness of our origin and the history of the resources placed in our professional custody. This presentation outlines how fish, wildlife, and portions of the public estate came into our contemporary custody. It also relates personal experiences of the author while in an agency transitioning from a strong fish and wildlife advocate to a politically responsive entity.