

**Preservation versus Conservation  
Discussion (Journal #3)**

- What is the **preservationist** viewpoint of wilderness?
- What is the **conservationist** (wise-use) viewpoint of wilderness?
- Who was John Muir? What were his beliefs about wilderness?
- Who was Gifford Pinchot? What were his beliefs about wilderness?
- What is the definition of **wilderness**?

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**Preservation versus Conservation  
The Great Debate**

Video: [The Wilderness Idea](#)

- Where was **Hetch Hetchy Valley** located?
- What was the **great debate**?
- How did **Muir & Pinchot's** philosophies differ?
- What **natural resource (air, water, soil, species, ecosystems)** was at the center of the debate? Why?
- What period of time?
- What was the outcome of the debate?

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**Preservationist vs Conservationist**



- 1906 Earthquake in San Francisco
- Debate over access to drinking water for San Francisco
- Tuolumne River in Hetch Hetchy Valley, Yosemite

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## Muir's Sierra Nevada perspective

- Sierra Nevada is 500 miles long and 70 miles wide; 7000 to 15,000 feet high
- "Range of Light". . . "the most beautiful of all mountain-chains I have ever seen"  
John Muir
- "Everyone needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in where nature may heal and cheer and given strength to body and soul alike" John Muir

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## Preservationist Viewpoint



- Muir & others opposed the flooding of the valley
- Preserve in its natural state - "preservation"
- Would destroy the valley and change Yosemite forever
- Duty to protect

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## Preservationist Viewpoint



- World is not made for man
- It is a world that is useful to itself, not man
- Man is only a component of the unit of creation
- Wilderness is a necessity and "fountain of life"
- Wealthy & privileged classes aligned themselves with Muir

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## Conservationist Viewpoint



- Flooding of the valley is justified . . . Provides more benefits to society than preserving a remote valley
- Would free residents of San Francisco from reliance upon privately-owned water company
- Would “improve” the valley

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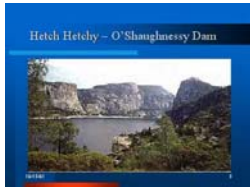
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## Conservationist Viewpoint



- “Earth belongs to all people . . . Not to rich elitists” Gifford Pinchot
- Public good must come first
- We can improve upon wilderness
- Bible evaluates humans above all other life

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## Debate's Outcome



- Hetch Hetchy became a national issue
- Public supported preservation of the valley
- After 8 hearings and a decade of debate, the dam was approved (Raker Bill 1913) by Congress on December 6, 1913
- One year later, John Muir was dead (1914)

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## National Park Organic Act



- **California Rep. John E. Raker** & others (National Park Organic Act 1916) propose legislation to prevent further development in National Parks
- Since Muir - no intrusion into National Parks (like Hetch Hetchy dam)
- “Truth & right must prevail”

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## Overview of Preservationists

QuickTime™ and a Photo CD Decompressor are needed to use this picture

- John Muir, Aldo Leopold, Henry David Thoreau
- Focused on romantic value of nature
- Nature as a purifier of human civilization
- Preserve land for its “aesthetic, spiritual & moral values”

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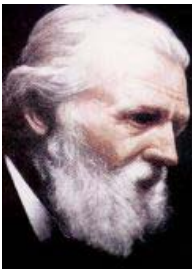
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## Overview of Preservationists



- Nature “mirrors divinity, nourishes humanity & lifts the spirits”
- Nature is sacred place - work of God
- Go into the wilderness and not fear it
- Open-armed embracement of nature

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## Overview of Preservationists

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Photo CD Decompressor  
are needed to use this picture

- Philosophy of the National Park System
- Preservation first, all other activities secondary
- To leave “unimpaired” for future generations

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## Overview of Conservation (Wise-Use)



- Gifford Pinchot, Teddy Roosevelt
- Multi-use concept (land of multiple uses)
- Believed in government studies & safeguards for preservation of nonrenewable resources
- Understood need for federal leadership

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## Overview of Conservation (Wise-Use)



- More concerned with economic justice & democracy in handling of resources than with prevention of waste
- Wanted to prevent monopolies
- Believed in government interference & regulation

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## Overview of Conservation (Wise-Use)



- They agreed passionately in the need for honesty and social conscience in the administration of resources
- Was a scientific movement
- Its essence was to promote efficiency in development of all natural resources
- Give people a fuller share of opportunity & profit

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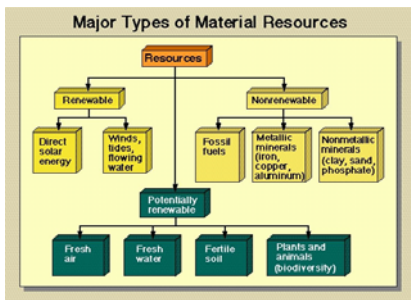
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What is the “wise use” of our natural resources?



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## The debate continues today . . .

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- National Parks
- Wilderness Preservation Areas
- National Forests
- Wildlife Refuges
- BLM Lands

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### How will you continue to manage our federal lands?



- The debate over use of our natural resources in the United States and worldwide will continue
- It gets more complex as human population continues to grow

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### What is the human place?



- That debate continues . . .
- Future generations will have to decide this . . .

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### Opportunities for Students . . .



- John Muir's house in Martinez
- Muir Woods
- Yosemite National Park
- Wild places in the Bay Area or California

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