



Hunting Helps Wildlife

In the fall, many people look forward to going hunting. There are a lot of reasons why people love to go hunting, including spending time outdoors with their friends and family, harvesting healthy meat to eat and for the sport of it. What is surprising to some people is how hunting is very important for wildlife conservation. To explain this, we have to take a look back in time....

In the early 1900s, many wildlife species in North America were not doing well because of habitat loss and over-hunting. At this time, there were hardly any laws about how many animals should be hunted. This was concerning to many people, especially those

who wanted to make sure that wildlife would be around for future generations to see and hunt. So, these people, called conservationists, got together and created a plan called the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation.

This plan, which still guides wildlife agencies like Wyoming Game and Fish Department today, aims to protect wildlife by managing it wisely using science. Biologists study wildlife to decide how many healthy animals can live in the habitat. If there are extra animals on the landscape it can lead to disease, starvation and damage to the habitat. Hunting removes the extra animals the habitat cannot support, which

keeps the wildlife healthy in the long run.

The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation also explains that money raised by selling hunting and fishing licenses should pay for improving habitats, studying wildlife and making sure hunting and fishing laws are being followed. Today, Game and Fish manages over 800 species of wildlife - that includes animals you can't hunt or fish for - mainly with with money raised from hunting and fishing licenses. The department also gets money from a special tax that is added to hunting, fishing and boating gear as well as donations from conservation organizations.