

# Arizona Wildlife Podcast

## Transcript: Episode 7 – The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation

*(Please note: this podcast was recorded live from a public presentation. It was not a rehearsed speech. This transcript attempts to capture the dialogue as it was spoken. At times when the speech was difficult to hear or understand, a good effort was made. These rare cases are noted in the text.)*

---

The content for this episode came from the training day at the 2008 National Envirothon competition. It was originally recorded on July 29, 2008, outdoors at the Flagstaff Arboretum. It consisted of Arizona Game and Fish Department employees providing background information about some of the wildlife and wildlife issues found in the state. It concluded with a question and answer session by the students participating in the competition.

Listen as Kellie Tharp, a Department educator, briefly outlines the North American Model for Wildlife Conservation. Eric Proctor, also a Department educator, helps Kellie answer questions at the end.

---

### **KELLIE:**

The abridged version of the North American Model for Wildlife Conservation:

Hunters and anglers are the cornerstone of wildlife conservation throughout North America. It's a model that many of you might not know. It's not something that'd be in your textbook. It's a lot of different principles.

There are seven pillars that guide the North American Model for Wildlife Conservation:

1. Wildlife is held in the public trust. Wildlife does not belong to anyone in particular but belongs to everyone.
2. Regulated commerce in wildlife. Black market selling of different illegal animals that are either poached or taken illegally. It needs to be regulated. We want to regulate commerce in wildlife: parts, pieces or live wildlife.
3. Hunt...Hunting and angling laws are created through public process. So the public has the opportunity to have input, and create and develop these hunting and angling laws.
4. Hunting and angling is an opportunity for all. As long as you're in good standing, you're allowed to have those opportunities.
5. Hunters and anglers fund conservation. This is through Pittman-Robertson Act and many other excise taxes on hunting and angling equipment, hunting and angling license sales. So all of these funds that are generated go back and are primarily what fund Arizona Game and Fish and wildlife conservation organizations.
6. Wildlife is an international resource. Wildlife doesn't...doesn't adhere to boundaries, so...between countries or states, those boundaries mean nothing to wildlife. So, it being an international resource needs to be recognized by everybody.
7. And science is the best basis for wildlife policy. Every time a wildlife manager is making hunt recommendations, or for how many tags should be generated, it's all based on science.

All of these pillars come together to form the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. And this isn't the same as what you're going to find in other countries.

**STUDENT:**

What are some of the major successes of the North American Model?

**KELLIE:**

I would say one of the major successes is...in North America is having that opportunity for all; is having everybody having the opportunity to, um, to be able to hunt or fish. Uh. In many other areas or countries it's based on, um, your status. So say you're rich or you're very wealthy, um that's when you get to hunt or you're a landowner. Those different things play in in other countries, but in North America everybody has the opportunity.

I'd also say hunters and anglers funding conservation. I'd say that's a huge success. You don't see that everywhere else. Through the excise taxes and through the monies that are generated, they're able to fund, you know, almost all of the wildlife management conservation.

**ERIC:**

The...the recovery of elk, pronghorn, and deer were primarily done through hunters, um, self-regulating themselves. And that was part of the...part of the North American Model. So here we are where...where, um, you talk about, you know, the country getting its foundations and beginning, um, we very well could've...could've taken a more European or an African...African look at, when you look at how wildlife is managed on different continents or different countries. We could have very easily just gone through and said, "You know, its here. Its open country." Which is what they did for a while. We had massive decimation. Talk about the buffalo, the deer, the elk went through massive parts of that. Well, then it was the hunters primarily stepping up, voluntarily putting on an excise tax. I mean that was them. They were the ones that pushed it through. It was nobody else. They said, "we...we're willing to pay more to help, um, recover some of these species." So you look at, right about that 1900 to 1920 timeframe was really that turning point when you started seeing the elk recovery, the...the...the deer recovery, the pronghorn recovery specifically. Where we're talking numbers of...of, in some cases, 1200 maybe, when we used to have millions, all the way up now to where we're talking hundreds of thousands for many of those species.

**KELLIE:**

And we shouldn't say hunters and anglers are the only ones...

**ERIC:**

Yeah.

**KELLIE:**

...that fund conservation. Um. When I say that I'm saying one of the primary funding sources. There's a lot of other non-profits, critter groups, a lot of other people that fund conservation too.

---

This podcast is brought to you by the Environmental Education section of the Arizona Game and Fish Department and is made possible through the Heritage Fund and the Arizona Lottery. For supplemental information and activities for this podcast, please visit [www.azgfd.gov/focuswild](http://www.azgfd.gov/focuswild) and click on the podcasts button.

Thank you.