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NREM 585

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Reading Activity 13: Chapter 6 in Cubbage et al. 2017

1. After reading Cubbage et al., Ch. 6, please use ideas of ethics and professionalism to

describe key ethics, attributes, or things you will consider in your professional career in

natural resources. What will your professional ethic be?

I entered the field of natural resource research and management because of an environmental ethical stance. I soon learned that conservation was significantly different than preservation. However, in our department we primarily deal with *renewable* natural resources, which have often sustained humans for millennia. Therefore, my professional ethic will encompass the wise or judicious use of fishery resources, generally defining ‘wise or judicious use’ in the framework of Aldo Leopold’s Land Ethic. I am a big believer in ecosystem- and habitat-based management, which rely on biotic integrity to resist disturbance and maintain an ecological regime.

2. Please list two things that you found to be most important, interesting, or surprising

from the assigned readings. For each of the two things, please briefly include why you

chose that thing to include from this reading.

John Muir’s biocentric, deep ecology alignment made me think more about the spectrum of environmentalism discussed in the opening part of the chapter. Although the IACUC board at ISU is integral to maintaining research animal health and safety, the decisions made by that board are strictly based on the study organism’s moral standing, trade-offs of human benefit to animal cost, and the board’s ethical alignment.

The sections on whistleblowing and reporting violations gave me pause. I figured that most academic and professional natural resource managers were trustworthy and would act appropriately regardless of any moral, ethical, or political alignments. On the one hand, people don’t usually make it that far in a career if they have unprofessional episodes, but on the other I guess it is like any workplace where the culture and environment surrounding employee behavior varies from place to place.

3. What is one question that you have after this reading? This could be something that

you’re unsure about or don’t understand from the reading, something you’d like to

learn more about, etc.

I thought that the claims of the EPA in Figure 6-2 regarding improvements to environmental quality while maintaining economic growth was interesting, but it makes me think of data manipulation, sampling protocols, and other factors that can influence data. For instance, were the “six common pollutants” that reduced 63% in the graph selected just because they decreased? Did six other common pollutants increase?