

Focusing on the Bigger Picture: An Exploration of the Relationship  
Between Photography and Land Conservation in New England

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## Abstract

While there has been much written regarding the relationship between art and science, a narrower focus on the connection between photography and land conservation has not been explored to its fullest potential. Historical photographers such as Ansel Adams and Carleton Watkins used their photographs as evidence of the importance of preserving the land of the national parks. Today, however, land conservation photographs show more than just how desirable the land is, they also show the ecological components, usage, and importance of the land not just for the people, but for the flora and fauna as well. In the past, aesthetics were a significant factor in successful land conservation photographs. Today, aesthetics is no longer the only factor. Examining these photographs provides a lens into contemporary views of land conservation and its practices.

Historically, land conservation efforts, such as those led by naturalist and environmental philosopher, John Muir, focused more on preservation and keeping the lands as natural and untouched as possible. John Muir spent his life fighting to keep the lands in their natural state and “considered forests sacred places of contemplation and communion with nature” (Duncan and Burns 84). Although many supported his views, by the early twentieth century, professional foresters realized that land management was more beneficial to both humans and nature and changed the focus from preservation to conservation. Land conservation still focuses on protecting the forests; however, it also involves managing the use of the land through sustainable harvesting, and grazing. This thinking allows for people to not only enjoy the land, but benefit from the goods nature

produces. This view is still practiced today, and ecological and economic factors now play a role in the definition. Land conservation, as defined by David Foster:

is actually a very broad term that includes both land protection - that is trying to establish specifically legally binding or enduring constraints over what can happen to the land...[and] also includes all the ways that you treat the land, so it can include not just legal protection but also management and stewardship (Foster, Personal Interview)

He goes on to say that:

one might think of it as treating the land well or conserving, [and] protecting the environment. But of course, a lot of what we do is actually destructive. We go and cut down trees...burn forests...graze the heck out of a sheep pasture... purposely trying to shape the land through protection and management” (Foster, Personal Interview)

To gain a better understanding of the relationship between photography and land conservation, this thesis will examine the work of three diverse photographers. Each approaches land conservation differently. First, the work of Jerry Monkman will be examined. Monkman is a conservation photographer, who works directly with land conservation groups, such as the Trust for Public Land, The Nature Conservancy and the Society for the Protection of NH Forests, to provide photographs that directly engage their missions. The second is David Foster, a self-taught photographer, who is also an ecologist and the Director of the Harvard Forest in Petersham, MA. Foster’s photographs have been featured in many articles and books that focus on land conservation, land-use and the history of the land. Finally, Marion Belanger is a fine art photographer who describes herself as a “Cultural Landscape Photographer” (Belanger, Bio 1). Belanger has worked for many years photographing various aspects of the natural and human impacts on the earth.

The goal of examining these three different types of photographers is to gain a better understanding of the relationship between photography and land conservation and to see what role images can play in the success of land conservation missions. This would include helping to save vital tracts of land, bringing awareness to ecological challenges and gaining supporters for various organizations on a national and local level. Although land conservation is a world-wide subject matter, this thesis will focus strictly on New England and several of the environmental issues that are prevalent in this area. Subjects such as the Northern Pass, the Wildlands and Woodlands initiative, and the pollution of the Naugatuck River will be examined along with images by the three photographers related to these topics.

## Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my incredible little boy, Owen. May you never lose your wonder and awe in all things wild.

## Acknowledgments

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## Preface

"Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and  
leave a trail." - Ralph Waldo Emerson

Photography's importance in the field of science has been appreciated for decades. Back in 1872, *Nature* magazine stated, when it came to photography "there are, as we know, numberless ways in which it is constantly being employed as a faithful handmaiden to science" (Pritchard 62). Historically, photography has been used to advocate for land conservation as far back as the mid-nineteenth century with landscape photographers, such as Carleton Watkins, whose photographs of Yosemite "were the spark that started the national parks movement in the United States" (Rothman and Ronk 2). Even through the mid-twentieth century, photographers like Ansel Adams continued to pave the way for future land conservation photographers. Their work helped gain awareness of these vast, untouched areas in the United States that were eventually preserved as national parks in a time where the United States was expanding west. These images can be used as a historic reference for successful land conservation efforts. Since these historical precedents helped pave the way for today's photographers, they will also be used in this thesis to provide an example of where land conservation photography originated and how it has evolved over time.

Today, there is no longer a single model for effective land conservation photography. The hypothesis of this thesis is that photography can play just as important

of a role in today's world as it did during the time of these historic photographers. Although it is believed that the role of photography will be as important, this thesis also suggests that it has the capacity to approach new challenges of today with ecological and social dimensions. Different types of photographers play a unique role in land conservation missions and their potential successes. Three different types of New England-based photographers will be examined: a land conservation photographer (Jerry Monkman), a scientist & photographer (David Foster), and a fine art photographer (Marion Belanger). By choosing these different types of photographers, a greater perspective will be gained in how each work contributes to the challenges of contemporary ecological and social domain, such as pollution, development and land use.

### Methodology

At the beginning of the research, the work of many different photographers was examined and these three were selected because their photographs most accurately portray the genres used in land conservation efforts today. To learn more about these photographers, they were each interviewed individually. Independently interviewing each photographer allowed for an examination into the methods used when creating land conservation photographs and working with different organizations. Multiple questions were asked about their process and their work specifically, but they were also asked several of the same questions to get a better understanding of their views on particular aspects of land conservation photography. Upon interviewing the three photographers, it became abundantly clear that conserving the lands of New England is important to each of them, and they have all been inspired by this region. Although the focus is on New

England, this thesis will be of use to anyone interested in photography, nature, and land conservation since national and global concerns can be extrapolated from local ones.

For each photographer, two different projects were selected along with a couple of images from each project. For Monkman, one of the projects examined is a series of images created while working with the Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire, in an effort to conserve the lands of the Stonehouse Forest. The second project examined is his documentary, *The Power of Place*, which features photography, videography and various graphics used to bring awareness to an ongoing issue in New Hampshire known as the Northern Pass – the proposed 192-mile transmission line project that would disrupt the New Hampshire landscape from the boarder of Canada down to Deerfield, NH (Forward NH Plan 1). Several photographs from Foster’s new book *A Meeting of Land and Sea: Nature and the Future of Martha’s Vineyard*, published in March 2017, will be studied. This book contains over 150 of Foster’s photographs, many of which are used in conjunction with the text to bring awareness to the need to conserve land on Martha’s Vineyard. Additionally, a new report Foster helped author, titled: *Wildlands and Woodlands, Farmlands and Communities: Broadening the Vision for New England*, will be considered while showing the use of photographs combined with scientific writing to bring awareness to the initiative’s vision. Two past projects by Belanger will be investigated. One, titled *River*, depicts the Naugatuck River in Connecticut, which was formerly polluted, but has now been cleaned up. Additionally, an installation piece she created titled *Landfill* will be examined, which exemplifies the detrimental impact of human’s actions, such as waste and pollution.

This collection of works will help to illustrate that photography, while playing a vital role in land conservation efforts, expands into new challenges and new media. Although each photographer has a different perspective to offer, they are all equally significant regarding land conservation because they approach it from different angles, such as scientifically and artistically. By being able to interview these photographers, a greater understanding is gained of the work that they do and how they can leave a lasting impression on the New England landscape.

One of the other issues that will be covered in this thesis is who the target audience is for each photographer, and how they get their images into the hands of those people. The success of land conservation photography is more than just taking the pictures, it also involves making public the interests of the particular organization with which they are collaborating. Photography allows for land conservation groups to get the images of vulnerable lands into the hands of thousands of people who might otherwise be unable to access these areas or who may not know they exist. With each photographer, the route in which these images travel to their target audience is not the same. Typically, the organizations Monkman works for are responsible for distributing his images, whereas Belanger is generally in charge of curating her photographs. In Foster's case, a mix of self-distribution and circulation by the many organizations he is a part of gets his work into the hands of his audiences.

The fundamental goal of this thesis is to examine the impact photographers can have on land conservation and arguments that support wider awareness for present challenges. Whereas Carleton Watkins and Ansel Adams used their photographs to help form the national parks and preserve the untouched landscapes, today photographers use

their images to present the challenges facing the American landscape and showcase the reasons areas should be conserved. Investigating the individual work of the three photographers—Monkman’s photographs of the Stonehouse Forest, Foster’s work on Martha’s Vineyard and Belanger’s efforts in raising awareness of the issues of pollution—will allow for an exploration of the impacts and benefits photography has on land conservation efforts.

Can land conservation organizations use photography in a way that directly encourages action? Although it is difficult to quantify the direct impact photography has to land conservation, with the continued success of organizations who use these photographer’s images, some correlation can be assumed. Giving more people access to these photographs can help gain supporters who will uphold the endeavors of organizations hoping to conserve those important tracts of land. Ultimately, this thesis should provide an understanding of the complex relationship between photographer and land and the role that photographs can play in aiding land conservation efforts in New England, particularly in the context where challenging conditions, such as financial and ecological needs, seem to prevail.

## Chapter I.

### A Reflection on Land Conservation and Its Imagery

“Once destroyed, nature’s beauty cannot be repurchased at any price.” – Ansel Adams

Land conservation and environmentalism have changed throughout the mid-nineteenth century to present day. At the beginning, it was [and in some cases still is] difficult to help citizens take ownership in the care of public lands, in part because people were made to “believe that the use that is made of the environment is mostly someone else’s right, and certainly not [their] responsibility” (Rollins 29). As the population in cities grew and more and more people became detached from nature, this sort of “out of sight, out of mind” attitude developed. The distribution of landscape photographs played a significant role in reminding citizens that these landscapes exist and are worth visiting and saving. The ability to mass produce and distribute photographs allowed for photographers to “provide the sole means of access to what was once held to the part of our common inheritance” (Snyder 200).

In 1869 John Muir, “a deeply religious mountain prophet” (PBS 2), arrived in Yosemite Valley and immediately fell in love with this land. He devoted his life’s work to helping make sure the lands of Yosemite and many other national parks and monuments were preserved forever, and he “inspired generations of park enthusiasts” (PBS 2). Thanks to Muir and those he inspired, eventually “in the United States, the

environmental movement...took off rapidly and developed into a record of protection and innovated equaled by no other part of the world” (Barton 163). One issue facing many of the areas that Muir and other environmentalists were working to preserve was the lack of supporters. Only the wealthy, who could afford to travel to the locations by train, were able to see these magnificent lands in person. In the late nineteenth century, a photographer named William Henry Jackson arrived at Yellowstone and photographed its many natural wonders. His images were widely spread, and “for the first time, Americans could see what mere words had previously described” (Burns 1:10:12). By being able to give a visual explanation of how important Yellowstone was, Congress made the decision to save this magnificent land. Yellowstone became the first national park “on March 1, 1872 [when] President Ulysses S. Grant signed the bill” (Duncan and Burns 35). Although there was mostly support for this new national park, not all agreed with the idea. The “*Helena Rocky Mountain Gazette* complained that a ‘great blow’ had been struck against the prosperity of the region. The new park, it said, ‘will keep the country a wilderness’ and prevent economic development” (Duncan and Burns 35). Despite negative reviews from some, most Americans were in support of Yellowstone and continued that support for future national parks.

In 1891, Congress enacted the Forest Reserves Act, which allowed “presidents of the United States, without consulting Congress, to set aside parcels of public land as national forest reserves” (Duncan and Burns 84). With this, lands around Yellowstone and Yosemite became protected from future harm. In 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt asked John Muir “to accompany him during a short visit to Yosemite” (Duncan and Burns 95). Muir was able to convey his passion and love for Yosemite to

the President, and leave a long-lasting impression on him. Within a few years, “the California legislature and United States Congress approved the transfer of the Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Grove back to the federal government” (Duncan and Burns 98). Muir’s dream of seeing Yosemite become a national park had finally come true. Then in 1906, Congress approved the Antiquities Act, which was “perhaps the most important conservation law in American history” (Duncan and Burns 104). Like the Forest Reserves Act, this allowed the president to declare any tract of land a national monument and “before he was done, Roosevelt would use the Antiquities Act to proclaim eighteen national monuments” including many suggested by his friend John Muir. (Duncan and Burns 104)

Across the United States, national parks and monuments became “protected sites, they showcase prized wilderness areas, provide places of enjoyment, and allow diverse flora and fauna to flourish” (Barnes 7). To assure the parks were being cared for, an agency known as the “National Park Service, established by the Organic Act of 1916 [was] responsible for preserving and protecting the natural and cultural resources of each individual park unit, while providing enjoyment to the public and for future generations” (Villalba 1336). The National Parks Service, which is still active today, continues to care for the lands of the national parks and “safeguard[s] these special places and share their stories with more than 275 million visitors every year” (U.S. National Parks Service 1).

In 1916, after the Organic Act was passed, a man by the name of Stephen T. Mather became the director of the National Parks Service and began working on creating new national parks and managing the current ones. As soon as he began, as “one of his principal goals, the aggressive new director sought public acceptance and support for the

parks by opening them to greater tourism to increase their popularity” (Sellars 5). Mather realized he needed to get more people into the parks. In order to “popularize the national parks, he courted their chief constituencies, the tourism industry and the traveling public” (Sellars 4).

In a 1917 report on the progress of the national parks, Mather wrote “realizing that success depends ultimately upon public support, and knowing that the people were surprisingly ignorant of the extent, variety, magnificence, and economic value of their national parks, I early inaugurated an earnest campaign of public education” (Mather 326). With the help of the American writer Robert Sterling Yard, Mather produced *The National Parks Portfolio* which was widely distributed across the nation. It featured page after page of photographs showing the most notable places within each of the national parks accompanied by important historical information. In the opening letter, Mather states “The Nation must awake, and it now becomes our happy duty to waken it to so pleasing and profitable a reality. This portfolio is the morning call to the day of realization” (Yard 5). The formation of these national parks “were made possible through strong advocacy efforts supported by photographs” (Barnes 7). Since the mid-1800s, photographers, including Carleton Watkins, began arriving at the national parks to photograph them. Watkin’s “photographs became symbols of the American landscape,” and “preservationists and legislators used these early photographs...as visual support to persuade Congress to protect Yosemite” (Allen 9-10). Photographs in the portfolio generated wider support and assisted in the aspiration of preserving the parks.

In order to grant even more visitors access to the parks, Mather allowed automobile admittance. He called for roads to be built and maintained, allowing tourists

to see the scenic views of the national parks without ever leaving their vehicles. Although this disrupted the wildness, “with highways winding through majestic park landscapes and with rustic log and stone buildings and bridges, much of the development was designed to harmonize with the scenic beauty and thus seemed not to impair the parks” (Sellars 5). Despite efforts to have the roads blend into the landscape, they still left a lasting negative impact on the parks. The National Parks Service mission was meant to protect the parks; however, it was “heavily weighted in favor of public use and enjoyment rather than preservation, and they fostered management practices that altered the national parks forever” (Sellars 1).

During the 1920s and 1930s, a change was seen and the focus was no longer on preservation, but on conservation, which allowed for proper care of the flora and fauna in the national parks and other conserved areas across the nation. Eventually, professional foresters “believed that regional planning for land and water resources would alleviate farm poverty, modernize farm areas and restore the viability of rural living” (Phillips 22). Regional planning, which is still prominent in land conservation today, “depended on a ‘permanent,’ rather than an extractive, relationship with nature” (Phillips 22). The early recognition of the importance of planning on a regional level, rather than a national level led to the formation and growth of organizations across New England and the United States, including the Appalachian Mountain Club, Massachusetts Audubon Society, New England Wild Flower Society, and the Trustees of Reservation. To help raise awareness of regional issues, organizations enlisted the aid of photographers to provide images that helped enhance their message and gain supporters as they set out to conserve vital tracts of land. The earliest examples of these messages are found in the formation of the

national parks and include conserving the land for public enjoyment as well as protecting the wildlife.

Watkins' photographs made a big impact on the establishment of Yosemite National Park; however, today his photographs are not always receiving the same praise. While working, he "took his photographs from a vantage point that eliminated all traces of human presence, and dislocated the view from contemporary life" (Marien 136). Conveying a sense of wilderness through his photographs attracted many tourists, who began flocking to California, many of whom never left. Although Watkins was "long praised for the beauty in his quasi-modernist formal compositions, he has recently been described as a propagandist for the exploitation of California's natural resources, creating aesthetic images that legitimized the region's commercial development" (Hutchinson 112). Watkins may have never intended for his images to be considered an exploitation, however, their attractiveness caused an increase in tourism. Images showing a place completely free from humans, even if that was not actually the truth, was appealing to the mass audiences and people wanted to see the wilderness for themselves.

During a speech in 1975, Ansel Adams stated he was "certain that the impressive photographs of Carleton E. Watkins did much to influence the security of Yosemite Valley" (Adams, *Artist in Conservation* 2). He went on to say, "while photographs undoubtedly encouraged exploitations, they also stimulated interest and desire to preserve the endangered land" (Adams, *Artist in Conservation* 2). Regardless of how they are viewed today, during his time, "not only were Watkins' images immensely popular, but they were widely acknowledged for exercising profound effect on how nineteenth-century audiences experienced the natural world" (Berger 19). Watkins became one of

the earliest photographers who brought nature into the hands of the general population through mediated means. As a result, he helped people appreciate the remoteness of nature, and went on to inspire countless photographers.

One of those photographers, Ansel Adams, is perhaps the most well-known photographer and environmentalist of his time. Adams defined the relationship between his photography and land conservation, stating, “artists created beauty and, through it affirmed life. It was here that the purposes of the artist and the environmentalist joined: in the affirmation of life on this planet” (Alinder 297). From an early age, Adams felt a connection to the land, and in particular Yosemite, where his family visited yearly and was greatly influenced by the writings of John Muir. In 1919, Adams became a member of the “Sierra Club, which raised awareness for environmental preservation” (Allen 13). Muir had a “pivotal involvement in the establishment of the Sierra Club, one of North America’s leading conservation associations” (McDowall 1629). Adams “believed in both the possibility and probability of humankind living in harmony with its environment” (Lens of Ansel Adams 16) and through that belief, he found his life’s purpose.

Unlike many photographers at the time, Adams did not solely rely on the help of organizations, like the Sierra Club, to get his images into the hands of Congress and those involved in securing the future for the national parks. In addition to his photographs, writing played a significant role in his success, and “he wrote more than a thousand letters regarding basic park and wilderness management, on issues large and small” (Adams, National Parks 53). Additionally, he “attended countless meetings and wrote letters in support of conservation reforms,” including the reforms that eventually lead to

the establishment of Kings Canyon National Park (Lens of Ansel Adams 16). Kings Canyon was one of several national parks conserved due to Adams' photography and perseverance. Adams did not want to "rely solely on his photographs, [so he] carefully studied the issues and presented both the history and current facts of the Kings Canyon situation, but it was his visual message that was most persuasive" (Alinder 106). Adams was a true activist, artist, writer and environmentalist.

Adams' images of Yosemite and other national parks "have come to represent the grandeur of the American landscape, conjuring a sense of pride [and identity] for the American viewers in both the land itself and the preservation of these spaces through the National Park Services" (Allen 56). His work has been so highly regarded that in 1980 he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Jimmy Carter. In his speech, President Carter explains that Adams "has been visionary in his efforts to preserve this county's wild and scenic areas, both on film and on Earth" and continues to say, "It is through his foresight and fortitude that so much of America has been saved for future Americans." (Adams, *An Autobiography* 348).

Like Watkins, Adams also receives contemporary push back regarding his work. Adams' photographs focus on the 'natural world' and seldom feature any humans or non-natural imagery. As a result, "this avoidance of the reality of commercial and industrial development in his fine art images is a crucial flaw, making his art little more than a pleasant daydream" (Spaulding xiv). Some critics have gone so far as to say they view "his work as an unwitting embodiment of the false dichotomy between human and nature, a dichotomy at the root of our continuing legacy of environmental destruction" (Spaulding xiv). Adams, while describing his visualization process for his famous

photograph *Monolith*, said “I had been able to realize a desired image: not the way the subject appeared in reality but how it *felt* to me and how it must appear in the finished print” (Adams and Alinder 60). Adams recognized that his images are not entirely from reality, but his concern was for the aesthetic appeal and the emotions the photographs evoked in his audience. Despite the negativity, there is no denying the impact his images had on the creation and conservation of several national parks.

Thanks to the work of photographers like Carleton Watkins and Ansel Adams, “Yosemite’s story became the standard for land conservation organizations, and the photographic lineage of many national parks follows a similar trajectory” (Allen 12). Historically, land conservation photographs primarily showed the aesthetic qualities of the land, whereas today they show both the visual appeal and functionality. But according to Aaron Ellison, a senior scientist at Harvard Forest, land conservation decisions “reflect aesthetic preferences more than they reflect economic values placed on ecosystem services, contemporary artists have an opportunity to help shape future societal decisions regarding what natural areas to conserve and protect” (Ellison 260). Knowing that aesthetic preferences can be a contributing factor to successful land conservation efforts, many organizations continue to enlist the help of photographers to provide a visual explanation as to why certain lands need to be conserved. Ellison emphasizes a very specific role for photography related to land conservation. He argues “the importance that an aesthetic appreciation of ‘picturesque’ landscapes has had in determining priorities for land protection in the United States cannot be underestimated” (Ellison 261). Although picturesque landscapes are important in land conservation efforts, it can be argued that it is not the only important factor.

Artists, including photographers, have a greater role in advancing land conservation than simply aestheticizing the landscape. They have the ability to create lasting images that encourage action and bring awareness to pressing environmental issues, including man's impact on the land. It is of "little wonder, then, that artists, whose work beckons us to contemplate and experience the world around us, have played a unique and important role in marshaling people's energies to steward and protect the natural world" (Chameides 3). Even for those who are unable to get out and experience nature themselves, through photographs shown on television, documentaries, and social media, they can still gain an appreciation for it, and hopefully support the efforts of local and national organizations that focus on conserving the natural landscape. It is very common in today's world that "societies are growing increasingly distant from nature and increasingly reliant on media for information on the world around them" (Ward Jr. 10). Previously, scientific documents were self-supported, and did not need the addition of photographs, but now, "text can no longer command attention on its own" (Ward Jr. 11).

Powerful images can leave a lasting effect on the audience and inspire change. One such visual image that many who were alive during the 1970s still remember is the single tear rolling down Iron Eyes Cody's face as part of the Keep America Beautiful campaign. That commercial aired on televisions across the country and was created by the Ad Council to show how Americans were polluting the earth and tried to stop people from being "litterbugs." The image of the tear caused a lifelong impression on people and eventually went on to be used in magazine ads and billboards in addition to the commercials (see figure 1). One goal of this campaign was to elicit emotion from the audience because the "aestheticizing of his tear yielded emotional eloquence; the tear

seemed to express sincerity, an authentic record of feeling and experience” (Dunaway 81). The sincerity of this imagery caused the audience to feel the same hurt and sadness expressed by that lone tear. It well known that images can have such an impact on the public, and as Edward Steichen once said, “photography is a universal language; that it speaks to all people” (Steichen 45). Through this visual language, land conservation photographers can produce images that not only bring awareness, but also encourage action.

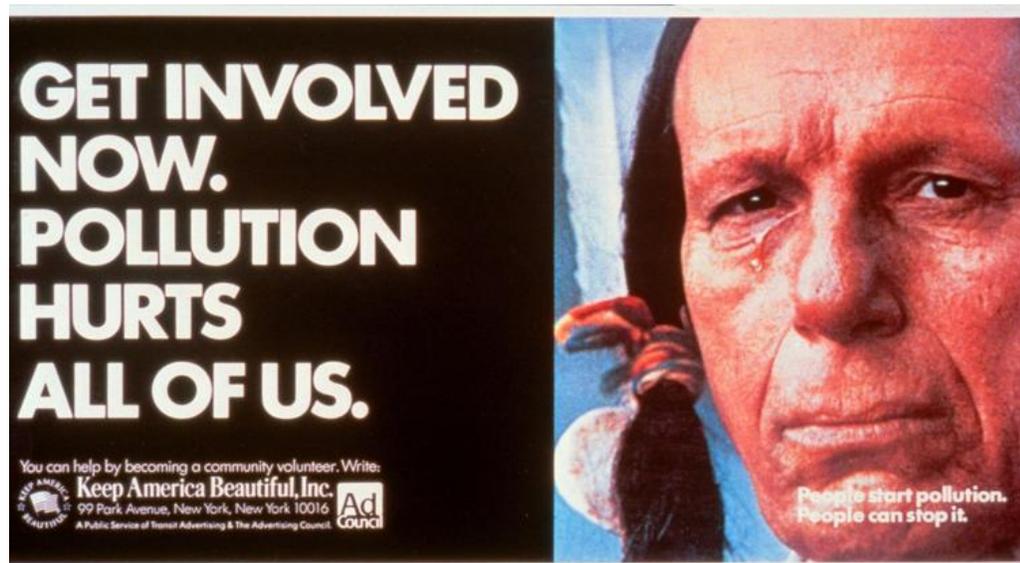


Figure 1. *Ad Council*. 1971. Keep America Beautiful advertisement featuring Iron Eyes Cody.

Not all photographs used to raise awareness for environmental issues are beautiful or aesthetically pleasing. In documenting the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska, photographers provided evidence for serious consequences from our oil consumption.

Shortly after the oil spill, images of “blackened beaches and doomed wildlife” (Dunaway 225) began to flood the media. These images inflicted a range of emotions on the audience, “yet feeling upset about oiled otters and angry at Exxon were easy emotions for mass audiences to claim, as they were never asked to consider the larger energy and environmental policies that exacerbated the national dependence on oil” (Dunaway 225). One writer observes that “contemplating nature within the frame of photography also invites us to consider what sort of environmental understanding of our changing world nature photography does provide” (Chianese 64). In this instance, these images caused the “shock factor” and did bring awareness; however, mass audiences were not concentrating on the larger issues at hand.

Richard Misrach, a contemporary photographer exploring the environmental abuse caused by chemical production along the Mississippi River, created a photographic series titled: *Petrochemical America* that features photographs between New Orleans and Baton Rouge and show “a startling landscape where...current-day communities line the swamps and levees among gargantuan industrial plants that produce a quarter of America’s petrochemicals” (Shaheen 1). Instead of presenting a picturesque landscape, Misrach’s photographs convey the detrimental impact chemical plants have on the land surrounding the Mississippi River. Several of his images feature various landscapes along this tract with towering buildings from the industrial plants, breaking up the image. One photograph (see figure 2) shows a green front lawn with several homes in a row. Directly behind those homes are enormous grain elevators so tall they cannot be contained in the image and easily eclipse the homes. These thought-provoking photographs allow the audience to get a first-hand look at the daily views these home-owners have, and provides

a physical representation of the imbalance of power between a company and individual home owners, opening the discussion to the negative impact these industrial plants have on humans and the environment.



Figure 2. Misrsch, Richard. *Home and Grain Elevator, Destrehan, Louisiana*. 1998

Land conservation images today seek to not only elicit an emotional response to environmental crises, but to also cause the audience to focus on the bigger picture. One organization, the International League of Conservation Photographers (ILCP), founded in 2005, coined the term “conservation photography” and use it as a “powerful tool in preserving the environment, especially when produced in collaboration with our committed Conservation Partners” (International League of Conservation Photographers 1). ILCP has both photographers and scientists working together on each specific conservation effort. With this partnership between the arts and sciences, “ILCP is

accomplishing the dual mission of improving the willingness and ability of photographers to focus on conservation issues” as well as “the willingness and ability of conservation and research organizations to incorporate the use of professional photography in their programs” (Ward Jr. 56). Today, this collaborative effort is seen almost exclusively between land conservation organizations and the photographers who work with them.

In New England, there are many state and national organizations that focus on land conservation motivated by the varied biotopes existing in New England. A unique area, “New England is a distinctive landscape of mountains, forest, rivers, and coastlines, iconic farms, and a blend of small villages, large towns, suburbs, and cities” (Foster, Lambert et al. 5). These organizations enlist the help of photographers, including some of the photographers interviewed for this thesis, to provide images that raise awareness and encourage action for region-specific environmental issues including proper land use, sustainable harvesting, and environmental destruction. A new *Wildlands and Woodlands* report suggests a call to action in hopes that:

Investing in land protection and supporting the capacity of people to steward their land responsibly offers a path to ecological and economic well-being that can benefit every individual in the region by ensuring that New England forests and farms provide vital benefits for centuries to come (Foster, Lambert et al. 5).

The three photographers selected all have ties to New England and their desire to conserve area is evident in their photographs. A common theme discovered during the interview process was that the success of land conservation efforts requires a collaborative effort from both the photographer and the organization with which they are working. Jerry Monkman works directly with organizations across New England to provide photographs as requested. David Foster is involved in many groups with a

conservation vision, and he provides both scientific and photographic evidence to support the ideas fueling their missions. Marion Belanger uses her photographs of the cultural landscape to examine the detrimental impacts humans can have on these lands. These three photographers show a range of examples, that effectively showcase the relationship between photography, land conservation, and action plans that lead to change. A deeper examination of each of these photographers and their work will be explored further in the following chapters.

## Chapter II.

### Jerry Monkman: Conservation Photographer

“The mountains are calling and I must go.” – John Muir

Jerry Monkman, a self-taught conservation photographer based out of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, has spent the last 25 years photographing areas all around New England. Land conservation organizations enlist the help of Monkman to provide photographic evidence as means to gain support for the conservation mission they are pursuing. His “photographic contributions to over 100 various conservation projects have actually helped preserve many of New England's wildlands” (Photoshelter: Jerry and Marcy Monkman 1). Over time, Monkman has begun to do videography in addition to photography which is an added medium to the evolution of biotopes in land conservation efforts. (Monkman, Personal Interview)

Monkman grew up “next to 3000 acres of conservation land and another 2000 acres of fields and farms” and states that “as a kid [he] was just lost out in the woods and in the fields almost every day after school and [he] loved it” (Monkman, Personal Interview). For Monkman, being able to explore conserved land “was an important part of [his] life and [he] think that, that experience is something everyone should have” (Monkman, Personal Interview). Monkman credits the amount of time spent in nature as a child as a major reason why he grew up as a well-rounded adult. The fact that nature played such a positive role in his life, it is easy to see why Monkman has dedicated his

life to doing what he can to help conserve the land so that others can have a positive experience as well. (Monkman, Personal Interview)

Monkman had never considered being a photographer as his career, but once he moved to New England and he and his wife “started hiking and exploring the White Mountains, Baxter State Park and places like that... [he] just got inspired to work in conservation” (Monkman, Personal Interview). Originally a business major, Monkman had no idea how he could contribute to conservation work, but eventually decided that photography could be his entry point and began his career as a conservation photographer in the early 1990s. The decision to pursue his career as a photographer proved to be a wise choice, as evidenced by the continued success he has had over the years building his business and assisting many organizations. (Monkman, Personal Interview)

Throughout the past 25 years, Monkman has noticed a shift in conservation efforts. There is no longer the push to stop “clear cutting and protecting all the woods” (Monkman, Personal Interview). Energies have become focused on protecting “this landscape in a way that honors the traditions of how woods are utilized and served New England over the years” (Monkman, Personal Interview). Recognizing this change caused Monkman to develop his formula for successful land conservation photography that includes images of the landscape, but also show the use of the land through recreation and sustainable harvesting. (Monkman, Personal Interview)

### Process

When contacted by a client for a job, Monkman takes the time to prepare before going out to shoot. In an effort to previsualize his ideas, he starts by “looking at Google

Earth or talking to people who have been on the land or just going there and looking at things” (Monkman, Personal Interview). This allows him to plan and prepare before he goes out to photograph, and helps eliminate the need for multiple trips. His landscape and nature shots depend primarily on the weather and lighting, but his recreation photographs require some advanced planning. Admittedly, “most of the people shots are kind of set up. It’s just the only way to predict” (Monkman, Personal Interview). Although some of the photographs with people are staged, Monkman tries to “be very conscious of not making images that aren’t true to the place or the story” (Monkman, Personal Interview). Additionally, he also photographs people working on the land, which he usually does not have to direct, and those images are another addition to the visual explanation of why a certain area of land needs to be conserved by showing the economic benefits. With the help of his clients, and volunteers, he is able to create powerful images that showcase the functionality and appeal of the land, which in turn will hopefully gain supporters and help conserve those tracts of land. (Monkman, Personal Interview)

Monkman believes his photographs have played a role in saving many tracts of land across New England and often finds himself walking or hiking in a conserved area that he photographed in years past, in an effort to raise money and gain supporters. He has also received positive feedback from his clients over the years, who believe his work is important and corresponds to their overall mission, whether it be for bringing awareness to a tract of land, or raising funds to save an area. Most of his clients give him creative freedom when it comes to photographing; however, generally it is the clients who decide which images to use to advance their mission. Occasionally, he will make suggestions to his clients, especially if he photographs something of interest that “was

going on while [he] was there and this is an interesting part of the story,” (Monkman, Personal Interview) such as an abundance of a particular plant species, and they will use those images on their websites, pamphlets and for other advertising purposes. (Monkman, Personal Interview)

Over the years, Monkman has worked with a variety of clients and land conservation organizations including American Forest Foundation, Appalachian Mountain Club, Conservation Fund, The Nature Conservancy, Mt. Washington Observatory, Northern Forest Alliance, Society for the Protection of NH Forests, The Trust for Public Land and The Wilderness Society (Monkman, EcoPhotography: About 1). He worked with the Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire (SELT) on a project known as the Stonehouse Forest in Barrington, NH, which is “1,500-acres of land adjacent to the popular Stonehouse Pond...[and] supports vibrant wildlife, free flowing streams, and miles of trails” (SELT, Stonehouse Forest 1). In order to purchase and conserve this land, SELT needed to raise over \$3.4 million or they risked losing it to a development whose “conceptual plans show 350 possible house lots with 8+ miles of new roads, fragmenting these unspoiled lands” (SELT, Stonehouse Forest 1).

To help spread the message and secure funds, SELT enlisted the help of Monkman to photograph the Stonehouse Forest and provide visual examples of this vast landscape. Before Monkman visited the forest, he talked with “the land trust folks about why they thought this property was important” (Monkman, Personal Interview). From there he learned what a unique piece of land the Stonehouse Forest is and how unusual it is to find 1,500 acres of undeveloped land in southeastern New Hampshire. He also learned about some of the fascinating natural features, including an array of wildlife and

wetlands. Learning more about the project and the importance of this land helped Monkman gain insight and photograph it with a new perspective. He aimed at providing the general public and potential donors a visual account of why this forest should be conserved, with its “unfragmented woods with natural ponds, bogs and five miles of streams...[wildlife] such as reclusive turtles and bobcats...[and] a trail network for hiking and exploring” (SELT, Stonehouse Forest 1).



Figure 3. Monkman, Jerry. “A girl on the edge of Round Pond in winter waiting for the sunrise. Barrington, New Hampshire.” 2016

Monkman also wanted to photograph all the different recreational uses of the land, such as hiking, biking, snowshoeing and kayaking. Given that the Stonehouse Forest is “such a big place that was also going to be open to the public for non-motorized recreation, [he] also wanted to explore where that recreation would be and how it would take place” (Monkman, Personal Interview). Monkman took many photographs of the different recreational uses, including one image, a panorama, featuring a woman in snowshoes standing at the far right in front of a frozen lake, freshly covered with snow (see figure 3). This photograph was taken as the sun was beginning to rise and shows

some subtle colors in the sky against the monotoned landscape. By choosing to display this scene as a panorama, the viewer can get a sense of scale and the vastness of this land.

For many of the projects Monkman is hired to do, he usually only has one day to get the photographs he needs, but for the Stonehouse Forest project he was fortunate to have several days to shoot, and months to prepare in advance. SELT asked him to “shoot five days’ worth of time out there, and [they] started talking about it in September of 2015” (Monkman, Personal Interview). Since he had months to work on this project, he was able to photograph multiple seasons, and this gave the audience examples of the sights, flora and fauna, as well as the different recreation possibilities throughout the year. Monkman was able to photograph some of the “unique features of this property [including] one of the largest growths of mountain laurel this far north” (Monkman, Personal Interview) and he was able to be there during peak bloom (see figure 4).

Monkman’s photograph of the mountain laurel shows an abundance of these stunning white and pink flowers bursting out of the image and speckled amongst the lush, green background. Given that mountain laurel, especially such bountiful quantities, is so rare that far north, Monkman felt it was important to showcase such an incredible display. He scoped out the area and planned for a time where he could photograph at the height of the mountain laurel season. In turn, SELT is able to use this photograph as evidence of one of the many examples of flora in this landscape that should be conserved and enjoyed for years to come. (Monkman, Personal Interview)

SELT has been working tirelessly for the last two years to raise enough money to purchase and conserve the land. They brought in people from the U.S. Forest Service as well as some graduate students from the University of New Hampshire to core trees and

survey another unique feature of this land, the black gum swamps. Through this work, they found out that some of the oldest trees in this forest were approximately 450 years old (Monkman, *The Stonehouse Forest* 4). Between the scientific evidence and Monkman’s photographic evidence, SELT had enough documentation to present to potential supporters.



Figure 4. Monkman, Jerry. “Mountain laurel, *Kalmia latifolia*, fills the understory of a forest in Barrington, New Hampshire.” 2016

In the beginning of 2017, the Stonehouse Forest “got one step closer to being a reality with the announcement of a \$1 million Federal grant from the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, administered by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service” (Hyde and Cook 1). As of December 14, 2017, SELT was able to raise the remaining funds and “the 1,500-acre Stonehouse Forest in Barrington, NH has been saved for generations to come – for public access, clean water, and wildlife” (SELT, Stonehouse Forest 1). Monkman’s photographs were used in various fundraising efforts and allowed potential donors to recognize the importance of this unique area without having to physically go there. By bringing the forest into the hands of their target audience, SELT and Monkman have played a major role in gaining supporters and raising the funds needed that saved this forest. Thankfully, the future is looking bright for this exceptional piece of property in southeastern New Hampshire and will be enjoyed by people for generations to come. (Monkman, Personal Interview)

### Videography

In addition to photography, Monkman has recently entered the world of videography, which allows him to create a greater exposure for environmental issues and give more depth to the stories he is trying to tell (Monkman, Video 1). The first documentary he produced is titled *The Power of Place*. This film “looks at a project called the Northern Pass, which is a proposed electricity transmission line to bring hydropower from Quebec to the New England grid” (Monkman, Personal Interview). According to Forward NH, the Northern Pass, this “will help meet the regions increasing demand for power while substantially decreasing carbon emissions by up to 3.2 million

tons per year” (Forward NH Plan 1). They claim some of the benefits of the Northern Pass are “2,600 new jobs during construction, \$62 million annual energy cost savings for New Hampshire consumers, [and] \$30 million in additional state and local tax revenue annually” (Forward NH Plan 1). While some may see these as tremendous benefits, many state and local organizations and citizens are against the Northern Pass because of the destruction to the land and the impact the power lines would have on scenic areas.

One organization greatly opposed to the Northern Pass is the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (SPNHF), who voiced their disapproval immediately after the proposal for this project was submitted. While they are big supporters of renewable energy they “are not naïve enough to think that just because a power source or project is based on renewable energy sources that it doesn’t have drawbacks or downsides” (Difley 1). SPNHF is concerned that this “proposal for the largest-ever power line in New Hampshire would cross and have detrimental impacts on thousands of acres of protected conservation lands” (Difley 2). Another fear is that the “90- to 135-foot-tall towers will permanently alter the lands they cross, fragmenting forests, disrupting wildlife habitat, disfiguring communities and lowering property values” (Difley 2). In this instance, SPNHF decided the cons greatly outweigh the pros for the Northern Pass proposal, and they have worked assiduously since the initial proposal to do everything in their power to stop the New Hampshire state officials from allowing this to pass.

SPNHF reached out to Monkman, with whom they have previously worked, to “produce a handful of short advocacy clips interviewing people that would be impacted or are familiar with the project” (Monkman, Personal Interview). While meeting and

interviewing these people, Monkman felt that many of them had deeper stories to tell. He interviewed “people who lived along the right of way in both far northern New Hampshire and down here in southern New Hampshire who would be seriously, negatively impacted” and he decided he had “a chance to maybe make their voices heard louder than they could be otherwise” (Monkman, Personal Interview). Monkman believed that by filming these people he could help advocate for their cause. It was from there that he became inspired to create his documentary on the Northern Pass.

The documentary, titled *The Power of Place*, features many interviews from people who would be directly affected by this project, and many graphs and charts to show just how serious of an impact these towers would have on the landscape. Monkman interviewed a variety of people including those from the rural north who lived on farms, or worked in the forest industry, people from the White Mountains area who live there for recreation and the scenic beauty and people in southern New Hampshire who are impacted because these towers are going up in their backyard (Monkman, Personal Interview). By interviewing these people and putting it in his documentary, he is giving them a voice and showing the state legislature that if this proposal passes it will affect real people, many of whom have lived in New Hampshire for generations. The people interviewed have a clear love for the landscape and feel it would be an absolute devastation to have those scenic lands interrupted by these giant towers. (Monkman, Personal Interview)

Monkman raised money through Kickstarter, began production of the film in the spring of 2013 and filmed the whole summer. Unfortunately, a week after finishing production, Monkman had to delay for personal reasons and the project came to a halt.

Although it took some time from when production ended, to when the documentary was completed “it worked out okay because the issue dragged on and by the time it came out, it was still very relevant and it was good timing” (Monkman, Personal Interview).

Monkman showed the film in a dozen theaters, released it online and was even able to show it at the New Hampshire Film Festival. The documentary has also “been submitted as an official comment to the states evaluation committee, so to [Monkman] that’s always been important that the people who are making the decision will see this film” (Monkman, Personal Interview).



Figure 5. Monkman, Jerry. “Cairn at sunrise on the Appalachian Trail - Mount Moosilauke, White Mountains, New Hampshire.” Still from *The Power of Place*

In addition to the interviews, *The Power of Place* features photographs and video from places all along the proposed route of the Northern Pass. One such image (see figure 5) features a cairn on the Appalachian trail taking during the sunrise. The endless rolling mountains in the distance show a beautiful uninterrupted scenic view. This image would be quite different if it featured transmission poles that tower way over the canopy. A place that is currently tranquil, picturesque and unspoiled would become broken up and disturbed. Monkman's documentary aimed at not only giving a voice to the people who will be affected by the Northern Pass, but also a voice for the landscape which will be devastated if this proposal passes.

Currently, the proposal is still ongoing, and has not been approved or denied. From the time this documentary was released until now, it is evident that the voices of the people have been heard, at least to some extent. The proposed "route was designed to address concerns we heard from New Hampshire residents about the possible impacts the project could have on key scenic areas" (Forward NH Plan 1). Because of this redesign, 60 miles around the White Mountains and across the Appalachian trail will be buried instead of on large transmission poles. However, that means 130 miles will still be above ground and "that leaves still a lot of people being impacted" (Monkman, Personal Interview). Although some of the concerned areas are addressed, this still leaves over a hundred miles of land at risk for the destruction that could happen to the landscape if this proposal passes. For now, SPNHF is continuing to spread the word, raise funds and advocate for the land to make sure the public's voices are heard and hopefully stop the Northern Pass altogether. (Monkman, Personal Interview)

Today, Monkman is continuing his work providing his variety of clients with images to help in the success of their land conservation missions. Although he was forced to stop work following a personal distress, he managed to spend 20-30 minutes a day outside in a small conserved area nearby his house. Having such close access to a conservation area “made [him] start to feel that access to open spaces and protected spaces is almost a basic human right and [people] need it as a way to deal with the stress of being a human” (Monkman, Personal Interview). That realization has pushed Monkman to work even harder since returning to work and gave his photographs a new meaning. Monkman is currently working on a new documentary with the Forest Society on the Merrimack Watershed and plans to “continue to promote ecological awareness through creative photography” (Monkman, Personal Interview). His career as a conservation photographer has been very successful thus far, and Monkman hopes to continue making a positive impact on the landscapes of New England. (Monkman, Personal Interview)

### Chapter III.

#### David Foster: Ecological Photographer

“In wildness is the preservation of the world” – Henry David Thoreau

David Foster is an ecologist and Director of the Harvard Forest, a part of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University with the mission “to develop and implement interdisciplinary research and education programs investigating the ways in which physical, biological and human systems interact to change our earth” (Harvard Forest 1). As the director for almost thirty years, Foster has produced several books and collaborated with several other scientists to create the *Wildlands and Woodlands* reports, which discusses the author’s vision “for an unparalleled, long-term conservation effort to retain at least 70 percent of the region in forestland, permanently free from development” (Foster, Donahue et al. 2). With this goal in mind, Foster has taken thousands of photographs, many of which are used in various articles, books, reports and websites. In this case, Foster operates as both photographer and Director of the Harvard Forest. This multifaceted role gives Foster a different perspective when photographing the land because he photographs the land with a scientific understanding.

Foster is a self-taught photographer, who began in the 1970s photographing the “landscape around where [he] lived in Rollingford, CT, which was an absolutely magnificent agrarian New England landscape” (Foster, Personal Interview). As Foster began his work as an ecologist, he used photography in a variety of ways, including data

collection, repeat photography, aerial photography and to illustrate the “phenomenon [they] were describing in scientific papers” (Foster, Personal Interview). From early on, Foster “tried to use photos for cover photos of journals, and that’s obviously essential for communication, for increasing the readership” (Foster, Personal Interview). In 1983, shortly after Foster arrived at the Harvard Forest, one of his images was featured on the cover of *Nature* magazine, which showed “this spectacular boreal landscape of wetlands, almost impossible to describe but there were these kind of gossamer thread strands of wetlands that go across ponds, and it was taken from the air and it doesn’t look like anything that you’ve ever seen” (Foster, Personal Interview). From the beginning, Foster recognized the importance of photography to increase interest in the work that he was doing not just with the public but also with other scientists. As he moved into additional subjects, including land conservation and the ecological benefits behind it, the ability to create interest using photographs has been crucial.

### Process

Having a background as an ecologist has greatly influenced the subject matter and the way Foster photographs the land. When he takes pictures “almost every photograph [he takes] is to tell a story, or to capture something specific that [he finds] compelling” (Foster, Personal Interview). When putting together articles, books and reports, Foster aims in “reinforcing the messages with photographs and making the products much more compelling...by diversifying the kind of material and capturing peoples interest just with the photographs” (Foster, Personal Interview). Foster believes that photographs play a significant role in raising interested in his scientific endeavors.

To Foster, land conservation is “important for New England, and for the people because of the benefits that it provides directly to the people in terms of food, shelter and environmental goods including water and fresh air and their health” (Foster, Personal Interview). He goes on to say that it’s “good globally because the intact environment will reduce the rate at which the environment changes” and “it’s important now for nature because there is still so much nature retained in New England” (Foster, Personal Interview). In this region of the United States, 80 percent is covered by forest today, which is “a far cry from the mere 30 to 40 percent that remained forested in most parts of the region in the mid-1800s” (Nickerson 2). A change in the use of the land from the previously logged and farmed areas has seen regrowth and the return of forests. New England is an important area and it “is now the most heavily forested region in the United States—a recovery that even the great naturalist Henry David Thoreau once thought impossible” (Nickerson 2).

Foster has been studying areas across New England since he began working at the Harvard Forest. One major project that Foster has been working on is his recently published book *Martha’s Vineyard: A Meeting of Land and Sea*. Foster has been photographing and conducting scientific research on Martha’s Vineyard since the 1990s. In his book, Foster “explores the powerful natural and cultural forces that have shaped the storied island to arrive at a new interpretation of the land today and a well-informed guide to its conservation in the future” (Foster, About the Book). His approach for this book regarding “conservation management seeks to balance pragmatism, human needs and desires, and nature’s impulses” (Foster, Greening Martha 3). Foster continues, “It acknowledges the constraints imposed by laws and regulations, ownership and

institutional differences, and conservation priorities” (Foster, Greening Martha 3). Instead of restraining development on Martha’s Vineyard, Foster uses his book to paint a realistic picture of what can be feasibly accomplished on the island. (Foster, Personal Interview)



Figure 6. Foster, David. “A forest perforated by houses, Oak Bluffs.” 2009. *Martha’s Vineyard: A Meeting of Land and Sea*. Page 201

To give a better idea of several of the conservation issues, Foster has filled his book with over 150 images showing all aspects of the Vineyard. One image in particular, shows the issues of development (see figure 6). This image, an aerial shot, shows a lush, green canopy broken up by houses built up in Oak Bluffs. By photographing this view from above, it gives the audience an idea of just how much development there is, and the

impact it has to the landscape. The image is captivating and draws attention, because it is difficult to grasp just how affected land is by development when viewing it from the ground. Foster took this photograph from a plane flying above Martha's Vineyard, and "the aerial view has encouraged a new sensitivity to the bonds that exist between humanity and the natural world" (Cosgrove 4).

Although Foster argues that some development is inevitable, he also explains that conserving lands and not allowing anything to happen to it – i.e. logging, recreation and so forth – is also not a good solution. Instead, Foster recommends conservation that allows access to the lands, so they can be appreciated by all. As he explains "one of the most direct ways that conservation makes a huge difference on the Vineyard is through access" (Foster, *Martha's Vineyard* 203). By allowing access to private and state-owned conservation lands, it can "open remarkable resources to everyone" (Foster, *Martha's Vineyard* 203).

Throughout the book, Foster touches upon a variety of topics, including the history of the Vineyard, agriculture, the people of the Vineyard, and erosion. Foster discusses these topics throughout the text and has a variety of images to support each subject. One of the topics, erosion, shows several images and maps used as a visual explanation of an issue that is causing a lot of damage to the island. The Vineyard coast is eroding at a rapid pace. Comparing U.S. Geological Survey maps from the mid- to late-1800s with maps of the island today shows a clear example of the erosion. Projections based on factors such as climate warming and ice melting "suggest that the south shore will erode and additional five hundred to two thousand feet by 2100" (Foster, *Martha's Vineyard* 139-140). An additional map of a proposed development, featuring roughly 750

lots on Wasque from 1913 was laid over a current map of that land and shows that “today approximately one-third of the proposed development would be in the Atlantic Ocean” (Foster, *Martha's Vineyard* 141). These visual guides and data are used to show the seriousness of these environmental issues.



Figure 7. Foster, David. “Fallen oaks along the eroding bluff at Wasque in April 2012.”

*Martha’s Vineyard: A Meeting of Land and Sea*. Page 128

In addition to the maps and graphs showing erosion, Foster has several photographs to depict the issue as well. One photograph (see figure 7) illustrates the severity of coastal erosion by showing a bluff with over a dozen oak trees that have fallen off the cliff onto the shore. This photograph is a good example of the balance between an

image showing nature untouched and one that shows too much devastation. This image, especially when used in the book and in Foster's various presentations, alerts viewers of this natural destruction, and does so in a way that gets the audience, which consists of Vineyarders and anyone concerned about coastal erosion, interested, but does not leave them feeling hopeless. This balance is crucial to land conservation photographs. (Foster, Martha's Vineyard)

When putting together the layout of this book, Foster's goal was to have the readers "be able to read the book on three levels and one level was just looking at the photographs and just being able to flip through it. That in and of itself would be a message and captivating for some people" (Foster, Personal Interview). His overall target audience is "people who make a difference to the land, so that's land owners, it's kind of land managers, if you will, it's conservation organizations and it's decision makers at local levels and higher levels" additionally his book has "a lot of messages that go beyond the Vineyard, so hopefully it would also attract those same type of people more broadly" (Foster, Personal Interview). Since the book's release, Foster has had many book-related events to discuss the Vineyard and the broader topics, and hopes to continue to raise awareness of the potential ecological consequences, the need to conserve the land of the Vineyard, and what a truly remarkable area it is.

Another major project of Foster's is the Wildlands and Woodlands (W&W) initiative. W&W began in 2005 with *A Vision for the Forests of Massachusetts* and in 2010, expanded to a regional initiative with the release of *A Vision for the New England Landscape* which, "calls for a 50-year effort to conserve 70 percent of New England as forest permanently free from development" (Wildlands and Woodlands 1). In September

of 2017, a new report *Wildlands and Woodlands, Farms and Communities: Broadening the Vision for New England* was released and expands on the vision to include “at least 7 percent of New England as farmland” (Wildlands and Woodlands 1). This new report “broadens the perspectives of the 2010 report to connect both forests and farms to climate resilience and economic sustainability and it honors the region’s diverse conservation needs across cities, suburbs and rural areas both in northern and southern New England” (Wildlands and Woodlands 2). The three W&W reports all feature information from over thirty scientists and authors who have contributed, as well as photographs and graphs to help support the information in the text.

Some of the main facts that most of the media reported on with the most recent W&W report is that “reforestation has peaked, and New England is now losing 65 acres of forest to development each day” (Powell 1). Additionally, “funding for land conservation has fallen 50 percent since 2008, and the acreage conserved annually is also down, falling more than six-fold since the early 2000s, from 333,000 acres a year to about 50,000 acres a year since 2010” (Powell 1). If this pattern continues, “New England will lose another 1.2 million acres by the years 2060 – that’s an area nearly twice as big as Rhode Island” (Powell 2). The importance of showcasing the challenges in this new report is critical to slow down the rate of development and increase the amount of conservation land in New England. To reach the level of conservation advised in the report, there is a need for “increased public funding, integrating land conservation with urban and municipal planning, and ensuring that land dedicated for economic development is used as efficiently as possible” (Powell 2). Capturing the attention of the

policy makers and others who could positively affect the New England lands was a major focus when choosing the text and images for the report. (Foster, Personal Interview)

According to Foster, “the writers involved and to a certain extent the consultants that aid in the design of the document choose the photographs to best reinforce either the positive or negative points that they are trying to make” (Foster, Personal Interview). With this new W&W report the goal is to “broaden the vision to include agriculture and communities so [we wanted] both the writing and photography to show that” (Foster, Personal Interview). And as Foster says, “it’s not just about nature but it’s about nature that produces food...and where we live and where we work, and so it’s very much about the communities and farming as well as the forests” (Foster, Personal Interview). With that goal in mind, the process for selecting the cover photos was very methodical. The cover features a large landscape photograph (see figure 8) as well as two smaller images- one of two people in a community garden, and another showing a little boy enthusiastically holding up a fish he just caught.

The main photograph features an image taken by Foster. This quintessential view of a New England landscape is the perfect image used to entice readers to open the report and read further. The photograph was taken near Mount Holyoke in Northampton, Massachusetts looking north-northwest at the oxbow, up the Connecticut River Valley to southern Vermont. This image features fall foliage, a small community, farms, and mountains in the distance as well as the winding Connecticut River going off into the horizon. Collectively, this photograph captures most of the important pieces included in the new W&W report, such as farming, community, and the New England landscape. The

rest of the images in the report showcase other significant elements, including wildlife, land-use, recreation, and agriculture. (Foster, Personal Interview)

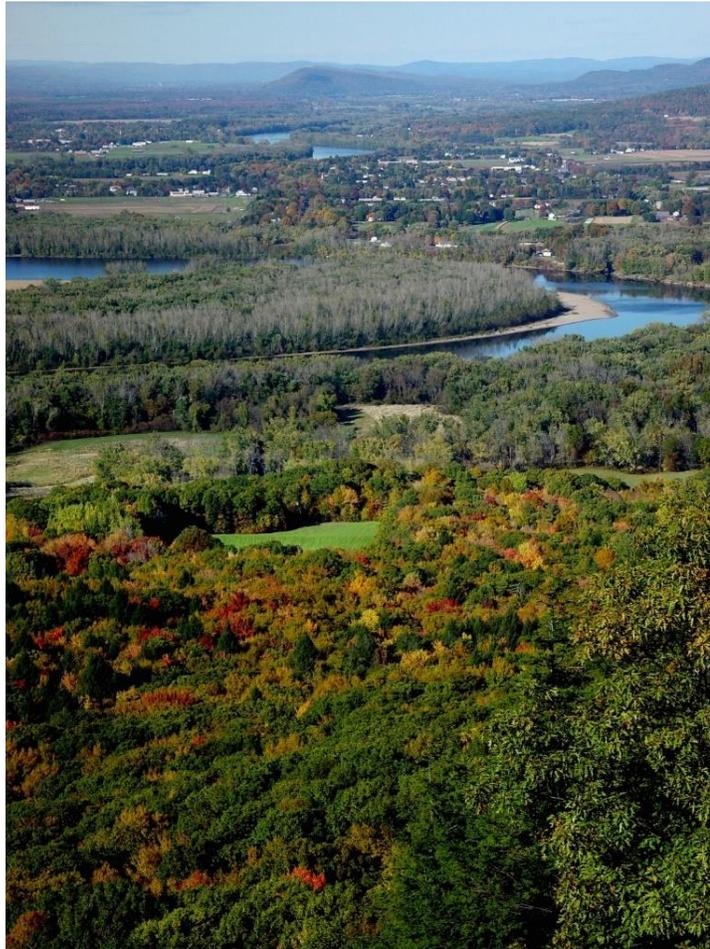


Figure 8. Foster, David. “Oxbow view near Mount Holyoke.” 2010. Northampton, MA

The combined effort from the scientists, photographers and consultants resulted in a thorough report that is a true representation of the Wildlands and Woodlands vision. To spread their message, the W&W communications team started with a large and “very effective release, that is notable and reaches media sources that then amplifies that and

spreads it out” (Foster, Personal Interview). From there they “released it electronically and on social media... and continue that to maintain the drumbeat of activities into the following year and to engage a lot of organizations that will magnify the message” (Foster, Personal Interview). Thanks to social media, the W&W communications team is able to keep the report in the eyes of the public through engagement from posts regarding W&W vision. Being able to use the photographs to pique the interests their target audience will lure the readers in and will hopefully gain supporters and continue to spread their message. (Foster, Personal Interview)

Going forward, Foster hopes to continue to build on his work from the past thirty years and he also hopes “to combine [his] work with other people’s work and strengthen that” (Foster, Personal Interview). On the Vineyard and for W&W, his goal is to continue to reinforce and spread the messages regarding agriculture, erosion and land conservation, which would engage the right people and gain supporters. Additionally, “in each of the landscapes that [he] may work in [Foster hopes to] continue building on the past efforts and reinforcing them in the future” (Foster, Personal Interview). Foster has dedicated his life’s work to bettering the New England landscape and leaving this unique area in the best shape possible by spreading the message of proper land conservation and land use through ecological research and photography.

## Chapter IV.

### Marion Belanger: Cultural Landscape Photographer

“All land, no matter what has happened to it, has over it a grace, an absolutely persistent beauty.” – Robert Adams

Marion Belanger is a fine art photographer from Connecticut who uses photography to explore relationships between humans and nature. Belanger describes herself as a “cultural landscape photographer” because she considers herself “a landscape photographer, but [she] photographs the built environment and that to [her] is landscape” (Belanger, Personal Interview). As she explains, “the landscape is what we see outside, that includes the telephone poles, and the houses, and the roads, and all that” (Belanger, Personal Interview). Although Belanger does not work directly with land conservation groups, she does feel her photographs could play a role in land conservation because “the more people use visual methods and the more we work with scientists or educators... everyone wins” (Belanger, Personal Interview).

Belanger has several projects that show the relation of humans and nature. One such project is her series *River*, that shows the Naugatuck River, which was formerly “one of the most polluted rivers in the country” (Belanger, *River*) and has now been cleaned up. Belanger lived along the river and when she was growing up, the river was

“essentially a sewer” and would “literally be neon colored” (Belanger, Personal Interview). Belanger would ride her bike away from the river to this valley and “[she’d] be in this beautiful pastoral Connecticut-what you would think of when you think of a classic New England town” (Belanger, Personal Interview). She spent a lot of time in the natural landscape, and after she got her first job in high school, she purchased an Olympic camera and became interested in photography. (Belanger, Personal Interview)

It wasn’t until years later that she truly considered herself a photographer. For her undergraduate studies, she attended Alfred University and majored in ceramics. While there, she took a class taught by photographer John Wood. She has often found that “people say the teacher makes such a difference, and John was that teacher for [her], so [she] started leaning more towards photography” (Belanger, Personal Interview). At that time, there was no photography major at the university. She graduated with her major in ceramics, but the spark had been lit and she knew she wanted to be a photographer. After Belanger graduated she moved to New Orleans with her husband, who got a job as a reporter for the *Times Picayune*, and Belanger got a job for them photographing debutant balls. Although she loved photography, she knew she didn’t want to spend her life photographing events, so she eventually attended Yale where received her MFA in photography. (Belanger, Personal Interview)

### Process

Belanger has always been attracted to the cultural landscape, and that has become her primary subject matter. The cultural landscape is different from the vast natural landscape that photographers like Carleton Watkins and Ansel Adams photographed, and

instead features people, buildings and industrial objects and the relationship these subjects have with the land. Belanger has “a very specific way of working [and] a lot of [her] work is research based” (Belanger, Personal Interview). Before going out to photograph, Belanger loves to “read fiction, non-fiction, [she] watches movies, does it all” (Belanger, Personal Interview) in an effort to understand all aspects of her subject. Sometimes that research leads to other projects.

Any projects that involve travel, Belanger will research the land, the sites and the history before she goes so that she could determine the best places to photograph ahead of time. As a result, “sometimes it’s a bust, [but] sometimes it’s better than [she] imagines” (Belanger, Personal Interview). And “when [she] get there it’s always this moment of anticipation” (Belanger, Personal Interview). Belanger will then take photographs from her initial visit, and from there her photographs tell her what to do next. She has a very methodical way of approaching projects, and does not jump into anything until she is sure she has all the information she needs. (Belanger, Personal Interview)

Although she has photographed at locations throughout the United States and Iceland, she still finds inspiration in New England, where she grew up. Belanger wanted to photograph the Naugatuck River for years, but she said she “just couldn’t do it, it just wasn’t coming out right” (Belanger, Personal Interview). Growing up near such a polluted river, Belanger hated it, and never went near it because it was so “disgusting. It stunk, it would catch on fire. It was considered one of the dirties rivers in the country...[and] when [she] was growing up [she] couldn’t wait to leave” (Belanger, Personal Interview). There were factories all along this river, as it was a very industrial

river valley, and although these factories supplied the locals with thousands of jobs, they were also a major reason the river was so polluted. (Belanger, Personal Interview)



Figure 9. Belanger, Marion. "Astonia." 2014. *River*.

In 2014, Belanger and several other photographers were commissioned to create an artist book related to Connecticut. Belanger decided it was finally time to tackle the Naugatuck River and chose that as her subject matter. After Belanger had grown up and moved away, in 1972 the Clean Water Act was passed and "the poor water quality was addressed by upgrading all waste water treatment facilities, the largest in Waterbury, and going after large industries that were still using the river for a dumping grounds for their

left-over wastes” (Naugatuck River Watershed Association 1). Belanger photographed spots all along the 40-mile river and when she saw people fishing and “saw these people kayaking and these parks and running paths along the river... [she] just couldn’t believe it” (Belanger, Personal Interview).

Belanger took a series of images showing the various parts of the river and how they are being used today. She also tried to show the cause and effect of the river being cleaned. One such image, shows the clean river running, with abandoned factories and mill buildings along the side (see figure 9). The photograph shows bright green shrubs growing along the river bank which stand out against the mostly muted color palette. The faint sunlight is lighting up and bringing focus to the buildings running alongside the river. Today, “the mill and factory buildings sit fallow and decayed” (Belanger, Projects 1) and as a result, the unemployment rate in that area increased. Efforts to clean up the river include, “major changes in state and federal pollution control laws, upgrades to municipal waste water treatment plants, natural and intentional dam removal, and the transition away from heavy industry in the Valley [which] have all contributed to vast improvements in the river’s water quality and wildlife population” (Naugatuck River 1)

Belanger considers her work to be “poetic but it’s also very quietly political” (Belanger, Personal Interview) and although it is important that the river is now clean, the efforts in cleaning up this river and the shift of industry going overseas, ultimately resulted in the loss of hundreds of jobs at these mills. While it has had a positive impact on the health of the ecosystem and quality of life for nearby residents, it’s had a negative impact on the local economy. Belanger attempts to explore the cause and effect for such an event through this series. (Belanger, Personal Interview)



Figure 10. Belanger, Marion. “Derby.” 2014. *River*

While working on this project, Belanger was completely taken aback by how clean the river was. Much to her surprise, “the river has rebounded, fish are plentiful and once happy visitors, like bald eagles, osprey and herons are returning to fish along its banks (Naugatuck River Watershed Association 1). Belanger wanted to capture this and “the very last photograph in the book is two fishermen at night and that was unheard of” (Belanger, Personal Interview). This photograph of the fishermen (see figure 10) shows two men on the edge of the riverbank fishing. The muted color pallet shows some greens from the trees, that is also reflected into the water and is symbolic of the color the river used to be and how “it is haunted by contamination and pollution” (Belanger, Projects 1).

This photograph was taken at night, but appears light due to the use of long exposure and the fishermen are blurred from movement, almost as though they are ghosts themselves. The ambiguity of this image plays on the past and present and shows hope for the future of the Naugatuck River. (Belanger, Personal Interview)

For Belanger, it is not enough to just produce a successful series of images, it is also very important for her how those images are displayed. Belanger creates her books in a manner that complements the nature of her subject matter. For *River*, Belanger created a pull-out book, much like an accordion that spreads out the whole length of a table (see figure 11). Since she photographed the whole span of the river she wanted to show that in order through her series of pictures. By “collapsing centuries of history into a few minutes, it offered thoughtful meditation on what was gained and what was lost when all those factories were built, and in turn, when they all shut down” (Slattery 8). The thought process behind not only which images to choose, but also how they are displayed is an additional element that can add to the accomplishments of land conservation organizations.

Belanger printed the images in the book on rice paper and “when you see the images of the river and its pulled out, it looks like waves” (Belanger, Personal Interview). Belanger believes “that form and function complement each other” (Belanger, Personal Interview) and she tries to use this when creating all of her books. Although this book was shown in an art gallery, she also feels “a book like *River* [could be] in a science museum where kids go” (Belanger, Personal Interview) and believes that her photographs mean different things to the various people who view them. Although her books are not meant specifically for land conservation, she believes that her books are “visual poetry”

and could have a positive effect on land conservation missions. (Belanger, Personal Interview)



Figure 11. Slattery, Brian. “Example of *River* laid out” 2014. *New Haven Independent*

Another project that Belanger worked on using form and function is an installation piece titled *Landfill*. In 2008, Belanger was commissioned by Wesleyan University “to make an installation regarding climate warming as part of *Feet to Fire: Exploring Global Climate Change from Science to Art*” (Creative Ground 1). This “campus-wide interdisciplinary focus on climate change” (Belanger, Personal Interview) allowed Belanger and the others to have their voices be heard on the subject through

choreography, performance and exhibitions. In addition to Belanger, they “had dancers come to campus to work with the students...anthropology students did door to door surveys about what it is like to be living near a landfill...it was kind of approached from all these different ways” (Belanger, Personal Interview). The focus was on the landfill in Middletown, CT. Approaching the subject from artistic, scientific and anthropological angles helped her explore climate change.



Figure 12. Belanger, Marion. “Landfill” 2008. Installation

In this series, she printed her photographs of a local landfill on a sheer silk fabric and hung them up in a forest (see figure 12) in an effort to show how “the earth embraces

and contains the discarded, the broken, and the wasted” (Belanger, Landfill 1). While creating this piece, Belanger’s challenge was to make something that could be exhibited outside. Since she was doing the photographs with various issues of climate change in mind, such as global warming, energy consumption, and the impact of humans to earth, she “came up with this idea of making almost like a clothesline, which would reference climate and wind and weather, and also hanging your clothes out instead of drying them in the dryer” (Belanger, Personal Interview). Once she decided how her images would be displayed, she began thinking of how to print them, and “wanted fabric that would respond to the wind” (Belanger, Personal Interview). Her goal was to have the “superimposed image of the landfill on top of the woods” (Belanger, Personal Interview) and she was successful in achieving this with her fabric selection and method for displaying the photographs.

The fabric she chose to print these on is diaphanous, which allows the images to fade into the background and become part of nature. The three images featured on the clothesline are photographs of the ground at the landfill. Due to the sheer fabric, from a distance it looks like ordinary nature photographs. Initially, you cannot even tell that these are images of a landfill until you look at them close up and “unnatural textures and colors, fragments of plastic, and pieces of material culture are visible, as if woven into the land” (Belanger, Landfill 1). With this installation piece, Belanger brings awareness to the amount of refuse we create and the impact this has to the land.

Belanger has recently begun a new project where she is “photographing the science behind climate change” (Belanger, Personal Interview) and she is optimistic about the potential impact this series could have and the ability to bring awareness to the

issues surrounding this subject. She has visited several research sites, such as Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and Harvard Forest and has been photographing the tools used and various samples available. These organizations have provided her with information and allowed her to photograph there “because getting this idea out about climate change in whatever way [they] can, it benefits them and it benefits [her]” (Belanger, Personal Interview). Belanger believes the “most effective way for people to be working now is collaboratively” (Belanger, Personal Interview) and, by working with the scientists, Belanger will be able to use her photographs to help explain the issues the scientists have discovered and hopes to really enforce the messages behind climate change.

This new project can be directly correlated to land conservation due to the fact that much of the science behind land conservation plans is a result of the scientific evidence discovered regarding climate change, including anthropogenic and industrial impacts. Today, land conservation organizations use climate change data as a way to defend why lands need to be protected, and not developed. The photographs from Belanger’s new project could be used by land conservation groups to show the work scientists are doing to collect this data, and provide evidence that this data is in fact true. Although Belanger is not currently working with land conservation organizations, in the future a relationship may be established.

## Chapter V.

### Summary & Conclusions

“To cherish what remains of the Earth and to foster its renewal is our only legitimate hope of survival” - Wendell Berry

There is no doubt that photography plays a positive part in land conservation efforts. This is particularly true for New England, where the “landscape faces the increasing loss of forests and farmlands to residential and commercial development,” as well as, “the challenge of maintaining public support for land protection and traditional use of land (e.g., forest harvesting and animal grazing) amidst competing socioeconomic demands” (Foster, Lambert et. al 2). Upon further inspection, “popular photography and rural landscape attitudes suggest that photography has indeed helped mold the attitude of the general public towards rural space” (Stilgoe 298). Through the use of photography, land conservation organizations have been able to spread the messages regarding land protection as well as proper land use and, as a result, gain supporters, and increase donations that help to conserve vital tracts of land.

In the late nineteenth century, photography was used as visual evidence that particular areas exist and increase tourism in places like the national parks. Today the need for community support has expanded exponentially. Photography is no longer the sole means to gain supporters and raise awareness for ecological concerns, and many photographers use additional mediums such as videography and writing in collaboration with scientists and land conservation organizations.

Over the next 50 years, Wildlands and Woodlands predicts that another “1.2 million acres of farm and forestland will be lost to development” (Foster, Lambert et. al 2). This is a critical time for these organizations. If this trend of land loss continues:

this transformation of land will alter the inherent character of the New England landscape, diminish its beauty, and undermine its capacity to yield clean water, mitigate flooding, produce food and wood products, support wildlife, and provide other services needed and valued by New Englanders (Foster, Lambert et. al 2-3).

Not only is the appearance of the landscape at risk, but the value of the land and all its resources are in equal jeopardy. It is here that the work of photographers, such as Jerry Monkman, David Foster, and Marion Belanger play a crucial role in assuring that the important areas of New England are conserved for future generations.

All three of the photographers interviewed agree that a collaborative effort is key, and not something that one individual can tackle on their own. Monkman sees the most “successful efforts...being collaborative between multiple photographers, videographers, writers and the conservation groups” (Monkman, Personal Interview). Foster posed the question “what would Ansel Adams be without John Muir or other luminaires who could put similar evocative thinking into people’s heads” (Foster, Personal Interview). Interdisciplinary efforts and collaboration are the key to the motivation and success of land conservation organizations.

For many, “landscape...always greets us as space, as environment, as that within which ‘we...’ find—or lose—ourselves” (Mitchell 2). It is not just the physical resources that are being conserved, “without underestimating for a moment the importance of physical preservation, we venture the opinion that the intangible or spiritual side of

wilderness and wildness is also important – and even more in jeopardy” (Waterman 31). The writings of John Muir, Henry David Thoreau and other naturalists have inspired generations to appreciate not only the visual aspects of nature’s ecosystem, but also the spiritual side and ecological value. It is well documented that “nature’s impacts extend far beyond physical fitness, encompassing intellectual and emotional health, self-identity, and basic values and morals” (Sampson 9). Additionally, nature “has an unparalleled capacity to stir our emotions, fostering raw and powerful feelings of wonder, awe, mystery, joy—and, yes, fear” (Sampson 9). If land conservation organizations are unable to continue saving vital tracts of land, the well-being of nature is at stake as well.

Fortunately, “the people, communities, and institutions of New England bring to this challenge an unparalleled capacity for collaboration and land protection” (Foster, Lambert et. al 5). Together, land conservation organizations, along with photographers, and the local communities bring awareness to and support for the missions that, if successful, will conserve these important areas of New England for generations to come. Although photographers only play a partial role in this goal, their part is equally important as the various organizations and the public. By providing photographs that are aesthetically pleasing, and show the benefits of the land and the land use, photographers help give the general public a new appreciation, and, in turn the public will hopefully support the undertakings of land conservation efforts through civil action that leads to permanent conservation.

Aesthetics, such as a sense of remoteness of untouched lands, play a major role in successful land conservation photographs. In some cases, “it was left to the aesthetic realm to provide a sense of wholeness or interrelatedness in the world” (Rollins 31). In

many instances, “popular photographers not only followed landscape aesthetics dictated by self-appointed experts but created an aesthetic of landscape grounded in how well any landscape appeared in a photograph” (Stilgoe 254). Aesthetically pleasing images can be used to represent the unique environmental biotopes that need to be saved and provide visual evidence of its importance. Furthermore, “it seems to be true that the aesthetic perception of a true, fundamental unity implicitly carries with it the obligation of preservation” (Rollins 31). The hope is the more people who see these photographs and images of these natural landscapes, the more who will support the work of the land conservation organizations and save the land from development and devastation.

As Eliot Porter once said, “photography is a strong tool, a propaganda device, and a weapon for the defense of the environment...and therefore for the foster of a healthy human race and even very likely for its survival” (Caponigro 1). This tool is important to land conservationists who wish to spread their message in a visual form. The “organizations need compelling photography to help them advance their programs, and photography can provide access to mainstream media outlets that organizations may not otherwise have” (Ward Jr. 64). Additionally, “researchers and conservationists on the frontlines will often improve a photographer’s access to the conservation story” and “their expertise can help guide the photographer’s relevance to conservation needs, and their political engagement can help apply the photography to the conservation agenda” (Ward Jr. 64). This is yet another example of the importance of collaboration in land conservation.

In today’s world, the internet and social media have streamlined the process of getting the images into the hands of the general public. As a result, “environmental

nonprofits are using social media platforms as a main way of communicating with the public and their audience” (Smith 2). In addition, “organizations that included an image in their posts had higher rates of engagement than just text alone” (Smith 2). As Belanger explains, “it’s easier to reach people now and... that is because of the web. It’s so much easier and there’s so many resources” (Belanger, Personal Interview). Social media has allowed land conservation organizations to reach a larger number of people in a matter of minutes instead of the traditional and more costly methods of mailing supporting documents, which could take days or even weeks. Thanks to “social media, participants of a movement do not have to be near each other as was the case with historical environmental grassroots activism” (Smith 12). Although, with the rise of social media and the fact that there are so many pictures out there “it can look like the world is doing great, if you look at citizen photography” (Monkman, Personal Interview). This is where the importance of collaboration comes in, because “if you don’t have photographers and organizations and journalists telling the back story, you don’t realize how much is at risk, how much we are losing, and how much we need to be vigilant of conservation” (Monkman, Personal Interview).

Monkman has found over the years that he has had to evolve. Such a large percentage of “content on the internet consumed is film” (Monkman, Personal Interview) and that is one of the many reasons he began working with the medium. Monkman recognized that “times were changing, and if [he] was going to survive financially in this business that was the direction [he] was going to have to go. Now [film] is about 30% of [his] business” (Monkman, Personal Interview). Organizations hire Monkman to create a video regarding their conservation mission and use that to spread the message and give

their audience a quick explanation of what they are trying to achieve. For instance, Monkman recently produced for the Wildlands and Woodlands' new report, an introductory video which has been used to generate interest in the initiative and hopefully attract a wider audience. This video is available on Monkman's, Harvard Forest's and the Wildlands and Woodlands' websites and has been distributed through various social media networks. By having this video on multiple platforms, it will hopefully generate a larger viewing and create more supporters.

Land conservation is just as imperative now as it was during Carleton Watkins' and Ansel Adams' time. Today, "land protection is an ongoing and never-ending enterprise and even though the opportunities and focus may change, it's constantly building on the past" (Foster, Personal Interview). As a result, "the field of conservation photography will continue to grow, embodying hope to educate and inspire humanity to sustain biological and cultural diversity, essential yet imperiled resources" (Ward Jr. 66). This landscape "of intermingled forests, farms, and communities, shaped by nature and people and shifting through time, has defined New England for centuries" (Foster, Lambert et. al 14). As such, "conserving a matrix of diverse landscapes is essential to preserving New England's rich biodiversity," (Foster, Lambert et. al 20) and with the help of organizations, scientists and photographers, this continued success is possible.

However, "the single greatest challenge to reaching this goal is funding for the purchase of land and especially of easements on private lands to ensure they remain undeveloped in perpetuity" (Foster, Lambert et. al 21). This is where photography continues to play such an important part of land conservation efforts. Ultimately, "it is not what the artist has done but what he can do for the great cause of the environment that

should command our attention now” (Adams, Artist in Conservation 2). And for land conservation photographers, the job is never ending because “response to natural beauty is one of the foundations of the environmental movement” (Adams, Artist in Conservation 2). By using this response thoughtfully and carefully, photographers and land conservation organizations can work together to gain support and donations for their undertakings.

As humans, “we occupy a very small segment of environmental time” (Adams, Artist in Conservation 4). Artists and environmentalists must make the best use of that time and do everything in their power to protect the land for future use. Henry David Thoreau said it best when he argued, “we can never have enough of nature” (Thoreau 58). We will never have as much nature as we do today if we fail to conserve the land and lose it to development and destruction. There are many ongoing challenges ahead for land conservation organizations, especially raising support and necessary funds to move these missions forward. Fortunately, “social media provides these organizations with the opportunity to reach audiences they would otherwise not be able to engage” (Smith 60). Land conservation organizations now have the ability to reach even more people with social media, and hopefully with a larger audience, support as well as donations will be raised and the organizations will save vital tracts of land all across the region. With the fate of the New England landscape hanging in the balance, it is up to the photographers, scientists and land conservation organizations to focus on the bigger picture and work together to ensure that this beloved landscape will be here for future generations to come.

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