Chapter 2

Finding Common Ground: Emerging Principles for a Reconstructed Conservation

BEN A. MINTeer AND ROBERT E. MANNING

The preceding chapters have followed a wide-ranging but unhurried path through the fields of history, philosophy, political theory, sociology, anthropology, conservation biology, economics, and the applied professions engaged in conservation practice. Clearly, our authors have much to say about the shape and substance of a reformed conservationism, and they have provided an impressive pool of ideas to draw from in our efforts to move forward with this larger project. They have responded to the original challenge of providing a thoughtful assessment of the current theoretical and methodological trends in conservation thought and practice, and they have given us a clear-eyed reappraisal of earlier conservation traditions and their bearing on present and future work. In this final chapter, we would like to bring together some of the major insights, arguments, and proposals contained in the individual contributions. We believe these ideas represent many of the key commitments required by a reinvigorated conservationism in a new era of human action and reflection on the land.

Without question, the chapters in this volume offer a wealth of diverse perspectives on the conservation discussion. For example, on the preceding pages you have encountered projects focused on wilderness and protected areas (Trombita; Callicott; Mitchell and Brown), cultural landscapes (Judd; Diamant; Eugster, and Mitchell), rural and agrarian landscapes (Vivanco; Thompson, Freyfogle), urban and built environments (McCulough, Minteer, Stokowski), and multiple points on the geographic map (Judd; Stokowski; Vivanco; Mitchell and Brown). You have come across chapters providing a fresh look at conservation science (Lawrence, 335).
Flader) and those focused on the contributions of lesser-known figures and voices in the tradition (Judd, McCullough, Thompson, Minteer, Taylor). There have been discussions of the trends and challenges of domestic conservation planning and practice (Dizard; Trombulak; Diamant; Eugster, and Mitchell) and of international conservation agendas and efforts (Vivanco; Mitchell and Brown). You have seen enthusiastic endorsements of pluralism in conservation values and goals (Norton; Manning; Bengston and Iverson) and cautionary tales about the dangers of fragmentation and atomism in the conservation movement (Freyfogle; Trombulak). These examples—and there are many others—illustrate the multiple approaches and diverse applications pursued by the contributors to this book.

As we mentioned in the introduction, however, we are struck by the degree to which our authors’ work converges in a number of significant ways in this book. This unity amid diversity, or common ground, can best be demonstrated through a cataloging of what we see as a set of emerging “principles for reconstruction” that issue from the nineteen contributed chapters herein. Although we believe the following is a reasonably comprehensive list, there are no doubt additional principles, themes, and intersecting lines of argument to be uncovered in these chapters, and we encourage you to continue to explore and mine them for further insight in the course of your own reading. We hope, however, that the principles that follow provide a useful summary and synthesis of the work in this volume and that they set an agenda for further discussions and studies of the conservation tradition and its contemporary vitality in the literature and on the landscape.

Twelve Principles for Reconstructing Conservation

We have derived the following general principles for reconstructing conservation thought and practice from the nineteen contributed chapters in this book. As stated here, they are empirical observations about some of the major commitments and strategies of a new, revised conservation approach. Yet we believe these principles also possess an important normative force, especially for setting a thoughtful and innovative agenda for the scholarly fields that study conservation and the professions that carry out conservation projects on the ground.
I. A Reconstructed Conservation Will Adopt an Integrative Understanding of Nature and Culture

The authors in this volume endorse a model of conservation that recognizes the importance of the linkages between natural and cultural systems. Much of this view may be attributed to our improved understanding in recent years of the history (and prehistory) of human modifications of the environment. Indeed, as Callicott reminds us in his chapter, no landscape is really free of anthropogenic effects. This is ratified by Vivanco in his statement that “recent archaeological, ethnolinguistic, and ethnographic research has adequately proven that in important instances Western projections of unpeopled wilderness are in fact artificial landscapes manipulated by the hands of people.” This conclusion is clearly supported by Judd’s discussion of the eastern conservation tradition of rural New Englanders: “The markers of eastern identity are more typically pastoral, distinctive not because of their natural or their cultural attributes but because these two are so inextricably combined.”

The fusion of systems of human meaning and activity with the cycles and processes of the natural world also has a number of implications for our understanding of the boundaries of the large conservation discussion, one that challenges many of our previously held conceptual and professional categories. As McCullough points out in his chapter, if, as William Cronon and others have suggested, nature is a cultural construction, then our conservation emphasis should be on cultural resources as much as natural resources, or, alternatively, on their intersection. In fact, McCullough suggests that “the goals are so closely parallel and the task so enormous that there can be no such thing as a reconstructed conservation that has trained separate for so long.” Yet, as Vivanco points out, the essence of culture in conservation can be a very complicated issue, especially when “culture” becomes inappropriately instrumentalyzed in the service of the conservationist agenda. “Thinking of culture as a mere tool to change...
behaviors," he writes, "may underpin the very reason we might want to bring it to bear in conservation, which is its ability to help focus attention on the highly specific and context-dependent processes and interactions that help determine why people relate with their natural surroundings in certain ways."

2. A Reconstructed Conservation Will Be Concerned with Working and Cultural Landscapes as Well as More "Pristine" Environments

Many of the chapters in this volume warn us, directly or indirectly, of the dangers of embracing a "wilderness first" view of conservation, one that discredits or ignores cultural and working landscapes in favor of an idealized "pristine" nature. The majority of our authors would presumably agree with the sentiments of Diamant, Eugster, and Mitchell, who suggest that the concept of cultural landscapes "gives value and legitimacy to peoples' places, a fundamentally different perspective from nature conservation's traditional focus on wild areas." In this sense, Judd's account of the "long lived-in lands" of the Northeast offers a corrective to this wilderness bias in environmental history as it elevates "peopled" and transformed landscapes into the conservationist geography. As he puts it, "the oscillations of deforestation and reforestation, depletion and renewal, settlement and abandonment, and pollution and recovery suggest reciprocity rather than nature-as-victim. ... One era's ecological disaster becomes the next era's textured landscape." Darian is even more direct: "Undisturbed nature is an oxymoron. ... Put another way to argue that the understood (by humans) is to be preferred to the disturbed is to court a serious and disabling teleology." The "altered lands" perspective is also on display in Thompson's portrait of the agrarian vision, one in which "human beings are hard at work within nature." Thompson's account shows us how this agricultural modification of the land also transforms individual character and community values, in the process establishing close ties between rural producers and their supporting environments.

The contemporary notion of "sense of place" and its inherent blending of nature and culture is at the heart of working and cultural landscapes as suggested by Diamant, Eugster, and Mitchell; Freyfogle; Judd; Sokowski; and others. Quoting geographer E. C. Jelph, Sokowski writes that "the relationship between community and place is a very powerful one in which each reinforces the identity of the other, and in which the landscape is very
n Will Be Concerned with  
scapes as Well as More
the very reason we might want to  
ach is its ability to help focus attention  
-dependent processes and interactions  
late with their natural surroundings in  
much an expression of communally held beliefs and values and of inter-

personal involvments.12 In the southern Appalachian context, Judd sug-
gests that "mountain people saw the forest not simply as board feet but,  
historian Donald Davis asserts, also as a "living matrix of plants, animals,  
and shared memories" and that their "folk knowledge in turn cultivated a  
sense of ownership,"13 which ultimately developed into stewardship. In  
the agrarian tradition, Thompson notes that people's "actions shape and trans-
form [nature] as surely as nature shapes and transforms them"12 and that  
communities evolved in this way "will see no tension between conservation  
of wild nature and the duties of the steward."13 Muenter suggests that the  
origins of regional planning, as espoused by Lewis Mumford, Benton  
MacKaye, and others, may offer an appropriately expansive model of a re-
constructed conservation: "The task of regional planning, according to  
Mumford, was...more culturally and ecologically grounded than the ap-
proach taken by conservationists, which in his view merely attempted to  
protect wilderness areas from intrusion and sought to avoid the wasteful  
development of natural resources. Although he thought such a strategy was  
to be praised for protecting the rare and spectacular environments of the  
continent and for injecting efficiency measures into resource exploitation,  
he feared it was too limited in scope to serve as a guide for a true environ-
mental ethic."14 Building on their legacy, Muenter concludes that "a recon-
structed conservation philosophy needs to address the complex whole of  
human experience in the environment, including the urban, the rural, and  
the wild."13

3. A Reconstructed Conservation Will Rely on a Wider and More
Contextual Reading of the Conservation Tradition
Several of the chapters suggest that we already have many of the intellec-
tual tools and resources of a new framework for conservation embedded in  
our history and culture; we need only adopt a more expansive and more  
matured approach to the conservation tradition for these ideas and com-
mittments to come into sharper focus. In his case for an "eastern" conserva-
tion history, for example, Judd writes that we must adopt a regional and  
ethically textured understanding of the roots of the American conservation  
impulse, an interpretation that stands outside the conventional, "western"  
environmental narrative. In his words, "plumbing the rhetoric of place in  
long-settled lands reveals a more nuanced set of motives behind the use of  
nature."16 Similarly, in his attempt to recover the lost agrarian voice in
340 Conclusion

conservationism, Thompson concludes that this tradition has been "so thoroughly neglected and forgotten that it is now possible to see it as something new, as an expansion of conservation thought that can play a significant role in its reconstruction."

Meine's plea for another look at the "radical center" of the conservation vision of the Progressive Era and Minteer's suggestion that we find a way to weave Lewis Mumford's "pragmatic conservationism" into the intellectual histories of conservation philosophy are further examples of this multi-voiced call for a contemporary rethinking of conservation icons such as Henry David Thoreau, George Perkins Marsh, John Muir, Gilford P punching, and Aldo Leopold and for a revision and expansion of our received accounts of the tradition. "Any reconstructed conservation of today," concludes Minteer, "especially one in search of a philosophical "usable past" to inform and guide future thought and practice, could not ask for a greater intellectual inheritance."

4. A Reconstructed Conservation Will Require Long-Range Landscape Stewardship and Restoration Efforts

As David Lowenthal writes, one of George Perkins Marsh's most enduring lessons is that "Stewardship, indispensable for the common good now and in the future, needs to be ceaselessly nurtured."

Although Lowenthal finds in Marsh the notion that we need to take greater control of nature, he suggests that this celebration of human agency is checked by the frank acknowledgment of our ignorance regarding the long-term effects of our actions on the land. Yet despite this "imperfect knowledge," Lowenthal concludes, following Marsh, that restorative actions designed to reverse severe human effects are urgently needed and well justified. In his chapter on large-scale restoration projects, however, Dizard points out that such restorative activities may actually present formidable obstacles to "effective conservation stewardship, barriers due in part to some restoration advocates' absolutism about the "proper" methods and goals of environmental care. Indeed, as we suggest later in this chapter, a necessarily active and reconstructed conservation requires a pluralistic and robustly democratic context.

Other chapters illustrate the importance of conservation stewardship not only for taking care of the land for future generations but also for building social capital and shoring up the realm of civil society. Buskowaki writes that "conservation must also be about building community, so that people will be more likely to value others as well as value places." Based on their
cludes that this tradition has been "so
that it is now possible to see it as some-
ervation thought that can play a signifi-
" Meine's plea for another look at the
ion vision of the Progressive Era and
way to weave Lewis Mumford's "prag-
intellectual histories of conservation phi-
lus multi-vocal call for a contemporary
such as Henry David Thoreau, George
Pachot, and Aldo Leopold and for a re-
accounts of the tradition. "Any recon-
concludes Minteer, "especially one in
" to inform and guide future thought
greater intellectual inheritance."18

**Ion Will Require Long-Range**

**1 Resurrection Efforts**

of George Perkins Marsh's most enduring
sense for the common good now and
lessly nurtured."19 Although Lowenthal
need to take greater control of nature, he
human agency is checked by the frank ac-
regarding the long-term effects of our ac-
this "imperfect knowledge." Lowenthal
restorative actions designed to reverse se-
seed and well justified. In his chapter 7,9
however, Dizard points out that such
present formidable obstacles to effective
is due in part to some restoration advi-
methods and goals of restoration phil-
in this chapter, a necessarily active and
is a paradigmatic and robustly democratic
spiration of conservation stewardship not
future generations but also for building of
realm of civil society. Sokolowski writes
about building communities, so that people
as well as value places. 20 Based on their
wider-ranging program of international work, Mitchell and Brown enthu-
astically observe that "one of the most exciting elements of stewardship
work is that it often leads to advances in other social areas. Stewardship
helps to build civil society by giving people opportunities to participate in
shaping their environments and, therefore, their lives."21

**5. A Reconstructed Conservation Will Have "Land Health" as One of Its Primary Socio-ecological Goals**

The notion of health emerges from several of the chapters as an important
overlapping normative goal of conservation, suggesting the need to un-
stand and maintain the linkages between the reproduction of ecological
and cultural processes over time. The chapters by Callcott and Freyfogle
discuss how this unifying concept played a large part in Aldo Leopold's
thinking about the aims of conservation—that is, a harmony between pro-
ductive practices and ecological processes (or, as Dizard puts it, "land ca-
able of sustaining a robust variety of living things, including humans").22 And in the agrarian context, as Thompson notes, "productive practices that
cannot be passed down from parent to child fail to represent a heritable
way of life, which (for an agrarian) is to say that they are no way of life
at all."23

More strategically, Maine sees the goal of land health as unifying a broad
coalition of priests, professors, and citizens. In his view, it is an area in
which "people who care about land and communities and wild things and
places, whatever their political stripe, can meet to make common
cause."24 We should also not be too concerned that we will continue to
grasp for empirical definitions of "land health" (definitions that might best
be formulated at the community level). Bengston and Ivenson note approp-
rate analogies between the case of conservation and normative notions of
"human health" in medicine and "justice" in law. Perhaps, as Leopold an-
ticipated in these matters of higher concern, it is as important to strive to
achieve.

**6. A Reconstructed Conservation Will Be Adaptive and Open to Multiple Practices and Objectives**

It is clear that our authors do not subscribe to a rigid "one size fits all"
model of conservation. Instead, they describe in various ways a more flex-
able and adaptive approach to conserving the landscape. As Vivasco writes,
"we need a conservationist culture based on dialogue—not domination—
that is not about simply facilitating an exchange of wisdom in order to convert people to some predetermined expectations of what conservation should be. This dialogue should also involve a process of mutual enrichment in which the means and ends of conservation themselves are open to new contingencies and intercultural negotiations. The specific practices of a reconstructed conservation will vary. Thompson’s agrarian conservationist, for example, would endow parks and museums the memorialize farms and farming ways of particular note but would find it ultimately of greater importance to bring working farms into the conservation ideal. Activities such as farmers’ markets and community-supported agriculture, which connect those who do not farm with those who do, would come to be understood as productive conservation activities.

Many of the chapters also suggest that we must find ways to accommodate multiple social objectives (as well as ecological constraints) in framing significant conservation policies. As Manning writes in his chapter, variations in ecological conditions, cultural patterns, and institutional structure may lead to environmental policies and conservation models that vary across the natural and cultural landscape. Diverse environmental values and ethics offer empirical support for a correspondingly “patchy,” natural, and cultural landscape. As Manning notes, the U.S. public land system offers a model of such diversity in the conservation mission with national forests displaying more utilitarian commitments and the national parks embodying more preservationist sentiments on the landscape. Likewise, Callcott’s updating of the three paradigms of conservation philosophy in light of changes in ecological thought supports a multidimensional model of conservation action, as does Fromholtz’s discussion of dominant-use designations across a spectrum of land uses, from intensive human development to ecological lands managed to promote biodiversity and landscape-level processes. Diamant, Eustice, and Mitchell’s example of the National Park Service’s River conservation program provides a compelling illustration of how such broad-based, multi-objective, and multi-value conservation programs can meet with great success in practice. Further, it seems likely that conservation will continue to evolve, for, as Bengstson and Twomey write, “the history of conservation in the United States is a history of responding to changing social, economic, political, technological, and environmental conditions.” In this respect, the process of conservation—as adaptive and open character—may be as important as the final product. The adaptive environmental and policy framework outlined by Nowick, a process informed by science but conti-
erred within a multi-value, democratic context, may be a particularly appro-
appropriate model for this larger project.

7. A Reconstructed Conservation Will Embrace Value Pluralism

This endorsement of an integrated diversity of land-use types and objec-
tives is reinforced by many of the authors' advocacy of pluralism in envi-
ronmental values. Bengston and Iverson, in their defense of an evolving
ecological economics against the traditional economic paradigm, argue that
the latter is "inadequate to inform conservation thought and practice in the
face of charged ecological and social contexts of the twenty-first century" be-
because it is unable to comprehend and incorporate all the diverse values
people hold for the environment, especially noninstrumental moral and
spiritual values and the value of life-supporting ecological services and
functions. This value pluralism toward nature (including nonmaterial and
noncommodity values) is supported in the empirical investigations Man-
ing presents in his chapter and in the developing ecological science that,
according to Callcott and Trombley, recognizes "ecological services" (e.g.,
cclimate stabilization) as a natural resource as important as timber and other
commodities, or mere so. Such pluralism need not lead to political grid-
llock, however. Indeed, Norton's articulation of a multi-criteria approach to
environmental valuation, one in which "good policies are marked by their
robust performance over multiple criteria, which opens opportunities for
win-win situations when one policy can support multiple values and
goals," promises to offer a way out of the ideological logjams between in-
trinsic and instrumental values, conservation and preservation, and other
rigid dualisms. In this way, according to Bengston and Iverson, "natural re-
source planners, managers, and policy makers need to grasp and incorpo-
rate the full range of environmental values and learn to manage for
multiple values rather than multiple uses." 31

8. A Reconstructed Conservation Will Promote Community-Based Conservation Strategies

One of the strongest points of consensus in this volume is that the central-
ized, command-and-control conservation approach is in many cases giving
way to more grassroots and community-based conservation models. As
Diamant, Eugster, and Mitchell note, "the emergence of community-based
conservation has shifted the center of gravity from top-down management
strategies toward more decentralized, localized, place-based approaches." 32
An important consequence of this shift, one that Stokowski notes in her chapter, is that it affords a more expanded conservation vision. "The emphasis on community-based conservation focuses attention on people as well as on nature, assumes that natural landscapes will not be privileged over historical and cultural settings, and draws its power from collaboration by local leaders and citizens."33

This community-based conservationism is a theme picked up by many of our authors. Thompson, for example, notes that agrarian thought "holds great promise for the reconstruction of conservation and an empowering environmental philosophy emphasizing community-based practice."34 Minteer’s discussion of Lewis Mumford's approach to regional planning uncovers the latter's emphasis on the protection of human-scaled community values and institutions in the face of powerful metropolitan forces in the 1920s and 1930s. In her chapter, Flader suggests that Aldo Leopold would have approved of the new grassroots approaches: "As an inveterate organizer of local farmer-sportsman groups and other grassroots efforts at land restoration, [Leopold] would be heartened by the myriad watershed partnerships, community farms and forests, land trusts, urban wilderness projects, and other community-based efforts that have been thriving in recent years."35 Leopold struggled professionally and personally with the tension between "scientist" and citizen and placed an increasing emphasis and importance on the latter as he matured. In a related manner, Freyfogle instructs conservationists to adopt a robust understanding and defense of community in the face of rampant moral individualism and the socially and ecologically corrosive effects of the market economy.

The international arena offers some of the most striking examples of successes and failures of conservation as it relates to community involvement. Vivanco writes that "as an applied concept, culture has become a key element in international development schemes, based on the recognition that local technologies and social institutions are often uniquely adaptive and that programs succeed by building upon, not sweeping aside, local situations, needs, and traditions."36 Similarly, Mitchell and Brown caution us against "paper parks" and suggest that "managers of protected areas are turning instead to inclusive models, in which the interests of local communities are considered, resident populations are not displaced, and there is a high degree of local participation in planning and management of the protected area."37

Like most dualisms in conservation and in public policy more generally,
there is a productive middle ground to be found between local control and the legitimate interests of scientific experts, regional and national centers, and the financial aid and resources of centralized government. Conservation at any level should be informed by science, guided by larger-scale concerns about ecological health and integrity, and facilitated by government. As Stokowski observes, however, "newer participatory approaches treat the work of conservation to local community settings and practices in which public resource protection and private development interests intersect." And on the front lines of conservation practice, Diamant, Eugster, and Mitchell like what they see: "Local initiative ... in partnership with government, has taken the form of land trusts, small watershed associations, greenway and trail groups, friends of parks, 'Main Street' organizations, and heritage area coalitions." Likewise, speaking as conservation practitioners, Mitchell and Brown conclude that "public agencies still have a role; it is just different, centered more with guiding than with dictating, and it is especially concerned with carefully constructing institutional frameworks that grant genuine authority to appropriate community groups while ensuring that conservation efforts succeed in their primary objectives." 

9. A Reconstructed Conservation Will Rely on an Engaged Citizenry

Directly linked with this turn to community-level conservation is the growing recognition of the relationship between conservation and citizen participation in conservation initiatives. Flader and Meine both find great inspiration for fostering individual initiative in conservation efforts in the thought and work of Aldo Leopold, who on both professional and personal fronts promoted various levels of citizen involvement in conservation. Minter's account of Lewis Mumford's civic model of regional planning suggests additional foundations of citizen participation in the earlier conservation tradition. Writing from their experience with the contemporary management scene, Mitchell and Brown and Diamant, Eugster, and Mitchell also observe how the central role of citizens in environmental stewardship builds much-needed social capital and bolsters civil society, suggesting that conservation and citizenship are in many respects mutually reinforcing. Contemporary community-based conservation offers unlimited opportunities for all environmentally concerned citizens to become engaged: membership-based organizations, volunteer projects, informed consumerism, and the like.
10. A Reconstructed Conservation Will Engage Questions of Social Justice

It is clear that conservation in the twenty-first century will need to be more attentive to fundamental concerns of justice in environmental protective efforts. From the practitioner’s perspective, Diamant, Euguere, and Mitchell note that such questions of social equity are indeed becoming more critical in discussions within the conservation professions. McCullough observes how the growing emphasis on community in conservation activities effectively opens the door for considerations of social issues related to community welfare, including housing, transportation, education, and social services. It is clear that issues of social justice are increasingly recognized as critical elements of the new landscape of conservation planning and goal setting. Vivanco’s account of the struggles surrounding conservation efforts in Latin America illustrates just how central issues of justice are in these negotiations. “For many peoples of the South, nature conservation exists at a crossroads. Will it represent domination by a new set of elites, in this case scientifically trained natural resource administrators united with government or nongovernmental interests external to rural communities, or will conservation activists find ways to unite their struggles for nature with local struggles for equity, justice, and autonomy at the community level?”

Mitchell and Brown provide one indirect response to this question in their chapter, observing that the prospects for greater equity and accountability in international protected area management seem to be improving in many cases. As they write, a new paradigm for the world’s protected areas is emerging, one “based on inclusive approaches, partnerships, and linkages, in which protected areas are no longer planned against local people but instead are planned with them.”

Meme’s impassioned call for a revived Progressivism in conservation—one built around a “radical center” that appeals to all peoples and interests—offers the hope that conservationists can construct a more tolerant and inclusive community focused on shared goals rather than partisan values and preferences.

11. A Reconstructed Conservation Will Be Politically Inclusive and Partnership Driven

In step with Meme’s arguments, many of the chapters in this volume describe and defend a “big tent” approach to conservation, one characterized by multi-sector approaches, public-private partnerships, and new and re-
two-century world will need to be more of justice in environmental protection of the twenty-first century. This collaborative model in the first half of the twentieth century. One of the driving forces behind these shifts toward partnerships appears to be an increased concern with producing measurable, tangible results on the landscape. "It is more important to be successful in conservation than it is to be in charge," write Diamant, Egus, and Mitchell, suggesting that meaningful collaboration focused on real outcomes is part of strong conservation leadership. As Mitchell and Brown point out, however (and as stated earlier), this shift toward cooperative models does not retreat from, not does it preclude, the role of government in the conservation enterprise. There will always be conservation matters of scale or institutional complexity that require strong government leadership. The ecosystem-oriented and large-scale dimensions of many emerging conservation activities work to stimulate organized cooperation among different parties, including government, environmental organizations, and communities. Furthermore, McCollough’s chapter demonstrates how the conceptual revisions about the cultural dimensions of conservation also play a part in this rethinking and reopening of divisions between the academic and professional fields involved in conservation efforts, supporting his proposal to build "new green bridges of a collaborative nature" between the nature conservation and historic preservation communities.

12. A Reconstructed Conservation Will Embrace Its Democratic Traditions

Diamant, Egus, and Mitchell write that "we will need a conservation community that is ethical, democratic, and humanitarian in the broadest sense." We believe that one of the most significant conclusions to be drawn from the chapters in this volume is that a reconstructed conservation needs to embody the democratic values and commitments found in the best parts of its intellectual inheritance. On this score, Flader and Minter suggest (respectively) that, Aldo Leopold and Lewis Mumford provide useful models for fashioning a democratic approach to conservation from the intellectual resources of the tradition. But this project is not as easy as it might seem. As Taylor points out, "a reconstructed oppositional conservatism, if such is to be found, must embrace the imperfections, even the modesty of democratic political life." This democratic humility does not seem to have been demonstrated by Scott Naing’s conservationists, the subject of Taylor’s
chapter. In fact, Taylor's conclusions about Nearing's stern moralizing and his failure to engage citizens in a broader, critical form of conservationism stand as a lesson to those conservationists tempted by either a moral purism or an overzealous scientism in their work. In a related vein, Dizard's post
t-mortem of the controversy surrounding the Chicago Wilderness Habitat Project suggests how the dogmatism of restorationists undercut their politi
cal objectives. "If the goal of environmentalists is to create as large a con
stituency as possible committed to environmental stewardship," Dizard writes, "the Chicago experience should be read more as a cautionary tale
than as a model. The plain truth is that people resented being told that the
nature they appreciated was bad and that they were ignorant and mis
guided. The Chicago restorationists came to sound suspiciously like evangeli
cists who knew the one true path and who insisted that anyone rejecting
that path was an enemy of the earth."45
To avoid these unproductive situations, we might subscribe to Norton's
model of environmental valuation and policy argument, which focuses not
on a defense of specific environmental commitments but rather on "demo
cratic procedures designed to achieve a reasonable balance among multiple
competing human values derived from, and attributed to, nature."46 This
embrace of a democratic politics in environmental valuation and goal set
ning finds support in Stokowski's discussion of deliberative approaches in
community planning and development and also in Manning's chapter,
which concludes that "it may not be productive to advocate any particular
environmental value or ethic as a universal principle to be applied across a
spectrum of people, places, or environmental problems." Instead, Manning
writes, "environmental problem solving must be inclusive and democratic,
not peremptory."47

Moving Forward
If the chapters in this volume are any indication, the conservation tradition
is in very good hands during this moment of conceptual upheaval and
skepticism in environmental thought. This does not mean, however, that
our authors are at all complacent about the challenges presented by such
criticisms. If the percussive force of the deconstructivist critique has not
completely razed the foundations of conservation, it has certainly
prompted many observers, including our writers, to reconsider the contin-
about Nearing's stern moralizing and unadorned, critical form of conservationism is to explain that either a moral purism or "advice". In a related vein, Dizard's postulating the Chicago Wilderness Habitat for restorationists undercut their political appeals by creating a new and environmental stewardship. Dizard would be more than a cautionary tale at people presented being told that the things that they were ignorant and misusing to sound suspiciously like evan- tiend who insisted that anyone rejecting them, we might subscribe to Norton's and policy argument, which focuses not on commitments but rather on "de- a reasonable balance among multiple goals, and attributed to, nature. This environmental valuation and goal set- discussed of deliberative approaches in a recent essay and also in Manning's chapter, productive to advocate any particular "universal" principle to be applied across a namental problems. Instead, Manning and In this, they are advancing not only the main tenets of a new view of conservation but also some of the substantive content of a new generation's democratic values and commitments. It is our hope that this larger message—the faith in the capacity of citizens to be consulted intelligently and effectively to the evolving conservation challenge, and the accompanying judgment that this civic action is a critical part of a responsible conservationism in the twenty-first century—will continue to resonate long after you put down this book.