

ETHICAL DILEMMAS IN ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS
POLITICAL SCIENCE 365 / ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES 365
MICRO-ESSAY #2

Write a 750-900 word essay on the following topic. Your essay is due on MONDAY February 19 by 4pm in the Google doc folder. Please include your name, a title (not on a separate page), single space, and use both sides of a single sheet. Be sure to use direct quotations from the readings to bolster your argument and to cite the page number in parentheses after the quotation. Finally, be sure to include at least one claim-objection-rejoinder sequence.

Should states allow the hunting of wolves in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE)? Those valuing nature instrumentally would answer largely yes, those valuing nature inherently would answer largely no. Which view leads to the better environmental policy? Be sure to define key terms carefully.

This debate replays in many ways the old debate between the conservationist Pinchot and the preservationist Muir. As Norton relates, in 1961 “4300 Yellowstone elk were rounded up and shot” (*Toward Unity*, 158). This led to Starker Leopold’s 1963 “Leopold Report” which shifted the National Park Service away from conservationist policies toward preservationist policies protecting “biotic associations within each park” (159).

With time, this approach led to the reintroduction of wolves in Yellowstone National Park (YNP) and Idaho in 1995-7 (*Managing Wolves*, 436) as part of a “whole ecosystem management” environmental policy aiming at the restoration of holistic “biological processes” (*Toward Unity*, 160).

But as Stenmark notes (147), and Norton documents with his discussion of the Endangered Species Act (*Why Preserve*, 4), policies promoting whole ecosystem management and the preservation of endangered species have multiple value bases. They can be brought together as Norton argues “transformative value” does (*Why Preserve*, 10) and Meine argues Leopold himself urged in an “ongoing dialectic” (“The Utility,” 138), but they also can conflict as Stenmark argues.

The conflict is most clear in discussions of hunting and fishing policy, which groups like the World Commission on Environment and Development would permit and regulate on “intergenerational anthropocentric” grounds while “biocentrism” would severely restrict (Stenmark, 147-8).

In the case of the wolf hunt conflict in the GYE, those seeking “balance” (*Managing Wolves*, 437) would severely limit hunting as a management tool, but allow it in the GYE on combined biocentric and humanist grounds of preserving “social structure and pack size and public viewing opportunities” (*Managing Wolves*, 443).