

EVOLUTION of HUMAN/ENVIRONMENT RELATIONS

** before about 8,000-10,000 B.C. humans were primarily **hunter-gatherers**

* small groups usually less than 50 people

* consumed enough resources to survive, and little to no waste

* environmental impact was relatively low, basically not much different than other organisms

* referred to as **people in nature**, what we discussed in Lect. #5 as humans **being part of nature**

** starting about 10,000-12,000 years ago: **1st Agricultural Revolution**

* initially consisted of rudimentary types of agriculture: **Subsistence farming: slash-and-burn cultivation or shifting cultivation, and pastoral nomadism, then intensive subsistence farming.**

* over time grew more extensive, leading to permanent settlements and thus larger & larger agricultural activities

* **Impacts:**

* **More reliable food source= more people= need for more resources**

* increased degradation of grasslands, and forests, soils, water supplies.

* effects seen over relatively small areas, but effects spread as did agriculture

* led to the beginning of humans thinking they could control nature and perhaps they should.

** **Industrial Societies:** beginning in mid-late 1700's in England then spreading across Europe, then North America

* as Industrial Revolution spreads, so does it's effect on the environment

* **Increase use of resources (consumptions), increase in the creation of refuse or waste materials, increase dependence on non-renewable energy resources and synthetic materials.**

* triggers the 2nd **Agricultural Revolution** which, like before,
leads to more people = more consumption

*increase in degradation of environment

*eventual decrease of non-renewable resources

*has continued to present day, but changes in technology and thinking have prolonged these resources to some extent.

Historical Overview of Environmentalism in U.S.

** **Native Americans:** similar to early hunter-gatherers, most groups used only what they needed, with little waste

* Considered as humans that were **part of nature**

* today many Native Americans spiritually still feel as a part of nature as opposed to being separate from it

** the **arrival of Europeans** brought not only different people but different ideas

* mainly that the land and its resources are there for the **taking/using and to be conquered/controlled**, as was done in Europe.

* the Europeans saw the 'new' lands as boundless, endless

** some **early warnings** were voiced in the mid-1800's to reduce the depletion & degradation by such persons as George Catlin, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Charles Eliot,

Henry David Thoreau, George P. Walsh & others; * most were initially ignored

* by late 1800's **conservation became more organized & political**

* **1872:** (know this date!) government set aside 2 million acres of forest land in Wyoming, established

Yellowstone National Park

- * more & more land set aside over the next 30 years, then in 1901 a very conservation-minded person became President, **Theodore Roosevelt**
- * He **increased the lands and resources under protection** as national forests, reserves, and parks by 3X what they had been and established the **U.S. Forest Service** in 1905 to manage many of these lands.
- * National Park Service established in 1916 to manage the National Park system
- * the ongoing battle between **preservationists & resource managers** continued
- * **1933-1960**: Great Depression brought an increase in US land holdings with subsequent increased protection & an increase of people to work & manage them (Civilian Conservation Corps, CCC)
- * numerous federal regulations, laws and policies **to further protect the nations lands & resources**:
 - Soil Erosion Service* (as a response to the Dust Bowl and the loss of valuable farm land),
 - Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act* (which has brought in over \$300 million since 1934),
 - Taylor Grazing Act* to protect lands from over grazing by livestock,
 - Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act*
- * creation of the **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**- control grazing.
- ** **1960-1980**: another 'wave of environmentalism' & warnings
- * **Rachel Carson's 1962 book, *Silent Spring***, which brought to light the effects of pesticides (especially DDT) on the environment
- * books by Paul Ehrlich, Barry Commoner, & Garret Hardin regarding an **increasing population, resource use, & pollution**
- *Increasing number of incidents of air, water and other types of pollution make the national news; Oil spills, toxic waste dumps.
- * **April 22, 1970 the first annual Earth Day held**
- * numerous legislation to protect & conserve resources and the environment
- * Environmental Protection Agency(EPA) established in 1970 after the National Environmental Policy Act is passed in 1969