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A Divine Stewardship; Man's Relationship with Nature May 15, 2008

Rebuilding Trout Stream Capital

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- In addition to providing recreation and beauty, healthy rivers sustain and enable life of all types and they contribute valuable benefits to our economies.
- When we save or even improve a stream, we are building America's river capital.
- Good stewardship that enhances important resource capabilities can be synonymous with strengthening both economic and personal values.
- With well-timed, moderate grazing, even in riparian areas, a healthy river system can maintain its balance.
- Agricultural practices that originally protect the habitat and the environment are often more easily applied and more cost effective than are after-the-fact efforts to mitigate adverse impacts.

Principles and Observations

Nature is complex and dynamic. All natural systems bundle together many different resources, processes and functions. They work interactively within these bundles to create the actual conditions that exist at any point in time. Over time, these systems adjust with changing influences.

Consequences often lack immediacy. The impacts of certain practices introduced by man on any specific resource or bundle of resources often are not immediately apparent or understood. Adverse impacts triggered by man often perpetuate and cumulate in nature before they are fully recognized.

Unbundling and measurement is essential. To understand the impacts and tradeoffs involved in developing or building natural resource assets, individual resources and processes must be separately identified, and individually measured and valued; *if you don't measure it, you can't manage it.*

Integrated development plans are required. Wherever possible, the development of individual resources should be undertaken only within the context of an integrated plan.

Bigger is better: scalability adds value. It's harder to make a meaningful difference on small-scale properties, as any one steward may not control enough of the resource or natural system within which it exists. A system-wide approach to building and enhancing resource capabilities is often more effective.