



## Wildlife Stewardship and Recreation on Private Lands (Texas A&M University Agriculture Series)

By Delwin E. Benson, Ross 'Skip' Shelton, Don W. Steinbach

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**Wildlife Stewardship and Recreation on Private Lands (Texas A&M University Agriculture Series)** By Delwin E. Benson, Ross 'Skip' Shelton, Don W. Steinbach

Who owns wildlife? Common law, upheld by judicial decision, says that wildlife is owned in common by all citizens, and governments have the authority to manage wildlife on our behalf. An equally strong legal tradition, however, is the right of property owners to control the resources on and access to their lands. Two-thirds of lands are private and 85 percent of wildlife in the United States is found on these private lands, so how can governments carry out their management mission without encroaching on the property rights of landowners? If that mission is restricted, how can landowners be encouraged to manage and preserve wildlife?

*Wildlife Stewardship and Recreation on Private Lands* examines franchising systems that allow the public and private sectors to work together to set common goals and delegate responsibilities for the management of wildlife and users on private lands. Through enfranchisement, governments can empower landowners with management authority and offer guidance for them to manage wisely. The book considers ways governments and landowners can work together to be good stewards of the public's wildlife using recreation, tax advantages, and cost shares as incentives.

Although any enfranchisement system will have problems, Delwin E. Benson, Ross "Skip" Shelton, and Don W. Steinbach show that these problems can be overcome with cooperation and intelligent planning. Relationships among governments,

landowners, and recreational users should and can be based on trust and mutual respect. The authors focus on ways that these three groups can come together in a system of shared costs and benefits.

Conservationists, wildlife enthusiasts, hunters, land managers and landowners, wildlife professionals, and others interested in and involved with these issues will find this book an informative and indispensable guide to solving some of the

problems of managing wildlife on private lands.

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## **Editorial Review**

### Review

*"Wildlife Stewardship and Recreation on Private Lands* is a useful guide for people interested in protecting in protecting biodiversity on private lands. It is full of creative ideas for encouraging landowners to be good stewards of the land. Private land conservation is essential to the future of wildlife in America and the rest of the world. This book will advance the cause of conservation by giving landowners practical tools that can be easily implemented."--Melinda Taylor, Director, Environmental Defense Fund Landowner Conservation Assistance Program

(Melinda Taylor, Director, Environmental Defense Fund Landowner Conservation Assi)

### About the Author

Delwin E. Benson is professor and extension wildlife specialist in the Department of Fishery and Wildlife Biology at Colorado State University. Ross "Skip" Shelton is distinguished professor of wildlife and land policy in the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Tennessee at Martin. Don W. Steinbach is professor and extension specialist in the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences at Texas A&M University.

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