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Review: *Wilderness Preservation: A Reference Handbook*

By Kenneth A. Rossenberg

Reviewed by Peter Zimmer
Veterinarian

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Rossenberg, Kenneth A. *Wilderness Preservation: A Reference Handbook*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, Inc, 1994. 292pp. US \$39.50 hardcover ISBN 0-87436-731-X. Acid-free paper.

Wilderness Preservation: A Reference Handbook is a comprehensive resource detailing past, present, and future efforts at wilderness preservation in the United States.

The book begins by defining "wilderness" and explaining the preservation role of the four federal agencies who manage federal public lands, as well as the roles of various state, local, and private organizations. A discussion of the various issues and controversies surrounding the future of the American wilderness follows.

Next, the author presents a detailed chronology tracing the history of the preservation movement through the beginning of the Clinton administration, along with biographical sketches of the individuals most influential on the American wilderness preservation scene. Here the book does a good job of introducing the major forces which have shaped American wilderness conservation.

Other chapters in *Wilderness Preservation* include relevant statistics, quotations, discussions of important legislation, and concise descriptions of all the national parks and national monuments in the United States. A chapter on protected federal lands also provides tables which identify all the units in the National Wildlife Refuge and the National Wilderness Preservation systems.

This informative volume concludes with short reviews of print and non-print (film, video, and database) resources on such topics as: America's forests, prairies, deserts, wetlands, rivers and lakes, and the Alaskan wilderness. A helpful 67-word glossary and an extensive index is also included.

Wilderness Preservation: A Reference Handbook offers an accurate, well-organized, and unbiased foundation for research and decision-making in

wilderness conservation. My only objection to the book is that with such a general title, it should address more than just the efforts and achievements of one nation. A better title for this otherwise excellent handbook might be "Wilderness Preservation in America."

In light of recent funding cuts and the wide-scale loss of U.S. wilderness resources, this book is a must for all who are active or interested in the preservation of wilderness in America. I highly recommend it.

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