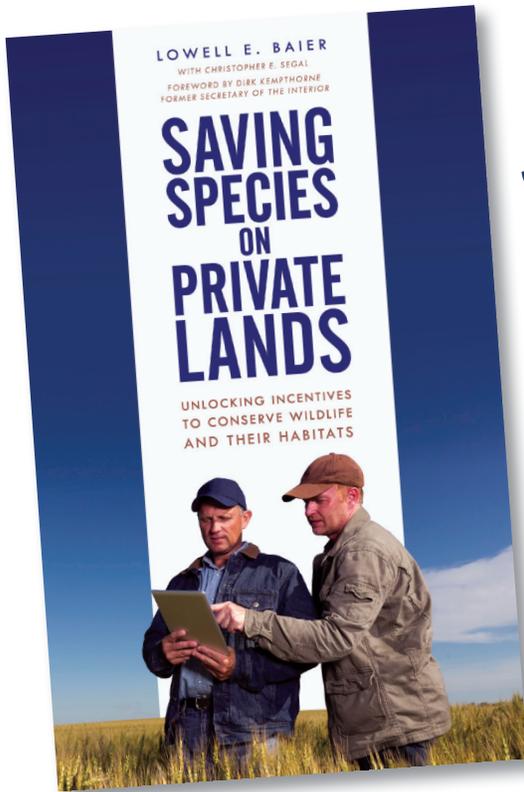


Book Review

Reviewed by John F. Organ



SAVING SPECIES ON PRIVATE LANDS: UNLOCKING INCENTIVES TO CONSERVE WILDLIFE AND THEIR HABITATS

BY LOWELL. E. BAIER



LOWELL BAIER, ONE OF THE MOST RESPECTED CONSERVATIONISTS IN THE NATION, HAS STEPPED FORWARD ONCE AGAIN TO TAKE A PRESSING ISSUE HEAD-ON. HE HAS PRODUCED A REMARKABLE BOOK THAT SHOULD BE READ BY ALL IN THE CONSERVATION INSTITUTION, FROM ACADEMICS TO WILDLIFE MANAGERS, INDUSTRIALISTS TO THE SMALL LANDHOLDER.

Aldo Leopold wrote, in the 1930 American Game Policy, that we must recognize the landowner as the custodian of wildlife, and that only the landowner can practice management efficiently. Yet, in spite of broad acceptance of this principle, there has not been a comprehensive guide as to how landowners can become wildlife stewards and use their lands for personal enjoyment and profit at the same time. The need for such guidance has become critical, with expanding legions of at-risk wildlife species, most of which are on private lands. Lowell Baier, one of the most respected conservationists in the Nation, has stepped forward once again to take a pressing issue head-on. He has produced a remarkable book that should be read by all in the conservation institution, from academics to wildlife managers, industrialists to the small landholder. This splendidly written, exhaustively referenced work, is the most thorough and clear treatment of the 1973 Endangered Species Act as it relates to private lands I have read, and his comprehensive guidance on programs and tools available to landowners should contribute most significantly in efforts to incentivize private lands conservation.

I would expect many private and corporate landowners to be intimidated by the prospect of having endangered or at-risk species on their land. They may anticipate restrictions on land use,

or worse, punitive damages for actions they may initiate to achieve personal or corporate goals. This can become a conservation disincentive and contribute to biodiversity loss in the long term. Lowell Baier has demystified the uncertainties associated with harboring rare species on private lands and demonstrated how one can both conserve wildlife and achieve land-use goals. Put simply, this book comes at a pivotal time in the storied history of conservation in this country. I hope it will be distributed to and read widely by all sectors in the private lands sphere, from the small woodlot owner, to the large acreage rancher, to the corporate landholders. This is exactly what is needed to incentivize conservation. I'm sure Aldo Leopold would approve!

John F. Organ

Chief Emeritus,

USGS Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units

*Former Chief, Northeast Region USFWS Wildlife
and Sport Fish Restoration Program*

*Past President, Fellow, and Honorary Member,
The Wildlife Society*

*Adjunct Associate Professor,
University of Massachusetts, Amherst and
Michigan State University*