Hunting Preserves as a Wildlife Conservation Strategy

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Introduction

Wildlife conservation is the process of conserving animals in their wild habitats. The process conserves species that are few in number and face the threat of extinction. The process is essential because, without it, thousands of animals can become extinct. In the past, there was no regulation for hunting, and hunters were not bound by any law that forbade them from killing animals. There was no structure of taxes or enforcement of animal conservation, and there were no laws and rules that enforced these laws. The concept of wildlife conservation in the United States originated from the efforts of Theodore Roosevelt, who created the United States Forest Service (USFS) in 1906 to protect forests and wildlife.

Dr Jon Hutton considers wildlife conservation not to be a part of conservation but the conservation itself. Many people have opposite views on this subject, and they consider hunting as unlawful and murder. However, after the development of hunting laws, wildlife has become more protected. Wildlife agencies conserve wildlife by collecting taxes from hunters and selling them hunting licenses. It is more of a survival skill rather than a sport, and people have been hunting animals since ancient times to harvest meat. Hunting may be a sport that involves the killing of animals, but it contributes to conserving wildlife.

Discussion

Hunting preserves wildlife by providing financial support to wildlife agencies. A large portion of this financial support comes from taxes and wildlife licensing. These licenses include firearm license fees, which impose taxes on pistols, bows, and other hunting equipment. Federal Aid regulates this taxation through the Wildlife Restoration Fund (Braverman, pp. 150). The fees collected by taxation go to the wildlife restoration agencies that use them to preserve fish and wildlife. Wildlife taxation was established in the 1930s, which granted permission to hunters for a shorter period. This taxation generates around 1.1 billion dollars annually, which is paid by hunters and is further used for the conservation of wildlife (Hosmer, n.p). In addition to the revenue generated from taxation, millions of dollars are spent annually on wildlife restoration in the US. In addition to this taxation, the conservation is funded by personal funding, which totals around 3 billion annually and is reserved for

only conservation purposes (Hosmer, n.p).

The Pittman-Robertson law that applies to all hunting equipment provides up to 75% of the total costs that are used for the preservation of wildlife. This law, with the addition of hunting equipment laws, collectively generates money that makes 90% of the total contribution collected for wildlife preservation (Braverman, pp. 151). The New York state licenses that allow fishing and hunting generate about 47 million annually deposited into the Wildlife Conservation Fund, which protects and promotes the growth of freshwater fishes and wildlife. Therefore, we can safely claim that wildlife conservation agencies rely on hunters to provide the required funds.

The moral view about hunting describes it as an action that is against the natural balance. It is claimed by the people who are against hunting that killing is a human action against the natural order. It should under no circumstances be allowed to kill any animal, be it in abundance or endangered. The laws that regulate hunting provide legally acquired private ownership of hunting areas to people who like hunting as a sport. The public trust doctrine provides conservation of natural resources, including wildlife (Braverman, pp. 151). Similarly, the New York state hunting law makes it illegal to kill a deer by gun or a vehicle, as in some areas, this species is endangered. These laws are made to protect animals and are successfully protecting wildlife at a greater rate, but most of the people who are against hunting for sport want to preserve wildlife just because they want to enjoy them both as a natural asset and as a source of meat. Most people do not care for animals as a natural attraction. Rather, they want to preserve them for their future.

Hunting has been proven to increase the population of animals. This has been proven by research done by Fairfield County Municipal Deer Management, Department of Environmental Protection (FCMDMA). The agency initially aimed to reduce the deer population by 10 to 12 per square mile. The agency provided the logic of decreasing this number not to reduce the population but to provide a constant number of available hunting opportunities to the hunters (Chitwood, Michael C., et al., 2015). When no animals are hunted, the natural order and nature itself balance their number and govern their birth and death rate. This rate is maintained by the predators and natural deaths of the animals. The FCMDMA claims that by hunting animals, the average growth rate increases. They claim that controlled hunting of animals provides more resources for the remaining animals, and they have less competition for food resources and in choosing females. This reduces the death rate of animals due to increased competition for food and territorial disputes.

With the increase in legal protections, the net increase in the deer population in the Northern United States is positive. The forests are now protected, and there are more forests now than there were a hundred or two hundred years back. The impact of reverse deforestation has reversed the decreasing animal population (Braverman, pp. 159). More forests are providing more natural habitats for wildlife, and their population is increasing because of favourable conditions. Hunting in more densely populated areas where the deer population is higher than normal decreases the competition. This factor encourages the deer population to move towards other areas where the population is less. It decreases both the competition in those densely populated areas and the population boost in areas

where deer move.

Another factor in how hunting preserves the deer population is by decreasing the number of its predators. The hunters have a special interest in killing wild wolves and mountain lions. Hunters kill these predators as a sport as well as for their precious hide. Killing these predators for several purposes has reduced the number of deer deaths that were caused by the predator attacks (Braverman, pp. 160).

The process of hunting, which is considered to be acting against nature and morally incorrect by many people, has many potential benefits. The hunters provide financial support to preserve wildlife by paying for their taxes and licenses for ammunition and other hunting tools. Taxes and hunters also provide additional support, which directly goes to wildlife conserving agencies and is spent on improving natural habitats. The laws that protect hunting include securing hunting grounds and forests, which increases the wildlife population. Hunting is directly increasing the population of some species, too. As we see from the deer example, the hunting of these animals and their predators has increased the population of deer, and the number is ever-increasing.

Conclusion

Hunting is inarguably benefiting the natural wildlife and helping in conserving the animals. It provides financial support to wildlife agencies in preserving animals, which is proving to be a positive factor in their preservation. Hunting of one species also increases the number of other species that serve as prey for the first one. People who have moral views about hunting and consider it unethical should provide a little flexibility on the issue and try to understand the positive effects of hunting, too, rather than hold a strong bias against it.

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