

Column: Important to have realistic view of the world

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The Corvallis Gazette-Times

After stating I hoped to take my grandson on his first hunt this fall, I fully expected someone to ask, "Why would you want to teach him how to do such a thing?"

Aside from his wish to participate, I have a feeling that learning hunter/gatherer skills may prove vital in the radically changed environment he will be facing. But reasons for hunting are something all potential hunters should ponder.

Just so you'll know, I firmly believe: If someone is merely enthralled with the idea of killing something, they really shouldn't be allowed to own any kind of weapon.

Ever. So where should the interest you feel spring from?

Valid question.

Perhaps realizing humans are still members of the animal kingdom, though we speak,

keep records, use tools, raise crops and animals for food, and accomplish things most animals can't do. What induces many people to forget this is our ability to philosophize. To create concepts, and analyze their merits and meanings. Sometimes analyzing, carried to an extreme, places mankind on a pedestal outside the animal kingdom.

From this pedestal, food magically appears at supermarkets. All messy steps of growing, harvesting, digging, picking or killing and butchering remain invisible. Here they can be ignored. As can the fact that, classified omnivorous, humans are fairly efficient predators.

But you have been fortunate to have educators, and/or adults, who have taught you about our evolution as hunter/gatherers without labeling hunting as an evil we should have outgrown. You've studied nature.

You see predators feeding on herbivores, rodents, fish or anything they can catch. You ponder times when hunting was the primary source of our meat supply. Harvesting prey animals begins to seem a not unnatural notion; perhaps a valid way to both provide

food, and interaction within nature.

You have accepted a reality: Our existence revolves around food. Food doesn't originate in stores. But the biggest hurdle in deciding to pursue hunting often involves social conditioning.

We are all products of our social environment. Some grow up knowing most animals are part of the food chain, whether domestic or wild. We have no problem in harvesting game animals for their meat; realizing, a well-placed shot provides an easier end than lingering death caused by predators, starvation, disease or old age.

The majority of us grew up with cartoons, books and Disney movies in which animals talk and don't eat

If more people would step down from the pedestal, the future of the environment might be less bleak.

each other, and hunters are portrayed as villains. Some people, though still meat eaters, embrace this fantasy. Rarely, if ever, do they view deer and elk as part of the food chain. They avoid thoughts

of the pain inflicted as a cougar or wolf, uses ripping claws, or fangs, to pull down its prey. When such happenings are pointed out, they reply, "it is just part of nature in action." Yet these same people can, somehow, mentally sidestep the fact that humans are part of nature.

Media fabricated attitudes, whether you realize it or not, have affected your outlook — creating conflicts, between reality and fantasy, which may have to be faced after harvesting an animal.

If, after trying hunting, you choose to become a non-hunter, you will still have taken a huge step toward a realistic — and important — perception of humanity's relationship with the natural world: Realization that humans are, inextricably, part of nature/environment and all its cycles.

If more people would step down from the pedestal — where all nature is merely there to supply their wants, or increase their wealth — and admit our masses can/ have altered environmental cycles, our children's future might be less bleak.

Bill Barker is an outdoors columnist for the Corvallis Gazette-Times.

Designating monuments, Obama touts conservation as U.S. ideal

By **JOSH LEDERMAN AND MATTHEW DALY**
Associated Press

CHICAGO — Designating the country's newest national monuments, President Barack Obama said Thursday that protecting places of natural beauty and historic significance is a truly American ideal.

Obama used the powers of the presidency to designate the Pullman National Monument in his hometown. The historic South Side neighborhood is where African-American railroad workers won a significant labor agreement in the 1930s that Obama said led to such protections as the 40-hour work week.

"So this site is at the heart of what would become America's labor movement," he said.

Pullman workers also played a role in the rise of the black middle class.

Obama began his career as a community organizer nearby and said returning to designate the monument "brings back a lot of good memories."

Before leaving Washington, Obama signed a proclamation in the Oval Office designating the Browns Canyon National Monument in Colorado, a 21,000-acre site along the Arkansas River popular for whitewater rafting. In Chicago, he also announced designation of the Honouliuli National Monument in Hawaii, the site of an internment camp where Japanese-American citizens and prisoners of war were held during World War II.

"Conservation is a truly American ideal," Obama said. "The naturalists and industrialists and politicians who dreamt up our system of public lands and waters did so in the hope that by keeping these places, these special places in trust, places of incomparable beauty, places where our history was written, then future generations would value those places the same way as we do."

Obama also announced a new program to provide fourth-graders and their families with free admission to national parks for a year.

The Pullman designation honors the neighborhood built by industrialist George Pullman in the 19th century for workers to manufacture luxurious railroad sleeping cars.

The 203-acre Pullman site includes factories and buildings associated with the Pullman Palace Car Company, which was founded in 1867 and employed thousands of workers to construct and provide service on railroad cars.

While the company employed a mostly white workforce to manufacture railroad passenger cars, it also hired former slaves to serve as porters, waiters and maids on its iconic sleeping cars.

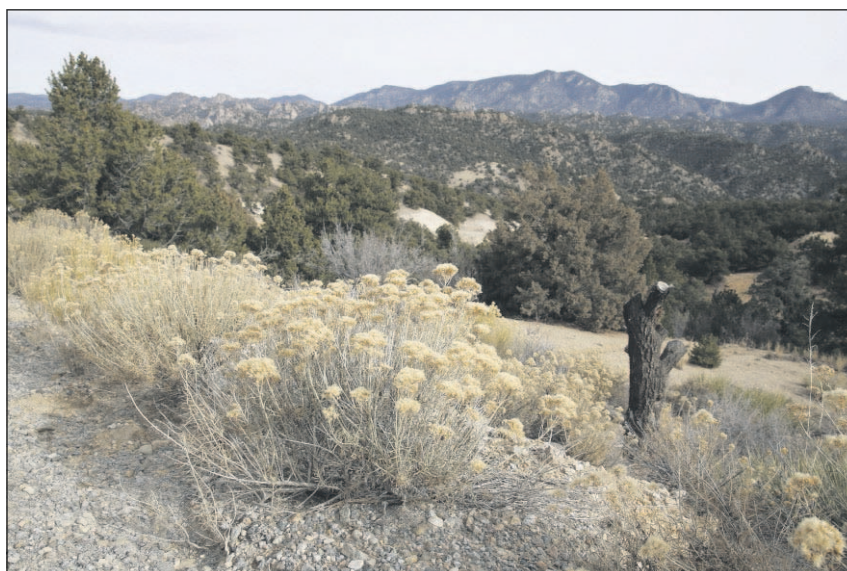
The railroad industry — Pullman in particular — was one of the largest employers of African-Americans in the United States by the early 1900s. Pullman workers played a major role in the rise of the black middle class and, through a labor agreement won by the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, they helped launch the civil rights movement of the 20th century, the White House said.

The new monuments bring to 16 the number of national monuments Obama has created under the 1906 Antiquities Act, which grants presidents broad authority to protect historic or ecologically significant sites without



AP Photo/Charles Rex Arbogast, File

In this Aug. 2014 file photo, a mural in the Pullman neighborhood of Chicago dedicated to the history of the Pullman railcar company and the significance for its place in revolutionizing the railroad industry and its contributions to the African-American labor movement.



AP Photo/David Zalubowski, File

In this Dec. 2014 file photo, rabbit weed lines a roadway leading to Browns Canyon near Salida, Colo. President Barack Obama is designating the canyon and two other areas as new national monuments for protection as historic or ecologically significant sites.



AP Photo/Charles Rex Arbogast

In this photo taken Tuesday, a burned support beam and original bricks in the Pullman railcar administration building located in the Pullman neighborhood of Chicago.

congressional approval.

Some Republicans have complained that Obama has abused his authority. They renewed their complaints over the newest designations, especially the Colorado site, the largest in size by far among the three new monuments.

Obama should "cut it out," said Rep. Ken Buck, R-Colo. "He is not king. No more acting like King Barack."

Rep. Doug Lamborn, R-Colo., called the move a "top-down, big-government land grab by the president that disenfranchises the concerned citizens in the Browns Canyon region" in central Colorado, about 140 miles south-

west of Denver.

Outdoors and wildlife groups applauded the Browns Canyon designation, saying it would allow future generations to enjoy its spectacular landscapes, world-class whitewater rafting, hunting and fishing.

Illinois' senators, Democrat Richard Durbin and Republican Mark Kirk, hailed the Pullman designation.

"As Chicago's first national park, Pullman's 135 years of civil rights and industrial history will be protected and enjoyed for generations to come," Kirk said. He said the new park would bring up to 30,000 visitors and more than \$40 million annually.

SKI REPORT

Spout Springs
Tollgate, Ore.
CLOSED

Anthony Lakes
North Powder, Ore.
New snow: 0"
Base depth: 49"
Conditions: Clear, light wind. Decent cover.

Ski Bluewood
Dayton, Wash.
New snow: 0"
Base depth: 18"
Conditions: Spring snow. Warm days, some melting.

Mt. Hood Meadows
Government Camp, Ore.
New snow: 0"
Base depth: 30"
Conditions: Varied depth, some runs closed

Egg-laying season starts at California condor breeding sites

BOISE, Idaho (AP) — Egg-laying season has started at four breeding facilities for captive California condors, North America's largest bird.

As of Thursday, the Peregrine Fund's World Center for Birds of Prey near Boise, Idaho, has four eggs among its 16 breeding pairs.

The Oregon Zoo has three eggs, the Los Angeles Zoo four, and the San

Diego Zoo Safari Park has two.

Oregon Zoo Senior Keeper of Condors Kelli Walker says the four facilities produce about 40 eggs each year as part of a program to bolster wild populations of the endangered bird.

California condors teetered on extinction in the 1980s and now number more than 400. Of those, about 230 are in the wild in Arizona, California and Mexico's Baja peninsula.

The birds can live more than 60 years and have wingspans approaching 10 feet.

BRIEFLY

Hawaii takes campaign against waterfall trespassers online

HAUULA, Hawaii (AP) — The managers of Hawaii's state parks are turning to social media to counter online photos and statements encouraging people to visit a waterfall where a landslide killed eight people more than 15 years ago.

Signs warning people not to enter and trespassing citations haven't been keeping people away from Sacred Falls, said

Curt Cottrell, assistant administrator for state parks at the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

So the state uploaded a video clip on Vimeo explaining why the area is off limits. It then posted the video on its Facebook and Twitter accounts to spread the word.

Sacred Falls is about an hour's drive from Honolulu on Oahu's lush eastern side. A park there used to be open to the public, but the state Department of Land and Natural Resources closed it in 1999 after boulders came crashing down on dozens of hikers.

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From left: Peter Wong, Hillary Borrund, Mateusz Perkowski

