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## BEGIN TRANSCRIPTION

[00:22 - 01:38] Host: So let me introduce now our first speaker, Holmes Rolston. And I'll be fairly brief in my comments so you have more time to hear from [coughs] him. Holmes is the university distinguished professor of philosophy at Colorado State University. So he shares our Northern Rockies bioregion but of the few states South in Colorado. He's written a lot on the issues that have influenced environmental ethics of, including most recently or at least most recent new environmental ethics, the next millennium for life on Earth. I first became familiar with some of Holmes' writings through the book that was deeply influential in my field of theology ethics called Genes, Genesis and God, which came out about 15 years ago. But he has other titles, Philosophy Gone Wild, which addresses some of the issues I'm talking about today. Environmental ethics, conserving natural value, and his [inaudible] in a book on biology ethics, and the origins of life. He has written chapters in 80 other books and published over 100 articles. But I think most important this morning, he's been a frequent visitor to Montana, to Montana wilderness areas, and has logged hundreds of miles of Indian Montana wilderness. So please join me in welcoming Professor Holmes Rolston [audience clap].

[01:52 - 05:25] Holmes Rolston: Thank you. I should be back in Montana. And I wanted to thank the [inaudible]. About half a century [inaudible] about what I call the three dimensions of life. [inaudible] people and you see an excavation for and all through [inaudible] in a wilderness of social construct constructed by a man or perhaps impossible because the human hands have improved the thoughts

on the world that runs itself. Almost 50 years ago to the day Lyndon Johnson signed the World [inaudible] Act, not long after he signed the Civil Rights Act. So we have to learn to be more civil and we have to learn about residing in wildlands from these two acts as we've been doing for half a century. Maybe Yvonne Taylor could be a good example of being both more civil and more wild. Originally we had about we had 54 areas, 13 states and 758 areas, about 5% of the landscape, [inaudible] that's in Alaska. You can include Alaska about 5% of the U.S. landscape is [inaudible] this but leave out Alaska, 2.7% [inaudible]. One time, it's got 16 [inaudible] areas, three and a half million acres. You might say 3.7% of Montana is [inaudible]. I've been in Montana, here's the [inaudible] audience. Oh, and maybe you've been on the horse too long. [audience laugh] Maybe? [inaudible]. This is where we're training people. Chinese wall, we've got about 500 miles in one town [inaudible]. You've got Chris [unconfirmed name] here once. In the wilderness, we are the visitor who does not [inaudible]. Question is, are we a part of or part from where [inaudible] and then I'm out there riding on horseback or [inaudible] that.

[05:29 - 09:11] My sense of territorial boundaries. That's ancient. And [inaudible] to set up territorial boundaries. You're [inaudible] we were hearing from John in the previous era [inaudible] than the human role on Earth. I'm thinking of wilderness as moral and social goal, because now we don't just defend our own territory, we set aside and defend territory for others, not our own. In that sense, we set ourselves the power, don't we? That consciously setting apart these areas for others. And I don't think that's ever been done before on earth by any other species. We want an earth that's our culture, our marble nature. Couple of years back, I was in Arizona, in Apache National Forest in [inaudible] territory. Once upon a time there, the young Aldo Leopold [inaudible] here recalls that he shot a wolf. We think this is probably where he shot the wolf. He then removed Syria and reached the wall and tagged the C grade fire in her [inaudible]. He later wrote of [inaudible] against the wolves and thought that his evolution and his own morality leading thinking about wilderness was one of the milestones in moral evolution. And he had something to do with restoring the most Yellowstone. In fact, Yellowstone, most of the Yellowstones saw the, you know, [inaudible]. I'm saying perhaps in other [inaudible], as far as we know, we never saw another wolf, which means he never mentions it in his writings. He did help to [inaudible] this wilderness [inaudible] in which marks the wilderness. And I think looking back, we can see that it was [inaudible] a wild [inaudible] triggers [inaudible] thinking big about the big outdoor. Now the claim that if we're going to be three-dimensional Persons, we've got to think urban. we've got to think rural and we've got to think wild.

[09:14 - 13:02] Aristotle said we're political animals. The world's political means with the police of a city. And we do live in towns, cities. We are in a city town at this moment. Yes, we indeed [inaudible]. But you can't see that out of your penthouse window. The rules and the wild. They [inaudible] us

place list. It's kind of like being in front of a television set. You're digitally everywhere, but actually nowhere. Children play very digital games until they have to make sure that was the disorder. We worry about the last child in the woods. Yes, people who live in cities need to know that they need environmental support. They need [inaudible] from the planes but also [inaudible] love their lives here. I grew up in the Shenandoah [inaudible] the Chesapeake, as well as Montana desert Southwest. We know we belong to the land. The land is grand, Montana surrounds [inaudible] West Virginia and now in the long. We sing America the Beautiful. We need to be sensitive to values that are already in place before we arrive there and get a sense of [inaudible] the landscape. Why save the grand tea [inaudible], why save the Grand Canyon? Because they're grand. Aren't they? Early, easy, there. To move from [inaudible] to [inaudible] celebrate, to conserve the beauty of nature. And we do think that life would be impoverished without these experiences or feeling normal and why? Now the excavation plan, and of course, [inaudible] without remorse for people. Well, we did need [inaudible] as benchmark and we need to say [inaudible] were recreated in the world witness. People need wild nature to show what they can do. But [inaudible] nature show. [inaudible] they really need to wonder and [inaudible] is one wonder for. We have a sense that the underlying natural world is the fundamental ground of our existence.

[13:02 - 17:48] Yes, we are political animals. We have to be citizens but we are embodied creatures. We are earthlings. All three-dimensions, urban, rural, wild. Preparing our sense of identity as present and future. So in that sense, while this is a museum of our roots. But I like to think of it as an [inaudible] museum. We learn where we came from and we get to learn who we are. Leopold found himself on a moral frontier, from the Western frontier. [inaudible] we get the sense of kinship with fellow creatures who wish to live and let live, sense of wonder over the magnitude and duration of the violent enterprise. That said, if [inaudible] put people in their place. Oh, yes. It's not where you live, where you are a wild [inaudible], but you realize your culture is superimposed on natural systems. Are we going back to [inaudible] of our life, back to [inaudible] as much as I do [inaudible] now [inaudible]. Something in, with and under our existence. We re-contact natural [inaudible]. Montana is a mountain state. Montana is the big sky country. House, bars, [inaudible], they are among the archives of the foundations of the world. Forest, [inaudible] our lasting [inaudible], [inaudible], seasons, photosynthesis, earth change, speciation, medical, succession and resetting, life, death, life review. Forest is calm in the presence and [inaudible] of all these natural [inaudible] And for people, we have to be careful how we say that. Here's a statement, a report some years back restating [inaudible] people, [inaudible] society, not set aside for the sake of this, for [inaudible], for people. Well, [inaudible] mistake, I think, a mistake, although [inaudible] for people who once headed to entrance to Yellowstone [inaudible]. It's a pleasuring ground in invasion and it's people. [inaudible] area ago because not too sure we like phrasing it that way. [inaudible] called Yellowstone

said Yellowstone was a natural community where nature takes its course and people learn to take pleasure in it. That's a better description I think [inaudible]. Well, we are going to get critics who say, well, you know, wilderness, wilderness is a construction in the human mind.

[17:55 - 20:58] This [inaudible] wilderness is state of mind. Civilization created wilderness. And I know that in the actions of the moralists of our members. But I shouldn't have said this [audience laugh] They were going for [inaudible] an excellent job with the wilderness [inaudible] type of landscape and all. Countries have feelings about man and nature. Different and different times and places. Create [inaudible] perhaps, [inaudible] Geographer world views [inaudible]. Yes, it is a legislated [inaudible] to create [inaudible]. Because the biological [inaudible] and in that sense, we do not create the rules. The rules created itself long before civilization. Everybody knows that [inaudible] too [inaudible] times. So what do I think when I'm out there in the wilderness? I'm thinking [inaudible]. [audience laugh] Wilderness is what there was before there were states [inaudible]. And they exist objectively, even though our ideas about it may change. Philosophers talk about [inaudible] which can be constant through changes in meaning. That is to say, water has shifted its meaning. It's H<sub>2</sub>O now. Before [inaudible] it didn't mean H<sub>2</sub>O. Though it shifted its meaning to an element in the atomic chart. Star shifted its meaning but we still know what we're talking about don't we? Well, [inaudible] I think, can shift its meaning, but we still know what's there. Well, here's one of the worst statements ever made by two philosophers. [inaudible] wilderness is ethnocentric, androcentric, phallogocentric, unscientific, unphilosophic, impolitic, outmoded and genocidal.

[21:03 - 25:56] [inaudible] do? This is very complicated [inaudible]. Well, this what you're saying here is nearly all wrong, [inaudible] most of it is totally wrong. You might be told, well, no, [inaudible] nature or, you know, like it's a Western day modern idea, Christians have some idea of women's rulers, [inaudible] concept of nature and Native Americans don't think that [inaudible]. So now, you control something that is God's creation, the great chain of being in [inaudible], chaos and evolutionary system, Gaia or mother nature of [inaudible] or parents illusion some sorrow, some [inaudible] the end of [inaudible], all these are ideas of divine food world which are created in the human mind. Nature is not so much out there, it's a category of your own selves. When we reinvent the category, it's a social creation of nature, nature's [inaudible] into what many people [inaudible] forms. Romans are [inaudible] Romans are [coughs from audience] [inaudible] it's not for me a [inaudible] two latitude there are they? So now they say, well, whoa, this is like that. It's a kind of lens through which we choose to see things. Wow, in that sense, they say, is this motion called constructive? Let's, let's get it smart you see this. In the modern world, we get smarter by how how we are constructed. Well, it's not the Spanish or Danish language, we have original people still [inaudible] I guess. But the world [inaudible] of the English language, words translated this while,

they found 300 [inaudible] in the Bible. [inaudible] The [inaudible] they still kept something that's out there in nature. For example, being [inaudible] extinction. None of our grandparents knew these words nor did Native Americans, but it doesn't follow that these ideas don't get something which is objectively there in the natural world. They [inaudible], but they enable us to dictate what's [inaudible] but don't get confused about how you see what you see, even though you know that your idea is to some extent shape, which you cannot see. Maybe we now have the word [inaudible] there to see. These foundational forces that worked so well [inaudible]. It's now available [inaudible] because we discovered these foundational elemental forces. We wanted to serve for what it is in itself the natural environment. The world [inaudible] create legislation. [inaudible]

[26:04 - 28:58] [inaudible] because Native Americans have transformed the landscape. From 10,000 years to 14,000 years, my question is, can they really transform landscapes beyond your range of spontaneous self restoration? They had some agriculture, they didn't have that much agriculture in these parts of the world around here. They had [inaudible], they had spears, oh they had fire [inaudible] they could burn landscapes, reduced, true. But it's also true that forests in the Americas have been burning for millions of years as we know, from fossil tropical forests. For [inaudible] you've got to have your build up, you've got to have a source of ignition, then it may run for days or weeks. But [inaudible]. Yes, you can a fire, [inaudible] or a lightning bolt [inaudible] the source of ignition is not that critical. What really counts is do you have fuel? And I took my time to find it. You [inaudible] if you don't have the fuel. But, you have the fuel, [inaudible] with smoke. One weekend we were [inaudible]. Conditions are, right, yes, you could start today, if not then you can start [inaudible] smoke and [inaudible] largest fires in the history of our time. I think Smoke says he heard the [inaudible] that started the [inaudible].

[29:00 - 34:14] [inaudible] it was a long time. Although not too far from [inaudible] summer [inaudible] said [inaudible] over 3600 lightning strikes on [inaudible] U.S. lands. And it's here all year long, about ten strikes on average in each square mile. What I'm saying is, that the Native Americans, maybe like the stronger fires, maybe they [inaudible] maybe they really think the land was [inaudible] Yellowstone or the Great Smokies there [inaudible] they didn't have shoes, they didn't have iron valves, they didn't have horses, they didn't have cattles, they didn't have [inaudible]. And everybody knows what's going on in the [inaudible] country, It was tough. To stay alive in those simple conditions. But did they manage wilderness so much that we can now think the worse? And I don't find anyone who can really tell me what presently designated wildernesses are significantly different now than what they would have been if they'd been made in [inaudible]. Well, yes, [inaudible]. Yes, if you spot some fire marshals, but not the landscape as a whole. Even in Montana, Native Americans have designated their amouries. The mission now is [inaudible], I'm not prepared to accept the idea

that there's no [inaudible] possible regardless of what Native Americans did to the landscape. Maybe the [inaudible] was more than impossible. Can we think that the world it runs itself? [inaudible] is for people [inaudible] some people, I don't think there's much of any [inaudible] in the natural world which means we have no answers for the natural world. Environmental ethics is more inclusion, more comprehensive and we cannot set aside these natures for what they are in themselves or [inaudible] the species, we're all species [inaudible] the creative process. We cannot ignore the natural world powers, the forces that transcend those rules. Why persist in the midst of this perpetual purge? Flower fruits pass away by pass on earth, then live forever regenerated. It's a deeper sense of place. Why, Why people? Why wild lands accentuate these kind of basic touchstones? Settle down and converse with quite genuine while promoting the natural. We may be entering the an of Cassini. But I want always to be this unmanaged and traveling wild nature. You're going to be managing the planet. But how close or what kind of planet? Yeah. Whereas. I'm quite sure, and I hope everyone in this room is very vigilant. We do not want to rely on a teenager playing. There ought to be once and future major. In the world and on our planet. Thank you. [audience applause]

[34:43 - 35:52] Speaker 1: Here's [inaudible] questions. Great. There is. I have lots of questions from here, but I'm going to go right to, if people are going to be able to respond, there's no time here. But I wanted to make just a couple comments. I think I was struck by how both of your presentations were told nicely with a previous presentation by Donald Forrester, who talked about a real pragmatism beginning to emerge. And Christopher, your notion here of the earth not [inaudible] either or [inaudible] but a whole range of different kinds of options for different ways of thinking about how we take seriously the wild, conservation of the wild. [inaudible] this, that maybe we don't need to have just a North American cosmopolitanism expanded worldwide but actually there is different ways of respecting the world and conserving nature's value and take place in culturally appropriate ways, diverse ways around the world. So seeing that the rewilding effort of Europe is being [inaudible] too [inaudible] with North American policy [inaudible], but each can learn from each other along those lines there. Let me start by asking you [inaudible] either Holmes or Christopher, do you have any comments you want to make to the other in terms of presentation [inaudible] possibility that opened up for conversation?

[35:56 - 36:03] Host: [inaudible] Okay. So my proposal, if we have any folks who would like to address either questions or comments for [inaudible]

[36:07 - 36:46] Holmes Rolston: I've been in [inaudible] on all seven continents. Yes, all seven. And [inaudible] from time to places. And Europe is the continent with the least wildness. Then you say

Europe has, let me say, most continents have at least one-fourth of the landscape that can be [inaudible] your thinking [inaudible]

[36:53 - 37:37] Speaker 2: Hi, Professor Rolston and Preston. I am one of your former students. Both of you. I'm going to speak later this afternoon. And so it's a huge honor and privilege for me to have the chance to hear you guys speak today about wilderness. And my question to you is, as one of your former students and somebody who has had the honor of listening to each of you for a semester or so, when you are up there speaking in front of your students, whether they're undergraduates or graduate students, what are you hoping to inspire in the next generation in terms of thinking of this troubled future?

[37:40 - 38:01] Holmes Rolston: One out of three-dimensional persons will have liberal, urban, rural and wild. I want them to hope that they will not [inaudible] on a [inaudible] plan.

[38:04 - 39:10] Christopher Preston: I was told last night about the extreme polarization. 100% for and 100% against. And I think I like to encourage a little bit more flexibility. Now, what I'm saying about the human impact, we should sort of accept that human impact, that might not be as strongly applicable to wilderness areas, ones that we want to designate as formal wilderness areas as it might be to areas that are sort of in buffers or ecosystems or on the edges. So I certainly don't want to translate that your inexperience into the American Wilderness Act experience, but a little bit of flexibility, perhaps a little more flexibility than we currently see, might encourage that. Fundamental experience, that feeling, that emotional connection, which is really a bedrock of what the world is imperative about.

[39:12 - 39:22] Holmes Rolston: I think that his one word experience [chuckles] need to learn [inaudible] the word [inaudible]

[39:28 - 40:16] Host: Wanted to follow up and ask you both the question that came out of both of your presentations, and that's that there could take some times that the wilderness is a flawed concept because embedded in it is necessarily [inaudible] the problematic nature, culture dualism and achievements of the Western tradition. And I'm wondering, was it a pick up in the use of Christopher that could we not rather think of it instead as being a concept that embeds the virtues of humility and restraint? So that is not so much the nature and culture oppose each other, but that wilderness becomes one expression within culture, practicing the virtues of moulding restraint towards other members of a natural community, which humans are one, but recognize that others are part of that community as well.

[40:17 - 41:01] Christopher Preston: I think a part that [inaudible] was to make this morning [inaudible] one for [inaudible] pretty clearly in his work is that there is a sort of sense [inaudible]. Humans do ethics. Humans decide to restrain himself. All right? So on those grounds alone, having a natural, cultural distinction and and having a fairly fair one, that remains important, I think. If you want to cash out in terms of virtues, strength and humility, that's fine. You know that that works. But despite everything I laid out today, I think that's a merit in the nature of cultural distinction.

[41:03 - 41:04] Holmes Rolston: Christopher, [inaudible] [audience laugh]

[41:09 - 41:32] Host: Well, I think in terms of when I talk to my students is there's a difference between pointing out relevant and appropriate differences and necessarily see those as opposing organisms. And I think so. There's been a lot of sort of brutally critiqued about the nature of culture dualism in some form [inaudible]. But that doesn't mean there aren't relevant distinctions and differences between nature and culture that are so important to recognize.

[41:34 - 42:29] Holmes Rolston: [inaudible] and apart from I think [inaudible] humans need to have a sense of being part of these natural systems out of which we came. [inaudible] we came. In some sense we left wild, spontaneous nature to become cultured. [inaudible] my talk reverberated Lyndon Johnson signed the civil rights act. [inaudible] signed [inaudible] and suggesting that Montana might be a state [inaudible] the most civilized and [inaudible] wildness. Is that dualism or not?

[42:34 - 42:40] Host: Dean has a word for us here, but let's first thank our panelists, Holmes and Christopher [audience clap] [inaudible] in the conversation [inaudible] [audience clap].

END TRANSCRIPTION