

Essay

Snow covered peaks, vast sweeping valleys, and dense old growth forests. Environments where animals often outnumber humans, and where one can walk in a single direction for days and never see anything but true, untapped wilderness. For many, these words I write are merely something stripped from an old western novel their parents read them as a kid. But for me, this illustration is a reality. The rugged untouched landscape I speak of is where my family calls home. There are no skyscrapers, no packed interstates, or millions of people. Just pure, and natural land.

How many people get to say that they live next to nearly two million acres of wilderness? Being able to grow and develop in this environment has allowed me to look at the world in an entirely different way. These lands have instilled a love and appreciation deep within me that can never be taken away. As I grow up and look to begin my adult life, this love for the land has stayed true. I feel obligated to preserve the land that has provided me with so much joy and adventure. These environments are extremely fragile, and humans have become the main source of their difficulties. We have often become poor stewards of the land, and the land has seen many problems because of it. All these places ask from us is to be cared for in a sustainable and responsible manner, but we seem to have lost touch with this.

This is what is leading me to pursue a degree in Environmental and Natural Resources. With this degree, I will be equipped with the skills and information needed in order to protect these amazing landscapes. I am not sure exactly what I want to do when I graduate college, but what I do know is that it will mean fighting for and protecting land, and the animals within it that cannot stand up for themselves.

With the insane modernization of the world, people have lost touch with nature. I don't think that we are intentionally hurting the planet. I believe people either do not know what is going on, or have chosen to ignore it. That being said, my biggest goal for the future is to make these problems known. The fact that most people don't know about the continent sized pile of trash floating in the ocean, or the constant and ever worsening acidification of the world's oceans, is absolutely astounding. This kind of information should be known by all, and should not be something that people can choose to ignore. Everything that happens to the planet affects everyone in some way, so everyone should have the ability to know about these things, and have the ability to do something about it.

Humans and nature should not be two separate thoughts. We are connected in every way imaginable and if these amazing places disappear, then so do humans. I don't know what my future beholds, but I know that the world needs protecting, and I am prepared to be one of those protectors. I will do whatever it takes to be a good steward of the land, and hopefully teach others how to do the same.