

There is a growing recognition that human activities on global, national, and regional levels are having an increasingly adverse affect on the physical and natural environments that humans depend on for sustenance in both a physical and an emotional sense. Citizens are increasingly demanding solutions to environmental challenges in hopes of creating a sustainable society. Thus, the study of the environment, with all its facets and subtleties, is going to be critical to providing a safe and sustainable world for humans to live in. This is one of the great challenges of our age. Defining where WSU should position itself in this endeavor is also a challenging task.

Interest in environment is going to experience rapid growth in the next few decades and will become an area of intense student and faculty interest. Subjects such as climate change, ecosystem analysis, sustainability, water and atmospheric resources, environmental policy, and green design will be in great demand; additionally, abundant funding will be available to pursue research in these arenas. The major solutions to current and future environmental issues will not come from narrowly defined groups of researchers and educators. Only those universities that succeed in effectively merging their faculty and institutional resources into broad coherent structures will succeed in performing cutting edge environmental research of national significance to solve the grand environmental challenges.

I strongly support the recommendation of Dean Bernardo with respect to the need for the formation of a larger academic unit devoted to the study of the environment for the reasons outlined above. In fact, the Department of Natural Resource Sciences has prompted the formation of a larger school of this type on multiple occasions over the past seven years. I also support the recommendation to place additional emphasis on water resources. However, the dean's recommendation to phase out forestry instruction, research and outreach/extension is not consistent with developing a larger academic unit devoted to the study of the environment. While forestry enrollment is current at a relatively low level, the course work needed to retain a separate major in forestry is very limited due to the highly integrated nature of these programs.

Preeminent areas of research and teaching will not exist in the wildlife ecology and water resources without at least selected supporting course work and research devoted to forested as well as arid land ecosystems. The elimination of all instruction and research focused on various aspects of forestry makes as much sense as attempting to offer premier programs in economics or engineering while phasing out mathematics.

Similarly, Washington State is a heavily forested state, with a comparatively large proportion of these lands in small private holdings (the largest of any western state). Washington State is the second largest lumber producing state in the country and the small private forest owner is a significant source of supply. Many of these lands also play a critical role with respect to various wildlife species and the state supply of clean water. Private non-industrial forest landowners need the assistance of one or more state extension specialists in addition to strategically placed county agents focused on forested ecosystems. Washington State University is the only university in the state with an extension mission.

It should also be noted that the elimination of forestry research would affect other departments/units in the college such as entomology, pathology, and IBC, if the recommendations were implemented as stated in the dean's recommendations. Further, the elimination of forestry research would likely result in the loss of or at least a reduction in McIntire-Stennis (M-S) funding allocated to Washington State University. We currently receive about \$300,000 worth of M-S funds annually. These funds are allocated to the state on a formula basis from the federal government with the University of Washington receiving 55% of the funding and Washington State University receiving the remainder. Any reduction in these funds would negate at least part of any potential savings to the university.

In summary, I do not believe Washington State University can become a leading institution with respect to the environment by implementing simplistic recommendations of this type. Instead we need to refocus our teaching, research and outreach/extension efforts with an emphasis on developing a well designed program centered on critical aspects of the environment and sustainability important to the state and university's state holders.

