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Comparative Ethics: SAF and Arkansas Registered Foresters

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Southwest Research and Extension
Center

Ethics Background



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- Comments on “New Ethics” – 1999
- Reviewer for SAF Ethics Handbook – 2000
- Member - SAF Ethics Committee 2000-2006
– Chair – 2004-2005
- Member – SAF Board of Certification – 2011-2015

DISCLAIMER



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- The views of this paper are my own and may not represent any organization or affiliation that I have.
- This statement must be made to insure that the words and ideas do not have more weight or importance than my opinion.

Ground Rules



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- Ask questions.
- Give opinions.
- When I say go on; we will go on.
 - Continue discussion by phone, in-person, or email.
- It is more important to get my talk through than go through my talk.

Professionalism (Glascocock 1973)

- Professional Education
- Experience
- Workmanship
- Integrity
- Ethical Conduct

The logo for the University of Arkansas, featuring the letters 'UofA' in a stylized, serif font. The 'U' is large and the 'ofA' is smaller and positioned to the right of the 'U'.

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The ethics of a profession may be compared to salt;
it keeps it from spoiling.

H. H. Chapman 1937



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ETHICS



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- Lammi 1968
 - Ethics is the relationship of conduct with the goals of a particular profession or society as a whole.
 - Ethical conduct contributes to the goals of society or a profession.
 - Unethical conduct does not contribute to the goals.



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ETHICS AND MORALITY



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- Lammi 1968
 - Separated ethics from morals and morality on the basis of whether the rules and practices relate to society as a whole or relates to the activities of a particular group or profession.



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ETHICS AND RELIGION



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- Chapman 1947
 - Distinguished religion from ethics by stating that religious tenets relate to human life as a whole while ethics relate to professional conduct.



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ETHICS BOTTOMLINE



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- Ethics is professional conduct.
- Professional ethics does not necessarily reflect a personal belief system.
- Members of a profession or a professional society are expected to behave according to a set standard usually spelled out as a “code of ethics”.



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ARKANSAS REGISTERED FORESTERS CODE OF ETHICS



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The applicant agrees to conform to the following rules of professional conduct:

1. He will advertise only in a dignified manner, setting forth in truthful and factual statements the services he is prepared to render for his prospective clients and for the public.

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2. He will strive for correct and increasing knowledge of forestry and the dissemination of this knowledge, and will discourage and condemn the spreading of untrue, unfair, and exaggerated statements concerning forestry.

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3. When serving as an expert witness on forestry matters, in a public or private fact-finding proceeding, he will base his testimony on adequate knowledge of the subject matter, and render his opinion on his own honest convictions.

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4. He will refrain from expressing publicly an opinion on a technical subject unless he is informed as to the facts relating thereto, and will not distort or withhold data of a substantial or other nature for the purpose of substantiating a point of view.

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5. He will not voluntarily disclose information concerning his business affairs of his employers, principals, or clients, which they desire to keep confidential, unless express permission is first obtained.

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6. He will not, without the full knowledge and consent of his client or employer, have an interest in any business which may influence his judgment in regard to the work for which he is engaged.

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7. He will not, for the same service, accept compensation of any kind, other than from his client, principal, or employer, with full disclosure, knowledge, and consent of all parties concerned.

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8. He will engage, or advise his client or employer to engage, other experts and specialist in forestry and related fields when ever the client's or employer's interest would be best served by such actions, and will cooperate freely with them in their work.

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9. He will aid in safeguarding against the registration of persons disqualified because of lack of good moral character or of adequate training.

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10. If he has substantial and convincing evidence of unprofessional conduct of a registered forester, he will present the information to the State Board of Registration for Foresters.

Society of American Foresters



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Preamble

Service to society is the cornerstone of any profession. The profession of forestry serves society by fostering stewardship of the world's forests. Because forests provide valuable resources and perform critical ecological functions, they are vital to the wellbeing of both society and the biosphere.

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Preamble (Cont.)

Members of the Society of American Foresters have a deep and enduring love for the land, and are inspired by the profession's historic traditions, such as Gifford Pinchot's utilitarianism and Aldo Leopold's ecological conscience. In their various roles as practitioners, teachers, researchers, advisers, and administrators, foresters seek to sustain and protect a variety of forest uses and attributes, such as aesthetic values, air and water quality, biodiversity, recreation, timber production, and wildlife habitat.

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Preamble (Cont.)

The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to protect and serve society by inspiring, guiding, and governing members in the conduct of their professional lives. Compliance with the code demonstrates members' respect for the land and their commitment to the long-term management of ecosystems, and ensures just and honorable professional and human relationships, mutual confidence and respect, and competent service to society.

On joining the Society of American Foresters, members assume a special responsibility to the profession and to society by promising to uphold and abide by the following:

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Principles and Pledges

1. Foresters have a responsibility to manage land for both current and future generations. We pledge to practice and advocate management that will maintain the long-term capacity of the land to provide the variety of materials, uses, and values desired by landowners and society.

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Principles and Pledges

2. Society must respect forest landowners' rights and correspondingly, landowners have a land stewardship responsibility to society. We pledge to practice and advocate forest management in accordance with landowner objectives and professional standards, and to advise landowners of the consequences of deviating from such standards.

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Principles and Pledges

3. Sound science is the foundation of the forestry profession. We pledge to strive for continuous improvement of our methods and our personal knowledge and skills; to perform only those services for which we are qualified; and in the biological, physical, and social sciences to use the most appropriate data, methods, and technology.

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Principles and Pledges

4. Public policy related to forests must be based on both scientific principles and societal values. We pledge to use our knowledge and skills to help formulate sound forest policies and laws; to challenge and correct untrue statements about forestry; and to foster dialogue among foresters, other professionals, landowners, and the public regarding forest policies.

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Principles and Pledges

5. Honest and open communication, coupled with respect for information given in confidence, is essential to good service. We pledge to always present, to the best of our ability, accurate and complete information; to indicate on whose behalf any public statements are made; to fully disclose and resolve any existing or potential conflicts of interest; and to keep proprietary information confidential unless the appropriate person authorizes its disclosure.

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Principles and Pledges

6. Professional and civic behavior must be based on honesty, fairness, good will, and respect for the law. We pledge to conduct ourselves in a civil and dignified manner; to respect the needs, contributions, and viewpoints of others; and to give due credit to others for their methods, ideas, or assistance.

INSPIRED TO BETTER BEHAVIOR



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- One of the stated purpose of the SAF Code of Ethics is an inspiration to better ethical behavior.
 - Do “fuzzy” or “gray” principles help?
 - Do we need a clear line?
 - Do case studies that do not have answers help or hinder?



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The Ethical Dilemma

**Conflict between loyalty and
obligation**

Examples



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- Land ethic and landowner rights
- Confidentiality and correcting false statements
- Others view points and correcting false statements
- Sound science and societal values



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Ethics for the New Millenium

- His Holiness the Dalai Lama
- “Need For Discernment”
 - Practical wisdom to make prudent choices



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HOW TO AVOID ETHICS VIOLATIONS



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- Patterson 1984 as modified by Irland 2001
 - What if everybody did it?
 - Would I want to read about it in the paper tomorrow?
 - What will it look like tomorrow?
 - Would I be comfortable explaining this to my 12-year old?



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PROTECTING YOURSELF IN COMPROMISED POSITION



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- Show due diligence.
- Copies of written correspondence.
- Management plans.
- Demonstrate forethought not rationalization after the fact.



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How to Successfully Bring an Ethics Charge



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- KISS.
- Limit charges to those with hard evidence.
- Be specific.
- Have credible experts; not advocates.
- Print or electronic media may support but are generally not a determining factor.
- Volume information is inversely proportional to probability of prediction.

Case Study



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- Diameter Limit Cutting

Case Study



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- Water Quality and Forest Management
 - Endangered species
 - Endangered ecosystem