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An Ecological Aesthetic for Forest Landscape Management

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Abstract

Although aesthetics and ecological sustainability are two highly regarded values of forest landscapes, practices developed to manage forests for these values can sometimes conflict with one another. In this paper I argue that such conflicts are rooted in our conception of forest aesthetics as scenery, and propose that a normative, "ecological aesthetic" based on the writings of Aldo Leopold and others could help resolve conflicts between aesthetic and sustainability values. I then offer suggestions on how we might advance an ecological aesthetic in policy and planning programs, on-the-ground management, and research and theory development in landscape aesthetics.

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