

NEW COURSE!!

The Value of Nature

ENVST 240-01

Thursdays 1:15-4:05

Fall 2009

Prof. Tim Farnham

Director of the Center for the Environment



Photo: Dick Cooper

This seminar will focus on the characteristics, expression, and variations of diverse environmental values, including: utilitarian, scientific, aesthetic, naturalistic, symbolic, ethical, and spiritual. We will use different typologies of human environmental values as frameworks for readings and discussion and subsequently extend our examination to historical and cultural variations in values, competing perspectives of the natural world, and other value concepts, including intrinsic and transformative value. Particular attention is paid to the role that values play in the concern over losses of biological diversity and the subsequent implications for societal, cultural, and individual development. We will also closely examine the concept of biophilia and its relationship to the various values we explore throughout the semester.

The main objective of this seminar is to help students develop an in-depth knowledge and articulate vocabulary for the significant ways that humans value the natural world. A premise assumed in this course is that it is not only important to understand how environmental values influence human behavior and decision making; it is also essential to be able to express convincingly the multiple values that humans obtain from living within a healthy, functioning natural environment. Students will be responsible for completing weekly reading assignments, class presentations, short essays, and a final paper, which will focus on the student's personal articulation of environmental values.

SPACE STILL AVAILABLE!