



Summary: The Way Things Could Be

Cynthia Salley, McCandless Land and Cattle Co.

A few weeks ago, there was an article in the paper by Ron Wall, in which he told about the dilemma he faced, in a bookstore, as he viewed two books near each other, one titled "How To Get What You Want" and the other "How To Want What You Have."

It seems to be appropriate as a starting place for me today: "How To Get What You Want," or is it "How To Want What You Have"? As the only private landowner on this panel, whose holdings include native forest, I think that I need to address or support the "How To Want What You Have" part of the dilemma, because more than likely the other esteemed panelists here will be addressing the "How To Get What You Want" issue, and they will be talking about my land.

In reality, I already want what I have, but, I want to keep it. The "it" here, is the prototype native forest in West Hawai'i. It might not be perfect, but it's the best there is. Every time I turn around, somebody, or some agency, or some law is chipping away at our ability to manage it, and is making it more tedious and more costly and sometimes downright impossible to practice good stewardship. So, this panel's topic, "The Way Things Could Be," goes hand in hand with "How To Keep What You Have."

My utopian, pie-in-the-sky ideal is to have us all—private landowners, government agencies, and environmentalists—be able to communicate when required, collaborate when necessary, and respect each others'

positions at all times, in an atmosphere of cooperation, honesty, and trust.

So much for ideals, let's move on to something that maybe there's a reasonable hope for. What will it take to make it work?

I would hope for more tax revision. I understand that Hawai'i County has a new ordinance pertaining to taxes on forest land. So far, it is the best-kept secret on the island. This information needs to be distributed. We need to know how far it goes, what does it include, what hoops do we need to jump through in order to take advantage of it? Do we have the potential to harvest down the line? Tax revision is absolutely necessary. No one should be penalized for having forested land, or for reclaiming pasture and planting koa.

I would hope for an amended Forest Stewardship Plan. The present plan is a good idea, but it can't help landowners like us, because we've been such good stewards of our land over the years, we don't qualify. There is no plan that can help us get better. We were turned down for a Forest Stewardship Plan because we were too pristine and intact. We weren't turned down right away. No, we had to go through the whole bureaucratic process—many months of process—before being told that we were at the wrong window. We need a clearing-house for the small landowner, so we can know in which line to stand. The Forest Stewardship Plan needs to be amended to be inclusive, not exclusive. All forest and



potential forest land needs to be included. This can't happen soon enough, because the grant-gluttons are eating up all of the money.

I would hope for changes in endangered species acts: the federal law and the state law are out of sync with each other and with the private landowner. To get cooperation from the private landowner, both laws need to be nonthreatening and friendly to those affected by them. Both need to include incentives for the private landowner, such as the unconditional right to selectively harvest areas which were previously reforested. The private landowner needs incentives to protect endangered species on their land.

I would hope for a large prototype forest, on state land, run by state foresters and biologists. This is long overdue. If the bureaucrats and environmentalists are going to continue to try to control us and tell us what to do, then they need to have a prototype or template where they have put their book-learning into practice. I want a place where I can go and see results from management tools that are more effective and efficient, both experientially and economically, than those that I am using. The state needs to be the prototype.

I would hope for a central clearinghouse and network for research. This should respond to the needs of the growers and users of Hawaiian woods. Koa research: What are the results of genetic tests? What effects does fertilizing have on the wood? Do koa seeds grow true? Is curly koa genetic or environmental? How long before I know the results, and how do I find out about them? Fire research: What, how, who, where, and when? What is the plan and what are the hazards? How is it to be accomplished? Who has identified the problems, and who is in charge? Where is the clearinghouse and when will it come together?

I would hope that inheritance tax laws would change, in order to be an incentive for preservation rather than development. Because of the laws, the next generations are precluded from preserving their inherited land and are forced to sell it.

Lastly, I propose that HFIA is the perfect entity to act as the clearinghouse for these issues I have mentioned. It is a private organization with no personal or hidden agenda. Its mission includes conservation and economics, both of which are vital to the perpetual and continuous life of the forest.

Comments:

Michael Buck: I just want to follow up, it's not a rebuttal. Concerning the issue that Kathy Ewel brought up about the landscape level, we need to refine and understand the difference between private and public land. Even though they're the same color on some of those maps, they're not the same. They have different clientele and different constituencies. One issue is, there is a group that is trying to reform the Endangered Species Act. Not weaken the act, but make it so private landowners could put native koa forest back on their property. That is the number one issue. Unless that changes, it's going to be very hard, so I urge all you to participate within the legislative process when that issue comes up. Finally, the "state" is you guys, the state is not me. There is a relationship between what happens on public land and private land. You in your collective wisdom have given the state five foresters on the island of Hawai'i to manage half a million acres of forest land. That's your land. I understand where Cynthia Salley's coming from, and she's earned that right to say that. If we keep referring to the state as "they," you need to understand that that's *your* underfunded agency. I just want to add my aloha for our employees out here who don't really have the resources to do the job. It's interconnected. If the state isn't managing its public lands well, that puts more pressure on private lands. The bulk of the biodiversity should be protected on public lands. That's how issues are coming down all over the world. If you don't fund the state to manage your resources on your own lands, then that puts more pressure on other things. It's very easy to attack the state, but look in the mirror. That's your land we're managing. We're not doing it that well because you're not there in support of your land when it's time to allocate.