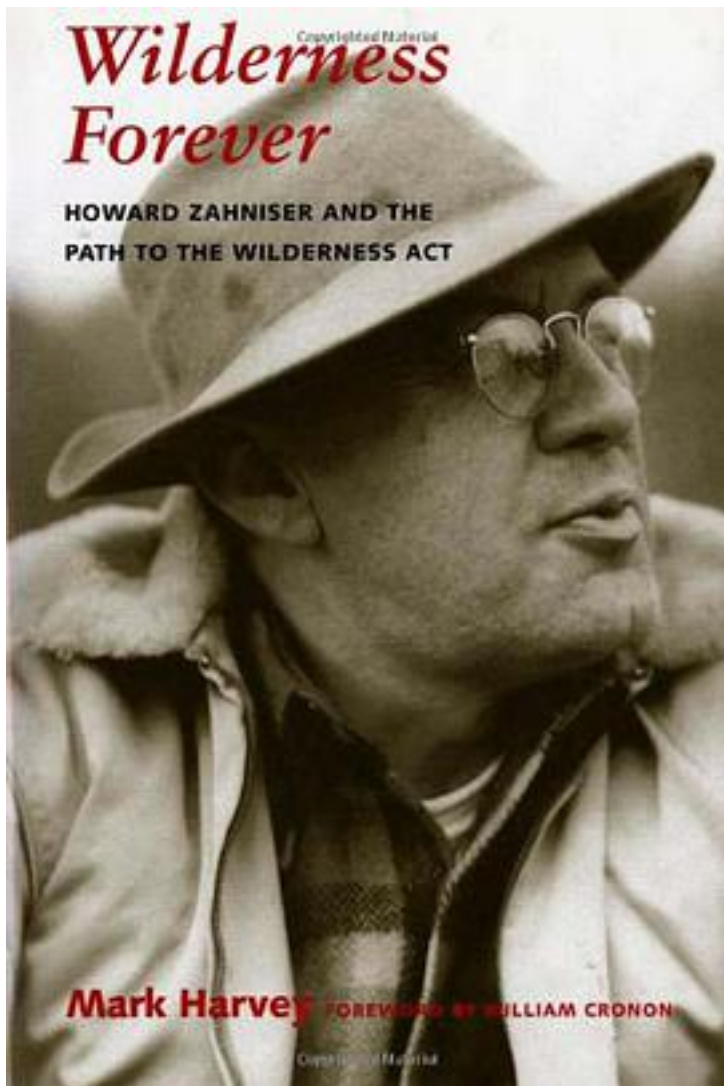


Wilderness Forever



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Winner of the Forest History Society's 2006 Charles A. Weyerhaeuser Book Award As a central figure in the American wilderness preservation movement in the mid-twentieth century, Howard Zahniser (1906-1964) was the person most responsible for the landmark Wilderness Act of 1964. While the rugged outdoorsmen of the early environmental movement, such as John Muir and Bob Marshall, gave the cause a charismatic face, Zahniser strove to bring conservation's concerns into the public eye and the preservationists' plans to fruition. In many fights to save besieged wild lands, he pulled together fractious coalitions, built grassroots support networks, wooed skittish and truculent politicians, and generated streams of eloquent prose celebrating wilderness. Zahniser worked for the Bureau of Biological Survey (a precursor to the Fish and Wildlife Service) and the Department of the Interior, wrote for "Nature" magazine, and eventually managed the Wilderness Society and edited its magazine, "Living Wilderness." The culmination of his wilderness writing and political lobbying was the Wilderness Act of 1964. All of its drafts included his eloquent definition of wilderness, which still serves as a central tenet for the Wilderness Society: "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain." The bill was finally signed into law shortly after his death. Pervading his tireless work was a deeply held belief in the healing powers of nature for a humanity ground down by the mechanized hustle-bustle of modern, urban life. Zahniser grew up in a family of Methodist ministers, and although he moved away from any specific denomination, a spiritual outlook informed his thinking about wilderness. His love of nature was not so much a result of scientific curiosity as a sense of wonder at its beauty and majesty, and a wish to exist in harmony with all other living things. In this deeply researched and affectionate portrait, Mark Harvey brings to life this great leader of environmental activism. Mark Harvey is professor of history at North Dakota State University in Fargo. He is the author of "A Symbol of Wilderness: Echo Park and the American Conservation Movement." "If any one person is responsible for the 1964 Wilderness Act, it is surely Howard Zahniser. He remains a towering figure in the history of American environmentalism, and Mark Harvey has written a first-rate biography that finally does justice to both the man and his contributions." - William Cronon, University of Wisconsin-Madison "A much-anticipated biography of this most critical of players in the modern environmental movement. Harvey has nicely brought Zahniser's many public accomplishments to light and in doing so has enriched our understanding of the man and the political context in which he so skillfully operated." - Char Miller, author of "Gifford Pinchot and the Making of Modern Environmentalism"

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