

Navigating Environmental Attitudes



Thomas A. Heberlein

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“With lively prose, inviting stories, and solid science, Heberlein pilots us deftly through the previously uncharted waters of environmental attitudes. It’s a voyage anyone interested in environmental issues needs to take.”

-- Robert B. Cialdini, author of *Influence: Science and Practice*

“*Navigating Environmental Attitudes* is a terrific book. Heberlein’s authentic voice and the book’s organization around stories keeps readers hooked. Wildlife biologists, natural resource managers, conservation biologists – and anyone else trying to solve environmental problems – will learn a lot about attitudes, behaviors, and norms; and the fallacy of the Cognitive Fix.”

-- Stephen Russell Carpenter, Stephen Alfred Forbes Professor of Zoology, University of Wisconsin-Madison

“People who have spent their lives dealing with environmental issues from a broad range of perspectives consistently abide by erroneous assumption that all we need to do to solve environmental problems is to educate the public. I consider it to be the most dangerous of all assumptions in environmental management. In *Navigating Environmental Attitudes*, Tom Heberlein brings together expertise in social and biophysical sciences to do an important kind of ‘science education’—educating eminent scientists about the realities of their interactions with the broader public.”

--the late Bill Freudenburg, Dehlsen Professor of Environment and Society, University of California, Santa Barbara

The environment, and how humans affect it, is more of a concern now than ever. We are constantly told that halting climate change requires raising awareness, changing attitudes, and finally altering behaviors among the general public—and fast. New information, attitudes, and actions, it is conventionally assumed, will necessarily follow one from the other. But this approach ignores much of what is known about attitudes in general and environmental attitudes specifically—there is a huge gap between what we say and what we do.

Solving environmental problems requires a scientific understanding of public attitudes. Like rocks in a swollen river, attitudes often lie beneath the surface—hard to see, and even harder to move or change. In *Navigating Environmental Attitudes*, Thomas Heberlein helps us read the water and negotiate its hidden obstacles, explaining what attitudes are, how they change and influence behavior. Rather than necessarily trying to change public attitudes, we need to design solutions and policies with them in mind. He illustrates these points by tracing the attitudes of the well-known environmentalist Aldo Leopold, while tying social psychology to real-world behaviors throughout the book.

Bringing together theory and practice, *Navigating Environmental Attitudes* provides a realistic understanding of why and how attitudes matter when it comes to environmental problems; and how, by balancing natural with social science, we can step back from false assumptions and unproductive, frustrating programs to work toward fostering successful, effective environmental action.

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