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"Shifting Forest Value Orientations in the United States, 1980–2001: A Computer Content Analysis"

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This paper examines three forest value orientations—clusters of interrelated values and basic beliefs about forests—that emerged from an analysis of the public discourse about forest planning, management, and policy in the United States. The value orientations include anthropocentric, biocentric, and moral/spiritual/aesthetic orientations toward forests. Computer coded content analysis was used to identify shifts in the relative importance of these value orientations over the period 1980 through 2001. The share of expressions of anthropocentric forest value orientations declined over this period, while the share of biocentric value expressions increased. Moral/spiritual/aesthetic value expressions remained constant over time. The observed shifts in forest value orientations have implications for identifying appropriate goals for public forest management and policy, developing socially acceptable means for accomplishing those goals, and dealing with inevitable conflict over forest management.
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