

# Mahoney

## Carries Conservation Message to Pheasant Fest

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Contributing Writer

Any hunter who wants to take a step back to reflect on what their brethren have done for wildlife in this country needs to listen to Shane Mahoney.

Strike that. Every hunter needs to listen to Mahoney.

Considered the leading authority on North American conservation history, Mahoney is the executive director of the Institute for Biodiversity, Ecosystem Science, and Sustainability at Memorial University of Newfoundland in Labrador, Canada.

When Mahoney takes the podium to address conservationists, the room turns dead quiet. And after he speaks he usually receives a standing ovation.

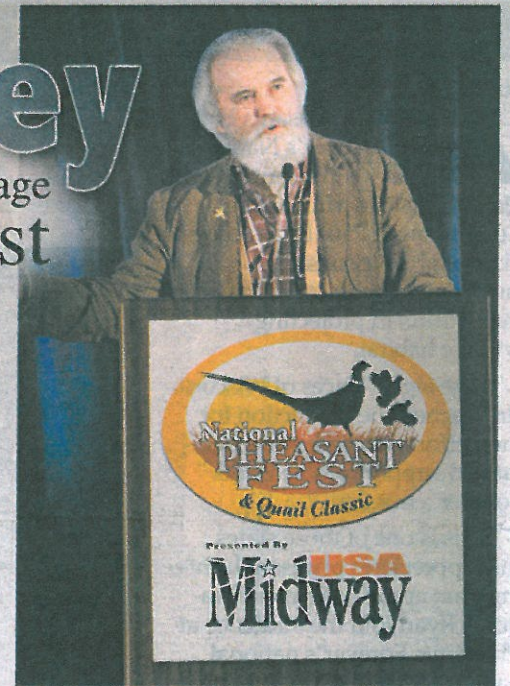
So it was when Mahoney addressed a crowd of Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever members and chapter volunteers on Valentine's Day at the 10th annual Pheasant Fest that was held in Milwaukee this year. Once again, the room fell quiet as Mahoney began speaking. And again, his listeners exploded with applause when he finished.

Mahoney makes no apology that working on behalf of conservation is the most important purpose in the world.

"Conservation underscores the greatness of the United States of America," he said.

There is not a thing that we can value as human beings that ultimately is not dependent on a world that is sustainable.

"It is not a trade-off between economic



Shane Mahoney extolls the virtues of what hunter conservationists did in the early 1900s, and tells today's hunters that they must continue bringing the conservation message to every corner of the nation. Photo courtesy of Pheasants Forever

development and conservation of the natural world," he said. "We must find a way to co-exist (with natural resources). Our lives and progress of civilization are all dependent on it."

In alluding to why people hunt, he quotes Joseph Campbell, "Flesh eats flesh. This is the ultimate truth."

Mahoney said it is common to hear that conservation is put forward as a profession, but people must start thinking of their passion for conservation as a social movement. It is not just something that biologists do for a living, but it is a movement that makes society a good place to live.

Conservation is neither some side show, nor something that a politician can say he is in favor of.

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