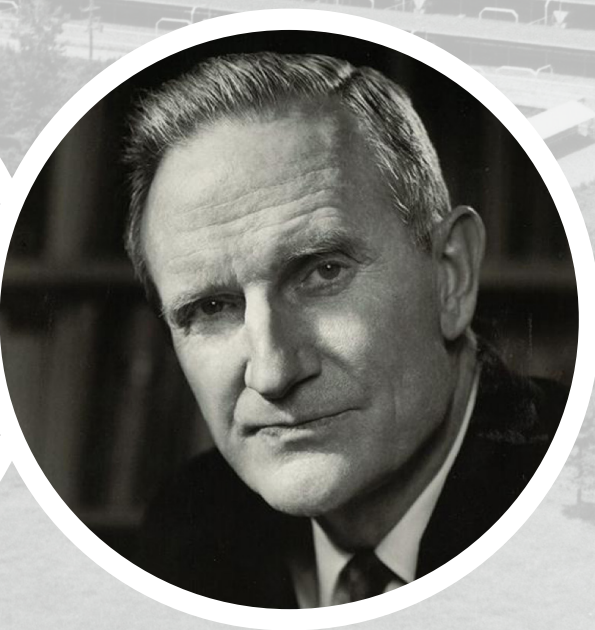



PRACTICAL IMAGINATION:

THE STORY OF WINROCK
INTERNATIONAL





Winrock Chairman and CEO Rodney Ferguson was recently asked to reflect on Winrock International's legacy and to give an overview of its current work. Here are his prepared remarks.

Hello, and thank you for having me here. It's an honor and a pleasure to talk with you today about Winrock International.

Winrock is a nonprofit organization that partners with governments, communities and businesses to empower the disadvantaged, increase economic opportunity and sustain natural resources. Since its founding in 1985, it has employed thousands and worked in more than 100 countries.

Winrock began with the union of John D. Rockefeller III's Agricultural Development Council (or A/D/C); his brother, Arkansas Governor Winthrop Rockefeller's Winrock International Livestock Research and Training Center; and the Rockefeller Foundation's International Agricultural Development Service (or IADS).

To understand Winrock then, it helps to understand our founding organizations. I'll start with A/D/C. John D. Rockefeller III was deeply concerned about Asia's exploding population and food shortages. In 1953, he created A/D/C to help solve these problems by building a network of homegrown experts — 588 Asian agricultural economists and other social scientists who were educated abroad but returned home to provide leadership to their countries from the inside out. These A/D/C fellows became university professors, members of Parliament, even the president of Taiwan. They helped their countries immeasurably — and still do.

Our next founding organization, IADS, was created by the Rockefeller Foundation in 1975 to build a bridge between agricultural research and practice in the developing world. Like A/D/C, it aimed to boost food supplies and increase rural incomes, but it did so by building institutions and managing a broad array of field programs. Its model of working with rather than dictating to local partners — in essence being less Western-centric — is one that modern-day Winrock carries forward and is an important part of our DNA.

As for the third organization, we take our name from a man who left the gilded halls and concrete canyons of the world's most powerful city to build a new life more than a thousand miles away. When Winthrop Rockefeller came to Arkansas in 1953, he wasn't intending to start a model farm or elevate a state. But something there spoke to him. Within months, he had bought 900 acres on a mountaintop northwest of Little Rock. It was one of the most improbable places in the country to build a ranch. The soil was poor and there wasn't much water. But he took that as a challenge. He would create a ranch and it would be successful. It would take money, of course, but it would also take what he called practical imagination.

The views off the brow of Petit Jean Mountain go on forever. Two mountain ranges come together there — the Ozarks and the Ouachita — and the Arkansas River meanders through the valley. The view has a western feel to it, a sense of possibility. It's a place where you expect to get your hands dirty, where you get things done. And this appealed to Rockefeller, who had spent time as a roughneck in the Texas oil fields.

Rockefeller brought in a herd of Santa Gertrudis cattle from the King Ranch, including a bull he named Rock (he

In some ways, those early days of Winrock Farms were a blueprint for the organization we would become. The emphasis on agriculture and water and sustainability. The importance of research. The human touch, the practical imagination, treating others as partners and equals.

called another one Feller). He and his team designed a state-of-the-art irrigation system and built six artificial lakes. They saved every tree they could. They did research on livestock breeding. And they shared what they learned with the people of Arkansas.

After Rockefeller died, the Winrock International Livestock Research and Training Center — Winrock International, for short — was created to continue helping the people of Arkansas and the world with the mission of advancing animal agriculture.

In some ways, those early days of Winrock Farms were a blueprint for the organization we would become. The emphasis on agriculture and water and sustainability. The importance of research. The human touch, the practical imagination, treating others as partners and equals. At Winrock, we are implementers, we carry out the work. We may not wear cowboy boots and Stetsons, but we get our hands dirty, and we're proud of that.

We're also proud that from the beginning we've plugged people into market systems. Eleven years before he took office, Rockefeller became the founding chairman of the Arkansas Industrial Development Commission, drawing some 600 new industries to the state and creating 90,000 jobs. Sixty years later, that organization's successor funds a Winrock project that helps technology entrepreneurs turn startups into commercial enterprises. It's a full-circle moment for our organization. It illustrates the importance we place on promoting economic opportunity here in America.

By the early 1980s, there were three Rockefeller organizations working on rural development — from the pastures of Arkansas to the rice paddies of Asia — but it had become apparent that these organizations would



be stronger together than apart. Winthrop and John's brother David financed a merger committee, and the three organizations became one in 1985.

Winrock International was a development powerhouse right from the start. It had the resources and experience to expand a notion of good built on sharing knowledge for the improvement of all, especially the most vulnerable. At our heart is an organization rooted in the land. Agriculture is our origin story, you might say. Our earliest goal was to apply science to agriculture to improve the productivity and incomes of the world's most vulnerable.

In the beginning, our work with agriculture meant developing improved crop varieties to feed the hungry.

Our founding board member Norman Borlaug won the Nobel Prize for his work developing high-yield wheat and is credited with saving a billion people from starvation. He and our first president, Robert Havener, worked together to create the World Food Prize, which honors the best annual achievement in ending world hunger. And Winrock was selected to manage the prize in its early years.

At our heart is an organization
rooted in the land. Agriculture is our
origin story, you might say.



In another early partnership, we teamed up with the Sasakawa Africa Association to create a program that strengthens agricultural extension services through university degree programs. It has produced more than 5,500 agricultural extension agents. We've been managing this program for almost 30 years, and it continues to this day.

Another signature program was our African Women Leaders in Agriculture and the Environment network, which provided women with scholarships for advanced studies. Here you see the strong influence of A/D/C and the creation of local expertise. There was a time when if you were in Africa and met a woman with a Ph.D. in agricultural economics, she was probably part of this network. It's just one of many ways we've empowered women.

Early on, we realized that there was no separation between agriculture and environmental issues, and we moved into forestry, water management, biodiversity and other areas. We currently manage the U.S. government's flagship water security projects in Africa and Southeast Asia.

We have also developed some of the leading, if not the leading work, in forest-carbon-accounting. This sounds very technical but is in fact hugely important. All efforts to preserve forests and manage forests to prevent deforestation and degradation start with the kind of work that we are doing — and we have a particular point of view. We believe that forests are natural resources that have to be managed. There are many organizations that work on forest preservation and conservation, and that's an important part of the spectrum. But Winrock focuses on how to make forests productive economic assets while maintaining a zero-carbon footprint.

In fact, we are now a world leader in encouraging the responsible stewardship of forests to mitigate climate change by reducing carbon emissions. Because of that

Early on, we realized that there was no separation between agriculture and environmental issues, and we moved into forestry, water management, biodiversity and other areas.

leadership, the Norwegian government and others have asked Winrock to be the secretariat of ART, the Architecture for REDD+ Transactions. This is a gigaton-scale (that's a billion metric tons) mitigation opportunity to slow climate change. The idea is simple: to attract large-scale finance to reduce global deforestation, we need a credible system of rewarding the countries that practice it. And we have the experience, credibility and earned trust to be part of creating and maintaining this standard. As the secretariat of this new program we will help preserve billions of hectares of forest.

It's a big job, and we got it because of the management skills and carbon measurement expertise we've built over decades. Expertise we've built through the American Carbon Registry (ACR), the first private voluntary greenhouse gas registry in the world. ACR is an approved offset registry for the state of California and has now issued 150 million metric tons of carbon offset credits, the equivalent of removing 32 million cars from the road for a year. ACR not only serves as a registry, but it also identifies and certifies methodologies that the California Air Resources Board must approve. Though other organizations have had their methodologies rejected on scientific grounds, we've never had one rejected. And that's because of the quality of our science and the rigor of our methods. It's one of the things I'm most proud of about our environmental work.

I'm also proud of our carbon measurement work in Guyana, where we created a cadre of mostly female scientists and helped fashion a national forest census and

satellite-imagery-based approach to verify the amount of carbon being sequestered. This allowed Guyana to earn \$250 million from Norway, which signed a deal in 2009 to pay the nation for curbing its deforestation.

This project and many others were led by our former chief scientist, the late Dr. Sandra Brown, a hero to thousands of people who worked in this field around the world. In fact, she was a co-recipient of the 2007 Nobel Prize that was given to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Nobel associated with former Vice President Al Gore.

Further proof of our forestry expertise is the Payment for Forest Environmental Services program in Vietnam, in which private-sector hydropower operators, water companies and others pay farmers to preserve their trees. It's one of the ways we've kept A/D/C's work alive, because it began with research conducted through the JDR 3RD Scholar program started in John D. Rockefeller III's name. It's resulted in revenues of over \$400 million. Vietnam is the first country in Asia to adopt this as a national policy. It's a huge shift in a country on the frontlines of climate change — and a model for the world.

As you know, it's become a real balancing act to do environmentally friendly work given current government priorities. A couple years ago, I was at a high-level meeting of about 20 leaders of USAID partner organizations, all of us standing on a stage and making a "Pledge to Innovation and Excellence." It went alphabetically — I was second-to-last — and Winrock was the only organization to stand up and mention climate change, the only one to say that we are still doing everything we can to meet the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement. No one else made this pledge. Climate change is often the elephant in the room, but Winrock remains committed to it. Even if it means standing alone from time to time. We know what's important and where the world is going.

Winrock focuses on how
to make forests productive
economic assets while
maintaining a zero
carbon footprint.

And we know how to listen. I remember meeting a soybean farmer in Myanmar. When I asked him what evidence of climate change he saw on his farm, he looked at me and said: "Now, even the wind is hot." Then he explained. "When I was a kid, the wind was what gave us relief," he said. "But now there's no relief." As a result, this farmer harvests only two crops a year instead of three, because his growing season is reduced. To him this is not a parlor game, this is his life. It's what we are seeing everywhere we go around the world.

I also want to tell you about our robust Civil Society and Education program. It largely grew out of our work in agriculture, because we realized that as agricultural technologies advance, there will be tens if not hundreds of millions of people left behind in terms of their ability to maintain livelihoods for their families. We help address those livelihood issues. In fact, we are the largest implementer of anti-trafficking work on behalf of the U.S. government in the world. We operate 35 anti-trafficking projects in 11 countries, and we have a number of projects in child labor, too.

We work on all aspects of modern-day slavery: on prevention, protection, prosecution and policy. We work with governments, organizations, research institutes and the business community to improve data and systems, and to tackle criminal exploitation. But ultimately, we work with people. So, let me tell you about Kannitha and Leap. They were both trafficked, she in Malaysia, he in Indonesia. Our Cambodia Countering Trafficking-in-Persons project and its partners rescued them and provided them with the essentials — food, clothing, shelter, counseling and livelihood training. But because it's our way to maintain relationships with people years after they return, both Kannitha and Leap were invited to a survivor's forum. These are multi-day events where victims gather to meet and support each other



and learn about safe migration. This particular forum also became a matchmaking session when Kannitha and Leap met. The couple courted, married and are expecting their first child. They have big plans, to start their own business and own their own land. From something very bad came something very good. Now, thanks to our project, Kannitha and Leap are facing the future together.

One of the ways we help trafficking victims takes us right back to our origin story. When people have new ways to grow crops, they can harvest a surplus. They become part of a market system with enough extra cash to get ahead. Maybe they can afford to buy a few chickens, or even a cow. They no longer want to leave their homeland. Multiply these changes by tens of thousands and you have what might seem like a miracle. But we know better. We know what people can do when they're given a chance to transform their lives.

The market systems piece of this is key. You can see it in some of earliest work and all the way up to a current agriculture project in Nepal, where farmers are commercializing their crops, and incomes have soared.

You can see market systems at work in our domestic work, too. Having a robust domestic portfolio is highly unusual for an international development organization. It happened because we wanted to carry forward Governor Rockefeller's legacy in Arkansas and also because we realize that many of the challenges we see around the world, we see in rural America, too.

We have worked across Arkansas and the South through a program called the Delta Innovation Fund, which is essentially an incubator program to develop promising companies in the Mid-South. Recently, I spoke at an event celebrating this program. The gathering had



a real legacy feel to it since both Will Rockefeller, one of our board members and grandson of Governor Rockefeller, and Asa Hutchinson, the current governor of Arkansas, were there.

I couldn't help but think of all the economic development experience in our history. I thought of our subsidiary organization the Wallace Center, which boosts small farmers and the local food movement across the country. I thought about all the small towns in Arkansas that we've rejuvenated through our U.S. Programs unit, towns like El Dorado and Lake Village. I thought about a project that we run funded by the Walton Family Foundation that works to bolster rejuvenative practices in the natural grass-fed livestock industry in the United States. The demand for organic, or grass-fed, beef is exploding. The farmers and ranchers that do grass-fed are disproportionately smallholders in the United States, and we help connect them to markets. This is another full-circle story, connecting us back to our livestock roots.

A funny thing before I close: After I came to Winrock in 2013, I started to play a little game with myself. I look at the *New York Times* and ask myself, "How many stories in here are we connected to?" There are usually several: a piece on solar mini-grids in Nigeria, a story on anti-trafficking work in the fishing industry, an article on the rural economic development issues that are leading to the opioid epidemic in the United States. I did it this morning and there were three articles — all directly related to what we do around the world.

I'm telling you this to underscore the point that Winrock is trying to solve some of the world's most complex challenges: how we adapt agriculture to climate change, how we create markets to limit carbon emissions, how we eliminate child labor from supply chains. I don't want to

Winrock is trying to solve some of the world's most complex challenges: how we adapt agriculture to climate change, how we create markets to limit carbon emissions, how we eliminate child labor from supply chains.

sound pretentious, but it's not an exaggeration to say that the most important problems in the world are addressed by our organization. In other words, we think big.

Today we are hewing as closely as ever to our mission. As implementers, we are durable and adaptable. But we're facing new challenges. No organization anywhere would advise a strategy of becoming overly reliant on one

channel of money, so we continue to seek funding outside our core U.S. government work. Because we want to do more than just improve agricultural productivity and boost incomes — as crucial as these are. We also want to make sure people live in a world with clean air and water, a world where they can prosper without damaging the environment. In short, a more resilient world.

Unfortunately, some of these goals aren't currently in favor. When funding goes away, important work can screech to a halt — and the world suffers. We can't let this happen.

Quite frankly, I look at Winrock as the best our country has to offer. The U.S. is full of wonderful and generous people, and Winrock demonstrates this. It proves that the best our country has to offer is engaged in helping the world. In fact, I'd go even further. I'd say that the world needs Winrock.

I'd like to close with Winthrop's words. In 1957 he said, "Winrock is an investment not only of money but of faith, faith that the future belongs to those willing to do battle for it."

I know he was talking about his farm when he said this, not modern-day Winrock. But he might as well have been. More than 60 years later, we still believe the future is worth fighting for.



Rodney Ferguson

PRESIDENT & CEO

Rodney Ferguson is the President and CEO of Winrock International, a \$100 million international nonprofit organization with over 1,000 employees in more than 40 countries. Before coming to Winrock, Ferguson worked for 20 years as one of the country's leading consultants on communications and strategy for the nonprofit sector. He is a frequent speaker and presenter on foreign policy, international development and nonprofit accountability. Ferguson has served on a number of boards and is involved in many organizations that call attention to the importance of development aid, including USAID's Global Development Lab and the National Good Food Network. Ferguson is a member of the Export-Import Bank of the United States (EXIM) 2019 Advisory Committee, the Milken Institute Center for Public Health Advisory Board, the U.S. Global Leadership Council and a founding member of the Cuba Consortium. Born and raised in Alabama, Ferguson graduated summa cum laude from Birmingham Southern College. He attended the University of St. Andrews in Scotland, and graduated from Harvard Kennedy School with a master's in public policy.

About Winrock International

Winrock International is a nonprofit organization that implements a portfolio of more than 150 agriculture, environment and social development projects in over 40 countries. It has annual revenue of \$100 million, employing over 1,000 staff around the world managed from five Winrock offices and dozens of project offices. Created over three decades ago through the philanthropy of Winthrop Rockefeller and John D. Rockefeller III, Winrock has extensive on-the-ground experience in Asia, Africa and the Americas, and provides evidence-based solutions to some of the world's most complex problems. Our mission is to empower the disadvantaged, increase economic opportunity and sustain natural resources. Whether it's improving the water supply in Tanzania, tackling human trafficking in Bangladesh or supporting Asian entrepreneurs who deliver new tools to poor farmers, Winrock's legacy and practice of continuous innovation help us adapt to challenges that are more urgent and interrelated than ever before.



winrock.org