

Friday, September 12, 2008

## **TROPIC CASCADE and GAY MARRIAGE**

Many commentators on the subject of gay marriage here in Massachusetts love to say the sky did not fall when it became legal. The world did not end. So what was all the alarm? The alarm was about long term, not immediate, effects of the acceptance of gay marriage in our society. Ideas have consequences, often unintended. This is one of them. Another one, to illustrate my point, is about the extermination of wolves in the 1920's and the damage that has caused in this Century. "The extermination of wolves in the United States was a source of national pride in the early 20th century. Biologists thought livestock would be safe from marauders and game such as elk would flourish, leaving a bounty for hunters. But the consequences would ripple through the decades, affecting ecosystems in ways no 1920s wolf-hunting government biologist could have foreseen -- including altering rivers in Olympic National Park in Washington. Heavy elk grazing has transformed steep-sloped rivers densely bordered with vegetation into shallow, sediment-heavy flows, Oregon State University's Robert Beschta and William Ripple report this month in the journal *Ecohydrology*. These changed rivers may affect fisheries and local highways. The chain of events that results from the loss of a top predator is called a trophic cascade." The change of events that will result from the acceptance of Gay Marriage will be, over time, the loss of Marriage as we have known it all our lives. That can be called a catas-trophic cascade! [http://www.oregonlive.com/environment/index.ssf/2008/07/century\\_without\\_wolves\\_alters.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/environment/index.ssf/2008/07/century_without_wolves_alters.html)

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