

Title: Decoys: Fair or Foul?

Objective: Students will discover and articulate reasons for cultural change and public policy through the study of historic artifacts and testimony using the waterfowl decoys collections in *Harvesting the River* Online exhibit.



Grades: 6-12

Time Required: 30 – 60 minutes to read or present the waterfowl section of the ISM *Harvesting the River* Web site; 20 – 30 minutes to explore other Web sites; 20-30 minutes to discuss findings and argue for policy.

ISM Harvesting the River Online files:

Read the waterfowl hunting section of *Harvesting the River* Online.

<http://www.museum.state.il.us/RiverWeb/harvesting/index.html>

video clips about decoys

<http://www.museum.state.il.us/RiverWeb/harvesting/archives/video/index.html?TopicID=decoys>

decoy images

<http://www.museum.state.il.us/RiverWeb/harvesting/archives/images/index.html?TopicID=decoys>

audio clips about decoys

<http://www.museum.state.il.us/RiverWeb/harvesting/archives/audio/index.html?TopicID=decoys>

text on decoys

http://www.museum.state.il.us/RiverWeb/harvesting/harvest/waterfowl/tools_techniques/decoys/index.html

references on decoys

www urls on decoys

Hunting Magazines Online:

<http://www.decoymag.com/> *Decoy Magazine*

<http://www.waterfowler.com/inportal/index.php> *Waterfowler*

<http://www.ducks.org/> *Ducks Unlimited*

<http://www.wildfowling.co.uk/magazine/> *Wildfowling Magazine*, from the UK, but has interesting articles

<http://www.thesi.com/duck-hunting-videos.html> Duck hunting section of *Sportsman's Interactive Video Magazine*.

Motivation: Hunters have been using decoys since prehistoric times. The decoys range from dead waterfowl propped on a stick, to cutouts, to minutely detailed painted carvings. When did the carvers cross the lines from minimally effective, to maximally effective, to decorative? What economic and cultural factors may have accelerated this change? Using examples from the Museum's collections and examples from articles in hunting magazines,

research and discuss the advantages, disadvantages, and “fairness” of using a) mounted duck carcass decoys, b) finely detailed, realistically painted carvings, and c) Robodecoys to hunt ducks.

Question for Exploration:

How realistic do waterfowl decoys have to be?

Does ultra-realistic become “unfair” to the ducks?

Should some kinds of decoys be outlawed? Why or why not?

Who should decide what kinds of decoys are legal? Hunters? Government? The Public?

How should they make those decisions? What factors go into the decisions?

Illinois State Board of Education Goals Addressed:

Social Science: Social Systems:

Middle School: 18.A.3: Explain how language, literature, the arts, architecture and traditions contribute to the development and transmission of culture.

Early High School: 18.A.4: Analyze the influence of cultural factors including customs, traditions, language, media, art and architecture in developing pluralistic societies

Late High School: 18.A.5: Compare ways in which social systems are affected by political, environmental, economic and technological changes.

Visual Arts:

B. Understand how the arts shape and reflect history, society and everyday life.