John Muir Day — April 21
Deep Ecology
Arne Naess was a Norwegian philosopher (teaching at Oslo). Having read Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* (1962), he developed the ideas now known as “Deep Ecology” (or ecosophy: eco-wisdom). Pictured in his cabin retreat (Tvergastein) in Norway.
Deep Ecology as a New Philosophy

**Ecological:** A philosophy that understands humans as part of a systemic web of dynamic relationships between living beings, in the context of a changing physical environment.

**Deep:** Biocentric and holistic, not anthropocentric and individualistic.
Deep vs Shallow Ecology

Naess sought a more appropriate way to understand human existence that took account of ecological science.

Shallow ecology keeps modern consumer society intact: Consume, but also recycle!

Deep ecology shifts what we value and how we perceive the world and our place in it.
The Heart of Deep Ecology

(1) **Self-Realization**: the move from the self-as-ego to self-as-all (*atman*)

(2) **Identification with Nature**

“Identification is a spontaneous, non-rational, but not irrational, process through which the interest or interests of another being are reacted to as our own interest or interests.” (*Ecosophy T* [1985])
When Interests Conflict …

(1) The **More Vital** has Priority
   Life of individuals and integrity of species over mere comfort or curiosity.

(2) The **More Near** has Priority
   Care for family, for neighbors, etc.
Values are Objective

(1) Animals have intrinsic value.
(2) Animals have a right to live (apart from any use they have to humans).
(3) Nature does not belong to humans.
(4) Nature is worth defending, whatever the fate of humans.
(5) A wilderness area has a value independent of human access to it.
Main Problems to Overcome

Problems that Naess identified in 1985:

(1) Growing Militarization.
(2) Population growth.
(3) Economic Growth.
(4) Habitat destruction.
Deep Ecology Platform (1985)

(1) Life is intrinsically valuable.
(2) Diversity is good.
(3) When needs conflict: we may interfere with nature only to protect vital human needs.
(4) Reduce human interference.
(5) Reduce human population.
(6) Change policies.
(7) Change ideologies.
(8) Become agents of change.
# Ecology: Shallow and Deep


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shallow Ecology</th>
<th>Deep Ecology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural diversity is valuable as a resource for us.</td>
<td>Natural diversity has its own (intrinsic) value.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is nonsense to talk about value except as value for mankind.</td>
<td>Equating value with value for humans reveals a racial prejudice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant species should be saved because of their value as genetic reserves for human agriculture and medicine.</td>
<td>Plant species should be saved because of their intrinsic value.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollution should be decreased if it threatens economic growth.</td>
<td>Decrease of pollution has priority over economic growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third World population growth threatens ecological equilibrium.</td>
<td>World population at the present level threatens ecosystems but the population and behavior of industrial states more than that of any others. Human population is today excessive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People will not tolerate a broad decrease in their standard of living.</td>
<td>People should not tolerate a broad decrease in the quality of life but in the standard of living in overdeveloped countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature is cruel, and necessarily so.</td>
<td>Man is cruel, but not necessarily so.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discuss with your Neighbors

What kind of ecologist was Aldo Leopold? Deep or shallow?