

Howard Zahniser, 58, Is Dead; A Leader in U.S. Conservation

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WASHINGTON, May 5 — Howard Zahniser, a leading conservationist, died in his sleep early today at his home in nearby Hyattsville, Md. He was 58 years old.

Mr. Zahniser was an early advocate of a national policy for wilderness preservation and he played a prominent part in the drafting in 1955-56 of a wilderness bill. The bill has passed the Senate but still is being considered by the House Interior Committee.

Since 1945 he had been executive director of the Wilderness Society and he wrote extensively on wilderness, parks and other conservation subjects.

Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall, who worked closely with Mr. Zahniser on the wilderness bill, described him today as the "most dedicated and faithful advocate of the country's leading conservationists" and "a lovable person with the character of the wilderness."

Mr. Zahniser believed that every man had his own idea of wilderness and that a wilderness did not have to be spectacularly scenic or majestic. He visited most areas now designated as wilderness by the Government and areas he thought should be designated.

Associates recalled that he was content to walk and look in wild areas rather than fish or engage in other forms of recreation. He seldom took pictures.

A Former Newspaperman

Mr. Zahniser began his career as a newspaper editor and writer.

He was editor of *The Papyrus*, a weekly published by the Greenville (Ill.) College Students Association, in 1925-26, went to *The Pittsburgh Press* in 1927 but returned to Greenville in 1928 as assistant to the editor of *The Advocate*, a daily newspaper. The same year he was graduated from Greenville College. He taught school for a year in Greenville before entering Government service in the Department of Commerce in 1930.

A year later, Mr. Zahniser became an editor, writer and broadcaster with the Depart-

ment of Agriculture's Bureau of Biological Survey, the forerunner of the Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of the Interior. He was also head of the Division of Information and principal research writer of the Agriculture Department's Bureau of Plant Industry, Soils and Agricultural Engineering and book editor of *Nature* magazine.

After joining the Wilderness Society, he also became editor of the society's magazine, *The Living Wilderness*, and as a freelance writer he contributed articles on wildlife conservation and the preservation of wilderness areas to several publications, including the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

Headed Resources Council

In 1946 Mr. Zahniser took part in the organization of the Natural Resources Council of America. He was chairman of the council in 1948-49 and wrote the chapter on parks and wilderness for the council's book "America's Natural Resources."

He also contributed the foreword to Francois Leydet's "Tomorrow's Wilderness" and Arthur Carhart's "Planning for America's wildlands" and wrote the chapter *Wilderness Forever* for the Sierra Club's "Wilderness: America's living heritage" in 1961.

Mr. Zahniser served on the Secretary of the Interior's Advisory Committee on Conservation, was a member and Washington representative of the Trustees for Conservation and was a director of the Citizens Council on Natural Resources.

In 1957, he received an honorary Doctor of Letters degree from Greenville College. He belonged to the National Parks Association, the National Audubon Society, the Thoreau Society, of which he was president in 1956, and other outdoor and conservation groups.

Mr. Zahniser was also a member of the National Press and Cosmos Clubs.

He leaves his wife, the former Alice Bernita Hayden; a son, Mathias, and two daughters, Mrs. H. Edward Knox and Karen Zahniser.

A funeral service will be held Friday at the Riverdale Presbyterian Church in Hyattsville.