

Nineteenth Annual Meeting and Conference

ALBERTA CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

Delta Edmonton Center Suite Hotel,
Edmonton, Alberta
March 6-8, 2009

If you haven't pre-registered yet- it's not too late!
Please do so on the website!

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Friday, March 6

- 12:00-17:00 Registration & poster set up**
- 13:00-17:00 Plenary Session "Land Use Framework – Changing Roles for Fish and Wildlife Professionals"**
- 18:30-21:30 Social, mentoring, photo contest, posters & movie: "Being Caribou"**

Saturday, March 7

- 8:10-10:00 ACTWS Business Meeting**
- 10:00-10:20 BREAK & Poster Session**
- 10:20-12:00 Concurrent sessions 1:**
 - 1a: Ungulate Management
 - 1b: Ecological Monitoring
- 12:00-13:00 LUNCH – on your own**
- 13:00-15:00 Session 2: Parks Canada Session**
- 15:00-15:20 BREAK & Poster Session**
- 15:20-17:00 Session 3: Carnivores Session**
- 17:30-19:00 Cash Bar and awards banquet**
- 19:00-19:45 Banquet presentation**
- 19:45-23:30 Auction and entertainment**

Sunday, March 8

- 8:20-10:00 Concurrent sessions 4:**
 - 4a: Aquatic & wetland wildlife
 - 4b: Ungulate Disease
- 10:00-10:20 BREAK**
- 10:20-12:00 Concurrent sessions 5:**
 - 5a: Foraging & movements modeling
 - 5b: Habitat and population modeling
- 12:00 Wrap up – Best Student Presentation Awards**

Banquet Talk: ***The Future of Wolf Management In North America***
Dr. Ed Bangs, Wolf Recovery
Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife
Service



→Speakers and Students

If you are speaking at the conference- please note the time of your session and guidelines on the website. Students are encouraged to still enter the student presentation/poster awards contest.

Wildlife Society AUCTION at the Conference
The annual Wildlife Society auction will be held yet again this year. All funds raised go towards scholarships for undergraduate and graduate student members of the Society. Some interesting highlights up for bid currently include Ken Crutchfield, Executive Director of Fisheries, offering a lunch as an auction item. We also have two pairs of tickets to Oilers games, game in row 3! We are also offering the opportunity to bid on the first dance with Society celebrities!

Last minute auction items will be graciously received as well. Soliciting items or encouraging your company, professor, father or local wildlife oriented business to donate an appropriate is heartily encouraged. Please advise Robin Gutsell robin.gutsell@gov.ab.ca or Hugh Wollis Hugh.wollis@gov.ab.ca of your donation.

Photography Contest

ACTWS is seeking photo entries from amateur photographers. Any registered delegate of the 2009 annual conference can submit one photo per category (Wildlife and Alberta Landscapes). Prizes will be awarded for best photograph in each category. To submit photos download and fill out the photo submission form from the ACTWS website and email it to Barry Robinson: bgrobins@ualberta.ca by Thursday March 5th. Then bring an 8x10 print of your photograph(s) to the conference registration desk on Friday March 6th. For further details see the ACTWS website or email Barry.

**Delta Edmonton Centre Suite Hotel,
10222-102nd Street, Edmonton, AB**

The Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society 2009 conference will be held at the Delta Edmonton Centre Suite Hotel in Edmonton, Alberta from March 6-8, 2009. The Delta Edmonton Centre Suite Hotel is located in downtown Edmonton and is connected to over 100 stores and services via indoor walkways. Edmonton's Light Rail Transit system (LRT) has a stop (Central Station) 1 block from the Delta, which allows convenient access to the hotel if you are coming from south (U of A) or northeast Edmonton. There are also several parkades in the downtown area that are either attached to this hotel or are within walking distance of the hotel. Hotel website:

<http://www.deltahotels.com/hotels/hotels.php?hotelId=11>

Childcare Option for ACTWS Conference Attendees

A room separate from the conference facility will be available for Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society conference attendees to use as an on-site childcare option. The plan is to have anyone that will be using this option for their childcare to volunteer a portion of time to helping out with childcare. We plan to create a schedule of parent volunteers so that everyone that is using this childcare option is helping out with this service and this rotating schedule will permit everyone to get a chance to participate in the conference. We will be setting a reasonable adult to children ratio. Please contact Tammy McLash (phone: 780-492-2842, email: tmclash@ualberta.ca) if you are planning on bringing your children and would like to participate in this childcare option.

Friday Night Social

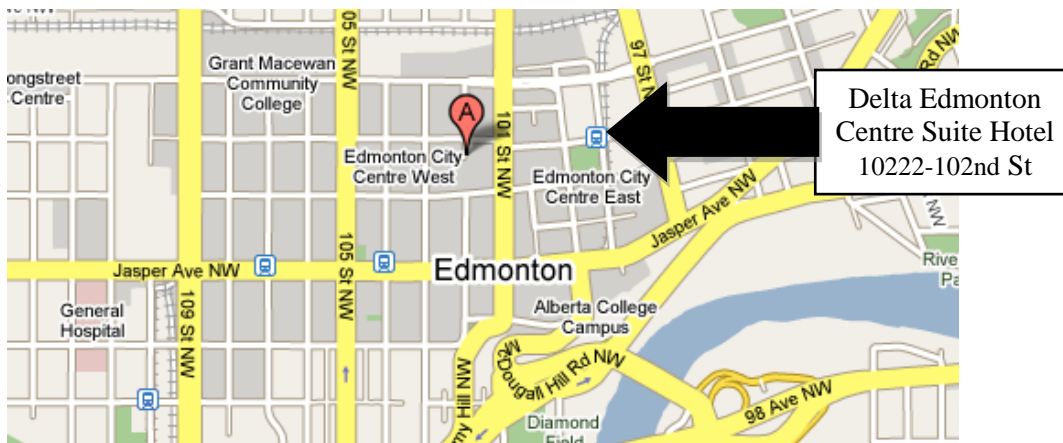
The fun begins at 18:30 on March 6th. Entries into the photo contest will be on display and mentors and protégés will be matched-up for our wacky and weird wildlife identification quiz! All that excitement will be followed by a showing of the movie "*Being Caribou*". Come-on out and help start the conference with a bang!

Saturday Night Entertainment

Come prepared to rock out on Saturday Night with The Old Hippies following the Banquet and concurrent with the lively auction!



For more detailed information on speaking times see the website after 24 February 2009.



PLENARY SESSION

Friday, 6 March 2009

The Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society Plenary Session

Land Use Framework: Changing roles for fish and wildlife professionals

All involved in Alberta's natural resources sectors are familiar with the pressures that economic growth is placing on Alberta's landscapes. There are more and more demands from resource extraction (oil and gas, forestry, mining, agriculture, recreation) and the infrastructure (housing and transportation) associated with this growth on the land base. Despite the recent global economic slowdown, Alberta's growth continues to be fueled by a large infusion of risk capital and increasing global demand for our products (hydrocarbons, wood fiber, water, crops, livestock, and electricity). All indicators point to a continued trajectory of rapid development in Alberta during the next several decades. But how does this growth really translate into the quality of life for Albertans now and in the future? There is an emerging sentiment that economic growth needs to be balanced with social and environmental goals. The newly proposed Land-use Framework (<http://www.landuse.alberta.ca/>) has the potential to guide our future decisions to this end.

During the past several decades, wildlife biologists have played a minor to modest role in planning for Alberta's future landscapes. Despite working to the best of their abilities, wildlife and fisheries managers have had to manage the fish and wildlife resources largely as "derived products" of a landscape shaped by other landuse interests or more powerful governmental agencies (forestry, oil and gas, agriculture, municipalities). The purpose of the Plenary Session at the annual meeting of The Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society is to promote a conversation among wildlife biologists about what role our profession can play to promote and implement the goals of the Land-use Framework.

The session will include oral presentations by 5 speakers and a formatted discussion. Invited speakers include:

The Alberta Land-use Framework Blueprint - An overview of the Alberta Land-use Framework. **Morris Seiferling, Assistant Deputy Minister, Sustainable Resource and Environmental Management**

The Scope of the Task at Hand: Where is Alberta Heading - A synoptic overview of what may happen if we do not make tough decisions now, what are the likely ecological trade-offs in the face of rapidly growing industries (agriculture, forestry, energy, residential, and tourism) in Alberta during the next 5 decades, and what is needed to turn this to our advantage using the Land-use Framework. Brad Stelfox, Forem Consulting Ltd.

Finding the Right Perspectives - Historical views and previous types of participation by wildlife managers and researchers in Alberta may not serve us well during the upcoming decades. What are creative new approaches that must be developed and implemented if society is going to achieve a better comprehension and integration of ecological integrity? What are the challenges to the wildlife profession in managing this key resource in this new framework? Lorne Fitch, Retired Biologist

Implementing Programs within a Climate Change World - Our natural landscapes are not only being shaped by industrial landuses, but are also being transformed by a climate in flux. What likely directions in landscape conversions will we observe in the upcoming decades? How might these influence key drivers like water availability and distribution of wildlife habitat and what role might they play in long-term planning? Dr. Dave Sauchyn, Prairie Adaptation Research Collaborative, University of Regina

Managing Cynicism - How will the Alberta Land-use Framework differ from previous stakeholder initiatives like the "Alberta Forest Conservation Strategy", where efforts from the environmental and professional biologist communities were exhausted and trust was eroded. Can the Land-use Framework sufficiently integrate wildlife interests across municipal, provincial, and private entities to be successful? Does Alberta have the legislative support to promote the success of this initiative? How can we tap the current enthusiasm to promote the program in the long-term? Glen Semenchuk, Federation of Alberta Naturalists

Preliminary Presentation Schedule

Saturday, 7 March 2009

Session 1a: Ungulate Management

10:20-10:40 Harvest modeling of Moose (*Alces alces*) in Alberta ~ M. Boyce

10:40-11:00 Reducing error in deer aerial surveys in the aspen parkland of east-central Alberta~T. Habib*

11:00-11:20 Confirmation and management of valley-dwelling goats along the banks of the Narraway River, Alberta ~ D. Stepnisky

11:20-11:40 Distance sampling for Pronghorn Antelope in Alberta ~ N. Webb

11:40-12:00 Bighorn Sheep survival and demography in the Yarrow-Castle Region of Alberta, Canada ~ M. Jokinen

Session 1b: Ecological Monitoring

10:20-10:40 A fish-based index of biological integrity for assessing river condition in central ~ C. Stevens

10:40-11:00 Indicators of wetland health in constructed wetlands: Wetland birds and vegetation as measures of natural ecological functioning ~ A. Forrest*

11:00-11:20 Microbial communities as indicators of aquatic ecosystem health ~B. Eaton

11:20-11:40 The West Central Alberta Woodland Caribou Landscape Plan: Using a Modeling Approach to Develop Alternative Scenarios ~ K. Smith

11:40-12:00 Unintended outcomes? Examining the impacts of wetland policy on biodiversity in Central Alberta ~ S. Clare*

Session 2: Parks Canada Session

13:00- 13:20 Conserving amphibians using under-road tunnels in Waterton Lakes National ~K. Pagnucco*

13:20-13:40 Exposure of migrant and resident elk to forage and wolf predation risk on the Ya Ha Tinda Winter ~ B. Robinson*

13:40-14:00 Use of herding techniques to encourage migration in sedentary elk ~ H. Spaedtke*

14:00-14:20 Application of nest and brood habitat models to identify critical habitat for Greater Sage Grouse ~ D. Gummer

14:20-14:40 The effects of high ungulate densities on foraging choices by beaver (*Castor canadensis*) in the mixed-wood boreal forest~ G. Hood

14:40-15:00 Managing trophic interactions in Jasper National Park for the protection of caribou populations ~ J. Wilmshurst

Session 3: Carnivores

15:20-15:40 From absence of proof, to proof of absence: Wolverines in the foothills and mountains of Alberta ~ J. Fisher

15:40-16:00 Cougars in the backyard: value, risk perception, and tolerance for cougars in the Clearwater County, Alberta~ A. Knopf*

16:00-16:20 Cougar kill rate and prey composition in Western Alberta: Influence of season, sex, age and reproductive ~K. Knopf*

16:20-16:40 Spatial and Temporal Patterns of Wolf Harvest on Registered Traplines in Alberta~ C. Robichaud*

16:40-17:00 Dynamics of a harvested wolf population in West-Central Alberta ~N. Webb

Sunday, 8 March 2009

Session 4a: Aquatic & wetland wildlife

8:20-8:40 Riparian zones of small streams in boreal Alberta: are they important for amphibians? ~ B. Eaton

8:40-9:00 Distribution and abundance estimates of the Western Grebe corrected for detectability ~ M. Erickson*

9:00-9:20 The use of small ephemeral wetlands by amphibians in the Boreal mixedwood forest of Alberta ~ G. Okonkwo*

9:20-9:40 Western Grebes in Alberta: Distribution and Population Trends ~ H. Wollis

9:40-10:00 Patterns of mercury accumulation in Common Loons in Western Alberta ~ S. Lord*

Session 4b: Ungulate Disease

8:20-8:40 Managing the Hay Zama wood bison population: Implications for disease surveillance and control ~ M. Ball

8:40-9:00 Assessing the relative risk of chronic wasting disease spread in Mule and White-Tailed Deer populations using genetics ~ C. Cullingham

9:00-9:20 Analysis of Saskatchewan and Alberta hunter-harvest data to predict chronic-wasting disease spread ~ E. Rees

9:20-9:40 Chronic wasting disease in wild deer: Wildlife agency responses across North America ~M. Pybus

9:40-10:00 Chronic Wasting Disease in wild deer in Alberta ~ M. Pybus

Session 5a: Foraging and Movement modeling

10:20-10:40 Foraging Activity and Movements of GPS-collared Cattle, Elk, Bison and Deer in the Aspen Parkland of Alberta, Canada~ P. Jones*

10:40-11:00 Movement ecology and road mortality risk of prairie rattlesnakes (*Crotalus viridis viridis*) and bullsnakes (*Pituophis catenifer sayi*) on the Alberta prairies ~ A. Martinson*

11:00-11:20 The role of tadpoles in temporary pond food webs within the Aspen Parkland of Alberta ~ A. Whiting*

11:20-11:40 Caribou-primary prey-wolf relationships in northeastern Alberta ~ D. Latham

11:40-12:00 Survival of a unique and sensitive type of caribou in the Canadian Rockies ~ A. McDevitt

Session 5b: Habitat and Population modeling

10:20-10:40 Factors limiting our understanding of ecological scale in wildlife research ~ M. Wheatley

10:40-11:00 Estimating abundance of the elusive Long-tailed Weasel, *Mustela frenata longicauda*, in southwestern Alberta ~ G. Hornbeck

11:00-11:20 Predicting habitat value for elk in the central east slopes of Alberta ~ S. Webb

11:20-11:40 Avoidance of Crested Wheatgrass by three grassland songbirds in CFB Suffield, Alberta ~ L. Hamilton*

11:40-12:00 Multi-scale movement choices of grizzly bears in the Central foothills of Alberta ~J. Northrup*

* indicates Student Presentation

CONFERENCE SPONSORS

The Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society gratefully acknowledges the following sponsors of the 2009 Annual Meeting and Conference:

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