

July 1997

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Chair's Information Index

Steven L. Sheriff

The Biometrics Working Group (BWGW) of The Wildlife Society (TWS) is for real. Our charter was approved at the March 1997 meeting of TWS Council. Council gave BWGW official status because we had a) 91 members on February 28, which was over our 50 member minimum, b) a charter that had been approved by BWGW members, c) an election of officers, and d) evidence that the BWGW will make a substantial contribution to the wildlife profession. This last point should be most important to us all.

It is my belief that the wildlife profession cannot advance into the 21st century without major contributions from biometrics. Information necessary for sound, scientific management of wildlife resources must contain an element of biometrics in the process. Therefore, we are an important and essential ingredient in the wildlife profession. We must continue striving to ensure that wildlife management decisions are based on sound and appropriate data collection designs, assumptions, models, inferences, analyses, and results interpretations. This is an awesome responsibility that must be taken seriously and with commitment by us all.

BWGW would not exist if it was not for a small group of folks who deserve big thanks. Thanks from all of us to those who signed the petition to get us started, to the steering committee for helping guide us these last few years and getting our charter drafted, to our first nominating committee for their "arm-twisting techniques" that brought our first slate of candidates together, and to the first slate of candidates. The elected board members and I are encouraged by the dedication and devotion of the membership and all who played key roles in getting BWGW off the ground. We wish to encourage each member to become actively involved in our professions, both wildlife and

biometrics.

I personally would like to recognize the hard work of a couple of people who brought life to our working group and kept it alive from the start. Chris Bunck and Clint Moore did more than their fair share for our organization. I do not know all that they did, but I can tell you they went beyond the call of duty for us. If you get a chance, please thank them for their efforts.

As for where we are headed, communication and information exchange will be the first priorities for BWGW. We have the listserver started, and I would encourage you to subscribe. Much of BWGW business will be communicated through this electronic mechanism. (Subscription procedures for this listserver can be found in this newsletter.) We have been and will continue to be active in developing and presenting symposia and workshops at annual TWS conferences. We have had at least one symposium per conference since these conferences began in 1994, and at the 1997 Conference in Snowmass this September, we will sponsor two symposia and one workshop. It takes two to communicate, so your help will be needed. Your ideas and involvement are necessary and desired. Send me or the executive board members your ideas (our addresses are available in this newsletter.) Also, we ask that you be willing to serve BWGW on a committee or as a recruiter of members. I know that many people interested in biometrics do not know that our working group exists, and you can help bring these folks to BWGW, so that they can share their expertise and experiences with us.

The executive board and I look forward to serving you. Thank you for your support, and let us know how we can better serve you and our profession. See you in Snowmass.

Election Results

The results of the election held in February were very close. The elected officers and board members (committee chairs), who will serve until September of 1998, are:

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and phone numbers are included here. If you have questions, comments, or suggestions about any aspect of the working group, please contact one of these board members.

Once again, thanks to the nominating committee, the candidates, and to Sue Sheaffer for conducting the census of the ballots.

TWS Annual Conference 1997

Business Meeting

The BWG will hold a business meeting at the annual TWS Conference in Snowmass, Colorado on Wednesday September 14, 3:30-5:30. The exact location will be listed in the final conference program. It will be an opportunity to meet other members, to give input about the direction you would like to see this group move in, and to share specific ideas for future activities, such as symposia, workshops, etc. This is especially important with the group in its infancy. Hope to see you there!

Symposia and Workshops

The BWG will sponsor 2 symposia and 1 workshop at the conference in Snowmass. The workshop is entitled "*Statistical Analysis of GIS and Spatially Correlated Field Data*", and is organized by John Kern, Wallace Erickson, and Trent McDonald. Alan Franklin and Tanya Shenk have organized a symposium entitled, "*How to Practice Safe Modeling: The Use and Interpretation of Models in Resource Management*". Unfortunately for those who would like to take advantage of all the BWG offerings at the conference, these 2 sessions are concurrent, on Friday Sept. 26. Tanya has submitted more about the modeling symposium below. The last symposium, entitled "*Study of Resource Selection Using GIS*", and organized by Lyman McDonald and Grey Pendleton, will occur on the afternoon of Saturday the 27th. Details for all these sessions can be found in the registration and preliminary program information sent to all members of TWS. These sessions, combined with a scattering of other invited and contributed papers, promise a very worthwhile program for BWG members at this year's conference.

Safe Modeling Symposium

Tanya Schenk

The symposium entitled "*How to practice safe modeling: the use and interpretation of models in resource management*" was accepted as an all-day session for the 1997 TWS Conference at Snowmass, Colorado. This symposium is being sponsored by

Because some members do not have e-mail addresses, addresses

the BWG and includes presentations by members of the BWG. There will also be presentations by fisheries biologists, landscape ecologists, and marine mammalogists who will provide a different perspective on resource modeling.

For those of you who noticed, we apologize for not having the sponsorship by the BWG noted on the preliminary agenda. However, we submitted a correction for the final program which will be available at Snowmass.

We are currently developing a prospectus to submit to Island Press for publication of the proceedings of this symposium as a book. Almost all of the participants of the upcoming symposium have agreed to submit their papers as chapters. We would appreciate any suggestions or comments from other members of the BWG on how to make this publication not only informative and successful, but a positive reflection on the BWG.

Desperately Seeking Symposia, TWS 1998

John Sauer

We need some ideas for Technical Sessions and Workshops to sponsor at the 1998 Annual Conference! I am looking for some volunteers to suggest topics and serve on the technical session committee. At last year's business meeting, several potential topics were suggested, including (a) case studies in applying statistics to resource decision making; (b) statistical tools to aid decision making in the face of uncertainty; (c) fostering statistical competency among wildlifers; (d) statistics of monitoring avian populations, with emphasis on marsh birds; (e) SURVIV (and its offspring); (f) computer intensive methods; (g) sampling rare populations; (h) statistical resources on the internet; (i) monitoring non-avian taxa; and (k) role of biometricians in wildlife management.

Please think about topics for which you might be interested in organizing a session. It is very rewarding from a personal and professional standpoint. Best of all, once you get people to agree to present papers, you are essentially done- just make sure they show up! Either contact John Sauer (john_r_sauer@nbs.gov; 301-497-5662) with your ideas, or bring them along to the meeting in Snowmass.

*Next newsletter in November. Send contributions to:
Bill Kendall, at address above or
William_Kendall@nbs.gov*

Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference

Mike Samuel

The 59th Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin during 7-10 December. The conference features a number of special sessions on ecosystem management, including a session on Modeling and Statistics. This session emphasizes the integration of modeling and recent statistical methods in addressing large-scale ecological problems and ecosystem management. David R. Anderson will deliver the keynote talk on "New Paradigms in the Analysis of Data from Large-scale Studies". Other presentations will discuss habitat model variability, survival models, population simulation, spatial habitat modeling, and habitat selection. More information about the Modeling and Statistics session is available from me - michael_samuel@nbs.gov. Additional information about the conference is available at <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/fh/fish/mwfwc.htm>

BWG on the Internet

Just a reminder that the BWG, through Ed Kautz with the help of Paul Geissler, maintains a listserver for the posting, discussion and distribution of information on quantitative wildlife biology. Appropriate subject matter is the development and application of biometrical methods for use in the research and management of wildlife resources. The list currently has 50 subscribers and there is plenty of room for more. To subscribe, send an E-mail message to listproc@rana.im.nbs.gov with the following as the body of the message:

subscribe stat_tws <yourfullname>

Type your full name in place of <yourfullname>, for example: subscribe stat_tws J. Edward Kautz. You will receive additional instructions on sending messages and subscription. For more information please contact Ed Kautz at kautzje@crisny.org or (518) 783-3925.

Membership and Financial Report

Chris Bunck

As of 30 June 1997, the BWG has 103 members, including 10 members from outside the U.S., who have joined and paid dues for 1997. The treasury balance is \$769.68. The starting balance on 1 January 1997 was \$427.90. Since that time the BWG has received \$400.00 in dues and \$6.21 in interest and spent \$64.43 on postage and supplies for the ballots.