

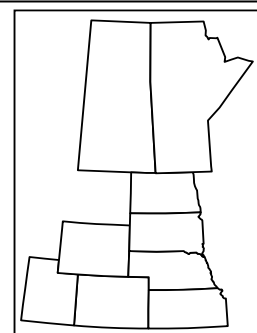


# Wildlife Society

Central Mountains and Plains Section



Kansas Colorado Nebraska South Dakota Wyoming  
North Dakota Utah Saskatchewan Manitoba



## CMPS Section Newsletter

March 2007

Volume 50, Number 4

### President's Message

Gary C. White

First things first, I want to update you on some recent and future CMPS activities.

- Mark Sexson is doing a great job of getting the summer meeting in Kansas organized. See his article in this newsletter (pg 5).
- The Executive Board voted to donate \$500 to TWS's Information Technology initiative, and a check was sent in January.
- Elections are coming up, and your Executive Board needs to arrange a slate of candidates. Nominations are needed for President-elect, and 2 Board positions. States and provinces not currently represented on the Board include Wyoming, Utah, North Dakota, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan (but see below concerning the Canadian Section). Nebraska will not be represented when Past-President Steve Riley's term is over in August. Although we never achieve exactly equal geographic coverage of the membership, the intent should be to maintain some balance. Therefore, I'm asking any of you CMPS members that feel the hankering to run for a CMPS position, especially if you are from North Dakota, Utah or Wyoming.
- According to Tom Ryder, the new Canadian Section is progressing very rapidly. A draft of their by-laws is finished and currently under review by Canadian members of TWS. Once their bylaws are finalized, candidates for Canadian Section Officers and a Section Representative to TWS Council will be solicited with the goal of having the Section up and running by September's TWS Conference in Tucson.
- The deadline for students to submit requests for funding to attend the national meeting in Tucson is July 15, 2007. A copy of the application form is included elsewhere in this newsletter.
- Contacts for student chapters on the TWS web site are in horrid disarray - only 2 of 10 connect to web sites, plus there are several student chapters missing (at least 3 in Nebraska besides Kearney).
- Students – get your chapter links up to date!

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#### Mission Statement of The Wildlife Society

The Wildlife Society exists to enhance the ability of wildlife professionals to conserve diversity, sustain productivity, and ensure the responsible use of wildlife resources for the benefit of society.

Beside Section business, this column gives me a chance to discuss issues I think are significant and relevant to TWS membership. The topic for this column is the evaluation of the effectiveness of TWS's programs.

For me for the last 2 decades, February is the month for my annual evaluation with my department head. I fill out the paperwork, and meet with my supervisor to discuss what I've accomplished during the past year, and what I intend to accomplish during the coming year. The communication provides me with insights into what my department head is thinking, and for me to express my views on various aspects of departmental management. The whole process requires considerable self-evaluation as well, and provides the opportunity to consider changes in focus and direction.

So, I'm thinking it is time to evaluate the effectiveness of TWS's efforts. I want to start with the Washington lobbying program, officially the Government Affairs Program of TWS. Are we as members getting what we think we want from this activity? A survey of the membership a few years ago by Tommy Brown and colleagues from Cornell reported that a strong majority of the TWS membership supported the lobbying efforts. To much of the membership, the lobbying effort is the MOST important activity that TWS provides its members. I suspect we all feel good that we have somebody representing our views in Congress.

My question – is the TWS effort effective? Are folks in Congress actually persuaded to change their vote because of TWS efforts? Most importantly, how do we evaluate the effectiveness of our efforts?

TWS membership is minuscule compared to some of the other wildlife lobby groups. Our membership is 8,027 at the moment (3/3/07). In contrast, the National Wildlife Federation represents probably 20 times this number (e.g., the Colorado affiliate claims 5,000 members), National Audubon Society maybe 50 times TWS, and The Wilderness Society claims 300,000 members. For a Congressman seeking re-election, which group represents the most political clout? It's not hard to figure out that not getting the votes of TWS is not a big deal compared to other organizations. Thus, I conclude that we can't be effective if only voting power is the criterion.

But as most of you know, TWS has always recognized this limitation, and argued that we are a scientific, professional society. Our political clout comes from our carefully reasoned scientific arguments, not the number of voters we represent. Of course, we're not the only conservation group talking to Congress. TWS also participates in at least 6 coalitions established to aid in the passage of wildlife legislation. For example, the Society is a leader of the Teaming with Wildlife coalition and the Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement (CARE). Others include American Wildlife Conservation Partners, Bird Conservation Alliance, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, and USGS Coalition. Are any of these efforts making a difference in Washington, and how do we know?

What criteria can be used to judge our effectiveness? A couple come to mind: number of briefs filed, and number of testimonies given. But I'm not sure that these metrics are all that indicative of effectiveness. Both criteria are like me arguing that the number of classroom lectures I give indicates the amount of learning by the students, but never giving the students any tests to see if they really did learn the subject. Or, putting on my researcher hat, the number of papers I publish, without ever demonstrating that anybody read the papers and used the results. I think better criteria might be the number of times TWS is requested to give briefs, or number of times TWS is requested to give testimony. Have these criteria increased over the last 20 years, demonstrating that TWS is providing a service desired by Congressional staff?

One of my friends knowledgeable about the inner workings of Congress suggested that the most effective way to influence Congressional actions is to actually write the legislation, not just comment on it. So, how many times has TWS been invited to work with Congressional staff (Congressmen don't actually write the legislation – they have staffers to do this sort of heavy lifting) to put words to paper and draft legislation?

However, I'm not sure any of the criteria I've listed really answer the question – is TWS having an impact on the decisions made in Washington? If TWS dried up and blew away, would we see a difference? As a scientist, I want to conduct an experiment and obtain some data. But, there is no opportunity for replication, no controls, and maybe not even an opportunity for actual manipulation. By now, you will have figured out that I'm stymied about how to evaluate the TWS lobbying effort.

But I have a more rigorous criterion to evaluate another of the TWS efforts: impact of scientific publications. I also reported the following in the last CMPS newsletter. Librarians measure the impact factor of a journal by the average number of citations of articles published in the journal, i.e., total number of citations of articles in the journal divided by the number of articles published in the journal. With university budgets declining, library administrators use a journal's impact factor to help decide whether to maintain a subscription. Unfortunately, the impact factor of JWM and WSB are not competitive with other ecological journals. The following table summarizes impact factors for 2004 and 2005 from Web of Science.

Year	Ecology	Ecological Applications	Conservation Biology	JWM	WSB
2004	4.104	3.287	3.672	1.484	0.714
2005	4.506	3.804	4.110	1.462	0.944

Ecology, Ecological Applications, and Conservation Biology all considerably increased their impact factors from 2004 to 2005, whereas JWM actually went down and WSB is still <1. My conclusion is that the TWS scientific journals are not having the impact that we would expect them to have, and particularly so given the amount of effort (both volunteer and paid) and dollars that go into publishing these journals each year.

I could go on and consider other TWS programs, like Certification or the national meeting held annually. Instead, I suggest each of you evaluate whether TWS is providing the services that you think are most important. Self-evaluation within the Society is a necessary part of improving its effectiveness. However, be warned that you also have to look into the mirror as part of this evaluation process. To paraphrase John F. Kennedy, "Ask not what your Society can do for you, but what you can do for your Society."

## The Section Rep's Report

## "Ryder's Ramblings"

In this first issue of the 2007 CMPS Newsletter, I'd like to share a number of national TWS happenings with you. First, publications! With release of Volume 35, Issue Number 5, the Wildlife Society Bulletin is no more. Beginning with the first issue of the 2007 Journal of Wildlife Management, content of both WSB and JWM will be combined in this "new" publication. During the coming year, we plan on publishing at least 8 issues of JWM in an attempt to catch up with several hundred pages of manuscript backlogs. So if you subscribe to JWM this year, you will receive 2 to 3 times the content of previous Journal volumes. Also, by the time you read this "Ramblings", you will probably have received the inaugural issue of TWS's new member magazine, The Wildlife Professional. I've had an opportunity to review content of the first issue and I think you'll really like it. The only way to receive this issue, however, is to be a member of TWS. SO JOIN TODAY! Go to [www.wildlife.org](http://www.wildlife.org) and join using our easy online membership service.

In the realm of national and international policy issues, work continues on development of a position statement dealing with the impacts of oil and gas development in the Rocky Mountains. Council hopes to have a draft of this statement for review at the upcoming North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in Portland, Oregon. We are currently reviewing a draft technical review dealing with wind energy development as well. This document will become a valuable resource for field managers who work with impacts resulting from this growing trend in energy development. Similarly, Council has formed a subcommittee to develop a technical review on potential impacts and benefits to wildlife associated with biofuels development – a topic of great interest to many states within CMPS. We are also involved in a technical review of legal standing of the North American model of wildlife conservation (Public Trust Doctrine). This model, which has formed the bedrock of wildlife management in

the U.S. and Canada, is under constant attack in today's society and TWS is hoping to identify ways to better codify the model in state and federal legislation to safeguard states' abilities to manage our public wildlife resource. For your information, a number of CMPS members are involved on each of these policy issues.

Planning for TWS's upcoming national conference is progressing on schedule. This year's gathering will take place in Tucson, Arizona and should be a wonderful opportunity for professionals to interact with their peers and learn more about the awesome resource we work with each day. There is simply no better venue in the world today for wildlife professionals, so please put September 23 to September 27, 2007 on your calendar and head to Tucson for a great conference.

The Wildlife Society website continues to undergo a massive transformation. Although progress is a little slower than we'd like, I think you will be very pleased at the member and Chapter services that will be available once our overhaul is completed. Contact Webmaster Earl Wyatt ( [earl@wildlife.org](mailto:earl@wildlife.org) ), for more information and/or to become involved in this process.

The Society's Draft Strategic Plan is undergoing some final revisions before Council discusses where we go from here at our March meeting. There are so many things going on now within TWS that some of the new initiatives identified in this planning process may need to be delayed a bit until we can figure out ways to fund their implementation. However, many of the highest priority issues identified by the Strategic Planning Committee are already being addressed – including several of the items discussed above.

Plans to form a new Canadian Section of TWS have greatly accelerated since last fall when Council approved this idea. A draft set of by-laws has been developed and is being reviewed by Canadian members of The Society. Concurrently, a committee of Canadian members has been formed to solicit nominations for Section Officers and a new Canadian Section Representative to Council. It is our intention to conduct elections in the next several months and initiate the new Section at our fall conference in Tucson by installing these officers. While this is exciting news from an international standpoint, I'm sure many of us will miss interacting with our Manitoba and Saskatchewan colleagues at the CMPS Summer Conference each year. Hopefully, we can continue to have many of these wonderful professionals attend our meeting as well as becoming involved in their own Section.

Lastly, Council and a number of special ad hoc committees are beginning to solicit nominations for The Society's diversity of professional awards. One award that goes under-subscribed each year is our TWS Fellows program. Although a number of university professors have received TWS Fellowships over the past several years, the award is not intended solely for academics. State and federal wildlife scientists can also be very deserving of this honor. Please consider nominating a colleague who has been involved in TWS at the state, section, or parent society levels for many years. You can find out more about the Fellows program by contacting Lisa Moll at [lisa@wildlife.org](mailto:lisa@wildlife.org) or clicking on the Awards link on our TWS website.

Well, that's about it for now. As usual, don't hesitate to contact me with any questions, comments, or suggestions concerning The Wildlife Society. Keep fighting the good fight out there!

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## Don't Miss the Summer 2007 CMPS Meeting in Southwest Kansas

The 2007 annual meeting will be held August 6-9 in Garden City, Kansas. This meeting will be in the heart of Lesser Prairie Chicken country, and will be a great opportunity to see and learn about the unique Sand Sage Prairie, Playa Lakes, Riparian, and Short Grass ecosystems of Southwestern Kansas. The Kansas Chapter extends a heartfelt invitation to all, and promises to make it both a fun and educational experience. Be sure to bring the family, as Garden City has a lot to offer kids and significant others while you attend meetings and tours. Registration, motels, transportation options, agendas, and entertainment will be available online at the following site <http://www.fhsu.edu/biology/kctws/kctws.htm> after the middle of March.

### Preliminary Meeting Information:

Paper sessions and the annual meeting will be held at the Finnup Center for Conservation Education, located on the grounds of the Lee Richardson Zoo. This million dollar Conservation Education Center is a destination in itself. It is filled with engaging interactive displays, local wildlife, and conservation messages, and actually has a **live Black footed ferret display**. The Finnup Center is equipped with Interactive Distance Learning (IDL) technology, which the zoo's education staff uses to share their wildlife conservation messages with school students nationwide.



The Lee Richardson Zoo, accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, is the pride of Garden City. You will be impressed with the animal

collection, educational graphics, spacious and natural exhibits, and beautiful landscaping. Admission to the zoo is free to all who walk in, and there is a nominal charge for vehicles to drive through. You will be amazed at the quality of this facility, which is supported by a community of fewer than 30,000 people. The zoo has been a tremendous supporter of local and statewide wildlife programs, and has always been willing to help wherever they can, including being one of the sponsors for this meeting.



**The tour on Aug. 7<sup>th</sup> will be of the Sand Sage Prairie Ecosystem.** It will highlight different management styles for this sandy soil habitat. The tour will include areas managed by a state wildlife agency, a large utility company, and by private ranchers. A tour of private wetlands is also planned to include a discussion on water issues and the Arkansas River the evening of Aug. 8<sup>th</sup> as part of the Lamb BBQ festivities.

Optional tours of local industries having environmental impacts are also under consideration, and may be offered if interest dictates. A new state of the art ethanol plant is currently under construction in Garden City, and Sunflower Electric Cooperative is gearing up to add three new plants that will be rated at 700 megawatts each.

Sunflowers' current plant generates electricity from coal, and is rated at 360 MW. Over \$5 billion dollars will be spent on this project in the next 7 years. A local box plant makes custom boxes for the meat packing industry, and if you have never been to a large cattle feeding operation, now would be your opportunity. We even have a tortilla factory in the area. Regardless of your opinions about these industries, the fact is, they are reality, and they make up the bulk of the economics of this part of the world. The more we know, the better decisions we can make regarding wildlife-related issues. If nothing else, you will be amazed at the complexity of these highly technical industries. Get your registration in early, as the number of participants will be limited due to security reasons.

**Garden City is a growing community and has been identified as a melting pot of cultures comparable to New York City and Chicago. You**

**will have the unique opportunity to experience a town that prides itself on incorporating many cultures into its very fiber. Enjoy a tremendous variety of ethnic eating establishments, ranging from the normal chains to the mom-and-pop restaurants. As for the banquet, you can't come to the heart of the beef industry without having an aged KC Strip grilled to perfection. The banquet will be held at the Zoo and we will have the place to ourselves.**

**Another reason to get your registration in early is that we would like to supply entertainment at all the evening events. We can't do it if we can't afford it. If you are coming, send your money in. Although we already have some great things planned we can and will make it worth your while to sign up early.**

**Here are some particulars to get you excited:**

The first night mixer will be in Kathy and Mark Sexson's back yard. Directions will be available only to those attending the business meetings. We will be burning a few burgers and cooling off with cold drinks. This will be an informal way of visiting with old friends and making new ones. The Sexson' house sets out in the sand hills and is a great place to visit with old friends and watch the sun go down after a hot August day. Evening temperatures fall quickly on the Kansas High Plains. A local folk singer is lined up, if enough registrations are received in time.

**As part of this meeting we will be organizing a student mentoring program.** A few hours are set aside the first day to give students training and line them up with a professional for the remainder of the meeting. Professionals will be asked to volunteer to take one of these students under their wing during the meeting. As a further help to students, they will only be charged ½ the established registration fee. If you know of students members of TWS, please let them know of this opportunity.

**We have decided to make the tour part of the meeting and not an optional activity at the end. We just have too much to share not to give the tour the importance it deserves.** At our Spring KCTWS meeting a professor who prides himself in training future biology teachers said it best, when he made the point that only hands on experience can result in real understanding. We want you to all

experience the Sand Sage prairie first hand. Visit the meeting web site to learn more about what sites the tour will visit.

**A fun Banquet and auction will be held after the tour and after the zoo has closed to the public.** Members will be able to enjoy the Zoo's gardens and exhibits in a very special way. We will be working to supply entertainment to reflect the culturally diverse population found in SW Kansas. Of course you won't want to miss the KC Strips locally grown, processed and aged to perfection. Our cooks will be two local guys who specialize in these type feeds and are wildlife "nuts". I can guarantee that you will not leave hungry, especially after you have had a few pieces of their beer bread to soak up some of the juices, followed by dessert from a Dutch oven. However, be sure not to feed them as they might follow you home!

**Larger items are needed for the live auction and we will have the traditional silent auction so bring your regular small unique items. Please contact Mike McFadden if you have big items so he can plan for them. [miketm@wp.state.ks.us](mailto:miketm@wp.state.ks.us)**

**The call for papers will also be posted on the meeting web site by the end of March, but we have already been getting submissions for some great papers. We have also been working on at least one area-specific slate of papers concerning cultural diversity and its place in wildlife management.** These will include presentations on how to get other ethnic groups into higher education, presented by Martha Perkins the Director of Higher Education Opportunity Center for Fort Hays State University. Martha was born in Mexico City. A presentation by Doctoral Candidate Debra Bolton on Social Systems of Rural Hispanic Poor and its Tie to Wildlife Issues will also be presented. Debra is a Navajo/San Juan Pueblo (Oke OWinge) and is very interested in Wildlife and its management. Manuel Torres a Public Lands manager has been instrumental in bridging the communication gap between the KDWP Wildlife and Fish efforts and the growing Hispanic community of SW Kansas. He has done much of the work in developing a Spanish hunter safety course, the development of hunting and fishing regulations in Spanish, and he tends to be the go to guy for our Law Enforcement COs when they need an interpreter. The fourth speaker refers to himself as an Anglo Mutt. He came to Garden City in 1979 as a District Wildlife Biologist and has experienced the large cultural changes which have occurred over the

last 27 years. He has witnessed several generations of new citizens lost to Wildlife programs due to lack of communication between wildlife professionals and the non English speaking parents of these future Americans. If you know of additional speakers, let them know of this meeting and invite them to present.

**The last evening may be the most enjoyable of all. Bob and Adrian Price have invited us to their sheep ranch for the evening. Their land lies between Lake McKinney and the Arkansas River and is a prime example of what can be done to bridge the gap between Agriculture and Wildlife. You will have a great time kicking dirt and leaning on pickups through out the evening. The fatted Lamb (or maybe two) will be made available to us and will be grilled to perfection by some of our local KDWP staff. We have arranged an entire evening of entertainment for those who drive themselves west toward the setting sun. We will be giving wetland, riparian, and terrestrial tours to those interested. We have also lined up**

**various activities you can pursue while enjoying your grilled Lamb. The KDWP furbearer project leader has agreed to set up a trapping demo. There will be an authentic 1868 Infantry Camp re-enactment set up for you to step back in time, and if you have never experienced how a flint knife is made, this will be your opportunity, as we have someone lined up to demonstrate the art. We have more in the wings if registrations are plentiful.**

Plan to bring your favorite camp chair, as all the evening events will be out of doors and a personal sitting devise will come in handy.

Please mark your calendars, and join us this summer on the plains of Western Kansas. We are looking forward to having you as our guests.



See You in Kansas in August!

**CMPS – KCTWS ANNUAL MEETING****GARDEN CITY, KS  
AUGUST 6-9, 2007**August 6

9:30 – 5:00 Registration – Finnup Center  
10:00 – 12:00 KCTWS Fall Business meeting  
1:00 – 3:00 Student Orientation and Mentor Workshop  
3:30 – 5:30 CMPS Annual Business meeting – Finnup Center  
7:00 - ? Back Yard Burger BBQ

(Directions will only be available to those who attend one or both of the business meetings.)

August 7

7:30 – 8:00 Registration and Organize at Finnup Center for the Habitat Tour  
8:00 – 8:15 Travel to Sand Sage Wildlife Area  
8:15 – 10:00 Tour of Sand Sage Wildlife Area  
10:30 – 12:00 Tour of Sunflower Electric lands  
12:00 – 1:30 Holcomb and Garden City for lunch.  
2:00 – 4:00 Tour Wheatland Electric Cooperative lands being planted back to permanent grass cover  
4:00 – 5:30 Tour wildlife practices on private property, Oasis Ranch  
5:30 – 6:00 Return to Garden City  
7:00 - ? Banquet and auction – Lee Richardson Zoo

August 8

7:30 – 10:00 Registration  
8:30 – 9:00 Key note speaker  
9:00 – 12:00 Paper sessions  
12:00 – 1:00 Lunch on your own  
1:00 – 5:00 Paper sessions  
7:00 - ? Lamb BBQ on the Ark River

August 9

8:00 – 12:00 Paper sessions (if needed)  
8:00 – 12:00 Optional Ag Industry Tour

## **STATE CHAPTER REPORTS**

**Colorado:** Some of the Chapter's goals for 2007 include: 1) increasing membership participation in the Chapter, particularly increase involvement in committees and the annual meeting, 2) improving lines of communication within the membership and with the general public, 3) continue to provide the membership with legislative review updates, and 4) build strong relationships with wildlife students by working closely with the Colorado State Chapter and other state colleges interested in starting student chapters.

**2007 Annual Meeting** - This year's program centered on "Mitigation: Concepts and Tools". Day one focused on practical mitigation of oil and gas impacts. Speakers represented a wide range of state and local agencies, industry, academics, and non-government organizations. Topics ranged from *The Wildlife Society's development of a Position Paper on Oil and Gas Development to Sage Grouse Populations and Gas Field Development to the Challenges in Application of Winter Timing Stipulations*. Day two covered *Conserving Lands with Severed Mineral Interests*, wetlands and water development, transportation, monitoring an adaptive management. Finally, day three wound its way through the *Black-footed Ferret Program, Vaginal Implant Transmitters to Aid in Capture of Mule Deer Neonates, the Southern Rockies Ecosystem Project, the Second Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas, CDOW Private Land Conservation Efforts, and Artificial Raptor Nest Structures*.

**2007 Summer Meeting** - The Gunnison Basin has been suggested as a location for the summer meeting. Topics could include grazing and Gunnison sage grouse. The board will look into teaming with the Society for Range Management and the local Stockgrowers Association in planning the summer meeting.

**2008 Annual Meeting** - It has been several years since CCTWS has held an annual meeting in the Denver area and the timing may be ripe to hold the conference in the Capital city with a new governor, new state legislators, and new leadership in the Department of Natural Resources. Membership voted to hold the 2008 meeting on the south side of Denver (Denver Tech Center).

**Kansas:** See CMPS Meeting

**Nebraska:** No Update Available

**North Dakota:** The North Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society held its Annual Conference and Awards Banquet, February 7-9, 2007 in Mandan, North Dakota. Highlights of the conference included a Student/Professional Lunch, Professional Women's Breakfast, and paper sessions covering a variety of topics such as wind energy, biofuels, avian influenza, mountain lions, and invasive species. One session of the conference was dedicated to the Public Trust Doctrine and the North American Wildlife Conservation Model and included presentations by TWS President John Organ and Eric Fritzell. Natural Resource Communication Awards were presented to Neal Niemuth, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "Landscape-level Benefits of Waterfowl Conservation to Non-game Birds in the Prairie Pothole Region of North Dakota", and Katie Herman, SDSU, "Reproductive Ecology of Greater Sage Grouse in Southwestern North Dakota".

At the Chapter Business meeting the membership approved an endowment charter, senior dues schedule, and a new fiscal year. A new executive Board was elected that includes Mark Sherfy,

(USGS) President-Elect, Sandy Hagen, (NDGFD) and Curt Bradbury, (NRCS) board members. The Board appointed Randy Renner (DU) to fill the Past President vacancy, and Kathy Baer (USFWS) as Secretary/Treasurer. Returning Board members include Al Sapa, (USFWS-retired) President, Paul Myerchin,(private practice), and Cami Dixon (USFWS) Board members.

The Chapter held it's annual Awards Banquet in Mandan, North Dakota on February 8, 2007. Eight wildlife professionals, a non-profit corporation and five students were recognized at the awards ceremony. Recognition awards were also presented to the outgoing President and Secretary/Treasurer. Clay Jenkinson, nationally known humanities scholar, author, and newspaper columnist gave the keynote address, describing the roles Presidents Jefferson and Teddy Roosevelt played in the development of conservation in this country.

The prestigious North Dakota Award is presented annually to a wildlife professional that has made an outstanding contribution over the course of their career. This year it was awarded to Dr. Kenneth F. Higgins, formally of Woodworth, ND. Ken is retired from federal service after 40 years, which included distinguished careers with the Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center, Woodworth Station, Jamestown, N D, and the South Dakota Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, Brookings, S D. Dr. Higgins legacy includes authorship on over 180 publications, over 300 presentation at professional conferences and workshops, advisor to 44 graduate students, and recipient of 18 achievement awards. Dr. Higgins research covered much of North Dakota's resources including waterfowl ecology, wetlands, and grasslands. His studies were among the first on the effects of wind turbines on grassland birds. Ken served the North Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society for many years. In addition to presenting many talks at the Chapter's annual meetings, Ken regularly encouraged his students to attend the annual meeting and give presentations. In the 1980's Ken served as Secretary, Treasurer, and President of the Chapter. Ken's accomplishments speak for themselves but his legacy will live through his students and those he mentored that have gone on to natural resource careers.

**South Dakota:** The South Dakota chapter of The Wildlife Society held its annual meeting on March 5-7, 2007. The meeting was highly successful, boasting record attendance. A new leadership was elected to office, led by new SDTWS President, Kurt Forman. Kent (KC) Jensen, Art Smith, and Chad Switzer were elected as President-Elect, Secretary/Treasurer, and Board Member, respectively. Tom Kirschenmann will complete his second year on the board and Bridgette Flanders-Wanner will serve as Past-President this year.

The theme for the meeting's half-day special program was "Grassland Legacies—The Future of the Resource in South Dakota". A diversity of speakers representing the SD Cattlemen's Association, SD School and Public Lands, American Coalition for Ethanol, Ducks Unlimited, and others presented their broad and sometimes opposing perspectives on the topic.

A total of 163 people attended the annual awards banquet to hear guest speaker Terry Grosz. Terry, a conservation law enforcement officer for 32 years, host of the TV show Wildlife Wars on Animal Planet, and author of 7 wildlife conservation books, mesmerized the audience with his tales and experiences in wildlife law enforcement. Terry sold every single one of his books he brought to the annual meeting, with all proceeds going to the St. Jude Children's Hospital.

The Professional Award was presented to Tom Wickstrom for his service to wildlife conservation as a Private Lands Biologist for the USFWS' Partners for Wildlife Program. The SD Citizen's Award was presented to Larry Stomprud for his incorporation of wildlife into his sound range management and his active engagement of wildlife managers and the agricultural community. Steven Cutler, Diane Clayton, and Daryl Campbell received a Special Award for their outstanding contribution to wildlife habitat development via the Conservation Reserve Program. Kevin

Honness received the M.S. Student of the Year Award; Teresa Zimmerman and Dan Thompson both received nominations for the PhD Student of the Year Award. Carter Johnson received the Best Professional Presentation Award for his talk, "Vulnerability of Prairie Wetlands and Waterfowl to Climate Change", while Jesse Hankins received the Best Student Presentation Award for his talk, "Evaluation of Mixed Vegetation Plantings as Avian Nesting Habitat in Eastern South Dakota".

2006 topics that will continue to be high-priorities in 2007 include the Farm Bill and support and revitalization of SDTWS Committees. Additional topics that SDTWS has identified as major focus areas for 2007 include development of a siting map to provide guidance for placement of wind turbines, Missouri River management, and management of prairie dogs on public lands.

### **Utah: No Update Available**

**Wyoming:** On May 11 & 12, 2007 the Wildlife Heritage Foundation of Wyoming will host the Wildlife Heritage Summit at the Parkway Plaza in Casper. As an apolitical, charitable organization, the Foundation is pleased to assume this responsibility. The goal of the Summit is to improve information exchange and communication between Wyoming's conservation organizations; to raise public awareness about serious issues facing Wyoming wildlife and habitat; to foster cooperative relationships between conservation organizations and the Game and Fish Department; to identify important areas where groups can work collaboratively; and to build an effective system to follow up on progress being made in these areas. As Summit host, the Foundation will handle logistics and has established parameters in planning for this historic event. The most significant among them is structuring the opening session to include remarks from the Governor and a series of presentations on the state-of-the-state of Wyoming's wildlife and wildlife habitat. During this time we will examine the nature and scope of existing and planned energy development in the state and share the latest information on the values our citizenry places on wildlife, its well-being, and its management.

A Program Planning Committee, whose members represent various conservation organizations in Wyoming, along with the Foundation, are in the early stages of drafting an agenda that will address many wildlife and habitat issues, cooperative working relationships, and changes in trends and values influencing the future of wildlife in Wyoming. If you are aware of any conservation organization that has not heard about the Wildlife Heritage Summit and did not receive this letter, please contact the Conference Coordinator at [rkruckenberg@bresnan.net](mailto:rkruckenberg@bresnan.net) or 307-630-7687. Registration forms and information about the Summit are now available on the Foundation website at [www.whfw.org](http://www.whfw.org)

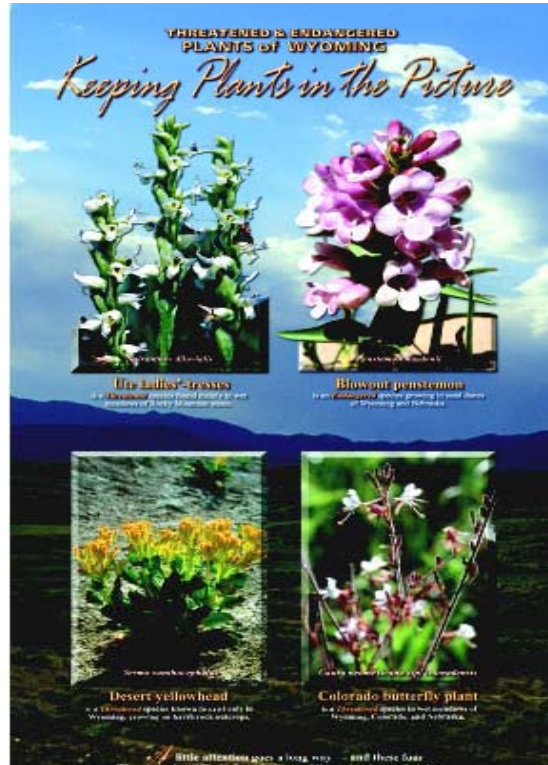
The registration fee is \$75 until April 11. After that date, the late registration fee will be \$90.

### **Threatened and Endangered Plant Poster**

Have you heard that there are Threatened and Endangered plants in Wyoming? Do you have a public talk, display, or other event to lead next year, or maybe a blank spot on the door or wall? An 18" x 34" poster featuring all four of Wyoming's Threatened and Endangered plants has been printed by the Bureau of Land Management in an eye-catching design on heavy stock poster paper. The Wyoming Native Plant Society has complementary copies to distribute at all Wyoming Native Plant Society events and copies will become available next year from all BLM field offices and U.S. Forest Service offices headquartered in Wyoming.

Copies are available from all BLM Field Offices, also being distributed in a collaborative effort through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Nature Conservancy, Teton Science Schools, U.S. Air Force - F.E.

Warren Air Force Base, William Ruckelshaus Institute for Environment and Natural Resources (UW), Wyoming  
Game and Fish Department, and Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (UW).



## **Building Partnerships, Managing Lands**

### **Scot Kofron and the WGFD Habitat & Access Branch**

As most people living in this state know, Wyoming provides a wide array of outstanding recreational opportunities in the outdoors. These opportunities can be found on the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission's Wildlife Habitat Management Areas (WHMAs) or through Public Access Areas (PAAs) to rivers, lakes, and public lands throughout the state. Management of all 36 WHMAs and 118 PAAs is coordinated by the Habitat and Access Maintenance Branch (Branch), part of the Service's Division of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD). "We provide land management and oversight of all Commission lands," said Scot Kofron, Assistant Branch Chief, "including maintenance of roads, fences, irrigation systems, hay meadows, facilities, farming and grazing contracts, property rights monitoring, Special Use Permits and signs." With 23 permanent employees and 7 temporary summer employees, the Branch provides critical support and assistance to the Wildlife and Fish Divisions through a project request system.

The Branch works closely with the WGFDs terrestrial and aquatic habitat biologists to develop and implement habitat enhancement projects. In the past year, WGFD partnered with the BLM on a sagebrush mowing and aeration project near Hudson, and also partnered with the BLM, USFS, and private landowners on an aspen regeneration project at Bates Hole. All proposed projects are submitted to the Branch on a project request form. "We have six regional crews and one state-wide Habitat & Development crew. We can handle most project requests, and we can shift work schedules to meet WGFD priorities."

Although they had 52 project requests submitted to them last year, the Habitat & Access Branch has been trying to spread the word regarding their program and willingness to partner with agencies on more projects. "Annually, we have an exhibit at the Hunting and Fishing Heritage EXPO, and many people are surprised that a program like ours exists within the WGFD," said Scot. "We have various habitat management tools available to assist in completing wildlife habitat projects".

If you or anyone you know is interested in assistance from the WGFD's Habitat and Access Maintenance Branch on terrestrial or aquatic habitat enhancement projects, you can contact Scot at the WGFD's Casper Regional Office at 307-473-3430 or via e-mail at [Scot.Kofron@wgf.state.wy.us](mailto:Scot.Kofron@wgf.state.wy.us).

## **Student Chapter Reports**

**Colorado State:** The CSU Student Chapter of TWS remains dynamic and busy. The Chapter elected new officers in December: Kyle Heinrich, President; Zach Sanders, Vice-President; Nicole Sedgeley, Secretary; and Josh DeVries, Treasurer. The Executive Board, consisting of the officers and several committee chairs, meets weekly at 7:00am Thursday to conduct Chapter business.

Speakers for Monday evening meetings this semester have come from various backgrounds and fields including 2 presentations about life in the private sector (Kirby Carroll and Chris Roe), and 3 from the Colorado Division of Wildlife (Mark Vieira, Steve Znamenacek, and Chad Bishop). The most recent Monday evening meeting featured a Quiz Bowl contest between students and faculty (Note from CMPS President White – faculty soundly trounced the students). Nine chapter members are making the trip to Texas A&M College Station for the 42<sup>nd</sup> Western Students Conclave March 9-12. On the return trip students will explore the Red River of Northern Texas and the Tall Grass Prairie of Kansas.

The Chapter also participated in the annual Cedar Ridge Deer Count conducted by the Colorado Division of Wildlife in Middle Park, Colorado. The Chapter brought three van loads of students to facilitate this event. We counted the 5th most deer on Cedar Ridge ever, dating back to 1957! As all those that walked or spotted know, the snow conditions were less than ideal due to fairly deep snow on the north side (and a few of the south side routes) with a non-supportive crust that made snow shoes relatively inefficient.

The totals were

Deer: 1060

Radio Collared Deer (included): 8

Elk: 164 (although there were more that may not have been counted)

Sage Grouse: 18

Coyotes: 31

Eagles: 2 (1 Bald and 1 Golden)



Brenna Ceron CSU TWS member stands with two volunteers in front of the snow cat after a long day of counting deer.

We've also got lots of activities planned for after spring break. We have invited David Mech to speak on April 30 on his wolf research. This will be a campus wide event that we are opening to the public. Plus, we have a weekend field trip planned to visit Mission Wolfe in Westcliffe, Colorado. While in Westcliffe students will also have a chance to tour Tom Redmond's ranch (Aussie hair products) to discuss natural resource management. The Chapter has also worked with the CSU President's office to invite Jane Goodall to campus April 23. We're planning our annual Techniques Workshop for the last weekend in April at McGregor Ranch. We plan on having mist netting (birds), large mammal trapping, electro-fishing, and field necropsy. Lastly, we are considering volunteering at a few middle schools in the area to provide students and teachers exposure to some of the fun aspects of wildlife biology.

### **Kansas State: No Update Available**

**University of Nebraska – Lincoln:** The UNL Wildlife Club is enjoying another eventful semester. At one of the first meetings of this year, the club became affiliated with the Teaming With Wildlife coalition, joining a growing list of organizations committed to wildlife conservation. Another highlight of this semester was a guided tour of an exhibit at the Nebraska State Museum that featured the work of award-winning wood carver Cliff Hollestelle. Cliff showed us how his work has developed over the years, from his first drawings that he made as a kid to the wood sculptures that won him so much recognition to his latest creations cast in bronze. On February 3, several members attended the annual Pheasants Forever State Habitat Conference, where they learned about various wildlife management issues in Nebraska and interacted with professionals in the field. The club also completed a survival workshop in February, where members learned stalking skills and primitive fire-making techniques. Despite the cold weather, it was a great way to spend a Saturday afternoon. Volunteers

from Raptor Recovery Nebraska were invited the February 28 meeting. They brought several live owls, hawks, and other raptors and talked about their work. Raptor Recovery rehabilitates sick and injured birds of prey and releases them back into the wild. In the last 30 years, they have treated over 6000 raptors. They are also very active in educating the public about ways to protect these birds.

The Wildlife Club has big plans for the remainder of the semester as well. Several members will be taking a spring break trip to College Station, Texas for The Wildlife Society's Western Section Conclave. They will attend seminars, take field trips to see local wildlife, and compete in various contests while in Texas. The club will again be teaching bow and firearm hunter education courses for the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission this spring, and more members will complete their teaching internships to become certified instructors. At the beginning of April, officers will be elected for the 2007-2008 school year. The club will also hold its annual awards banquet on April 14. The featured speaker this year will be Sam Wilson, the Furbearing and Non-game Mammals Program Manager for the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. Students will be commended for their accomplishments in a ceremony following a catered dinner. As it has for years, the club will be presenting the Outstanding Wildlife Conservation Award to a person or organization that has made outstanding contributions to wildlife conservation in Nebraska. This award is co-sponsored by the Lincoln Journal Star newspaper. The club's first Outstanding Alumni Award will be presented at the banquet as well. This will go to a former club member who has made significant contributions to the natural resources field. The new officers will also be recognized at the banquet, and the club will say "farewell" to the seniors who are graduating in May. The underclassmen in the club look forward to beginning their various summer jobs and internships, and they will carry on the club in the 2007-2008 school year.

**Utah State: No Update Available**

**Wayne State (Nebraska): No Update Available**

**University of Wyoming: No Update Available**

**CMPS Audit Conducted:**

Brandon Houck conducted an audit of the Section's finances. He reported that all deposits and expenses were documented with receipts and statements. The checkbook was correctly balanced. The review covered the time period from his previous audit of 11/09/2005 to 12/04/06.

The current balance as of 12/04/06 is \$4,884.95

In 2006 there were \$610.75 in deposits and \$1587.50 in debits.

**The Wildlife Society 14th Annual Conference  
Tucson, Arizona****September 22-26, 2007**

This will be a great opportunity to enjoy this unique southwestern desert city surrounded by mountains. Located in the midst of a 10,000-year-old Native American settlement, the city once served as a Spanish outpost, and later was a dusty frontier town, bustling

territorial-days railroad hub, and finally today is a fast-growing modern urban center. You'll want to take time to see the surrounding Sonoran Desert and its impressive saguaro cactus, visit nearby historic Spanish missions and colonial forts, cross over the border into Mexico to shop, or explore the wilderness serenity, cottonwood-lined streams, and unique birding opportunities of Sabino Canyon Recreational Area, Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge, and Coronado National Forest, among many outstanding natural areas.

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