

NORTHWEST WILDLIFER

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NORTHWEST SECTION

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Seeking Nominations to Executive Board of Northwest Section

- President elect
- Awards chairperson

Please send nominations for candidates or letters of interest to current Section President:
sanjay.pyare@uas.alaska.edu

NORTHWEST SECTION REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Council responsibilities seem to slow a bit during summer months. Via email, however, we reviewed and voted on a number of topics including: 1) approving a letter to the FWS commenting in detail on the latest spotted owl recovery plan (TWS members who reviewed the plan and prepared TWS comments did an outstanding job); 2) approving agreements with Johns Hopkins University Press for a new edition of the Wildlife Management Techniques Manual, a reprint of the book Human Dimensions of Fish and Wildlife Management, and potentially other publications; 3) approving a project proposed by the FL chapter utilizing carbon offset fees from the Miami conference; 4) approving the

recommendations for TWS Fellows and student chapter of the year, to be announced at the Miami conference; 5) approving the format for the raffle of a rifle once owned by Larry Jahn (and donated by Jim Miller), as well as the proposed distribution of funds generated; 6) voting to make The Wildlife Professional available, as a sales item, to non-members.

By now, membership voting is complete. Thanks to those who voted for our new TWS Vice President and approved the revised bylaws. Our next voting opportunity is likely to be electronically, which should mean greater participation.

As you may have seen in other communications, TWS recently hired Darryl Walter as Director of Membership Marketing and Conferences, filling in behind Sandra Staples-Bortner of our WA chapter who did such an excellent job. Darryl comes to TWS from the American Association for the Advancement of Science/Science magazine.

Speaking of conferences, as I mentioned in my last report, by traditional rotation, the annual conference is due back in the Northwest in 2012. This is a wonderful opportunity for our chapter members to

attend an outstanding conference close to home. From my involvement in the recent Anchorage conference, I can confirm that hosting this conference is energizing for the state chapter, personally rewarding, and a lot of fun. (As an aside, the new Canadian Section needs to fit into the conference rotation sometime, and may offer to host in 2012. If they do offer, and are selected, the conference may not be in the West.)

I look forward to seeing some of you in November at the Miami TWS annual conference.



Ellen Campbell,
Northwest Section
Representative

WASHINGTON CHAPTER NEWS

The Washington chapter of TWS had a successful meeting in Spokane in spring 2008, with over 115 people attending. Our next meeting will be held February 18-20, 2009, at the Skamania Lodge in Stephenson, WA, with The Society of Northwest Vertebrate Biologists. The meeting theme will be "Temporal Issues in Ecological Science: Implications for Research, Management, and Conservation in the Pacific Northwest." Fred Swanson and Charlie Fowler will be the plenary speakers, and Steven Beissinger will be the

banquet speaker. Three symposia will occur on February 18th, including Amphibians and Forest Management, Habitat Connectivity Planning, and Lessons and Insights on Long-term Ecological Research in the Pacific Northwest. Mark your calendars for Skamania! Also, the chapter had an excellent group of candidates for the Richard E. Fitzner Memorial Scholarship Award. Finally, Susan Piper will be the next President of the chapter. Congratulations, Susan.

AJ Kroll,
Washington Chapter President

OREGON CHAPTER NEWS

The Oregon Chapter of TWS has moved to an electronic newsletter, to reduce paper use and costs. This format gives us more flexibility and will provide members a chance to contribute through interactive surveys on issues and Chapter business. Research projects, career information, and profiles of wildlife professionals are also in each issue.

The Conservation Affairs Committee has been active in providing testimony and comments on several issues, including cougar management and the state's cervid ranching rule revisions.

The next annual meeting will be at Salishan again this year, and the theme is "Emerging Environmental Issues and the Role of Wildlife Science." The plenary session is titled, "The role of science in

developing/influencing policy." There will be a workshop on wave energy and other energy issues the day before the annual meeting.

The Oregon TWS chapter is also holding a workshop on wind energy and impacts to wildlife, on Nov 5-6, in Dalles Oregon. The primary goals of the workshop are to provide wildlife managers and biologists with an understanding of wildlife/wind energy interactions and current assessment protocols for wind energy installations in the Pacific Northwest.

Information on the annual meeting and upcoming workshops can be found at www.joomla.wildlife.org/Oregon

Holly Michael,
Oregon Chapter President

ALASKA CHAPTER NEWS

Progress on position statements:

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Position Statement — a committee of chapter members chaired by Dick Shideler completed the final draft of an update to our Chapter position statement "*Oil and Gas Development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.*" The draft was distributed to all members for review and to vote on its approval for adoption by September 1, 2008.

Pack Goats — Jim Herriges and his committee are continuing work on a draft of the new position statement on disease risk of domestic goats and sheep in Dall sheep and mountain goat habitat. Jim hopes to get the draft through the committee by autumn and then on to the chapter for review and vote.

BLM defers energy leasing on Teshekpuk Lake wetlands for 10 years:

In mid-July the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announced plans to offer 3.9 million acres for oil and gas leasing in the Northeast National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A). However, 219,000 acres of Teshekpuk Lake and

islands will not be leased, and leasing will be deferred for a decade on 430,000 acres of wetlands north and east of the lake. Comments provided to BLM from TWS in a 6 November 2007 letter can be viewed on the Chapter website (end of newsletter) under “*Documents*” and then “*Correspondence*”.

Howard Golden,
Alaska Chapter President

Leading Scientific Societies Criticize Proposed Rule Changes to Interagency Cooperation under the Endangered Species Act—September 29, 2008

Three prominent scientific associations today submitted comments critical of proposed regulatory changes that would eliminate the requirement that federal agencies consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or National Marine Fisheries Service (the “Services”) to determine if their activities or decisions likely will affect species protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The comments were submitted by the Ornithological Council, The Wildlife Society, and the Society for Conservation Biology.

Under the proposed rule, published on 15 August 2008 (73 F.R.47868), federal agencies could avoid consultation with the Services because the rule delegates to the other agencies the initial assessment of potential impact. The scientists say that this proposed rule would remove credible science from the assessment process. Few federal agencies have biologists on staff, so most have little ability to conduct the biological analyses needed to determine the probable effects of their actions. The rule would require no oversight or monitoring by

the Services. As Ellen Paul, Executive Director of the Ornithological Council, pointed out, “Even oversight would be of little value, because an erroneous decision, even if reversed later, could jeopardize the survival of endangered species.”

The scientists noted that a similar rule issued in 2004 has largely failed. That rule allowed the Forest Service (FS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to determine if their activities under the National Fire Plan would affect protected species. In January 2008, the Services reported that most biological assessments conducted by the FS and BLM under that rule were not based on the best available scientific information. The Services also determined that the FS and BLM failed to present scientific information sufficient to justify their decisions. According to Laura Bies, Associate Director of Government Affairs for The Wildlife Society, “Even agencies with substantial scientific expertise are not adequately evaluating whether their actions are likely to harm listed species.”

The comments highlight another flaw in the proposed regulations. An agency evaluating its own project lacks independence. Checks and balances that offset an agency's self-interest are needed. For instance, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service found that the BLM's tentative plan for 2.4 million acres of Oregon forests might eliminate habitat for 830 spotted owls and 600 marbled murrelets. Should the BLM decide that its plan was "not likely to adversely affect" protected species, it could avoid consultation with the Services and the protections that consultation triggers.

The proposed rule bars consideration of activities that increase greenhouse gas emissions. The scientific societies say that the Services lack statutory authority under the ESA to exclude such activities. John Fitzgerald, Policy Director of the Society for

Conservation Biology, said, "Under the law, all federal actions are subject to consultation. The effects of substantial increases in greenhouse gas emissions permitted or funded by the federal government should be addressed by expert wildlife, pollution, and energy agencies working together to present thoughtful alternatives to the next Administration and Congress."

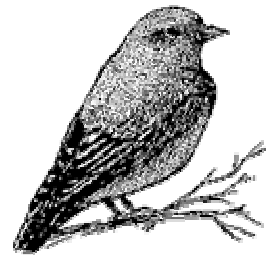
The Wildlife Society Press Release,
Posted on the Environmental News Network

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- National TWS Annual Conference for 2008 will be November 8-12 in Miami, Florida. See website for more details: joomla.wildlife.org/miami08/
- Washington Chapter TWS annual meeting for 2009 will be February 18-21 in Stevenson, Washington, at the Skamania Lodge. See website below for more information.
- Oregon Chapter TWS annual meeting for 2008 will be November 5-6 in Dalles, Oregon. See website below for more information.
- Idaho Chapter TWS annual meeting for 2009 will be March 10-12 in Moscow, Idaho, at the University Inn. A block of rooms has been reserved and people can make reservations on their website.

CHAPTER NEWS

Alaska: www.wildlife.org/chapters/ak/index.cfm/
Idaho: www.ictws.org
Montana: www.montanatws.org
Oregon: joomla.wildlife.org/oregon
Washington: www.washingtonwildlifesoc.org



Pine Warbler

Robert Savannah, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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