

# The Wildlife Society PROGRAM FOR CERTIFICATION OF PROFESSIONAL WILDLIFE BIOLOGISTS

(Valid thru 31 December 2010)

The Wildlife Society, a nonprofit, scientific and educational organization devoted to stewardship and enlightened appreciation of wildlife and its environments, is committed to the premise that these objectives can be achieved best with the guidance of well-educated, experienced, and dedicated wildlife biologists. The Wildlife Society has sought to promote and strengthen professional standards in all activities devoted to wildlife resources. To this end, the Society has developed a professional certification program designed to evaluate the education and professional experience of wildlife biologists.

A professional wildlife biologist is a person with demonstrated expertise in the art and science of applying the principles of ecology to the sound stewardship and management of the wildlife resource and its environment. An applicant for professional certification who demonstrates this expertise through education and experience and is judged to be able to represent the profession as an ethical practitioner will be designated as a Certified Wildlife Biologist.

Many professional disciplines have contributed to the creation of today's wildlife biologist, and certification requirements need to encompass the full breadth of the wildlife field. However, it is vital that those criteria distinguish a wildlife biologist from professionals in other fields, including those disciplines that have a stake in wildlife resources. Some natural resource professionals do not meet the criteria for certification as wildlifers, but this fact does not diminish their important contributions.

Strict application of rigidly defined criteria would be detrimental to the continuing evolution of the wildlife biologist profession. The certification requirements are structured to demonstrate the special expertise required to practice as a wildlife professional. If an applicant does not meet the specified minimum requirements, a Certification Review Board (CRB), composed of highly qualified wildlife biologists, *must* determine whether the applicant's education, experience, and professional contributions satisfy the *intent* of the established minimum requirements.

The program for certification of wildlife biologists is a service provided by The Wildlife Society for its members, as well as nonmembers and the public, who may desire a peer evaluation statement. Certification constitutes recognition by The Wildlife Society that, to its best knowledge, an applicant meets the minimum educational, experience, and ethical standards adopted by the Society for professional wildlife biologists. Certification does not constitute a guarantee that the applicant meets a certain standard of competence or possesses certain knowledge.

**The Wildlife Society has established the following objectives, rules, and procedures for certification and the administration of the program. The Society will maintain, annually update, and disseminate a registry of Certified Wildlife Biologists. An appropriate schedule of fees ensures that the program is financially self-sustaining. Certification applications are available from:** The Wildlife Society, Inc.,  
5410 Grosvenor Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814-2144; 301-897-9770.

<http://www.wildlife.org/>

## **I – OBJECTIVES**

The primary objective of The Wildlife Society certification program is to provide public and private clients and employers more positive access to professional advice in matters concerning wildlife resources. Specific goals include:

- To guide biologists, governmental agencies, courts, and the public in defining minimum standards of education and experience for professional wildlife biologists, and to encourage all practicing wildlife biologists to meet such standards.
- To create and maintain public confidence in the advice and opinions of Certified Wildlife Biologists as well educated and experienced professionals who have pledged to uphold the Code of Ethics and the Standards for Professional Conduct of The Wildlife Society and to act in the best interest of wildlife resources and the public.
- To assist the public in evaluating wildlife biologists by establishing a procedure for critical peer evaluation based upon defined minimum educational, experience, and ethical requirements.

## **II - CERTIFICATION CATEGORIES**

Application for certification may be made in one of two categories:

**Certified Wildlife Biologist (CWB)**--Persons who have completed acceptable educational and experience requirements.

**Associate Wildlife Biologist (AWB)**--A preliminary step designed for persons who have completed the educational requirements, but not the experience requirements.

## **III - REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBILITY**

### **A. Education**

The educational requirements were approved initially by The Wildlife Society membership. Subsequent educational requirements were approved by the Council of The Wildlife Society.

The Council shall review the educational requirements at least once every five (5) years and may revise the requirements as necessary. Once certified, wildlife biologists currently are not required to conform to changes in educational requirements resulting from future revisions.

However, all applicants for Certified Wildlife Biologist status after 31 December 1999 (except Associate Wildlife Biologists upgrading to Certified Wildlife Biologist) must renew their certification every 5 years by completing a minimum of 80 hours of Organized Activities (Category I) in The Wildlife Society's Professional Development Program.

It is the applicant's responsibility to provide full documentation of education. Each applicant must submit original or certified transcripts documenting completion of the educational requirements.

All courses must be taken for credit and passed (i.e., D or better or a "Pass" in the case of pass-fail). When course titles do not describe content, a written description or course syllabus must be provided. In addition, applicants must provide catalog or

own word course description wherever specified and as needed to demonstrate content relevant to the requirement category.

Applicants who do not clearly meet the stated minimum educational requirements, but believe they satisfy their intent, must submit detailed documentation of comparable qualifications. For continuing education or professional experience to substitute for educational requirements, the applicant must have at least one college or university course (at least 3 semester hours documented on a college transcript) in that educational category. To meet requirements, applicants may split and distribute credits in a course with broad coverage to two (2) categories where course content is appropriate; for example, 5 credit hours in general biology may be used to satisfy up to 2.5 credit hours in zoological courses and up to 2.5 credit hours in botany. Similarly, 4 credit hours in general genetics may be used to satisfy up to 2 credit hours in zoological courses and up to 2 credit hours in botany.

The smallest unit of credit that may be distributed is one semester hour and applicants must provide documentation supporting the credit distribution for each course that is split. Full course credits can not be listed or counted in more than one category.

College credits taken outside the United States often vary from the American system. Canadian and other non-U.S. applicants must organize and present course titles, credits, and contents in the format listed below to facilitate evaluation. When the educational program differs considerably from the American system, applicants must present a detailed description of courses taken and the credits obtained. Wildlife graduates and scientists from all countries are invited to apply for certification.

Applicants must have completed a course of study in a college or university leading to a Bachelor of Science, or Bachelor of Arts, or equivalent, or higher degree, and should have the following, or equivalent, course work (see paragraphs 2, 3, and 4 on Page 1) listed below:

1. Biological Sciences: Thirty-six (36) semester hours\* in biological sciences are required and must include courses in the following subcategories (Note: the sum of hours required in subcategories a-e is 33; the remaining 3 hours may be in any of these five subject areas):
  - a. Wildlife Management: Courses emphasizing the principles and practices of wildlife management. **Course descriptions, immediately following course listing, are required** and should demonstrate training in understanding and manipulating habitat relationships and population dynamics in the context of objectives and influences established by human concerns and activities. Conservation biology courses count if they contain a specific focus on management and decision making (6 hours).
  - b. Wildlife Biology: Courses in the biology and behavior of birds, mammals, reptiles, or amphibians. **Course descriptions, immediately following course listing, are required.** Courses should demonstrate training in understanding the biology of wildlife species and their habitat relationships as the basis for management and must include at least one course dealing **solely** with the science of mammalogy, ornithology, or herpetology. Ichthyology, marine biology (except courses focusing on marine mammals or reptiles),

microbiology, entomology, or related courses will not count in this category, but will qualify in the Zoology category (6 hours).

- c. Ecology: Courses in general plant or animal ecology (excludes human ecology). **Course descriptions, immediately following course listing, are required** (3 hours).
- d. Zoology: Courses in the taxonomy, biology, behavior, physiology, anatomy, and natural history of vertebrates and invertebrates. **Course descriptions, immediately following course listing, are required.** Courses in genetics, nutrition, physiology, disease, and other biology or general zoology courses are accepted. Ichthyology or fisheries biology courses are accepted (9 hours).
- e. Botany: Courses in general botany, plant genetics, plant morphology, plant physiology, or plant taxonomy (9 hours). **Course descriptions, immediately following course listing, are required. At least one course must deal with plant taxonomy or identification.**

2. Physical Sciences: Nine (9) semester hours in physical sciences such as chemistry, physics, geology, or soils, with at least two disciplines represented.

3. Quantitative Sciences: Nine (9) semester hours in quantitative sciences that must include:

- a. Basic Statistics: A course in basic statistics (3 hours). **Course description, immediately following course listing, is required.**
- b. Quantitative Sciences: Courses in calculus, biometry, advanced algebra, systems analysis, mathematical modeling, sampling, computer science, or other quantitative science. **Course descriptions, immediately following course listing, are required.** Introductory GIS courses and introductory personal computing courses do not count in this category (6 hours).

4. Humanities and Social Sciences: Nine (9) semester hours in humanities and social sciences, such as economics, sociology, psychology, political science, government, history, literature, or foreign language.

5. Communications: Twelve (12) semester hours in courses designed to improve communication skills such as English composition, technical writing, journalism, public speaking, or use of mass media. **Course descriptions, immediately following course listing, are required.** A maximum of three (3) semester hours each will be allowed for a completed Master's thesis and Ph.D. dissertation. Courses in literature interpretation, foreign languages, classes requiring a term paper, class projects, and seminars in non-communication courses will not count toward this category.

6. Policy, Administration, and Law: Six (6) semester hours in courses that demonstrate significant content or focus on natural resource policy and/or administration, wildlife or environmental law, or natural resource/land use planning will apply; as will courses that document contributions to the understanding of social, political and ethical decisions for wildlife or natural resource management. **Course descriptions, immediately following course listing, are required.** Up to three (3) semester hours in classes

dealing with human dimension issues may count in this category depending on course content. Conservation Biology courses that effectively integrate legal and policy aspects of conservation planning will count toward this category. Courses that are tools supporting professional practice, e.g., photogrammetry, Land-Sat mapping, GIS techniques, or more general courses such as environmental science, resource management, law enforcement, criminology, political science, and introductory survey courses in conservation will not apply.

**Credit Hours.** The educational requirements are expressed in semester hours. One semester hour usually reflects one lecture hour or 3 laboratory hours of instruction per week for a 16- week term. One quarter hour normally equals 0.67 semester hours. Applicants for certification who attended educational institutions that grant credits in different units must convert their credits to semester hours according to definitions above. For example, in many Canadian universities a one-credit course meets 3 hours per week for 2 terms and thus equals 6 semester hours. The Certification Board recognizes that the minimum number of credit hours may not be met exactly in some cases because of differing credits awarded to the same subject at different institutions and/or because of uneven conversions from quarter hours to semester hours.

Professional experience may be used to satisfy the educational requirements where specific deficiencies exist. Examples may include published papers or a completed thesis to meet course requirements in English composition or technical writing. Also, documentation of demonstrated professional competence through experience may meet the requirements for such courses as botany, resource policy, administration, land use planning, or public speaking.

Such documentation should be supported by letters of reference from professional wildlife biologists. In many cases candidates would be best served by preparing a written explanation of why they feel that their formal and continuing education course work and work experience, taken as a whole, qualify them to be certified as a wildlife biologist. In unusual cases a special examination may be required. The form, content, and administration of such an examination shall be at the discretion of the CRB and shall be conducted without discrimination. The CRB shall evaluate the examination and shall determine, in its sole discretion, to grant or deny certification.

## **B. Experience**

In addition to the educational requirements, the Certified Wildlife Biologist must have a minimum of five (5) years of professional experience gained within the ten (10) years prior to applying for certification.

Potentially relevant experience begins following completion of the education requirements which usually coincides with the conferral of the first wildlife-oriented degree at a baccalaureate or higher level. Information regarding pre-degree experience is of interest and value to document the applicant's "intent" to pursue a career as a wildlife biologist; however, it is not creditable for experience as a "practicing professional wildlife biologist."

Professional experience must demonstrate the application of current biological knowledge to problems and programs dealing directly with the wildlife resource (administration, education, research, or management) as a significant portion of job responsibilities. Professional experience provides demonstrated expertise in making decisions in the application of ecology to stewardship and management of the wildlife resource and its environment.

Technician-level work, such as data collection, surveys, and habitat manipulation conducted under existing protocol or under the specific direction of another, is not considered professional-level experience. Identification of professional-level experience will require careful evaluation of each application. Therefore, it is the applicant's responsibility to fully document for each experience the percentage of time devoted specifically to activities of a professional wildlife biologist.

Time spent obtaining advanced academic degrees apply toward professional experience subject to the following guidelines:

1. Experience credit normally will be given only upon completion of a degree judged by the CRB as relevant to the wildlife profession.

2. A maximum of one (1) year's credit for a Master's degree, a maximum of two (2) year's credit for the Ph.D., and a maximum of three (3) year's credit for a Master's and a Ph.D.

3. When time intervals for education and employment overlap, a detailed explanation must be provided.

Time credited as experience for practicing professional wildlife biologists is based upon the following guidelines:

1. Partial credit may be granted for experience gained in positions peripheral to wildlife such as forester, range conservationist, soil conservationist, naturalist, environmental specialist, and consultant when a significant portion of the job responsibilities are those expected of a professional wildlife biologist, based upon the following:

a. Applicant's estimate of percent of time devoted specifically to professional wildlife work. (Full-time positions are defined as 40 hours/week.)

b. The smallest component of creditable time is one (1) month.

c. Description of specific duties, responsibilities, and accomplishments as a professional wildlife biologist. A "general job description" will not be acceptable.

d. Working on two (2) or more jobs at the same time does not result in double credit.

2. Experience credit will not be granted for positions such as high school biology teachers, park managers, fisheries biologists, or field or laboratory technicians.

Experience credit also will not be granted for wetland delineation work unless it specifically addresses wildlife management.

3. Up to 12 months of volunteer experience will be credited toward the 5 year experience requirement provided that the position constitutes professional wildlife duties described in this section and is supported by a letter from the supervisor.

4. Experience must be gained within the ten (10) years prior to the date the application is signed.

Certification as an Associate Wildlife Biologist (AWB) is available to an applicant who meets the educational requirements, but not the experience requirements. AWB status may be retained for a maximum of ten (10) years before application for certification as a Certified Wildlife Biologist is required. AWB certification will terminate on the tenth anniversary of the date such certification was conferred.

### **C. Ethical Requirements**

All applicants must pledge to uphold and conduct their activities in accordance with the Code of Ethics and the Standards for Professional Conduct as prescribed by The Wildlife Society.

In the event any applicant has engaged in past activity or conduct that the CRB determines violates a provision of the Code of Ethics or Standards for Professional Conduct, or has a criminal record, the CRB shall request The Wildlife Society Council to thoroughly investigate such activity, conduct, or criminal record to determine whether such past activity, conduct, or record shows either a propensity on the part of the applicant to act contrary to the provisions of the Code of Ethics and Standard for Professional Conduct, or a likelihood that such person will act contrary to said Code and Standards in the future, and thereby constitutes grounds for denying certification.

## **IV - ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR WILDLIFE BIOLOGISTS**

Associate and Certified Wildlife Biologists shall conduct their activities in accordance with the Code of Ethics and the Standards for Professional Conduct as prescribed by The Wildlife Society outlined below.

### **A. Code of Ethics**

Associate and Certified Wildlife Biologists have a responsibility for contributing to an understanding of mankind's proper relationship with natural resources, and in particular for determining the role of wildlife in satisfying human needs. Certified individuals will strive to meet this obligation through the following professional goals: They will subscribe to the highest standards of integrity and conduct.

They will recognize research and scientific management of wildlife and their environments as primary goals. They will disseminate information to promote understanding of, and appreciation for, values of wildlife and their habitats. They will strive to increase knowledge and skills to advance the practice of wildlife management.

They will promote competence in the field of wildlife management by supporting high standards of education, employment, and performance. They will encourage the use of sound biological information in management decisions. They will support fair and uniform standards of employment and treatment of those professionally engaged in the practice of wildlife management.

### **B. Standards for Professional Conduct**

The following tenets express the intent of the Code of Ethics as prescribed by The Wildlife Society and traditional norms for professional service.

Wildlife biologists shall at all times:

1. Recognize and inform prospective clients or employers of their prime responsibility to the public interest, conservation of the wildlife resource, and

the environment. They shall act with the authority of professional judgment, and avoid actions or omissions that may compromise these broad responsibilities. They shall respect the competence, judgment, and authority of the professional community.

2. Avoid performing professional services for any client or employer when such service is judged to be contrary to the Code of Ethics or Standards for Professional Conduct or detrimental to the well-being of the wildlife resource and its environment.

3. Provide maximum possible effort in the best interest of each client/employer accepted, regardless of the degree of remuneration. They shall be mindful of their responsibility to society, and seek to meet the needs of the disadvantaged for advice in wildlife-related matters. They should studiously avoid discrimination in any form, or the abuse of professional authority for personal satisfaction.

4. Accept employment to perform professional services only in areas of their own competence, and consistent with the Code of Ethics and Standards for Professional Conduct described herein. They shall seek to refer clients or employers to other natural resource professionals when the expertise of such professionals shall best serve the interests of the public, wildlife, and the client/employer. They shall cooperate fully with other professionals in the best interest of the wildlife resource.

5. Maintain a confidential professional-client/employer relationship except when specifically authorized by the client/employer or required by due process of law or this Code of Ethics and Standards to disclose pertinent information. They shall not use such confidence to their personal advantage or to the advantage of other parties, nor shall they permit personal interests or other client/employer relationships to interfere with their professional judgment.

6. Refrain from advertising in a self-laudatory manner, beyond statements intended to inform prospective clients/employers of qualifications, or in a manner detrimental to fellow professionals and the wildlife resource.

7. Refuse compensation or rewards of any kind intended to influence their professional judgment or advice. They shall not permit a person who recommends or employs them, directly or indirectly, to regulate their professional judgment. They shall not accept compensation for the same professional services from any source other than the client/employer without the prior consent of all the clients or employers involved.

Similarly, they shall not offer a reward of any kind or promise of service in order to secure a recommendation, a client, or preferential treatment from public officials.

8. Uphold the dignity and integrity of the wildlife profession. They shall endeavor to avoid even the suspicion of dishonesty, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, or unprofessional demeanor.

## **V - CERTIFICATION REVIEW BOARD**

A Certification Review Board (CRB) shall be comprised of at least five (5) members, chosen to provide equitable representation of The Wildlife Society sections and professional disciplines.

The Board shall determine eligibility of applicants, by majority vote if necessary, and shall have the authority to confer certification as an Associate or Certified Wildlife Biologist.

Members of the CRB will be appointed or reappointed by the Council of The Wildlife Society for three-year terms. Appointments will be made in successive years to ensure continuity of standards. CRB members normally shall be ineligible for reappointment after two (2) consecutive full terms, except under unusual circumstances when a third term is needed to maintain Board continuity.

Individuals appointed to the Board must exemplify high standards of professional judgment, competence, and integrity, and shall be Certified Wildlife Biologists. The Council shall strive to achieve a balance in the Board's membership which equitably represents the private and public employment, educational, management, research, and international components of the Society's membership. Appointments shall take effect 1 October. Council shall fill vacancies immediately for unexpired terms. Appointees to fill vacant terms will be from Sections of The Wildlife Society and/or from professional disciplines currently not represented on the Board.

The Certification Review Board shall meet at least once annually or more frequently at the request of a majority of the CRB and with approval by the Executive Committee of The Wildlife Society. All reasonable expenses of CRB members shall be reimbursed. A chairman shall be elected annually, prior to 1 October, by majority vote of CRB members. The CRB shall report progress and problems annually to the Council. Board members shall correspond as necessary to ensure equitable and timely evaluation of each applicant. No member of the Board shall discuss at any time a particular application with any person other than a member of the CRB, except to clarify or verify the contents of the application.

Certification normally will be confirmed or denied within six (6) months from the date a complete application is received unless the Board advises the applicant that additional time is needed for review.

An applicant who is denied certification shall be notified in writing by the chairman of the CRB, which notice shall set forth the reasons for denial, and the applicant shall be reimbursed 25 percent of the application fee. Unsuccessful applicants may reapply twelve (12) months after the filing of their previous application.

## **VI - SCHEDULE OF FEES**

Certification is a service extended to qualified wildlife biologists. However, the certification procedure was developed and is administered by The Wildlife Society. Members of the Society subsidize this effort with their volunteer efforts to maintain a viable scientific and educational organization. Nonmembers contribute nothing in this regard; therefore, there is a differential fee for certification. In addition, a monetary incentive is provided to students or recent graduates to apply for certification as an Associate Wildlife Biologist. Once the certification educational requirements are met, applicants for Associate Wildlife Biologist are eligible for the reduced fee structure if they meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. application within six (6) months after graduation with (conferral of) a bachelor's degree that fulfills the certification education requirements,
2. application within six (6) months after the time the degree and certification education requirements have been completed, although the degree has not been conferred,\*
3. application after the bachelor's degree has been awarded but within six (6) months after specific course work requirements for Associate Wildlife Biologist certification have been completed,
4. application during a period of continuous student status in pursuit of an advanced degree beyond a baccalaureate that fulfills the certification educational requirements, and/or
5. application within six (6) months after graduation with the graduate degree or completion of the graduate degree program, although the degree has not been conferred.\*

\* A confirming letter is required from an appropriate academic official.

The fee structure for certification is:	Member	Nonmember <sup>1</sup>
Certified Wildlife Biologist	\$130	\$500
Associate Wildlife Biologist	\$90	\$300
Associate Wildlife Biologist (meeting fee incentive requirements listed above)	\$70	\$250

To receive the lower fee for members applying for certification as a Certified Wildlife Biologist, the applicant must have been a member of The Wildlife Society for the previous two (2) consecutive calendar years prior to the year of application, as well as a current member of The Wildlife Society in the year of application. Retroactive membership purchase is available. To receive the lower fee for members when applying for certification as an Associate Wildlife Biologist, the applicant currently must be a member of The Wildlife Society.

An Associate Wildlife Biologist may apply for certification as a Certified Wildlife Biologist within the 10-year limit by submitting a fee equal to the difference between the current CWB fee and the AWB fee previously paid. However, no refund will be made to the applicant if the initial AWB fee paid exceeded the CWB fee in effect at the time of application for certification as a CWB.

Fees shall be reviewed periodically and set by the Council of The Wildlife Society at levels sufficient to sustain the program.

## **VII - APPEALS OF CERTIFICATION DENIAL**

An appeals process is available to any applicant who feels a denial by the Certification Review Board was discriminatory or arbitrary and capricious. Any applicant may appeal the decision of the CRB by submitting a written appeal to the

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<sup>1</sup> While application for certification is open to members and nonmembers, membership in the Society is required for any approved certificate to be valid.

Council of The Wildlife Society (5410 Grosvenor Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814-2144) documenting the charges. The Board of Inquiry of The Wildlife Society shall investigate, review its findings with the CRB, and submit a recommendation to the Council. The Council shall decide the final disposition, and so inform the applicant by written notice.

Appeals must be made within one (1) year from the date of denial. Only information on education and experience previously submitted to the CRB will be subject to review by the Board of Inquiry. Submission of new information or additional documentation may invalidate an appeal and require the applicant to file a new application for certification. Therefore, it is incumbent on applicants to fully and completely document their education and experience in their original applications.

### **VIII - VIOLATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

Censure and suspension or revocation of certification for violation of the Code of Ethics or Standards for Professional Conduct as prescribed by The Wildlife Society is a serious matter that reflects unfavorably on the entire profession. Considerable effort must be expended to ensure equitable treatment of all concerned.

The Wildlife Society assumes no liability for charges of misconduct filed by or against an Associate or Certified Wildlife Biologist and the Society provides no financial or legal assistance to either the person(s) bringing a charge of misconduct or the individual charged with misconduct. The following procedure below is to be followed unless changed by TWS membership bylaws.

A. A charge of misconduct against an Associate or Certified Wildlife Biologist (hereafter referred to as a certified wildlife biologist) may be filed by transmitting to the Board of Inquiry of The Wildlife Society (5410 Grosvenor Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814-2144) a sealed statement of the charge. Such statement shall be accompanied by an affidavit of the complainant setting forth the allegations on which the charge is based, including dates, and the specific conduct involved. The Chairman of the Board of Inquiry shall transmit copies of the charge, affidavit, and supporting documentation to the CRB. The CRB shall review the charge and, within ten (10) days from receipt of the charge, report to the Board of Inquiry its opinion as to whether the charge should be further investigated. The Board of Inquiry shall determine, within twenty (20) days from receipt of the charge, whether an investigation of the charge will be made.

B. If the Board of Inquiry determines that an investigation of the charge should be made, the Chairman of the Board of Inquiry shall notify the certified wildlife biologist of the specific charges filed by forwarding to him/her copies of the charge, affidavit, and all supporting documentation and request him/her to file a written answer with the Board of Inquiry within thirty (30) days. Upon receiving the written answer of the accused certified wildlife biologist, the Chairman shall forward copies of the answer and any supporting documents to the person who filed the charge and request him/her to file a response within thirty (30) days. Upon receipt of a written response from the person filing the charge, the Board of Inquiry shall deliberate and within thirty (30) days from receipt of said response either dismiss the charge or issue a complaint against the accused certified wildlife biologist detailing the charge.

C. If the Board of Inquiry shall issue a complaint, copies shall be sent by certified mail to the certified wildlife biologist and the person who filed the charge. Copies also shall be sent to the President of The Wildlife Society, the

President of the Section where the certified wildlife biologist resides, and the Executive Director of The Wildlife Society.

D. Within twenty (20) days of receipt of the complaint, the certified wildlife biologist shall file an answer to the Board of Inquiry. Each allegation in the complaint shall be admitted or denied in the answer. If an allegation is denied, the answer also may include a statement of the certified wildlife biologist's account of the occurrence or circumstances. If the certified wildlife biologist fails to timely answer the complaint, the allegations shall be deemed admitted, unless the certified wildlife biologist shows extenuating circumstances warranting an extension of time. A copy of the answer shall be forwarded by the Board of Inquiry by certified mail to the person filing the charge.

E. If the certified wildlife biologist's answer denies the allegations and charge in the complaint, the Board of Inquiry, upon thirty (30) days written notice to the person filing the charge and to the certified wildlife biologist, shall hold a hearing at which time the person filing the charge and the certified wildlife biologist may testify and present witnesses to testify and document evidence for consideration by the Board of Inquiry. The person filing the charge and the certified wildlife biologist shall have the right to cross-examine and to be represented by attorneys. After the hearing, the Board of Inquiry shall review the evidence and find the Certified Wildlife Biologist guilty as charged or dismiss the complaint within sixty (60) days. The Board of Inquiry will send written notice of its decision and any disciplinary action to be taken by certified mail to the person filing the charge, the President of The Wildlife Society, the President of the Section where the certified wildlife biologist resides, and the Executive Director of The Wildlife Society. In the event the charge of complaint is dismissed at any stage of these procedures, the certified wildlife biologist may request public disclosure of the dismissed charges and/or removal of all statements and procedural correspondence dealing with the charges and their deliberation from the files of The Wildlife Society. All such documents are to be returned to their respective origins.

F. The certified wildlife biologist shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Board of Inquiry to the Council of The Wildlife Society by filing a written notice of appeal with the Council (5410 Grosvenor Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814-2144) within thirty (30) days from the date of the decision of the Board of Inquiry. The Council shall mail a copy of the notice of appeal to the Board of Inquiry and the person who filed the charge. The Board of Inquiry shall deliver to the Council, within ten (10) days from receipt of the notice of appeal, other evidence submitted to it by the person filing the charge and copies of the answer, documentation, transcript of witnesses' testimony, if any, and any other evidence or memoranda submitted to it by the certified wildlife biologist.

G. The certified wildlife biologist shall file with the Council of The Wildlife Society a memorandum in support of his/her appeal within thirty (30) days from the date he/she filed the notice of appeal. The Council shall forward a copy of the memorandum filed by the certified wildlife biologist to the person filing the charge. The latter may, but is not required to, file a memorandum in opposition to the appeal within thirty (30) days from the date the memorandum of the certified wildlife biologist was mailed to him/her. Upon receipt of the response filed by the person who filed the charge, the

Council of The Wildlife Society shall mail a copy to the certified wildlife biologist who shall have twenty (20) days to answer the response from the date it was mailed to him/her. The Council, in its discretion, upon fifteen (15) days written notice, after all memoranda have been filed or time for filing has expired, may hold a hearing at which time the certified wildlife biologist and the person filing the charge, or their counsel, may present oral argument to the Council.

H. The Council within sixty (60) days after the time to file all memoranda has expired, or within sixty (60) days after the presentation of oral argument, whichever shall last occur, shall issue a decision affirming or reversing the decision of the Board of Inquiry and shall mail by certified letter a copy of its decision to the Board of Inquiry, the person filing the charge, and the certified wildlife biologist. If the decision of the Council is to deny the appeal and affirm the decision of the Board of Inquiry, the Council also shall set forth in its written decision the disciplinary action to be taken.

I. The disciplinary action that may be taken by the Board of Inquiry or the Council against a certified biologist who has been found by the Board or the Council to demonstrate consistent incompetence and/or be in violation of provisions of the Code of Ethics or the Standards for Professional Conduct of The Wildlife Society shall be censure, suspension of certification for a specified time, or permanent revocation of certification.

#### **Certification Changes \***

**During the summer of 2009, a new bylaws change was approved by The Wildlife Society membership. Membership in the Society is now required for all current AWB and CWB certificates to remain valid. Nonpayment of Society membership fees will invalidate an approved AWB or a CWB certificate. Payment of Society membership fees will revalidate an approved AWB or a CWB certificate.**

On 1 January 2000 a new certification requirement went into effect. Applicants after 31 December 1999 are required to complete the professional development/certification renewal requirements every 5 years to maintain their certification. Applicants before 31 December are not required (but are encouraged) to periodically complete certification renewal.

Certification Renewal requires the completion of a minimum of 80 contact hours of organized activities (seminars, symposia, short courses, distant learning courses, workshops, training sessions, technical sessions at professional meetings, and regular college courses) during a 5-year period. These organized activities can be in wildlife, related natural resource areas such as forestry or range management, or in other professionally enriching areas.

Specifically, here is how the change affects applicants:

Anyone who applied for certification as a CERTIFIED WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST by 31 December 1999 (and is approved) will not be required, but encouraged, to apply for certification renewal on a voluntary basis.

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Anyone who applies for certification as a CERTIFIED WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST after 31 December 1999 must complete the Professional Development program and apply for certification renewal every 5 years to maintain certification.

Anyone who applied for certification as an ASSOCIATE WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST by 31 December 1999 (and was approved) will have up to 10 years to upgrade to Certified Wildlife Biologist status AND then will be encouraged, but not required, to apply for recertification on a voluntary basis.

Anyone who applies for certification as an ASSOCIATE WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST after 31 December 1999 will have up to 10 years to upgrade to Certified Wildlife Biologist status and then must complete the Professional Development program and apply for certification renewal every 5 years to maintain certification.

\* TWS reserves the right to make changes in the certification program at anytime.