

Minnesota Chapter Newsletter The Wildlife Society

VOLUME 34, NUMBER 1

APRIL 2007

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MN Chapter TWS Regions



**Next Newsletter
Deadline:**

June 1, 2007



President's Message

It is my pleasure to write my first President's Message for 2007, and I am honored to serve the MN TWS chapter for the next year. My involvement with the chapter has allowed me to grow more as a professional and learn more about our state's resources than ever. The best part has been getting to know all of you. We should be proud of our chapter and our members. We have some very passionate, talented people working in Minnesota.

Today was a foggy, gloomy day, but a little excitement was still in the air. We Minnesotans know that spring is right around the corner. We are all working hard to gear up for another field season, and we are hoping to see those first pasqueflowers popping up soon. Just as spring is a new beginning for work and play, it is also a fresh start to the year for our chapter. We begin making plans for summer and annual meetings, and the new legislative session has begun. MN TWS will play an active role in policy this year as we have position statements on a number of issues that will be finished soon. A flurry of letter writing is set to start on everything from the federal farm bill to OHV use on state land.

We have momentum behind a number of wildlife-related issues in the Minnesota Legislature this year. We hope to see legislation restricting aquaculture to places where invasive fish will have fewer impacts, allowing OHV regulations and planning options that will protect our state lands from damage, and putting some teeth in the ditch buffer rules. We hope to bring greater awareness to the problems caused by soil drainage, especially pattern tiling. On a federal level, this year may be a historic year for the Farm Bill. Conservation programs are being threatened as corn prices increase to meet the demand for corn-based ethanol. I believe we are at a crossroads with regard to the future of conservation. We must work hard now. Growing pains in the production of ethanol are inevitable, but we must ensure when we switch to cellulosic ethanol that we have set the stage for both fuel production and good conservation practices.

I also hope to continue to increase student involvement in our chapter. We had a very successful student discussion forum at the annual meeting in February, and I hope that we can continue that forum each year. I was truly impressed by the knowledgeable series of questions the students asked the panel. A very intelligent cohort of young people is headed our way!

I strongly encourage people to sign up for the new listserv. We will use the listserv to disseminate information about ongoing policy issues, educational opportunities, and chapter news. You can find more information about the listserv at our website, <http://www.umcrookston.edu/tws/mn/>.

I want to stress to you that this is YOUR chapter. If you have comments or concerns about wildlife issues or chapter business, please let me know. We will do our best to address any issues that are brought to the board. We are only as effective as our members are active. If you have not been involved, get involved. Run for office, help to arrange a meeting, join a committee, help to get students involved in our chapter, or help us with policy issues. Becoming active in the chapter is a fun way to grow professionally, and you will get the opportunity to work with some enthusiastic, fun people.



Keep your eyes open for spring flowers and grouse on their leks. I hope the sights and sounds of spring bring joy to your lives.

Stacy Salvevold
MN TWS President

Treasurer's Report

**MN Chapter TWS
Quarterly Report
30 November 2006 – 20 February 2007**

Savings Account **\$ 1,169.63**

Beginning Balance	\$ 1,168.15
Change	(\$ 1.48)

Checking Account **\$ 12,833.84**

Beginning Balance	\$ 7,060.77
Change	(5,773.07)

Debits:

Mike Larson (summer mtg.)	\$ 74.70
Godfrey's (raffle prize)	\$ 298.19
Aspen Parkland Conference	\$ 250.00
Printing Plus (newsletter)	\$ 496.00
Doug Franke (postage)	\$ 35.14
Lacey Koep (MNTWS website)	\$ 437.50
Cash (change for raffle)	\$ 100.00
Doug Wells (postage)	\$ 78.00
Student Conservation Award	\$ 100.00
Annual Meeting speaker expenses	\$ 740.00
Laura Bonneau (postage, supplies)	\$ 48.18
Cara Greger (typing op. manual)	\$ 56.00
TOTAL	\$ 2,713.71

Credits:

Interest (November - January)	\$ 1.78
Memberships	\$ 60.00
Annual meeting	\$ 8,425.00
TOTAL	\$ 8,486.78



12 Month CD (Life membership, matures Aug. '07)	\$ 2,048.47
60 month CD (Moose conference, matures 2010)	\$ 2,984.90
Total Chapter Assets	\$19,036.84

**MN Chapter TWS
2006 Annual Report
1 January 2006 to 31 December 2006**

Savings Account	\$ 1,169.13
Checking Account	\$ 6,734.12

Beginning Balance	\$5,173.74
Change	(\$1,560.38)

Debits:

Newsletter (Printing Plus)	\$ 990.00
Postage & mailing permit	\$ 240.98
MCF membership	\$ 250.00
FWLA membership	\$ 1,000.00
TWS (BR Fellowship, F Scholarship)	\$ 212.00
Awards	\$ 590.96
Annual Meeting	\$11,003.36
Summer Workshops	\$ 1,255.12
Bill Faber (NAF&WS)	\$ 20.00
Shallow Lakes Conference	\$ 448.90
DNR Roundtable	\$ 69.44
Returned check (Ann. Mtg)	\$ 5.00
2007 meeting raffle prize	\$ 298.19
Transfer to Savings (raffle proceeds)	<u>\$ 680.00</u>
TOTAL	\$17,063.95

Credits:

Interest	\$ 9.33
Memberships, t-shirt	\$ 1,490.00
Raffle	\$ 1,360.00
Change returned (raffle)	\$ 100.00
Annual meeting	\$14,075.00
Summer meeting	<u>\$ 1,590.00</u>
TOTAL	\$18,624.33



12 Month CD (Life membership, matures Aug. '07)	\$ 2,040.74
60 month CD (Moose conference, matures 2010)	\$ 2,974.11
Total Chapter Assets	\$12,918.10

Board Meeting Minutes

MN TWS Board Meeting Minutes Holiday Inn, Alexandria, MN Wednesday, February 21, 2007

Note: Minutes recorded by M. Larson because L. Bonneau needed to leave the meeting early to start conference registration.

Meeting called to order at 9:05 a.m.

Board members in Attendance: Trauba, Bonneau, Salvevold, Zicus, Hawkinson, Larson, Wells, Kittleson, Vacek, Faber, Myerchin, North, Huschle, Hoch, Quincer, E. Hutchins, Minchak, Mehmel, Haroldson, Haffley. **Others:** Michael Hutchins (Exec. Dir., TWS), W. D. Svedarsky, J. Moriarty, T. Barberg, J. Loegering, J. Lawrence, several other students from UM-Crookston.

President (Trauba). North requested adding a Bald Eagle item under New Business. Laura Bonneau appointed as Newsletter Editor, effective immediately.

Secretary-Treas. (Bonneau). Board meeting minutes from 30 Nov. 2006 were reviewed. Motion by Hawkinson to approve as submitted, second by Huschle, passed. Treasurer's report for 2006 calendar year: Motion by Wells to approve as submitted, second by Faber, passed. Interim Newsletter Editor's report (Salvevold): Next deadline 1 March 2007.

Business occurring since last meeting (via email)

Motion by Hoch to support Clean Up our River Environment (CURE) Farm Bill position statement, second by Huschle on 31 Jan., passed. Letter sent by Trauba.

Old Business

MCF & FWLA memberships (Trauba). MN TWS reps (Trauba, Quincer, Salvevold, Hoch) attended a meeting with AFS reps and both organizations. Trauba proposed recommending membership in both organizations (\$1,000 & \$250) to the MN TWS membership at the annual meeting. Motion by Wells to make proposed recommendation, second by Hawkinson, passed.

DNR Roundtable. Trauba attended as TWS rep.

Flash drives were purchased to facilitate electronic file transfer among chapter officers.



Operations manual and President's "Working" Manual (Trauba). Chapter paid someone to type the operations manual, so we have an electronic version to update. Copies of updated version of manual will be printed and distributed soon. Moriarty requested that copies of chapter documents be sent to him as they're created.

New Business

Website (Salvevold). Contractor updated our website content and format for half of estimated bill. Website is set up to easily merge with main TWS server/site in Bethesda. Use the new URL: < www.umcrookston.edu/tws/mn/ >. M. Hutchins: open source software found & other major changes coming to main TWS site during the next year. Trauba: who will be doing updates? Loegering will do quick updates like adding new content, just not major revisions like we just went through. PDFs from officers preferred.

TWS Headquarters web support/service. Loegering was asked to answer questions for a survey by TWS HQ:

Q. How much do you pay to have your website hosted?

Q. What functions/resources would you like to have available?

A. meeting/membership registration, electronic voting, email listserv, secured content (e.g., officer-only, members-only access).

Q. What else would you like to see on main TWS site?

A. clearinghouse for position statements by TWS subunits and NGOs.

M. Hutchins: new software will allow subunits to update their own content and have content from parent organization directly fed to subunit sites.

Loegering will submit responses for the survey immediately after this annual meeting.

Position statements. 3 draft position statements are pending (OHV, 2007 Farm Bill, Pattern Tiling). Rather than printing in the newsletter, the drafts have been printed for distribution at the annual business meeting later today and will be posted on the web site within a few days. Comments to committee chairs will be accepted through March 9, then committees will revise, if necessary, and make final recommendation for board approval. Mehmel: consider having a consistent preamble for all our position statements.

Federal/state bald eagle delisting (North). Bald Eagles will likely be removed from state and federal endangered species lists. They would still be protected by an act of Congress, but many people may not be aware of it, so eagles may suffer increased threats after delisting. State restitution value for harming an eagle is currently 0\$. North recommended raising the restitution issue with legislators. Moriarty said lots of other species are in a similar situation, so perhaps we should raise the larger issue of restitution in general. Putting values in statutes may not be best due to inflation. Wells suggested that North write an article for the newsletter, then keep item on next agenda and/or have the President assign the issue to a committee. Kittleson: Address where restitution funds go after they are paid to the state. On a related matter, North will write a letter for board approval to commend the city of Sartell for their handling of a recent bald eagle taking situation.



Governor's Task Force on Forest Industry. Quincer drafted a letter (to be available on web site within a few days), primarily to Gov. Pawlenty, to comment on the Task Force's report, which included recommendations that could be detrimental to wildlife interests. Trauba: draft letter will be open for member comment until 9 March, when Quincer will revise and recommend to board for approval by e-mail vote. Svedarsky: revise letter to place this state-level issue in a global forest industry context; see work by Jim Bowyer. Quincer will look into it.

Shallow Lakes Forum. Motion by Hutchins to sponsor it for \$250, second by Faber, passed.

New student chapters. (Hutchins). MN State-Mankato is interested in starting a new chapter. They need to have 10 charter members, an active faculty advisor, petition TWS Council for establishment, and fit the chapter within the campus structure for student organizations. Hoch: Student at MN State-Moorhead has spearheaded an effort to establish a joint student chapter with Concordia College-Moorhead. Svedarsky: further consider how best to include NDSU, even if not formally. M. Hutchins: Helping, encouraging students is a high priority for TWS parent organization as well.

NC Section Continuing Educ. Fund. (Moriarty). NC section is trying to set up a \$50k endowment, which is currently stalled at ~\$20k. MN & MI are the only state chapters that did not contribute after initial request a few years ago. Funds allocated to educational opportunities available at the Midwest Conf. or elsewhere as long as it's of broad interest and open to attendees from across the Section. Svedarsky: corporate interests that benefit from sportsperson business could be solicited. Moriarty: that idea has been discussed with Gary Potts, the Section Representative. Huschle: what is the relevance of Sections, and is it increasing or diminishing? Moriarty provided a brief history and current context. He thinks the Section is relevant because there are regional issues that are not necessarily addressed at the state chapter or parent society levels. Motion by Larson to contribute \$2000 to the fund in 2 equal annual installments, second by Vacek, passed (with 1 nay vote).

Membership database. Haroldson proposed establishing a temporary committee to resolve and coordinate a few on-going issues related to managing membership info. (e.g., membership renewals come from different sources). Trauba appointed a new committee. Committee membership = Pres. (Committee Chair), Pres.-elect, Past-Pres., Sec.-Treas., previous Sec.-Treas., Newsletter editor, NC Section rep. This will include Wells and Haroldson. Committee charge = membership database updating, changes to membership form, process/protocol for membership renewals, and other issues as needed.

Coordinated membership drive with NC Section (Moriarty) will be dealt with in the newly formed membership committee.

TWS Wildlife Damage Mgt. Working Group. E-mail request to Wells forwarded to Trauba. The working group requested funds to support the upcoming Wildl. Damage Mgt. Conference in TX. Motion by Faber to deny the request, second by Huschle, passed.

FWS budget cuts (Quincer). Tabled. We might consider addressing this issue with a letter to MN's Congressional delegation at a future meeting.



Student Chapter Reports

UM-Crookston (Trenton Haffley): 34 members this year (new max.), 9 attending this conference.

UM-Twin Cities (Tim Barberg): 9 members at this conference. Students hearing about job opportunities in Forestry and not necessarily in Wildlife (e.g., no DNR-Wildlife rep. at the University's Career Fair for at least 2 years). Peter Jordan (retired) is new advisor, things going well.

Committee Reports

Tribal (Faber): maintain \$20/yr membership? Not if the association isn't active.

Statewide issues (Faber): can help with eagle/restitution issue.

MCF (Faber): may not be receiving meeting notices.

Announcements

Hawkinson: MOHA is fund-raising for dedicated funding, which they hope will be on the ballot in 2008.

Motion by Faber to adjourn, second by Salvevold, passed at approx. 12:10 p.m.

MN-TWS ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES 22 February 2007 Holiday Inn Alexandria, Minnesota

Meeting called to order by Dave Trauba at 11:00 a.m.

Treasurer's Report (Bonneau) – Review of annual (2006) report. Motion to approve by Huschle, second by Faber; passed.

Membership (Wells) – 2002 was top year for membership; see newsletter for membership summary; Trauba stated that membership is driven by attendance at annual meetings and affordable meetings increase membership; suggestions welcome. Plans to improve efficiency of membership receipt and tracking process underway; Wells, Bonneau, and Haroldson to meet during annual meeting.

Audit (Mehmel) – Reports and bank statements are correct.



Newsletter (Trauba) – Announced appointment of Laura Bonneau as new editor. Thanks very much to Shelley Gorham for her many years of dedicated service as newsletter editor.

Regional Reports – see newsletter for details.

Conservation Issues (Trauba) – no report; need to look at big topics for next year...biofuels? Shoreland regulations? Contact committee with suggestions.

Programs – need summer meeting suggestions.

Awards (Minchak) – no report.

Historian (Moriarty) – please send any old documents, newsletters, etc. to John Moriarty; what you might consider trash could be valuable to the chapter!

OLD BUSINESS

FWLA – position is vacant; need someone in Twin Cities/Metro area to represent MN-TWS and vote on issues; (Norrgard – number one priority is dedicated funding).

Website (Salvevold) – New website up and running; bill was half of what was expected! If anyone has suggestions, let Stacy Salvevold know. Salvevold gave a big thanks to Trauba for his help with website, newsletter, and annual meeting.

Listserv – Link available on MN-TWS Website; can be used to communicate issues/current focus of chapter; e-mail mn_tws_list-subscribe@yahoogroups.com to sign up.

MCF/FWLA memberships – Board recommends continued joint membership; Trauba, Salvevold, Hoch, and Quincer met with both organizations and were impressed with both; MCF membership is \$250/year, FWLA is \$1,000/year; Motion by Lori Schmidt to continue membership, second by Rob Naplin. Passed.

Habitat Project Proposals – Deadline is 3/31/07; Decision will be made at April board meeting.

Position Statements – Copies attached to meeting agenda. Comments are due to individual contact person by 3/9/07. Each position statement will include standardized information about MN-TWS. Board will approve, then position statements will be taken to policymakers.

(Note from Trauba re: power of individual – encouraged writing to legislators; Svedarsky suggested fax or e-mail rather than mailed letter due to extensive screening process.)

NEW BUSINESS

Election results (Wells) – see newsletter.



Membership dues approval needed - \$15 regular, \$5 student, \$7.50 retired, \$22.50 joint. Motion by Hawkinson to approve, second by Moriarty. Passed.

Summer Workshops – Salvevold requested topic suggestions. Ideas included student-oriented session, wind energy, and joint meeting with farm groups, including a panel session on land-use choices, and having two summer workshops again.

Annual meeting – Possible locations for next year include Twin Cities, Duluth, and Rochester. MN-TWS has received invitation from AFS for a joint meeting. Please send suggestions to Steve Kittelson.

TWS Display – Please send suggestions for updates to Jodie Provost or Stacy Salvevold; Photos needed.

Motion to ADJOURN by Moriarty, second by Faber. Passed.

Regional Reports

Region 1 – Mike Zicus

Bovine tuberculosis (TB) was discovered at a cattle farm near Skime in 2005 and has infected 7 cattle herds in the area. TB was confirmed in 2 wild deer in 2005 and 5 more deer tested presumed positive last fall. All infected deer have been adult animals, and 70 percent were males. The DNR has already taken several steps to reduce the risk of deer-to-deer spread of the disease and will enforce a recreational deer feeding ban in a 4,000 square mile area of northwestern Minnesota. This ban also fulfills requirements from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. DNR conservation officers also identified about 22 potentially illegal feeding locations within the recreational feeding ban zone. Conservation officers are developing an enforcement plan to address the violations. Additional steps to minimize the risk of transmitting bovine TB include a cost-sharing program to assist cattle producers in installing deer-proof fencing around stored feed.

The DNR is working with USDA APHIS Wildlife Services to kill as many deer in the TB infected "core area" as possible this winter. They are baiting deer and shooting them on both public and private land in the core area. APHIS estimates 950 (+/- 150) deer in the core area. Three APHIS teams with one sharp-shooter/team have removed about 65-70 deer to date. Another team will be added soon. The APHIS contract runs through the end of April. DNR managers have been working to assuage the controversy surrounding herd reduction.

The DNR private lands program has been promoting applications for USDA WHIP funds for brush land management. DNR funds and FWS private lands funds have been used to winter shear 100 acres in east central Beltrami County. WHIP fund applications are pending for 100 acres of brush land management in Lake of the Woods County and 50 acres in east central Beltrami County.



The DNR Non-game staff continues to work on survey and coordination projects including the 2007 Common Loon Monitoring Project, Birds of Scientific and Natural Areas, Goshawk surveys, Division of Forestry Landscape planning coordination, and coordination with various disciplines developing Off-Highway Vehicle plans.

There have been several personnel changes in the region. Peter Buesseler began work as the new Ecological Services Regional Supervisor in Bemidji on February 7th. Peter previously worked for the DNR as a Prairie Biologist in Fergus Falls. Hamden Slough NWR was “destaffed” on February 18 as directed in the Region 3 Work Force Plan. Refuge staff was reassigned to the Detroit Lakes WMD. Steve Maxson retired from the DNR Wetland Wildlife Populations and Research Group of March 6th, and Gary Huschle will be retiring from Agassiz NWR on March 30th. Gary’s replacement will be Gregg Knutsen who is currently at Long Lake NWR in North Dakota. Gregg will begin work on April 30th.

The dry pattern that developed in 2006 continues with snowfall during winter of 2006-2007 well short of average. Snow depths across much of northern Minnesota have ranked below the 5th percentile for much of the winter. Spring and summer precipitation will need to far exceed normal for surface water to recover quickly from 2006 deficits. Drought concerns for 2007 include a possibly dangerous wildfire situation, stream flows below protected thresholds, low lake levels and associated access issues, lowering ground water levels, and inadequate soil moisture that will affect crops and forest communities.

Region 3 - Sheldon Myerchin

- The second annual “Wetland Summit” was held on Saturday, February 3, 2007 at the Normandale Community College in Bloomington. Approximately 250 attendees heard updates on wetland conservation activities across the state during the morning session. The afternoon session focused on the upcoming 2007 Farm Bill and its potential affect on wetlands in Minnesota.

- Bird Conservation Minnesota is looking for nominations for individuals to serve on its Coordinating Council. The term is for two years and the Council meets quarterly. The Coordinating Council is responsible for overall policy and direction of BCM and delegates responsibility for day-to-day operations to the Partnership Coordinator. Members will be recruited who have a strong interest in birds and appropriate skill sets, and represent organizations with significant bird interests, including government agencies and nonprofit groups, private land owners, agriculture, nature centers, recreation, or tourism. If you, or someone in your organization, are interested please contact Ron Windingstad, BCM Partnership Coordinator, at (651)739-9332.

- Shallow Lakes Forum IV is scheduled for April 3 - 4, 2007 at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Suites in St. Cloud. Information can be obtained at www.shallowlakes.info .



From Sherburne NWR:

- The Sherburne NWR annual Spring Bird Tour is scheduled for April 14, 2007 at 8:00 a.m. and Migratory Bird Day is scheduled for May 12, 2007 starting at 7:00 a.m.. Please contact the Refuge Office at (763)389-3323 for more information.

From Beau Liddell, MNDNR, Little Falls:

We have had a growing local sandhill crane population (belonging to the Eastern Crane population) in my work area for several decades, with highest concentrations near Little Falls around the Rice-Skunk-Mud wetland complex. We've also started receiving consistent spring and fall use of the area by whooping cranes from Necedah refuge. With this growing population has come increased crane-human conflicts, all associated with depredation on newly emerging corn from late-May through June (birds key in on new seedlings and then pry them up and pluck the seed, and continue working down rows). Corn seed is vulnerable for roughly a 2 week period after initial emergence.

While minor depredation (0.5-1 acre losses) associated with breeding birds adjacent to breeding & brood-rearing territories has been common throughout my 3-county work area for over 15 years, we've begun experiencing more severe losses (10-40 acres) from non-breeding flocks (25-150 individuals) that roost on large, remote, shallow wetlands (e.g. Rice-Skunk Lakes), and we have evidence that such damage is beginning to expand elsewhere in the transition zone (e.g. Fergus Falls area). Regardless of how severe the damage is, conventional means of dealing with these problems (cracker shells, propane exploders, etc.) are not effective or practical for most growers, and we have reports of individuals poaching cranes to deal with their problem. The situation experienced in my work area is very similar to what WI has experienced, and MnDNR & MnDA have been cooperating with the International Crane Foundation (ICF) to support EPA Section 18 listing of Anthraquinone (AQ) under the trade name Avitec. This chemical is a natural substance produced by plants and has co-evolved as an anti-bird herbivory strategy on seeds and fruits. It is the active ingredient in Flight Control to deal with Canada geese on turf grass, and has the potential to be used for a wide array of bird crop depredations. However, it's currently only labeled for geese and now cranes temporarily.

Our goal is to continue working with ICF to support their experimental trial work and to label this chemical permanently for cranes over the next 1-2 years. The chemical when properly applied to seed (powder or liquid formula; seed can also be purchased pre-treated) isolates the corn crop from the birds and is 100% effective, and costs about \$5/acre to treat. Cranes continue to use the same fields (hence we're not redistributing a problem) by foraging on waste grain and grubs (which also benefits the grower). This is the closest thing I've seen in the animal epredation business that I'd characterize as a silver bullet. We're currently working on a factsheet for managers and growers, and will be issuing some news releases over the next month or so to get the word out amongst the agricultural community. In addition, we're hoping to cooperate with local sportsmen groups, USFWS, ICF, and possibly SCSU to conduct research on cranes in Central MN to improve our understanding of crane dispersal, migration affinities, habitat use, and population expansion.



Region 4 – Curt Vacek

Dave Soehren, Area Wildlife Manager for MN DNR in Appleton, retired after 37 years of dedicated service to the State. No doubt, the resources will miss his helping hand.

Kurt Haroldson/Dick Kimmel:

Sharon Goetz left her job as Wild Turkey Research Biologist with the MN DNR Madelia Farmland Research Group for a job with MN DNR - Ecological Services in St. Paul. Madelia is interviewing on March 6 to fill the vacancy. Dick Kimmel, Group Leader, noted that applicant numbers for this and other positions he's filled in recent years are way down compared to a decade ago. Still, there are a couple of very strong applicants for this position.

Jeff Zajac:

The Renville SWCD was selected to receive an LCCMR grant to protect rock outcrops associated with wetlands with permanent conservation easements. The SWCD has worked closely with Wildlife, Ecological Services and USFWS in developing the project and preparing for its implementation. Approximately 200 acres will be protected by the easements, and priority will be given to those with the best potential for protecting biodiversity.

John Schladweiler:

John is now the Regional Ecological Services Manager (Region 4, New Ulm MN DNR). His former position as Assistant Regional Wildlife Manager (Region 4, New Ulm MN DNR) is currently vacant.

New wetland control structures are being installed by DU with grant money from MN DNR - Wildlife on Rice Lake in Blue Earth County and Lake Geneva in Freeborn County. In the case of the former, DNR Trails and Waterways is also assisting by creating a boat channel through a cattail-choked bay of the lake.

Region 6 – Bruce Hawkinson

Voters Say "Yes" to Raising \$20 Million for Water and Land Protection

On November 7, 2006, voters in Washington County, MN, overwhelmingly approved the County Question: Preservation of Water Quality, Woodlands and Other Natural Areas. Approval of this ballot question authorized Washington County to sell \$20 million in bonds to finance the acquisition of land or interests in land for the purposes of improving water quality of rivers, lakes and streams; protecting drinking water sources; purchasing parklands; preserving wetlands and woodlands; and protecting land along water bodies from development.

County leaders placed this question on the ballot after identifying land and water protection needs and researching voter willingness to pay, with assistance from citizen volunteers and the



Trust for Public Land. The Washington County Citizens for Land and Water led the campaign, with assistance from The Trust for Public Land, The Conservation Campaign and Minnesota League of Conservation Voters Education Fund (now called Conservation Minnesota).

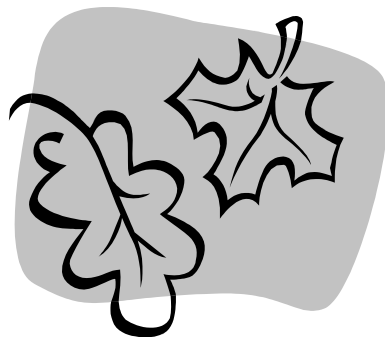
The most important factors for success were:

- Clear, compelling ballot language
- Strong campaign strategy, including reaching targeted voters and limiting broadcast communications
- Successful grasstops leadership recruiting key community endorsements
- Strong national and Minnesota nonprofits providing institutional support and recruiting regional media endorsements and coverage

The County Question received 61,616 votes for and 39,108 votes against, for a margin of 61% to 39%. A majority of voters in every precinct but one – 86 out of 87 precincts - supported the measure. The County Question passed by a larger margin than any other contested issue or candidate that appeared on the ballot county-wide (including a US Senate race, four statewide offices, state constitutional amendment, and county sheriff). Voters were comfortable voting on the County Question; more votes were cast for or against the County Question than in any candidate or other issue contest on the ballot, with the exception of Governor and US Senate.

These results confirm that Minnesotans are willing to pay to protect their quality of life and provide access to nature nearby. As Minnesotans continue to say “yes” to conservation at the local level, interest is growing to increase state matching funds for land protection for water quality, parks and natural areas.

“Minnesota voters are willing to pay to protect our clean waters and natural lands for our children and grandchildren,” said Susan Schmidt, director of The Trust for Public Land’s Minnesota Office. “They know that these lakes and natural lands play an important role in preserving our quality of life. With our natural lands diminishing, we cannot afford to wait to protect the water quality of our rivers, lakes and streams, and to conserve natural areas, parks, and habitat for fish and wildlife.”





Chapter and Section Reports

The **University of Minnesota, Crookston** student chapter has continued to be active this spring. We have had speakers on waterfowl biology, local wild turkey introductions and survival, and an endangered species speaker is the topic for our next meeting. Several members also traveled to hear Polar Explorer Lonnie Dupre relay his experiences. Nine members attended the Minnesota Chapter meeting and reported great success interacting with the state's wildlife professionals. We have continued our work planning and building an observation blind overlooking a local wetland. This weekend we will be clearing wood duck boxes at Rydell National Wildlife Refuge and we have at least one project planned with the local Department of Natural Resources area office. Alisha Maves, Secretary

Vermilion Community College recently completed a program review for their Fish and Wildlife management degree. This is a 2-year Associate of Science degree designed to give students some basic field skills in the area of fish and wildlife management, while providing a solid general education curriculum conducive to transfer to a 4-year institution. In addition, Vermilion offers a 1-year professional development certificate designed to provide students a variety of research, ecology and management based courses, enhancing their skills in such areas as radio-telemetry, habitat assessment, census techniques and literature review. A portion of the program review involved an application for Accreditation from the North American Wildlife Technology Association (www.nawta.org). Vermilion was successful and received the accreditation in June, 2006. This means any student that completes the Fish and Wildlife AS degree and the Ecology Certificate receives an additional accreditation from NAWTA. Lori Schmidt, Natural Resource program coordinator at Vermilion, has agreed to host the 25th annual general meeting in Ely and serve as the president elect of the organization. Ely's location will be ideal for the mix of both Canadian and US schools currently accredited by NAWTA. Please contact Lori Schmidt at l.schmidt@vcc.edu for more information.

North Central Section of the Wildlife Society

The North Central Section is formed by the State Chapters of The Wildlife Society in the Upper Midwest. The North Central Board is made up of the elected officers (President, President-elect, Secretary, and Treasurer) and the Chapter President from each state in the region. At the section level we elect a regional representative to the National TWS council. This is our voice on the National level.

The North Central Section also produces a semi-annual newsletter that helps state and student chapters stay in touch with other wildlifers. The newsletter is also promotes regional wildlife training and conference opportunities.

The North Central Section has a long tradition of Symposiums and Workshops at the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference. These sessions have covered many important topics of relevance to wildlifers. This year's symposium will be on lead poisoning in upland areas. The Section also helps fund regional workshops, such as the recent Grassland Management Workshop



sponsored by the Indiana Chapter:
(http://www.agriculture.purdue.edu/fnr/wildlife/pro/grass_2006/grasslands.htm).

In order to continue providing these important resources and services to wildlife professionals in the upper Midwest, we need to maintain a strong membership. You can become a member by paying through the national office at: <http://www.wildlife.org> or through the North Central website at: <http://www.crk.umn.edu/tws/NCS/>

If you have any questions about the Section please contact: John Moriarty at john.moriarty@co.ramsey.mn.us or (651) 748-2500.

Awards

The following awards were presented at our annual meeting on Wednesday, February 21, 2007, in Alexandria, Minnesota.

MINNESOTA AWARD – Gary L. Huschle

The Minnesota Award is our Chapter's highest award and has been presented since 1958 to an individual who has made outstanding contributions to Minnesota's wildlife and natural resources. Past recipients include some of the great names in Minnesota's conservation history: George Selke, John Moyle, Richard Dorer, Walter Breckenridge, Art Hawkins, Robert Farnes, Gordy Gullion, Dave Dickey, Dave Mech, Harvey Nelson, Carrol Henderson, Jan Green, Bill Berg, Dan Svedarsky, Francie Cuthbert, Ross Hier, and Terry Wolfe.

“Gary Huschle is the epitome of a seasoned field biologist who has remained current with developing technologies in the field of wildlife management and is respected by both professional resource managers, students, and the public.” Over his 30-year career he has worked at Charles M. Russell NWR, MT; Devil's Lake NWR, ND; and Agassiz NWR, MN. Gary has been the Wildlife Biologist for Agassiz NWR since 1992. During his 14-year tenure in Northwest Minnesota he has left his mark in the field.

Water management in northwest MN has been an extremely volatile issue especially since the spring flood events of 1996 and 1997. Gary's intimate understanding of the complex management of Agassiz' 26 impoundments located in the middle of the watershed have been invaluable during periods of extreme flooding.

Gary is a strong supporter of research that will improve management or enlighten our understanding on habitat and wildlife population issues. The following is a list of studies he initiated, designed, collaborated on, found students/volunteers for, assisted with funding, or provided oversight on:

- Wolf habits in an agricultural area prior to proposed delisting.
- American bittern ecology. This continues to be the only major study conducted on this species.
- Decline of NWMN Moose population from 1995 to 2000. Gary was the lead person for the FWS.



- Contaminant investigation by USGS and FWS. This was the first baseline contaminant study for the refuge.
- Least bittern nesting habits relative to water level management and marsh size.
- Shorebird use in restored wetlands on private lands in NWMN. A project involving some of the first attempts to measure the success of restored wetlands to wildlife.
- Investigation into hydrological changes as possible cause of loss of back spruce/tamarack in a wilderness area.

As a result of his leadership and/or involvement since 1995, 7 Masters' Theses have been completed, two PhD dissertations are in the works on projects initiated at Agassiz or in the Northwest Minnesota area, many papers have been published, some on which he is primary author, co-author or advisory. He is an outstanding media man (even though he dislikes this aspect of the job) on TV, radio, newspaper and magazine interviews. He deals effectively with hot issues such as wolves and flooding...always remaining calmly factual. Gary is an excellent mentor. He encourages independence in problem solving, but was always available to advise, guide and assist. He has led many college classes in the field. He has also supervised and mentored several student interns from local colleges. He has had a long-term commitment with several local high schools, serving as a Science Fair judge for over 10 years.

Gary has had a wonderful working relationship with the MNDNR, Red Lake Watershed District, and The Red Lake Band of Chippewa. He actively seeks input from retired biologists and experts in the field to come up with practical and achievable management objectives. During periods of flooding Gary keeps adjoining neighbors informed, often daily, on water conditions. These are not always easy conversations, but show an understanding and concern for neighbor welfare and relationships.

He has given countless volunteer hours to the Society Tympanuchus Cupido Pinnatus capturing, collaring and tracking birds, monitoring leks, and will continue to do so in retirement. As a member of the ND Chapter of TWS, Prairie Chicken Committee in 1990 he was instrumental in the development and implementation of the proposal for a ND prairie chicken translocation project that resulted in the reestablishment of a population that led to the first prairie chicken hunting season in over 60 years. Gary has been an active member of the MN Chapter of TWS for 15 years. He served as Region 1 Representative for many years, as President in 2001, and chairs the Professional Development Committee at present. He is an active member of the Northwest Minnesota Houndsmen, and is currently serving as Secretary/ Treasurer. He is a Board Member of the MN Chapter of the Rocky Mt. Elk Foundation. Gary raises horses, hounds, and bird dogs, all of which he uses pursuing various game, day and night.

In summary, Gary has remained throughout his career the consummate field biologist who has not only made a difference on the landscape but has influenced many coworkers and upcoming professionals in the field of wildlife management.



CONSERVATION AWARD – St. Louis River Citizens Action Committee

The Conservation Award has been presented since 1985 to an organization or institution that has shown an outstanding commitment to Minnesota’s resources. Past recipients include: MN Waterfowl Association, The Nature Conservancy, MN Sharp-tailed Grouse society, MN Prairie Chicken Society, MN Division of the Izaak Walton League, MN Conservation Federation, Nicollet Conservation Club, Rice Area Sportsmen’s Club and The Stearns County Chapter of Pheasants Forever.

The St Louis River CAC is a valuable resource in and around Duluth and Northeastern Minnesota. They serve as a facilitator, bringing together diverse interest groups to work on resource protection, conservation and restoration on a grand scale. While their primary focus is the St. Louis River and its estuary, including the Duluth/Superior harbor with its working industrialized port, their effect on the quality of life in and around St. Louis County, MN and Douglas County, Wisconsin is shared by all citizens.

In 2002 the CAC’s Habitat Committee completed a comprehensive “Lower St. Louis River Habitat Plan” detailing the historical uses of the river as well as past and continuing threats to the estuary. The plan doesn’t stop there but goes on to detail “Conservation Targets” for protection and restoration and the strategies needed to accomplish each target. Some of the targets include: restoration of Piping Plover breeding habitat, restoration of historically extensive wild rice and beach grass stands, protection and restoration of wetland vegetation in and around the many sheltered bays, restoring habitat in several area trout streams, and restoring breeding populations of lake sturgeon to the estuary. The Habitat Committee alone brings together folks from almost 20 different government, tribal, conservation and private organizations, from two states, as they work to restore the St. Louis River.

In recent years the CAC has been a voice for resource conservation on a variety of local issues including the proposed Spirit Mountain golf course development, Clough Island preservation and habitat restoration (including obtaining a \$1 million dollar grant for this purpose), two superfund cleanup efforts, the Duluth Natural Areas Plan and the City of Duluth’s Comprehensive Plan. They often bring together divergent viewpoints and bring about resolution of difficult issues to the benefit of local citizens and natural resources. And they’re not just all about work! They find time each year to sponsor several field trips canoeing or exploring the river and its history, geology, flora and fauna. All of this is accomplished with a volunteer board and 1 full-time staff person!

LAW ENFORCEMENT AWARD– Scott Staples

The Law Enforcement Award has been presented since 1992 to an individual who has demonstrated dedication and service to the protection of Minnesota’s natural resources. Scott Staples began his career with the MN DNR in 1997 in Moose Lake and transferred to Carlton (part of the Cloquet district) in 2002.

He is a valuable colleague in natural resources protection and education in the Cloquet/Duluth area. He frequently takes on duties of his own initiative and was a force to be reckoned with on OHV enforcement before the Department had a more formal program. He continues to work



hard on OHV violation issues and educational efforts. He does not shy away from investigating and prosecuting wetlands violations. He was instrumental in tracking down a particularly flagrant violation at Hay Lake in Carlton County one year ago involving an individual driving a truck in a lakebed. He was featured in a recent public service announcement on local television stations on preventing the spread of aquatic exotic species.

He has been recognized within his Division for outstanding achievement in several areas. Notably he was recognized last winter at the International Owl Symposium in Duluth for tracking down and prosecuting two individuals who had shot and killed at least 8 Great Gray Owls (and it is suspected that they shot hundreds more) during the previous winter's owl invasion. Carrol Henderson presented him with a meritorious service award for this unique achievement. He is an asset in local youth education efforts and has assisted with our local Izaak Walton League chapter's Youth Waterfowl Day for several years. Overall he is a huge asset to the area, the Department, and the state and is an exemplary Conservation Officer.

STUDENT CONSERVATIONIST AWARD – Tim Barberg

The Student Conservationist Award has been presented since 1985 to a wildlife major that has shown commitment to wildlife, has high scholastic achievement, and shows promise as a future wildlife professional. Several past recipients have gone on to natural resource careers in Minnesota. Tim Barberg is a senior at the University of MN – Twin Cities. He served as President of the UofM-Twin Cities, Student Chapter of TWS in 2005/2006. He has been active in conservation issues on and around the UofM campus but also around the state. He led the student efforts on the St. Paul campus to restore Sarita Wetland to more natural upland vegetation. This included: removing invasives like purple-loosestrife and buckthorn, obtaining \$4,000 in campus grants to buy native tree seedlings, and planning and leading work days to plant the trees last spring. Last fall as part of a Forest Ecology course, Tim led his group in planning the management of the future forest around Sarita. His group's efforts resulted in a poster presentation. Tim has also taken an active role in statewide conferences and workshops. Notably at last year's first annual Wetlands Summit, he spoke from the floor on the importance of the University's natural resource programs to the future of our state's resources. At this year's Summit he was part of a panel on the Farm Bill and presented on the need to bring the conservation and agricultural communities together to better and more positively impact the management of our prairie wetlands and landscape. He has initiated efforts to add a course to agriculture and natural resource majors' curricula that would integrate conservation practices into agricultural management to benefit future farmers. He has worked as a DNR laborer or intern for the Divisions of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Forestry. His future plans involve working in the wildlife profession with an emphasis on wetlands restoration and policy issues. He will truly be an asset to the wildlife profession.

FEDELER SCHOLARSHIP – Micah Meyer

These scholarships were established in memory of past MN Chapter President, Bob Fedeler, who taught in the Natural Resources Department at Central Lakes College. The scholarships, presented to one undergraduate student and one graduate student, are a one- year, full membership in The Wildlife Society including all publications. Qualifying students must have a 3.0 or better GPA, a strong interest in a career in wildlife biology, be active in extracurricular activities, have a strong sense of public service and have demonstrated good communication



skills. Micah Meyer is an undergraduate at University of MN - Crookston with a double major in the natural resources field.

Other TWS Members Recently Recognized

Perry Loegering was selected as the Conservation Professional of the Year by Ducks Unlimited (DU) for his ongoing work to enhance wild rice lakes in northern Minnesota.

Dave Soehren was awarded the Beyond the Call award by DU for his 37 years of service toward the betterment of wildlife habitat and shallow lakes in Minnesota.

Mark Gulick was awarded the Beyond the Call award by DU for his work assisting with the restoration of Lake Maria by improving water quality and removing carp and other rough fish.

Ray Norrgard was awarded the Midwest Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies' Biologist of the Year award.

Ed Boggess and **John Erb** are members of the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies' Furbearer Resources Technical Working Group recently honored with the Ernest Thompson Seton award for excellence in advancing wildlife management and conservation, and TWS' Group Achievement award for excellence in professional conservation accomplishments for a group.

Bill Berg was inducted as a 2006 TWS Fellow at the annual meeting in Alaska. TWS fellows, who are appointed for life and serve as ambassadors of TWS, have distinguished themselves through exceptional service to the wildlife profession.

Thank you from Gary Huschle

To Minnesota Chapter of the Wildlife Society Members:

Thank you for bestowing the distinction upon me of adding my name to the list of Minnesota Award recipients. It is a great honor which I am very proud to have received. I retired from the Fish and Wildlife Service March 31, 2007. I hope to be active in conservation in retirement status as have many others that have received this award. Thank you for this honor and allowing me to have served you in the past.

Gary Huschle





MN TWS Welcomes New Officers/Board Members

The 2007 Annual Meeting included election of new officers for MN TWS, and the appointment of a new Newsletter Editor.

- Steve Kittelson is now President-Elect and will soon be planning the 2008 annual meeting. Steve works for the MN DNR as a Wildlife Lake Specialist in Mankato, and has been involved with the Chapter for several years.
- Rich Olsen will serve as Secretary. Rich is currently the Assistant Area Wildlife Manager in Glenwood for the MN DNR, and recently moved to MN after working in several states and also in Estonia.
- Sara Vacek will keep the books straight as the new Treasurer. Sara is a biologist with the Fish and Wildlife Service at the Morris Wetland Management District.
- Regional Representatives for Regions 2, 4 and 6 will remain under the experienced and steady hands of Mike Larson, Curt Vacek, and Bruce Hawkinson.
- Mike Dings has agreed to serve as our representative in the Fish and Wildlife Legislative Association. You can contact him at ding0106@umn.edu.
- Laura Bonneau has graciously agreed to take on the duties of newsletter editor and was appointed to this task by President Dave Trauba. This is a critically important volunteer job for MN TWS. Laura works for the Fish and Wildlife Service at the Prairie Wetlands Learning Center in Fergus Falls and brings some TWS experience from Texas to the far north.

Congratulations to these new Officers and Board members. Please take the time to thank them for their time and energy.

MN TWS Chapter t-shirts are on sale
for only \$10! Get yours now! Contact
Jodie Provost at (218) 546-7310 or
sprucegrovefarm@emily.net.



February 7, 2007

Patrick Moore
Executive Director, CURE
114 South First Street West
Montevideo, MN 56265

Dear Mr. Moore,

The Minnesota Chapter of The Wildlife Society would like to express its support for CURE's position statement on the 2007 Farm Bill. The position statement brings together a number of important issues, 'a hodgepodge of programs' as they state, and integrates them into a big picture view of the Farm Bill. We find it especially important to stress how 'green' practices will have direct economic feedbacks to producers/farmers. This was supported by CURE citing several studies which demonstrate green farming can be profitable to the agriculture community. We also support the goal of diversifying rural economies through development of renewable fuels. These areas can provide both wildlife habitat and direct income for the landowner. The integration of working lands, rural economies, and emerging and traditional recreational uses of land are important parts of a holistic vision of a new agricultural landscape.

Sincerely,

David R. Trauba
President, MN Chapter
of The Wildlife Society
14042 20th ST NW
Watson, MN 56295

cc: Richard Kroger, Senior Policy Advisor, CURE
Greg Hoch, Chair, Prairie/Farmland Committee, MN-TWS



What Does It Mean To Be A TWS Member?

“Social cohesion demands a creed, or code of behavior, or a prevailing sentiment, or, at best, some combination of all three; without something of the kind, a community disintegrates...”

Bertrand Russell, *Power: A New Social Analysis* (1938)

Upon discovering that one could join a TWS section or chapter, but not be a member of the so-called “parent organization”, that is, of TWS as a whole, I’ll admit to being very surprised. In fact, it has been estimated that as many as half of the individuals participating in “our” organization currently limit their involvement and support exclusively to the regional or local level. One reason for my surprise is that our sister organizations, the American Fisheries Society (AFS) and Society of American Foresters (SAF), both require membership in the parent organization in order to participate in chapters and/or sections.

The reasons for TWS’ situation appear to be complex. First, this has apparently been going on for a long time, so there is historical precedence. Second, it certainly costs quite a bit more to become a member of the parent organization compared to a section or chapter. Another possible reason is distance and lack of connection—it is certainly harder for members to feel connected to an organizational headquarters hundreds or thousands of miles away than to their local friends and colleagues. Last, but not least, some TWS section or chapter members might simply feel that the benefits of membership in the parent organization do not outweigh the costs. However, these perceptions appear to be changing. As TWS has begun to improve its membership services, embrace positive change and increase communication with its sections and chapters, one chapter (Alaska) recently voted to require membership in the parent organization. Other chapters (e.g., Texas) have not gone so far as to make it a requirement, but rather have educated and recruited so actively that the vast majority of its members are also parent-society members. While I applaud the efforts of these highly successful chapters, we obviously still have a long way to go. This started me thinking about what it means to be a member of TWS, or for that matter of any professional organization. My intent in this essay is to share some of my thoughts on what it means to be a member of TWS, including some of the many benefits that are derived from membership in professional societies. In doing so, I also touch on what it means to be a wildlife professional.

Influencing Legislation and Public Opinion

Many individuals join professional organizations to become part of something bigger. Individuals can certainly make a difference in democratic nations. However, in today’s complex and highly politicized world, effective action is often only possible when people put their collective voices together in a unified fashion. Put more simply, there is strength in numbers. TWS represents and serves thousands of wildlife professionals—the people that manage, conserve, protect and study wildlife in North America and beyond. As such, it represents the views of a community of experts. As a science-based organization that values dialogue over confrontation, TWS has the potential to exert a powerful influence on legislation and public



opinion affecting wildlife. In fact, with all of the extremism and partisan bickering going on, there is a crying need for a more reasoned, science-based approach to wildlife management and conservation. TWS is uniquely positioned to fill that niche.

TWS is very active in the legislative arena, commenting on pending legislation, communicating with and educating elected representatives and developing policy statements on relevant issues. TWS members are encouraged to become involved in the development of draft policy statements in their area of expertise and, when appropriate, to contribute to technical reports that provide the scientific foundations for policy development. Some of our members have expressed concern that TWS might become an “advocacy” organization. While some individuals and professional organizations do advocate for extreme, often unrealistic, positions, I have pointed out that “advocacy” itself is not a bad word. It’s important that we stand for something. We are indeed and must be advocates for a science-based, commonsensical approach to wildlife management and conservation policy. TWS also hopes to increase its exposure to the media and public within the near future by producing regular press releases and expanding its web site to include a section designed specifically for public consumption.

One of the things that initially attracted me to TWS was its courage in standing up for what wildlife professionals and wildlife really needed, such as appropriate state, provincial and federal funding for wildlife and natural resources programs; the control of feral cats and other introduced animals; a more reasoned approach to the U.S. Endangered Species Act—an approach which retains the legislation’s strengths, while shoring up its weaknesses; and a recognition of the growing challenge of global climate change. TWS’ ability to influence decisions on a local, national and international stage will only improve as its membership numbers grow. Numbers tend to impress elected representatives, and when we can say that TWS represents 15,000 wildlife experts instead of the current 7,000 plus, the organization’s political clout will clearly grow. Simply put, our collective voice will become stronger the bigger we get. That alone should be sufficient reason to join a professional organization with which one shares common interests, values and goals.

Information Sharing and Communication

Knowledge is power, and one of the primary functions of scientific and educational organizations like ours’ is to share information. In 2007, TWS will deliver peer-reviewed scientific and management information to its members through its technical publications, *The (new) Journal of Wildlife Management*, *Wildlife Monographs* and technical reports. The journal and monographs, including legacy publications going back to 1937, will soon be available to members online. Furthermore, TWS realizes that many of its busy, non-academic members have little time to study TWS’ technical publications, but still would like to be kept up-to-date with information relevant to their profession. More specifically, they want practical, management-related information that will help them in their day-to-day work. In order to meet this demand, TWS will launch its new member magazine, *The Wildlife Professional* in early 2007. This popular publication will be a source of timely news and information on a wide variety of topics of interest to a broad range of people working in the wildlife and natural resources fields. Last, but not least, the TWS Web Site is being redesigned to become an essential source of information for wildlife professionals. Furthermore, all of TWS’ information resources, both on



and off-line are being fully integrated. For example, some articles published in *The Wildlife Professional* will be linked to expanded information resources on the web site.

Knowledge is also shared among members at TWS conferences and workshops. The TWS Annual Conference regularly attracts over 1,500 delegates annually, who participate in panel and roundtable discussions, paper and poster sessions, working group meetings, and training workshops.

Professional societies also have an important role in facilitating communication among their members. The installation of a new server will give TWS the capability of creating e-mail list servers for our working groups, chapters and sections, thus greatly facilitating internal communication. In addition, new web site templates are being built for chapters, sections and working groups that could also revolutionize communication at the local level. When completed, these sites will be managed at the grassroots level, with headquarters providing appropriate support through training. Informational feeds directly from headquarters to subunit sites will also be possible, thus resulting in improved communication at all organizational levels. In short, such changes will continue to bring our widely dispersed community even closer together.

Participation, Networking and Professional Development

Members of professional societies are a community of experts—a group of people that have assembled due to their shared values, goals and interests. Since TWS members are wildlife students and professionals, the primary interests of our members include wildlife biology, management and conservation. TWS members value healthy and diverse ecosystems and wildlife populations and recognize that humans play a vital role in restoring and sustaining native wildlife and natural systems. Furthermore, TWS recognizes the importance of science and education in developing sound stewardship policies. TWS members represent a broad range of expertise, ranging from wildlife ecology to land use planning to human dimensions to wildlife damage control and beyond. A wide range of organizations employs our members, including state, provincial and federal agencies, private industry, non-governmental organizations and colleges and universities. This diversity clearly is a strength, as it offers tremendous opportunities for participation, networking and professional development.

TWS offers members many opportunities for participation. Members are encouraged to either run or vote for elected offices and help shape the future of our organization. Recently, members were asked to provide input on TWS' strategic plan; they are also encouraged to participate actively in a diverse range of expert working groups that provide advice and consultation on important relevant topics, such as introduced species, urban wildlife, international wildlife management, biodiversity, and gender and ethnic diversity. Participation in local sections and chapters allows members to keep informed about relevant issues in their own communities, facilitates interactions with colleagues, and provides access to local networking and training opportunities.

Networking is often a critical component of professional development. No one ever gets to where they are without the help of others. Whether your goal is finding relevant information,



locating potential collaborators, identifying a mentor, or finding your first job, relationships with colleagues can be critical. Professional societies are the ideal places to develop such connections. As a community of professionals, most TWS members are ready and willing to help colleagues when asked. Students, in particular, have much to gain from their involvement in professional organizations. An ability to meet and speak with active professionals that have similar interests can be invaluable in the early formative stages of one's career. In addition, such interactions are often the source of jobs and/or educational opportunities, such as graduate student positions or projects.

In recent years, TWS has done much to increase involvement by students, fully recognizing that they are the future of our profession. This includes the formation of a Student Professional Development Working Group and focused annual conference activities, including a grant program and volunteer opportunities to help defray the cost of attendance, a student-professional mixer, a student dinner, a "Quiz Bowl" contest and a mentoring program. Expansion of these efforts is a high priority of the new strategic plan.

But, what if you've completed your education and already have a job? Your situation may have changed, but that does not mean that your involvement with TWS should suddenly cease. Indeed, as wildlife professionals, we all have an obligation to help develop the next generation of wildlife managers, researchers and conservationists. The opportunity to interact with and offer advice and assistance to student members through TWS mentoring programs can be very gratifying. Furthermore, in order to continue to be effective in a rapidly changing world, wildlife professionals must keep up-to-date with recent advances in their field of expertise or gain new skills. Workshops at the TWS annual conference can provide specialized training in a wide variety of relevant topics and TWS publications also help to keep members informed of the latest developments in the wildlife profession. TWS' Certification Program is a way for wildlife professionals to demonstrate their expertise and receive recognition for their continuing education efforts. Discussions are now underway between TWS and state and federal agencies about how certification can be made more relevant to hiring and promotional practices. In addition, work is also underway to expand certification to cover a broader range of wildlife professionals, beginning with wildlife technicians.

Professional Debate and Collective Problem Solving

I've always believed in the expression "more heads are better than one." Membership in professional societies, especially those that are science-based, offers tremendous opportunities for collective thought, debate, analysis and problem solving. TWS Working Groups provide a forum for such activities, as do technical report preparation, and TWS conferences. The 2007 TWS Annual Conference in Tucson, AZ will be the first to include panel and roundtable discussions, formats specifically designed to increase opportunities for professional debate and discussion. Engaging in productive dialogue about the many complex and important issues facing wildlife professionals today is a major benefit of belonging to a community of experts. TWS is committed to taking advantage of the innovative thoughts of its diverse and highly trained constituency by facilitating such interactions. It is also committed to bringing together experts from a diverse array of relevant disciplines, as this is the crucible from which true innovation often arises. For example, TWS recently co-hosted a planning meeting for the



Human-Wildlife Conflict Collaboration-a diverse collection of individuals dedicated to finding effective solutions to this growing and global conservation challenge. Many innovative ideas emerged for how to improve the way that wildlife professionals think about and deal with this exceedingly complex issue.

Professional Recognition

Individuals that make significant contributions to their profession deserve recognition for their efforts. A critical function of professional societies is to honor such individuals accordingly. TWS has many award programs that honor excellence in the wildlife profession, including awards for chapter and student chapter of the year, significant publications, conservation and research, educational and media efforts and so forth. The highest award given by the Society is the Aldo Leopold Memorial Award, a special honor reserved for those who have made outstanding contributions to the wildlife profession.

Preserving History

The existence of professional organizations, especially long-established ones, allows their members to continue to build on the traditions established by and the many significant contributions made by those who came before them. In a sense, it allows them to better understand and participate in the history of their profession. TWS has a proud and venerable history, going back to the mid-1930s. Its membership and founders included many of the giants of the wildlife profession, such as Aldo Leopold, J.N. (Ding) Darling, and Olaus J. Murie. As in any organization or profession, change is inevitable. But the contributions of our forerunners should never be forgotten. TWS has helped to track the history of our profession and assist us in remembering what we might otherwise forget. Such continuity is comforting and reminds us that we are part of something larger than ourselves, something that began before we were here and will hopefully continue long after we are gone.

Ethical Codes

Every community needs guidance on what is acceptable behavior and what is not, and this is especially important in professional communities. The credibility of an expert community can rise or fall depending on how well it addresses such issues. TWS has developed a code of ethics for certified wildlife biologists and a standardized and fair mechanism for assessing the validity of complaints when they arise.

Cost Sharing

One little appreciated benefit of joining a professional organization is cost sharing. TWS could not afford to support government affairs, publication and information services or conference programs without the combined support of its members. Indeed, one incentive for growing our membership as quickly as possible is that we may eventually be able to afford to cut costs to individual members. Currently, only a small percentage of wildlife professionals are supporting these critical services for the entire community. In fact, if TWS were to double in size tomorrow, there is a good chance that we could afford to ramp up membership services and, at the same



time, cut costs of membership to individuals. This is especially true if we were to improve our outside fund-raising. A recent example of cost sharing by members was support for the upgrading of TWS' technological infrastructure and web site, which was the focus of this year's annual member fund-raising campaign. The generous contributions of members allowed TWS to upgrade its IT infrastructure, begin overhauling its web site and digitize its legacy publications. All of these positive changes will lead to improved membership services.

Conclusions

I began this essay by posing a couple of critical questions: What does it mean to be a TWS member and what does it mean to be wildlife professional? Furthermore, are individuals who join *only* their local chapter or section participating fully in or supporting the "community of experts" we call TWS? After reading the above essay, I leave it to you to form your own conclusions. The fact that nearly half of TWS chapter and section members do not belong to or support TWS as a whole has been a significant challenge for this organization. A recent survey also indicated that only a quarter of federal biologists belong to TWS and the proportion of state and provincial biologists may be even lower. As we ramp up our member services, I sincerely hope that more wildlife professionals will begin to understand and appreciate the many benefits of and obligations associated with belonging to a "community of experts." I look forward to working with current members to help educate those individuals about the many positive changes taking place at our organization. TWS deserves to survive and thrive, but it cannot do so if large numbers of wildlife professionals choose to withhold their support and participation. This is *your* professional organization and Council and staff cannot face this daunting challenge alone. Existing members must help convince their colleagues that they have much to gain from joining. In other words, we both want and need them to be members of our community—a family of highly trained experts that is deeply dedicated to its core mission of ensuring a future for wildlife in a human-dominated world. That task is not going to be easy, but the more people we can convince to participate actively in TWS, the stronger and more effective we will be.

Michael Hutchins, Ph.D.
Executive Director/CEO

How Much is a Bald Eagle Worth?

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is set to remove the bald eagle from the threatened and endangered species list in February as the result of a lawsuit from a Morrison County landowner. The Minnesota DNR is also considering removing the bald eagle from the list of species of special concern. Although the bald eagle is still federally protected under the Eagle Protection Act, few elected officials and few people in the general public are aware of this, and the USFWS has not yet conducted an educational campaign about these protections. The Morrison County landowner who succeeded in forcing the USFWS to delist the eagle is also intent on challenging the Eagle Protection Act in federal court.



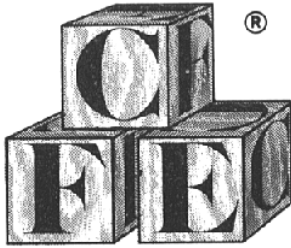
Bald eagle nest sites frequently occupy valuable developable property (e.g., undeveloped lake shore). Currently, financial rewards for developing property outweigh risks for violating eagle protection laws. Recent examples of illegal eagle nest removals occurred in Sartell and Aitkin County. Examples of proposed eagle nest removals come from Sullivan Lake in Morrison County and Crosslake in Crow Wing County. There is an example of a recently permitted development immediately under an active bald eagle nest in Itasca County, and a developer on Pelican Lake in Crow Wing County proposes a subdivision under an active nest. And there are numerous road, recreational trail and pipeline projects that potentially run under eagle nests.

All of this brings up the question; do you know what the restitution value is for illegally taking a bald eagle? Do you think it is high enough to discourage a developer of lakeshore property? You may be surprised to find that the current restitution value for bald eagles in Minnesota is \$0. Yes, that's right. An exotic chukar partridge is worth \$50, a muskrat \$30, a rabbit or squirrel \$20, a sunfish \$5, a bullhead \$0.50/lb, but an eagle is worth nothing. In fact, any nongame species not actually listed as threatened or endangered on the state list has no restitution value. Even leeches and fathead minnows are given their current market value as bait.

This need not have been the case. In preparation for restitution value rulemaking in early 1991, Dr. Daniel R. Talhelm, a natural resources economist from East Lansing, MI prepared an undated report for the Minnesota DNR entitled *Recommended Values for Computing Fair Restitution to the Citizens of Minnesota for Fish and Wildlife Illegally Killed, Injured or Possessed*. In it, he recommended the restitution value for bald eagles be placed at \$20,000. He also recommended other state listed endangered birds and mammals be valued from \$90,000-100,000; for other endangered animals \$10,000; for other threatened birds and mammals \$5000; for other threatened animals \$500; for species of special concern \$100; for whooping cranes \$1,000,000; for ospreys, falcons, and golden eagles \$500; and for common loons \$200. He even had pocket gophers, frogs, and garter snakes valued at \$2.

In the Statement of Need and Reasonableness (dated Jan. 22, 1991) for the restitution value rulemaking, DNR recommended changing the values for threatened and endangered species to \$500-\$4000. However, the rules (Minnesota Rules Ch. 6133) defined threatened and endangered species as those listed in Minnesota Rules Ch. 6134.0200, which does not include the bald eagle. Ultimately, no value was placed on species of special concern nor any other nongame species.

The Minnesota Chapter of TWS believes it is time to revisit the restitution value of game and nongame species alike. With the upcoming delisting of the bald eagle, this seems like a golden opportunity. The Minnesota Chapter proposes forming a special committee to make recommendations to the board regarding restitution values for game and nongame species. If you are interested in serving on this committee please contact your regional representative or Stacy Salveold, MN TWS President.



This program was reviewed and is approved for professional continuing forestry education credits by the Society of American Foresters. This program meets the SAF's Continuing Forestry Education guidelines and standards.

Title of event: MN The Wildlife Society Annual Meeting 2007

Date(s) of event: Feb. 21-22 2007

Location: Alexandria, MN

CFE Contact Hours, Category 1: 8.0

CFE Contact Hours, Category 2: 0.0

If you are a Minnesota Forest Stewardship Plan preparer and would like to ensure that you receive credit for this course towards your continuing education requirement, please complete the information below. Return the completed form to: Sustainable Forests Education Cooperative, Attn: Stephanie Oberg, UMN Cloquet Forestry Center, 175 University Rd., Cloquet, MN 55720

Name: _____

Agency/Organization: _____

Work address: _____

Work phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Lawrence E. Westerberg
MN SAF – CFE Coordinator





Upcoming Workshops

Minnesota Waterfowl Association Symposium 2007

The 10th Annual Symposium will be held at the Holiday Inn Select (Airport), 3 Appletree Square, Bloomington MN, April 13-15, 2007. The theme of the Symposium is: *Waterfowl Management Opportunities for Minnesota*. Presentations will be made by leading waterfowl and wetland experts from Minnesota, neighboring states and provinces, and members of the migratory bird hunting community. The program will address the current status of waterfowl populations, hunting regulations, harvest trends, species management problems, and the need for more intensive management of wetland and grassland habitats at the state, regional and national level. The Symposium is sponsored by the Minnesota Waterfowl Association, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, with support from other organizations and individuals. For further information contact Harvey Nelson, the Symposium Coordinator, at 952-831-8333, (harvnel@msn.com), or Brad Nylin at the MWA number or (brad.nylin@mnwaterfowl.com).

Stream Health and Restoration Workshops 2007

Fluvial Geomorphology and Stream Classification: 23-27 July, Duluth, MN

Stream Restoration: 20-24 August, Fergus Falls, MN

As rivers become more widely recognized and appreciated as valuable natural resources, the responsibility to better understand these systems takes on greater importance. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources offers workshops that teach the basic functions and processes of rivers, the Rosgen method of stream classification, assessing and monitoring river health, and natural channel design river restoration. These workshops are designed for natural resource professionals whose work involves rivers directly or indirectly as well as those who are engaged in watershed-wide resource management issues. Workshops are hands-on experiences and each one requires students to complete fieldwork, analyze data, and present their findings. For more information, contact Brenda Johnson, MN DNR – Ecological Services, Stream Habitat Program, 1509 First Avenue North, Fergus Falls, MN 56537, (218) 739-7576 x260, or brenda.johnson@dnr.state.mn.us.





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