

MINNESOTA CHAPTER NEWSLETTER THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

****FINAL PRINTED ISSUE****
****ALL ELECTRONIC IN 2012****

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NEWSLETTER
DEADLINE:
MARCH 1,
2012.**

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The end of an era – newsletter to become electronic only

This is the last newsletter of the MN Chapter of TWS that will be printed and delivered by mail. Starting with the first issue of 2012 the newsletter will be distributed only in electronic format.

Wes, our highly valued Newsletter Editor, will announce the availability of new issues on our membership email list, and all issues--including past issues back through at least 2007--will be posted on our website.

This change has been in the works, at least in my mind, for many years. I raised the topic shortly after joining the board as a regional representative in 2004. At that time there was fairly strong resistance to shifting to an electronic-only newsletter. Some of our members were not using computers or the Internet, and many board members relied on their paper newsletters as a portable reference to bring to board meetings. Times have continued to change, though. Resistance has waned, presumably because a higher proportion of people are comfortable managing email accounts, navigating the Internet, and reading news on a computer screen.

The most tangible and obvious benefit of shifting to an electronic-only newsletter is financial. During the 5 years from 2006 through 2010 our Chapter's annual budget averaged approximately \$6,000. One-third of that, or approximately \$2,000 per year, was spent on printing and postage for the newsletter. That is a substantial amount of money that our Chapter will be able to allocate to other priorities, including professional development and recognition, supporting student involvement in the Chapter, habitat projects, and

communicating our views on pending policy issues. Perhaps more importantly, there are environmental benefits to going electronic. Years ago our Chapter was willing to pay more for soy ink to make the newsletter more environmentally friendly; electronically we save ink, trees, and fuel for delivery.

Another important cost of printing and mailing the newsletter has been the time and effort of member volunteers. Doug & Ruth Ann Franke have worked with the printer, addressed all newsletters, and worked with the Post Office for many years. Maggie Anderson has handled Bulk Mail returns and address corrections. Brian Haroldson, as our membership database coordinator and producer of the mailing labels, has also been in the background ensuring the success of newsletter delivery. On behalf of all our members, current and past, I express our deep and sincere gratitude to them. Thank you!

Website maintenance

Relying on our website as a source for newsletters will require that the site be current and updated regularly. John Loegering has hosted our Chapter website and helped keep it going for over 10 years, even through terms of service as President of our Chapter and the North Central Section of TWS, but his valuable time is spread too thinly. We desperately need another one of our members to step up and take over as webmaster. John assures me that the time commitment is relatively minor and prior experience maintaining a website is not necessary. Please consider serving our Chapter as the new webmaster.

Happy Holidays!

Mike



2012 ANNUAL MEETING

**A Joint Meeting of The Minnesota and North Dakota Chapters of The
Wildlife Society**

Learning from Crisis: Opportunities for Ecological Renaissance

**Doublewood Inn, Fargo, ND
February 7-9th, 2012**

The Joint Meeting of the NDTWS and MNTWS is being held at the Doublewood Inn, Fargo ND on February 7-9, 2012. See the Doublewood Inn website (http://www.doublewoodinn.com/fdw_amenities.html) for directions, information about making reservations for lodging and activities in the area or call directly to reserve a room at 1-800-433-3235. A block of rooms is being held under "The Wildlife Society" until January 23 at a rate of \$70 per night.

The meeting will begin at 1:00 pm on Tues Feb. 7 and wrap-up at 12:00 pm on Thurs. Feb. 9. Registration begins at 10:00 am on Tues Feb. 7. Registration fees have not been determined yet, but an announcement regarding registration fees and an agenda will be sent out via the MN Chapter listserv later in December. If you are not on the listserv make sure you sign up. Planning is underway for another USFWS/MNDNR discussion session on Tuesday, February 7, prior to the start of the meeting.

TWS Meeting Theme: "Learning from Crisis: Opportunities for Ecological Renaissance". Our states and our profession face a wide range of crises - not simply stresses, but real and acute issues. While at times disheartening, often crises provides new opportunities to make major changes in thinking and practices. We need to embrace these challenges as an opportunity to revitalize and redirect conservation in new, more effective and exciting directions.

MN TWS 2011 AWARD NOMINATIONS REQUESTED

Each year during the Chapters Annual Meeting we recognize members, students and organizations for outstanding achievements in wildlife conservation. This ceremony when we pause to honor our peers is truly the highlight of each Annual Meeting.

The Chapter benefits greatly from your participation in the Awards process. By making a nomination you make a small but important contribution to the Chapter. When you nominate deserving candidates for these Awards you help legitimize and ensure the Chapters character, reputation and legacy. Please take time this fall to nominate deserving candidates for these Awards.



The Minnesota Award has been given to Minnesota's top conservationist annually since 1958. It is the Chapter's highest award and is presented to an individual who has made outstanding contributions to Minnesota's wildlife and natural resources.

The Conservation Award, first presented in 1985, goes to an organization or institution that has shown an outstanding commitment to Minnesota's natural resources.

The Law Enforcement Award is presented to an individual who has demonstrated dedication and service to the protection of Minnesota's natural resources.

The Student Conservationist Award, also given since 1992, is presented to wildlife major at a Minnesota college who has shown high scholastic achievement, and who shows promise as a future wildlife professional.

The Bob Fedeler Memorial Award is presented to one undergraduate and one graduate student who 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. A complete application is due in the same timeframe as other TWS awards.

The Janet S. Boe Memorial Award recognizes a professional woman or outstanding female graduate or undergraduate student who exemplifies the consummate natural resource scientist. The award was first presented in 2009.

We are fortunate in this state to have many dedicated and active individuals devoted to the stewardship of wildlife and their habitats. Take a few moments from your workdays to think about a deserving individual you work with, and submitting a nomination to recognize their contributions.

If a candidate you nominated last year was not selected, please resubmit the nomination for consideration.

Nominations must be submitted by January 9th, 2012.

**Nominations should be sent to: Thom Soule - Phone: 701-387-4420
Email souletp@bektel.com**

On behalf of the Awards Committee thank you all for helping to recognize and celebrate our 2012 Award recipients and also for all that you do for the citizens and the wildlife resources of Minnesota.

Thank you!

MNTWS 2011 Awards Committee

Thom Soule (Chair- DNR- Wildlife Retired)
Fred Bengston (R3-DNR Wildlife)
Bill Berg (R2-DNR- Wildlife Retired)
Wayne Bringer (R1-USF&WS)

Ross Hier (R1-DNR Wildlife)
Gregg Knutsen (R1-USF&WS)
Martha Minchak (R2-DNR Wildlife)
Sara Vacek (R1-USF&WS)



Nomination statement:

This is a typed statement explaining why this individual or group is deserving of recognition. Please explain fully the single accomplishment or series of accomplishments that are noteworthy and should be acknowledged by the Chapter. Include information concerning other awards and honors received, involvement in Chapter and other professional and community organizations, and other relevant information that will help in the selection process. Don't rely just on their resume. Pertinent news, clippings, letters, or documents to support the nomination may be attached.

Submitted by: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

MN TWS 2011 BOB FEDELER MEMORIAL AWARDS

The Minnesota Chapter of The Wildlife Society (TWS) has established this Award in honor of Bob Fedeler. Bob was a popular and longtime biology and natural resources instructor at Staples Technical College and in the Natural Resources Department at Central Lakes College in Brainerd, MN. He served as Chapter President in 1997 and Membership Chair in 1998. Bob died of cancer in March 1999 after teaching for nearly two decades.

This Award consists of two full memberships (one undergraduate student, one graduate student) in The Wildlife Society (TWS) including all publications. The Fedeler Awards will help beginning wildlife professionals get started with membership in TWS providing them with high quality peer reviewed research, issues and discussions through the Society's various publications and access to TWS's regional and local networks of professional wildlife managers, researchers, conservation practitioners, policy makers, academics, other students and opportunities to participate or attend Conferences and Meetings

Students applying for the Fedeler Awards should be undergraduates in their junior or senior year or graduate students in a masters or doctorate program at a Minnesota college or university.

Applicants should:

- Have a 3.0 or better GPA.
- Have a strong interest in a career in wildlife biology.
- Be active in extracurricular activities.
- Have a strong sense of public service.
- Have demonstrated good communication skills.

How to apply:

1. Send a letter of interest by December 31, 2011 to the MNTWS Awards Committee indicating interest and explain how you meet the requirements. Include your address, phone number, and email address, and the name of your academic advisor.
2. Ask your academic or research advisor to send a letter of recommendation to the MNTWS Awards Committee.



Recipients will be notified prior to the Annual Meeting which will be held February 7-9, 2012 at the Doublewood Inn in Fargo ND.

Submit Applications to:
Thom Soule, Chair MNTWS Awards Committee
14351 40th St NE
Driscoll, ND 58532
(701) 387-4420
souletp@bektel.com

STUDENT TRAVEL EXPENSES

MN TWS 2012 Annual Meeting

The MNTWS provides a travel stipend to Minnesota college students who plan to attend the Chapter's Annual Meeting. The 2011 Annual Meeting will be a joint meeting in early February 2012 with the North Dakota Chapter of the Wildlife Society at the Doublewood Inn in Fargo, ND.

The amount of each stipend depends upon the number of students applying for assistance (\$500 Total). Stipends are intended to assist with meeting registration, banquet tickets, and lodging. Students must be members of the MN Chapter of TWS (\$5.00 student membership, can join at the meeting) to qualify. We encourage recipients to volunteer to assist with the meeting as needed with lights, projectors etc.

Students interested in applying should:

1. Send a letter or e-mail indicating their interest to the MNTWS Awards Chair at the address below by January 15th 2012.
2. In the letter, students should include their address, phone number, email address, and the name of their academic advisor.

Recipients will be notified of their stipend prior to the Annual Meeting.

Thomson P. Soule
14351 40th St NE
Driscoll, ND 58532
701-387-4420
souletp@bektel.com

FUNDRAISING AT THE 2010 JOINT CHAPTER MEETING WITH NORTH DAKOTA TWS

The MN Chapter would like to thank all the members that have supported the raffle and silent auction in past years. It's not too early to think about the upcoming 2012 Joint MN/ND TWS Conference, to be held Feb. 7-9 in Fargo. We plan to work alongside the ND Chapter Fundraising Committee and make the fundraising effort a huge success.

For those of you who have attended a ND Chapter Conference, you know that they go all-out when it comes to the fundraiser, including a live auction, multiple games, specialty table raffles, and a large item raffle. We don't want to miss out on this opportunity to raise a lot of money for



our Chapter, so we'll be participating in the games and live auction as well. Help support the MN Chapter, put those crafty hands to work, dust off the outdoor gear/prints/books that are in the back of the closet or under your bed and bring your contributions to the Joint Conference. Challenge other staff at your station (or another station altogether) to see who can come up with the best contributions.

There is the option for us to pool contributed \$\$\$ from Chapter members and use these to purchase a "substantial" item or two (e.g., print, goose decoys) for the live auction or one of the games or tables (e.g., waterfowl table).

Contact Gregg Knutsen (218-449-4115 x203; gregg_knutsen@fws.gov) if you have questions, would like to assist with the fundraiser at the Conference (we could use the help of 1-2 members), or would like to make a monetary donation for the fundraising effort. Otherwise, I look forward to seeing what creative items members contribute for the upcoming Conference!

Gregg

MN TWS BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 29, 2011

Conducted via conference call

Called to order at 12:35 pm

Present: Jodie Provost, Nancy Gellerman, Wayne Bringer, Beau Liddell, Mike Larson, Greg Knutson, Thom Soule, Bill Faber, Wes Bailey, Richard Olsen

Officer Reports

- President (Larson)
 - Jodie Provost re-appointed as our NRCS State Technical Committee representative – everyone appreciates updates and information sent by Jodie – thanks.
 - Letter to Michael Hutchins to clarify different perspectives on the flow of solicitations and funds up and down within the Society – this has not been completed as of 29 November 2011.
 - Ask TWS parent society to support our membership in FWLA and MCF – this also needs to be acted on.
 - Request from TWS HQ to sponsor student memberships
 - This effort has currently led to about 145 new students to TWS at \$36/student to National TWS, but not to state chapters. Unsure if this includes publications.
 - Discussion about whether MN TWS wants to sponsor students independently and thus focus on students from Minnesota. Decided that the chapter should sponsor students from Minnesota, and in light of our annual meeting with the ND TWS to encourage/ask them to consider doing the same at the annual meeting
 - Membership database -



- Still looking for a new Membership Database Coordinator/Membership Chair. This unfilled position is beginning to affect how we contact members, especially with our newsletter and migration to all electronic newsletter. This database needs to be updated and maintained on at least a quarterly basis.
- Mike Larson will send an email statewide asking for a volunteer for this position
- Discussion on whether we should pay somebody to coordinate or contract this work out: but how much would it cost, and what are the other viable options?
 - Thom Soule and Nancy Gellerman will investigate contracting options and determine how other organizations maintain their databases
 - Mike Larson will contact Brian Haroldson and report the ongoing issues with our membership database and how to alleviate these problems such that our database is current and functional.
 - Rich Olson will contact TWS National Membership Coordinator to investigate how MN TWS should track and manage membership, protocols to follow, and best practices to manage email distribution lists
-
- Nominations & Elections committee
 - Past-president should be seeking candidates for election. Up for election are President elect, Region Representative 1, 3, 5, Secretary and Treasurer positions.
 - Mike Larson will confirm the above.
 - Mike Larson will contact Greg Hoch to determine status of above office elections.
 - Regional Representatives and others should send ideas to Mike.
- Webmaster needed
 - Regional Representatives and others should send ideas to Mike.
 - Mike Larson will contact John Loegering about future webmaster duties as well as send out a statewide email to request volunteers.
- Secretary (Olsen)
 - Motion to approve the minutes of the August 1, 2011, Board meeting via email.
 - Made by Bill Faber, seconded by Wayne Brininger, Passed.
 - Voting occurred via email during 15-18 August 2011.
- Treasurer (Larson for Roy)
 - Donation from the Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference Steering Committee
 - How to invest this – these funds are to be used for future Midwest Conference when it returns to Minnesota. Funds should be managed to provide reasonable return on investment. Fund should be managed and identified separately from other accounts.
 - Will wait for a recommendation from Charlotte.
 - Motion to approve treasurers report via email voting from 1-7 December 2011
 - Motion by Bill Faber, second by Richard Olsen, Passed



- Newsletter Editor (Bailey)
 - Deadline for December newsletter is Thursday, December 1st.
 - The December issue will be the last hardcopy mailed. Next newsletter (March) will be electronic (send via email).
 - Beau Liddell made Motion stating that 'beginning with the March 2012 newsletter, only electronic copies will be sent without exception' 2nd by Bill Faber and Passed
 - There is a need to straighten out membership and database issues so that we have updated and current email addresses of TWS members

Old Business

- A reminder that board members should consider developing a proposal for use of the proceeds from the "Lifetime Membership" account. We set a 31 July 2012 deadline for this proposal
- 2012 joint meeting with ND chapter
 - Meeting preparations are moving ahead well
 - Fundraising is looking for ideas and to spend some chapter dollars on items
- FWLA membership dues for 2011
 - Mike was unable to contact any of our FWLA representatives.
 - Need to find new representatives before rejoining FWLA
- Future of the Chapter (Larson/Soule)
 - Discussed board member attendance at meetings and how to increase involvement
 - Decided to have at least in-person meetings during summer workshop/meeting and during annual meeting. Try conference calls in between but may need to increase conference call frequency and keep these meetings shorter.

New Business

- Student Sponsorships/Involvement
 - Bill Faber and John Loegering are involved heavily with students. The board will ask them to lay out a program to spell out how many and who can be selected for membership sponsorship (Membership with National TWS). Support for student conclaves, incentivize student involvement with annual meetings...etc
 - Motion made by Thom Soule, 2nd by Beau Liddell, and Passed – Motion for Bill Faber and John Loegering to develop and present ideas/incentives for student involvement within MN TWS and present a report by November 2012.
 - Bill Faber says that any incentives are good and can bring more students to meetings. Will inform the ND Chapter of our plans this year for student subsidies, membership sponsorship.
 - Mike Larson and Charlotte Roy will examine budget and determine dollar amount for student support and ask for board approval.

Announcements

- Nancy: Request from Ann Giesen to advertise in our newsletter for interns for the Shallow Lakes Program.
- DNR disease surveillance efforts should receive recognition--put it in the newsletter.
- Recent passings of wildlifere, pass info. along to Thom.



Summary of HELP NEEDED

Membership Database Coordinator
 Webmaster
 Fundraising Committee members (1-2)

Motion to Adjourn by Bill Faber, 2nd by Thom Soule, Passed
 Meeting Adjourned at 3:48 pm

MN TWS TREASURER'S REPORT

01 August– 30 November 2011

SAVINGS

Beginning Balance at Affinity	\$1,277.67
Interest	\$0.44
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$1,278.11
Ending Balance	\$1,278.11

CHECKING

Beginning Balance	\$2,232.03
Change	(\$-278.72)
<u>Debits</u>	
Mike Larson Travel to ND for JT TWS meeting prep	\$47.00
US Postal (shipping for T-shirts to Sara Vacek)	\$5.95
Printing Plus (September Newsletter)	\$340.00
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$392.95

Credits

Dividends	\$0.78
Membership dues	\$57.50
T-shirt sales to Sara Vacek plus shipping reimbursement	\$55.95
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$114.23
Ending Balance	\$1,953.31

12 MONTH CD (Affinity Plus 7115999-renewed (0.499% rate), matures 24 Aug 2011) –
 Established from revenue (\$1000) for lifetime memberships in 1995, \$350 added to CD in 2002.
 The interest may be used for typical operating expenses of the society if needed.

Beginning Balance	\$3,419.11
Dividends	\$2.53
Ending Balance as of 24 August 2011	\$ 3,421.64 CLOSED

On Aug 24 2011, the funds from the 12 MONTH CD were invested into a Wahoo certificate at Affinity Bank with an interest rate of 1.982%

On October 17 2011, \$375 from Bill Faber for a lifetime membership was added to the Wahoo certificate. On November 8, 2011, \$20,000 from the Midwest Steering Committee was added to



the Wahoo certificate until a decision is made by the Board about an investment vehicle for these funds.

Thus,

Wahoo certificate (7142749)	
Beginning Balance	\$3,421.64
<u>Credits</u>	
Bill Faber lifetime membership	\$375.00
Midwest Steering Committee	\$20,000.00
Dividends	\$13.15
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$20,388.15
Ending Balance	\$23,809.79
<hr/>	
Total chapter assets as of 30 November 2011	\$27,041.21
Charlotte Roy, Treasurer	
30 November 2011	

REGIONAL REPORTS

Region 1 – Greg Knutson USFWS - Agassiz NWR

In December, 2011, Refuge Manager Margaret (Maggie) Anderson will retire from the USFWS with 38 years of service under her belt. She has been at Agassiz NWR since 1995 and plans to stay in the area for at least the next two years, periodically volunteering at the Refuge. Deputy Manager Jim Graham will serve in an "acting" capacity through likely the first half of 2012. Also, a Wildlife Refuge Specialist position that has been vacant at Agassiz since Dec. 2010 will be filled in Feb. 2012 with a recent graduate of the USFWS' Student Career Experience Program (SCEP). Andrew Diallesandro is a Minnesota native and is completing his M.S. degree at NDSU this winter.

A late August prescribed fire that was originally ~ 500 acres in size turned into a problematic peat fire after a series of unseasonal weather (high winds, hot temps, extended period without rain) events occurred during the first week in October. The fire boundary expanded to more than

1,100 acres and although flames were quickly extinguished by USFWS fire suppression staff, the numerous pockets of persistent burning peat exceeded fire's smoke prescription and began causing problems for a handful of Refuge neighbors. This fire was re-categorized as a wildfire in late October. Through the efforts of numerous firefighters from the USFWS, TNC, and the USFS, the fire was considered contained on Nov. 14 and oversight was returned to Agassiz NWR staff.

MN Chapter TWS Regions



Refuge and DNR staff collected samples from 93 hunter-harvested cranes during the 2011 Minnesota season, held in the northwestern part of the state. These samples, along with ~ 20 samples from cranes killed in southern Manitoba, and 5



samples from known Minnesota cranes collected during mid-summer, will be analyzed by a stable isotope lab at the University of Saskatchewan. Results will be compared to those from 2010 and will ultimately improve managing agency knowledge of the origin (i.e., MN, Canada) of hunter-killed cranes.

The third and final year of methyl mercury data was collected on two different Refuge pools. This was the "post-drawdown" collection. The St. Croix Watershed Research Station (Science Museum of MN) has been contracted to analyze, interpret, and summarize these data and ultimately provide information on whether our periodic, intentional impoundment drawdowns result in a significant release of methyl mercury upon the reflooding of the pools.

USFWS - Detroit Lakes WMD and Hamden Slough NWR

In August, Detroit Lakes WMD Project Leader Scott Kahan accepted the position of Chief of Refuges for Region 5 (NE Region) and moved to Massachusetts. The new project leader for the WMD was selected in early November and Ryan Frohling, Deputy Project Leader for the WMD since June 2010, was chosen for the position. Over 100 wetlands have been restored in the WMD due to this fall's dry weather. Since September, staff have been working endlessly, taking advantage of the near perfect conditions. Wetlands have been restored on WPAs in Becker, Clay, Mahanomen, and Polk Counties.

Construction of the new WMD headquarters is underway. Everyone involved has been working diligently since late August to keep the project on track, with a lot of help from Mother Nature. The anticipated date of completion is late summer 2012. The new environmental education building at Hamden Slough NWR has come a long way in the past few months. Construction of the building was completed in mid-summer 2011. During October and November, WMD

staff and volunteers have put up the soffits, fascia, and siding. We hope to begin using it next spring/summer.

MN DNR - Glenwood Area Wildlife Office

Below normal precipitation this fall has provided optimum conditions for the construction and operation of several water level control projects to improve waterfowl habitat in west-central Minnesota. A concrete box structure with a stoplog bay was installed in the outlet channel of Denton Slough, located just northwest of Wendell in Grant County. The 135-acre basin was lowered by approximately 4 feet this fall and currently holds less than a foot of water with large areas of mudflats exposed. Nearby, Ash Lake was lowered by approximately 2.5 feet with a permanently installed pump and lift station. Lower water levels on this 218-acre basin allowed for the completion of intake infrastructure for the lift station, as well as enhancing the likelihood of fish mortality during winter ice-cover. Dry conditions during the fall also allowed for the drawdown of Towner Slough near Herman in Grant County. This 162-acre lake was lowered by approximately 5 feet with a permanent pump and lift station that was constructed in 2004. Low water levels are expected to result in the elimination of the existing fish community and stimulate the growth of submerged and emergent aquatic plants.

USFWS - Fergus Falls WMD

Larry Martin has replaced Kevin Brennan as the new Project Leader at the Fergus Falls WMD. Larry started in August in Fergus Falls after relocating from Waubay NWR in South Dakota. Larry has 30 years of experience with the Service and has worked in a variety of locations across the country including Alaska, Nevada, and Ohio. Larry is a native of the upper Midwest and brings a strong passion for the grasslands and wetlands of our area.



Fergus Falls WMD took full advantage of the dry fall to follow up on invasive species control, especially spraying for wild parsnip. Wild parsnip is rapidly expanding across the District. Many sites were mowed during the early part of the summer and the dry conditions allowed field access with spraying equipment. Also on the increase is yellow toadflax and common tansy. The dry fall also allowed the District to establish fire breaks for the spring 2012 prescribed burn season. We expect budgets to be reduced so it will likely be a challenge to match previous accomplishments. The District has also been working with several local organizations such as PF and the Fergus Falls Fish and Game Club to successfully secure Conservation Partner Legacy grants to restore grasslands and wetlands on WPAs. This is providing additional funds to continue our habitat projects.

MN DNR Red Lake WMA

Hunting season was slow with a decreased harvest of both deer and ruffed grouse compared to last year. Lots of brush shearing work is planned for this winter. A new assistant wildlife manager will be hired in the next month or two and this will be a shared position working ½ time at Norris Camp and ½ time out of the Baudette Wildlife Office. The LUP Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan is in the writing stage (by Mike North) and it's being prepared for public review sometime late this winter or early spring.

Region 2 – Nancy Gellerman

Status of Migrating Scaup on Grand Rapids Area Lakes – Perry Loegering, Wildlife Manager, MN DNR

There was a notable die off of lesser scaup on Lake Winnibigoshish (Winnie) this fall with staff observing a couple hundred dead birds. Although staff is still monitoring the situation, it appears that the die-off is winding down. A sample of dead birds was sent to the USGS National Wildlife Health

Center in Madison, Wisconsin, but results on the definitive cause of death have not been confirmed. It's suspected that large infestations of trematodes as a result of eating faucet snails are causing the die-offs. This is the first significant mortality on Winnie since 2008 when an estimated 2,000 lesser scaup died. Bowstring and Round Lakes are also being monitored, although no mortality has been observed on either lake this year. In 2010, an estimated 2,000 lesser scaup died on Bowstring Lake. So far Round Lake hasn't had any lesser scaup die-offs in previous years. During the second week of November, an estimated 27,000 scaup (lessers and greater) were in the area.

Big Rice Lake Management –Darren Vogt, 1854 Treaty Authority

Big Rice Lake is located north of Virginia, MN, and is a significant resource important for waterfowl habitat, wild rice, harvesters, hunters, and trappers. In an effort to improve wild rice production, management actions were completed in fall 2011 through cooperation by a number of partners including the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Fond du Lac Band, 1854 Treaty Authority, and the U.S. Forest Service. A trapper was hired under contract to reduce the beaver population. After trapping was completed, a crew removed a beaver dam on the outlet in an attempt to make water levels more favorable for wild rice. Cooperation will continue in management efforts at Big Rice Lake.

2011 Moose Hunt Results and the Pagami Creek Fire

This year the Pagami Creek Fire created an additional challenge for hunters hoping to harvest a Minnesota moose. The fire was started by lightning August 18 approximately 13 miles east of Ely in the Superior National Forest. By the time moose season arrived, the fire had burned more than 92,000 acres. Road closures were put in place outside the perimeter of the fire as a matter of public



safety. Although the burned area was limited to one state moose hunting zone, the road closures affected access to several moose hunting zones. Since the state hunt is now a once-in-a-lifetime hunt for MN residents, hunters in zones impacted by the fire or road closures were given the option of a refund on their license and the opportunity to hunt in the future. Several hunting parties chose a refund. In the end, of 105 permits drawn, 92 state hunting parties chose to hunt, and 53 bulls were harvested for a success rate of 58%. The number of permits offered in 2011 was reduced significantly from 2010 in an effort to better match the bull portion of the moose population available for harvest. In addition, the 1854 Treaty Authority issued 59 permits in 2011 of which 10 bulls were taken. The Fond du Lac Band issued 65 permits and as of late October, 13 bulls & 4 cows had been harvested. The FDL moose season officially closes on 12/31/2011. More info on the fire can be found at

www.inciweb.org/incident/2534

Vermilion Community College Forestry & Wildlife Club – Lori Schmidt, Faculty Advisor

Club President Steve Birkemeyer reports that the students in the club have been active helping research agencies with projects. They have completed the small mammal trapping survey for the 1854 Treaty Authority as well as the one-day bag limit survey for the MN DNR on the Waterfowl Opener. Eighteen students assisted with the 2011 Governor's Deer Hunting Opener event that was held at Giant's Ridge Ski Area. Sessions included "Make N Tracks" plaster casting of animal tracks, "Oh Deer" predator/prey learning, a simulated deer hunt obstacle course, learning about animals by their fur, plus archery, and other safety-related training. The club is also working with the USGS by cleaning animal skulls and bones for the agency's wolf and deer studies. So far 2 skulls have been cleaned, a wolf carcass is being worked on, and 8 other skulls are waiting to be cleaned.

Students will be assisting with the wood duck box survey and box repairs around the Ely area this winter. The club is planning to do telemetry training work to assist with the recovery of dead wolves and lost collars. They will also be assisting with fuels reduction burns in conjunction with the local Society of American Foresters chapter. The Forestry and Wildlife Club is comprised of students in the Natural Resources Technology and the Fish and Wildlife degree programs. The NRT program is a two-year mix of subjects designed to prepare students for technician-level entry into the workforce and the FAW program is geared towards transfer to a 4-year institution.

Unusual Observation of Avian Keratin Disorder – Penny Backman, Wildlife Manager, MN DNR

Penny observed and photographed a rather unusual looking hairy woodpecker this fall. The upper bill was approximately 4 inches long! The condition is called Avian Keratin Disorder. Although the location for this bird was Side Lake, MN, the USGS is doing a major study in Alaska and the Pacific Northwest where this condition is very common across several bird species. While the direct cause is not yet known, an environmental contaminant is suspected since the disorder is appearing in a variety of bird species in fairly localized areas. Of course a number of other causes may also be responsible for this condition, which may be the case in this example of a single bird, but it's interesting to note that this problem is occurring at concerning levels in other parts of the country. Obviously an overgrown beak can interfere with many aspects of a bird's life, including feeding, grooming, and nesting.



Photo credit: Penny Backman

Region 3 – Beau Liddell– No report

Region 4 – Molly Tranel – No report

Region 5 – Brian Pember – No report

Region 6 – Erica Hoaglund

Miscellaneous news

Ramsey County is currently completing a MN DNR biomass grant at Battle Creek Regional Park and will be starting a MN DNR-CPL grant to restore prairie at Snail Lake Regional Park.

Urban deer hunts continue to expand in the county. Ramsey County Parks conducted archery hunts in 8 parks this fall. Where else can you sit in your stand and have the St. Paul skyline in your view! The Cities of Little Canada, St. Paul, and Vadnais Heights have also expanded archery hunting opportunities.

Walleye regulations change Dec. 1 on Mille Lacs Lake. Four walleye up to 18 inches long may be kept. All walleye between 18 and 28 inches must be released

immediately. One walleye over 28 inches long may be kept.

MN DNR reports that of 1,300 deer sampled for CWD, none have shown sign of the disease.

Division of Ecological and Water Resources

Erica Hoaglund has accepted the position of Region 3 nongame; she joined the DNR in 2008 as a natural resources specialist. Her region includes the MN TWS metro region as well as 16 other counties.

Robb Collett has accepted the position of Assistant Regional Manager in New Ulm. He has worked at the area, region and state level as a hydrologist in Floodplain Management, Shoreland Stewardship and River Corridor Management.

Liz Harper has accepted the position of Assistant Regional Manager for MN DNR's Central Region. Liz has served as acting Assistant Regional Manager over the past year. She joined MN DNR in 2003 and has worked as Natural Resources Technician and Natural Resources Specialist with the County Biological Survey program, and most recently as Natural Resources Specialist Senior for the Nongame Program in the Central Region.

Dan Lais has accepted the Assistant Regional Manager position for the NW Region. Dan has been on mobility for the past year and a half, first as Acting Waters NW Regional Manager and then as the EWR NW Region Assistant Regional Manager. Dan joined the DNR in 1990 and has worked as a staff hydrologist and area hydrologist, most recently as the Sauk Rapids Area Hydrologist for 17 years.

Four staff members of MN DNR's Division of Ecological and Water Resources were recognized in the first annual Better Government for a Better Minnesota awards ceremony. Peter Leete, Rich Baker, Julie



Ekman, and Steve Colvin received this award for a joint effort within MnDOT to

reduce water permit delays and improve environmental compliance for road projects.

STUDENT CHAPTER REPORTS

Minnesota State University Moorhead – Char Binstock – No report

University of Minnesota, Crookston - Austin Link –Respectfully submitted, Austin Link, President, linkx079@umn.edu

As the fall is winding down there is much to report. We started the semester with officer elections and welcome officers for the 2011-2012 academic year; Kelsey Kaiser-Treasurer, Krista Kenyon-Secretary, Andy Albertson and Clayton Lenk-Executive Board Members. Over twenty members were able to band ducks at Agassiz NWR. We conducted buckthorn removal from Red River Valley Natural History Area on two separate occasions. A Coca-Cola Grant for \$1,000 was awarded to our chapter to help defray the costs of our seven members attending the 72nd Annual Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference. As part of our community service commitment, during the next week we will be volunteering at the local food shelf and at “Winter Wonderland”, a community event for youth. On Thursday, December 8th we will be showing “Green Fire”, an Aldo Leopold Film as a study break for students campus wide. The public will also be invited. We are beginning to plan trips for second semester that include the International Wolf Center near Ely, MN and the Joint Annual Meeting of the ND Chapter of The Wildlife Society and the MN Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

University of Minnesota, Twin Cities Student Chapter – Devin Tunseth – No report

CONSERVATION REPORTS

Next steps on Farm Bill and RMA policy update on cover crops

With last month’s demise of the super committee deficit reduction process, the farm bill proposal that had been put together by leadership in an unusually expedited process was waylaid, and the farm bill will soon be returning to the traditional Farm Bill process. Chairwoman Stabenow (D-MI) announced the Senate Agriculture Committee will begin the Farm Bill process in early 2012, with hopes of reaching a final bill before the 2012 elections. Stabenow announced (<http://www.ag.senate.gov/newsroom/press/release/farm-bill-next-year>) that they will begin holding hearings when Congress returns in January; while Chairman Lucas

(R-OK) has signaled that the House Agriculture Committee might wait a bit longer to begin hearings. Additionally, Chairwoman Stabenow has called for using the Farm Bill proposal established during the deficit reduction process as a starting off point for the traditional Farm Bill process set to begin soon. Other Agriculture Committee members have voiced a desire to start from scratch.

During the expedited deficit reduction process, the Agriculture Committees had proposed \$23 billion in cuts over 10 years to the Farm Bill. Senator Stabenow views the plans laid out for conservation programs as a particularly solid proposal for that title in the new Farm Bill.



Under the deficit reduction plan, conservation programs would see budget cuts while all would experience consolidation from 23 programs down to 13 programs put into five “tool boxes” based on purpose: Working lands; Regional partnerships to address particular resource concerns; The Conservation Reserve Program; Easement programs; Private grazing and small watersheds.

Risk Management Agency Adjusts Policies toward Cover Crops to Better Reflect Risk Levels

Last week the Springfield, IL Regional Office of the Risk Management Agency announced policy changes regulating crop insurance on commodities following a cover crop. The Springfield office manages policies in the eastern Cornbelt states of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan. A number of changes were made to crop insurance policies on commodities following a cover crop in recognition that cover crops are a sound agronomic practice. Under the new policies, farmers need to terminate their cover crops by June 5th instead of May 15th. Farmers may now harvest their cover crops and still maintain insurance eligibility on the subsequent commodity crop. Previously, harvesting cover crops would have made the subsequent commodity crop ineligible for crop insurance. Additionally, farmers may now allow cover crops to reach a head or bud stage and still maintain eligibility for insurance coverage on a subsequent

Under the proposal the Conservation Reserve Program would reportedly get reduced from the current cap of 32 million acres to 25 million acres. Because the full proposal was never released, the details of the consolidation plan are not fully known at this point.

commodity crop. Previously, allowing cover crops to reach this stage of growth would have disqualified the subsequent commodity crop from insurance coverage.

RMA made these changes after reviewing information and data regarding the agronomic impact of cover crops and determining they posed no adverse risk or yield impact on subsequent commodity crops. These policy changes are welcomed by farmers throughout the eastern Cornbelt seeking to maintain production while also reducing input costs and impacts on the environment. Cover crops have been found to considerably reduce soil erosion and nutrient loss while also increasing carbon sequestration and improving soil health vital to long term productivity.

Ryan Stockwell, Ph.D.; Agriculture Program Manager; 715-965-2538



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CEO'S MONTHLY REPORT

TO TWS COUNCIL AND SUBUNIT OFFICERS

October-November 2011



Michael Hutchins, Ph.D.
Executive Director/CEO

The following report summarizes activities during October-November, 2011, two very busy months during which staff was preparing for the TWS Annual Conference in Hawaii:

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE
(Hutchins, Jorgensen, Walker, Mehta, Enquist)

CNRS Natural Resources Education Conference Report: Writer Natasha Atkins has completed a draft report from the CNRS Natural Resources Education and Employment Conference held from September 19-21, 2011 in Denver, CO. That report is currently being reviewed and following that review will be distributed to the participants for comment.

Blue Ribbon Panel Report: The report of the Blue Ribbon Panel on the Future of the Wildlife Profession and its Implications for How We Develop Wildlife Professionals is being revised following input from stakeholders. Notes from the listening session/panel discussion at the TWS Annual Conference in Hawaii are also in preparation and will also be passed along to writer Natasha Atkins for possible inclusion. Following these changes, the report will be distributed to the participants one last time for review and comment before being finalized and distributed early next year.

Climate Change Science Centers National Partner's Dialogue: TWS worked with USGS, ESA, and the Meridian Institute to organize a meeting of around 50 USGS Climate Change Science Center stakeholders in the Washington, DC from November 30-December 1. The purpose of this invitation-only meeting was to provide an opportunity for USGS to brief stakeholders on the progress that has been made in the implementation of the Science Centers and to attain additional feedback. Hutchins worked with Robin O'Malley

(USGS), Cliff Duke (ESA), and Jennifer Pratt Miles, Tim Mealy, and Jill Parsons (Meridian) to plan for this meeting. Along with co-organizer Duke, Hutchins gave opening remarks at the meeting, as well as provided an overview of the meeting's findings on the last day. TWS staff time is being paid for by a grant from USGS. TWS' Yanin Walker, Damon Yeh and Charlotte Weaver also participated in the meeting, manning the registration desk and taking notes of plenary meetings and breakout sessions.

TWS 2011 Annual Conference and Council Meeting: TWS staff was heavily involved in development and implementation of the TWS Annual Conference and Council Meeting held from November in Waikoloa, Hawaii. Operations Manager Yanin Walker took notes at the Council Meeting and, along with Finance Manager, Jane Jorgensen, monitored the registration desk and other operations. Executive Director/CEO Hutchins worked closely with Yanin Walker and President Tom Ryder on development of the Council's briefing book and agenda for Council's annual meeting, which occurred from November, 2011. Hutchins also was a plenary speaker, where he gave a presentation to the assembled delegates titled "The Wildlife Society: Past, Present, Future." He also organized and moderated a listening session/panel discussion titled "Developing the Next Generation of Wildlife Professionals: Challenges and Possible Solutions." He also gave an update on recent activities of TWS at the Member's meeting.

Wildlife Phenology Program: It has been one year since Carolyn Enquist started as the Science Coordinator for the USA National Phenology Network on behalf of TWS. It's been a busy and productive year focused primarily on building partnerships through promoting greater understanding of collecting and using phenology information



in natural resource management. For example, the USA-NPN is now working more closely with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' Climate Change Committee and the US Fish and Wildlife Agency's nascent Inventory and Monitoring program to advance and implement these ideas.

Carolyn has also been an invited speaker this past year in conferences held across the country. This includes the George Wright Society, the Ecological Society of America, and a World Wildlife Fund-sponsored bi-national meeting. Most recently, she gave a talk at TWS' Annual conference in Waikola, HI titled "Phenology as a tool for natural resource management and climate change adaptation." Carolyn wrote a short piece on this topic as related to the DOI's Landscape Conservation Cooperatives for the Fall 2011 edition of *The Wildlife Professional*.

Carolyn's work has culminated in her representation of the USA-NPN and TWS in efforts supporting the National Climate Assessment (NCA) of the US Global Climate Research Program. This includes (1) writing a section of the Southwest Regional Climate Assessment highlighting phenology and species interactions, (2) contributing to the Ecosystems, Biodiversity, Ecosystem Services national report, and (3) leading a NPN-sponsored team in developing a phenology-linked bioclimatic indicator of climate impacts on the nation's ecosystems.

Staff Changes: Ankit Mehta, Web applications Developer/Membership Administrator, left TWS in November to become Associate Software Engineer with iDirect, a commercial software company. TWS has hired Aniket Gajare to replace him. Aniket has a Bachelors Degree in Computer Engineering from the University of Mumbai, India and finished his M.S. in Computer Science at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA in June 2011. Please join us in thanking Ankit for his nearly two years of service to TWS and in welcoming Aniket to the TWS family.

GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS AFFAIRS AND (Bies, Rentz, Carmichael)

CARE field trip: In October Rentz attended the annual Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement field trip organized by the US Fish & Wildlife Service and other partners in south Florida. The purpose of the trip is to expose CARE members to critical finding and project needs at a Refuge level, the role of refuges in collaborative conservation projects, and to increase the Alliance's awareness of how limited dollars and staff are utilized to achieve critical conservation objectives.

Position Statements: Council recently approved a new position statement on Global Climate Change and Wildlife. Council also approved the release of two draft position statements for member review and comment; these include statements on Workforce Diversity within the Wildlife Profession, and Wolf Restoration and Management in the Contiguous United States. Council concurrently rescinded the expired statement on the Restoration of Wolves.

Technical Reviews: Council has approved the creation of a committee to draft a Technical Review on the effects of shale gas development on wildlife. TWS staff and Council members are in the process of identifying and recommending individuals to President Krausman to serve on this Technical Review committee.

New Committees: President Krausman is in the process of appointing an ad hoc committee to review current TWS position statements to develop a plan for strategically streamlining these statements, identifying position statements that can potentially be merged, and more adequately integrating Canadian needs and priorities. In his new position, President Krausman will also be appointing an ad hoc committee to develop a Conservation Leaders Summit to assess



TWS' national and international conservation policy strategy.

Government Affairs Workshop: Bies, Rentz, Pederson, and Patterson conducted a Government Affairs Training workshop at TWS' annual conference in Waikoloa, Hawaii. This workshop provided subunit and chapter leaders with tools for effectively communicating with policy makers in their respective regions, as well as information on the legal framework under which they operate, and an update on the status of revisions to TWS' website.

COMMUNICATIONS (Moore, Abhat, Unger, Thomas, Patterson)

The Wildlife Professional: Staff completed the Winter 2012 issue of TWP—the 20th issue of the magazine since its launch in 2007—and released it on time to the printer in late November. The issue is 88 pages with 16 articles, nine departments, and five online articles, a new record for online content. The magazine features packages of articles about U.S.-Mexico border fence impacts on wildlife, how zoos and aquariums aid conservation in the field, and the implications of energy development on wildlife and habitat. It also features a commentary about predator management in Alaska, a controversial subject that is bound to generate some lively response. We sent the article to the Alaska Board of Game and are printing its response online.

In early October we had a one-day planning retreat to develop lineups for 2012. Issues will include packages on wildlife disease (Spring) and invasive species (Winter). The Fall issue will be a single-topic special issue commemorating the history, accomplishments, and future goals of The Wildlife Society. We are working with an ad hoc committee to finalize the lineup for that issue and solicit authors.

Editorial Advisory Board: We held our fourth and final meeting of 2011 during the Annual Conference in Hawaii. Nine of our 21 board members were able to attend, along

with the four members of TWP staff, and we had a candid, productive conversation about the 2011 issues and the 2012 lineups. TWP staff prepared and presented a summary of EAB roles and responsibilities, which we discussed at the meeting. We also brainstormed about how to solicit more articles that are relevant to state agencies, what to include in the upcoming 75th anniversary issue, how to more-effectively promote the magazine in the general media, how to tap the expertise of TWS Working Groups, and what we can learn from the 2011 Reader Survey. We finished with a “pitch slam,” which generated promising story ideas for future issues. We then held a small open-bar reception for EAB members and who have written for the magazine to thank them for their contributions.

Annual Conference: Moore attended the Council meeting at the Annual Conference and presented an update about publishing and communications, with emphasis on discussing a new proposal from Wiley-Blackwell about launching a new Open Access CNRS journal. Among other Conference-related activities:

- Abhat, Unger, and Thomas created and presented a four-hour Writer's Workshop, which drew eight participants. Recent author Johnathan O'Dell from the Arizona Department of Fish and Game spoke about his experience writing for TWP, and TWP staff gave attendees valuable information and hands-on exercises designed to teach how to write for general-interest magazines. The session ended with a “pitch slam” that resulted in several potential story ideas for future issues.
- Thomas amassed more than 100 slides with brief bios to create a PowerPoint of women wildlifers, which was shown throughout the inaugural Women of Wildlife reception. Moore and Patterson worked together to design the WOW button for attendees.



- Abhat, Unger, Thomas, and Patterson worked the reception desk assisting TWS members and conference attendees.
- Patterson took more than 800 photographs during various events including the Awards Ceremony, student-professional mixer, and Women of Wildlife reception.
- Moore met with many students and young professionals at poster sessions and symposia to learn about their work and to solicit articles for TWP.
- TWP staff danced in coconut bras during the luau as a gesture to generate buzz about the magazine and the Society. (Just kidding—trying to see if anyone’s reading this.)

TWS Video: Moore worked with filmmaker Jeremy Roberts to edit the rough cuts of the TWS video, created with funds from the 2011 Investor’s Campaign to promote TWS during its 75th anniversary year in 2012. We were able to complete the video in time to debut it during the Annual Conference, and are now in the process of creating an email blast to members and a press release to officially launch the film for our membership and the media.

Staff Changes: In November we learned that long-time and much-beloved staff member Katie Unger will be leaving at the end of 2011 to accept a new position as science news editor at the University of Pennsylvania. TWP has placed a job-opening announcement with the Society of Environmental Journalists and the National Association of Science Writers, and put out the word with select journalism graduate programs. We are now reviewing applications and hope to hire the new science writer in mid-December, giving Katie time to train her replacement. As part of this reorganization of our department, Divya Abhat will become Managing Editor of TWP, taking on additional editing and managing responsibilities that Katie had handled.

TWS 2012 Calendar: Katie Unger completed work on the 2012 calendar and organized its printing and shipping to the Annual Conference, where staff gave copies to new and renewing members. Additional copies were sold in the bookstore, and are available through our online bookstore for \$5. The calendar features milestones in TWS history, in honor of the Society’s 75th anniversary in 2012.

TWS 2010 Annual Report: TWP staff edited and designed the *2010 Annual Report*, working with Terra Rentz in Government Affairs and Yanin Walker in Administration. The report is now posted online. In the future, we plan to have annual reports finished in time for the North American Conference in March so we can use them to educate attendees and policymakers about TWS. Final financial audits will not be complete by March, so we will note this and post final audited numbers online later in the year.

Career Brochure: Work continues, but was disrupted because of magazine and conference responsibilities. We still plan to have a draft ready for review by the March Council meeting.

Website: Webmaster Jeremiah Patterson is juggling numerous tasks and demands regarding the website redesign and shift to Drupal, a new content management system that will replace Joomla. Among his accomplishments, he:

- Finished a draft proposal to detail all site changes in visual design and function
- Created a post-conference survey for attendees
- Created a post-conference survey for the Native American Professional Development Program members
- Distributed the October and November *Wildlifer*
- Distributed the November *Wildlife Policy News*



- Produced a *Wildlife Techniques Manual* poster for display at the TWS Annual Conference
- Assisted in assessing candidates to replace Ankit Mehta
- Continued weekly Annual Conference email blasts
- Continued general site maintenance and updates

MEMBERSHIP MARKETING AND CONFERENCES (Walter, Pederson, Prete)

Membership: The Director of Membership Marketing and Conferences Darryl Walter reports that membership as of November 28 is 10,613. For the third straight month, this is a new membership record for TWS.

Conferences: The Wildlife Society Annual Conference took place November 5-10 in Waikoloa, HI. Close to 1400 attendees registered and when we include registered guests, we had over 1800 attendees. TWS Council voted for Winnipeg to be the location for the 2015 Annual Conference.

TWS Awards:

Student Chapter of the Year: Missouri Western State University Student Chapter

Student Chapter Advisor of the Year: Jacqueline Frair, State University of New York - Syracuse

Donald H. Rusch Memorial Game Bird Research Scholarship: Erik Blomberg - University of Nevada, Reno

Diversity Award: Native American Professional Development Program, TWS

Jim McDonough Award: Robert Lanka, Wyoming Department of Fish and Game

Conservation Education Award (Writings)

Book: Council for Environmental Education. 2010. *Flying WILD: An Educator's Guide to Celebrating Birds*. Council for Environmental Education, Houston, TX.

Article: Nevada Department of Wildlife. 2007-2010. *Southern Nevada Wild*. Vol.1(1) – 4(4)

Wildlife Publication Awards:

Editorship: Thomas H. Kunz and Stuart Parsons for *Ecological and Behavioral Methods*

for the *Study of Bats*. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD 2009.

Book: Carl H. Ernst and Jeffrey E. Lovich for *Turtles of the United States and Canada*. Smithsonian Books, Washington, D.C. 2010.

Article: Hawthorne L. Beyer, Daniel T. Haydon, Juan M. Morales, Jacqueline L. Frair, Mark Hebblewhite, Michael Mitchell, and Jason Matthiopoulos for *A The interpretation of habitat preference metrics under use-availability designs.*

Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B. 365:2245-2254

Monograph: Jonathan B. Cohen, Lawrence M. Houghton, James D. Fraser for "Nesting density and reproductive success of piping plovers in response to storm- and human-created habitat changes." *The Wildlife Society Monographs*, No. 173, August 2009.

Group Achievement Award: Maga Ta-Hohpi Waterfowl Production Area (WPA)

Caesar Kleberg Award for Excellence in Applied Wildlife Research: Karl Miller

TWS Fellows: Bruce Leopold, Michael R. McEnroe, Henry (Rique) Campa III, David J. Case, W. Daniel Edge, Robert Anthony, Selma N. Glasscock, William M. Block

Special Recognition Service Award: Larry Schwitters, Vaux's Happenings Project Co-Coordinator

Honorary Membership: Dr. Theodore A. Bookhout



Aldo Leopold Memorial Award: Kenneth P. Burnham

International Wildlife Management Congress and 2012 TWS Annual Conference: A call for proposals is currently out for the IV International Wildlife Management Congress in Durban, South Africa in July 2012 as well as for the 2012 TWS Annual Conference in Portland, OR.

Subunits: Pederson attended the Maryland-Delaware Chapter Fall Members Meeting and gave a talk about TWS history and structure, recruited new members, and participated in the executive committee meeting. Pederson also attended the Southeast Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies Annual Conference, gave workshops about running TWS subunits and applying for certification, worked at the exhibitor booth to recruit new members and help answer questions and spoke during the Southeastern Section members meeting.

On behalf of TWS Southeastern Section and Council, Pederson is pleased to announce the newest student chapter – University of Maryland. On behalf of Council, Pederson approved bylaws changes for Ball State University and charter changes for the Climate Change and Wildlife Working Group.

As previously mentioned, TWS is again running the Sponsor-A-Student program. Pederson sent out a request to all TWS advisors asking for them to nominate students they feel are deserving of a sponsored membership in TWS. Then, Pederson and Patterson sent requests to

subunit officers and TWS members asking them to sponsor nominated or specific students. To date, we have received over \$2,300 in donations and 132 nominated students.

During TWS' Annual Conference, Pederson spoke during the inaugural workshop – Government Affairs and Subunit Leadership Training, participated in the certification counseling session, and the Certification Review Board Meeting. The New Member Reception was well attended by TWS members and representation by TWS working groups (n=18).

Combined Federal Campaign: This year's Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) application was accepted and has been announced to TWS members through an email blast, *The Wildlifer*, and *The Wildlife Professional*. The CFC is a campaign to raise funds through federal government employee workplace giving. Each fall, federal government employees can choose to donate to approved non-profit organizations. Please encourage any federal government employee to select The Wildlife Society as one of their charities.

Certification: The fourth issue of the Certification Newsletter was sent out to AWBs and CWBs. The newest test of the certification electronic application is on hold until a new database manager is hired. TWS Council voted to dissolve the wildlife technician program due to little interest. TWS Council approved an extension for the certification ad hoc committee to finish their report about the survey sent out earlier in 2011.



www.mndnr.gov

Frederickson honored with conservation award

Dennis Frederickson, DNR southern regional director, has been awarded the 2011 Carlson-Minge Award by the conservation organization Friends of the Minnesota Valley. Named in honor of former Governor Arne Carlson and former Minnesota Congressman David Minge, the award is given to a current or former elected official, public figure, or public employee who has demonstrated outstanding leadership on the conservation of natural resources within the Minnesota River Watershed. Frederickson, a former long-time Minnesota State Senator from New Ulm, has been recognized over the years as a leader

in conservation and the protection of natural resources. Some of his notable accomplishments include being the author of state legislation authorizing the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program in the Minnesota River Basin, authoring the state's Clean Water Legacy Act, and serving on the Legislative-Citizens Commission on Minnesota Resources. Friends of the Minnesota Valley works to protect and enhance the natural resources of the Lower Minnesota River Watershed, including the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

Cougars are rare but confirmed visitors to Minnesota

(Released December 6, 2011)

Confirmed cougar sightings are becoming more frequent in Minnesota, but evidence suggests the large cats are most likely rare visitors to the state, according to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

The recent shooting of a cougar in southwestern Minnesota, along with verified observations of the big cats in the state, are raising awareness of cougars in the public and media.

"Within the past several years, we have been able to verify observations of individual cougars within our state," said Dan Stark, DNR large carnivore specialist. "Although rare, we have verifiable evidence such as trail camera photos, tracks and scat, and on occasion, dead cougars."

Since 2007, the DNR has confirmed 14 cougar sightings. Eleven have been from

trail cameras or video. One was road killed, one was found dead and one was shot. Dozens of other, unconfirmed sightings have also been reported.

Prior to European settlement, cougars, also known as mountain lions or pumas, ranged across all lower 48 states. Their present-day range is significantly smaller. Confirmed breeding populations are recognized by state game departments in 14 western states. The closest populations are in the western Dakotas, and the only population east of the Mississippi River is in Florida.

Why might cougars show up in Minnesota? Cougars are solitary, roaming animals, and as young males reach maturity, they begin to look for new territory and will travel

considerable distances. The timing of many of Minnesota's verified cougar sightings

(mid- 2000's and forward) is not unexpected given the somewhat rapid increase in the



cougar population in the western Dakotas that began in the mid-1990s. Extensive research in the Black Hills has documented the changing cougar dynamics that typically lead to increased dispersal of young males.

DNA analysis from cougars in Minnesota and other Midwestern states, along with cougar scat and hair found here, indicates most of the animals are male likely coming from the Black Hills population in South Dakota and western North Dakota. However, given their long dispersal capabilities, animals could show up from numerous other locations in the western U.S. as well.

In some cases, cougars roaming through Minnesota are leaving a remarkable record. Scientists were recently able to document and track a male cougar via its DNA, through the Twin Cities and three different places in Wisconsin before the same cat was hit by a car and killed earlier this year in Connecticut. The cat was killed 18 months after it was detected in Minnesota.

The cougar recently shot in Jackson County was a 125-pound male, estimated to be one to three years old. The DNR will send DNA samples from the cat to a lab in Montana so more can be learned about it

Stark said there have been no wild females cougars documented in Minnesota, and that annual carnivore tracking surveys by the DNR, which includes scent-post and winter tracking surveys, have recorded no evidence to suggest the possibility of a resident population of cougars in the state. Although verifications have increased,

evidence of cougars remains extremely rare. In contrast, in Florida, where an estimated cougar population of only 100-150 animals reside, an average of 23 cougar deaths (14 car-kills) are documented each year.

Although some cougar sightings in Minnesota are accurately identified, many observations from trail cameras and tracks turn out to be cases of mistaken identity. Bobcats, house cats, coyotes, wolves, fishers and light colored dogs have all been mistaken as cougars.

A cougar will range in length from four to six feet, with a head that appears small in relation to the body. The body is tan except for dark face markings and tail tip. The tail will be nearly as long as the body.

Human encounters with cougars are extremely rare. Even in California, which has a population of more than 5,000 of the big cats, a person is 1,000 times more likely to be struck by lightning than attacked by a cougar. If an encounter does take place, stay calm, face the animal, make yourself appear large by opening your coat or putting your hands above your head, and speak in a loud voice. Most cougars will avoid confrontation.

Cougars are protected animals in Minnesota. State statute makes it illegal for a citizen to kill a cougar in most circumstances. Public safety officials are authorized to kill a cougar to protect public safety. If a cougar poses an immediate threat to public safety, contact a DNR conservation office or local law enforcement person as soon as possible.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MN TWS LISTSERV

Do you want to exchange ideas and information with fellow TWS members? Or be the first to hear about the annual meeting, summer meetings, or important issues in conservation? We now have a listserv for all members for just that purpose. . If you would like to join the list, direct your browser to http://wildlifeprofessional.org/mailman/listinfo/mntws_wildlifeprofessional.org.



The governing board corresponds on a similar list (which is open to the members) at http://wildlifeprofessional.org/mailman/listinfo/mntwsboard_wildlifeprofessional.org

MN TWS SHIRTS!

Short sleeve (natural white or sage green, S-XXL): \$10

Long sleeve (natural white, S-XXL): \$12

Please contact Sara Vacek (320-297-0386 or curtsara@hotmail.com) to order.

WEBMASTER NEEDED

The Minnesota Chapter is searching for a webmaster to assume responsibility of the chapter website as it transitions from its current location to be hosted on the parent society's server. An interest in website design and Joomla software used to manage web content is a plus! Anyone interested in additional information should contact current webmaster John Loegering, 218-281-8132 or jloegeri@umn.edu.

INTERNSHIPS AVAILABLE WITH MINNESOTA DNR SHALLOW LAKES PROGRAM

The Minnesota DNR Shallow Lakes Program is planning to hire 12 student interns for the 2012 summer field season – Ann Geisen, Wildlife Lake Specialist, MN DNR. Twelve interns will assist with surveying shallow lakes and assessing waterfowl habitat throughout Minnesota. Positions will be located across MN in Detroit Lakes (2), Eveleth (2), Glenwood (2), Madelia (2), Marshall (2), and Sauk Rapids (2). The pay rate is \$12/hour. The complete announcement and application instructions will be posted in early January on the State of Minnesota job website at <http://statejobs.doer.state.mn.us/JobPosting>. Under "Department" highlight "Natural Resources Dept.," then click the search button at the bottom of the page. All job openings with the DNR, including the Shallow Lakes Program internships, will be listed. The application deadline will be early February, 2012

January 11, 2012. 9th Annual Forestry, Wildlife and Natural Resources Research Review (with a Wildlife Emphasis this year). Cloquet Forestry Center, Cloquet MN. 8:00 am - 3:30 pm.

This is an opportunity to learn about the latest basic and applied research from researchers and practitioners from the MN DNR, USFS Northern Research Station, USFS National Forests, UMN Depts. of Forest Resources and Conservation Biology, University of Minnesota, Duluth - NRRI, The Nature Conservancy and researchers from Wisconsin.

Draft Agenda

9th Annual Forestry, Wildlife and Natural Resources Research Review "Wildlife of the Northern Forests"

Wednesday January 11, 2012 University of Minnesota Cloquet Forestry Center Cloquet, MN
8:00 a.m. Registration

8:30 a.m. Introductions: Mike Kroenke-SFEC Program Director, Mike Rentz-UMN Dept. of Biology Graduate Candidate

8:35 a.m. **Keynote Address:** Gerald Niemi-Professor-Biology and Senior Research Associate, UMD Natural Resources Research Institute, ***'Forest Birds and Forest Management in the Western Great Lakes Region'***

9:20 a.m. Speaker: Ed Zlonis-UMD Graduate Student, ***'MN Boundary Waters Bird Count Findings'***

9:40 a.m. Break: Poster Viewing



10:00 a.m. Speakers: Michael Kilgore-UMN Dept. of Forest Resources, Stephanie Snyder-USDA FS & Steve Taff-UMN Dept. of Applied Economics, **'Forest Parcelization-Do You Know it When You See It?'**

10:20 a.m. Speakers: Tom Will & Henry Stebby, USF&WS, Fort Snell & Wayne Brininger, USF&WS, Tamarac NWR **'Golden Winged Warblers and Neotropical Birds'**

11:05 a.m. Speakers: Jody Provost, MN DNR & Wes Bailey, MN DNR, **'Sharp Tailed Grouse'**

11:50 a.m. Lunch: Poster Viewing

12:50 p.m. Speaker: Tom Cooper, USF&WS, Fort Snell, **'Woodcock'**

1:10 p.m. Speaker: Rocky Gutierrez, UMN Dept. of Wildlife Ecology, **'New Research On Ruffed Grouse, What Does It Tell Us About Options For Grouse Management In The Future?'**

1:30 p.m. Speaker: Ryan Hueffmeier, UMD Natural Resource Research Institute, **'Earthworms'**

1:50 p.m. Speaker: Jason Naber, EORINC, **'Wood Turtles'**

2:10 p.m. Speaker: Karen Noyce, MN DNR, **'Black Bear'**

2:30 p.m. Break: Poster Viewing

2:45 p.m. Speaker: Ron Moen, UMD Natural Resource Research Institute, **'Moose'**

3:05 p.m. Speaker: Ron Moen, UMD Natural Resource Research Institute, **'Lynx'**

3:25 p.m. Speaker: John Erb, MN DNR, **'Marten and Fisher'**

4:05 p.m. Closing remarks/Evaluations

4:10 p.m. Adjourn

To **register** for the Research Review, go to <http://sfec.cfans.umn.edu> and click on the 'Featured Programs' link on the Home Page. Then click on the registration link for the January 11, 2012 Research Review. We'll look forward to seeing you at the Review! **Good for (approx.) 6.5 CEUs, Cat. 1.**

A MESSAGE FROM THE MIDWEST COORDINATED BIRD MONITORING PARTNERSHIP

Do you work in the Boreal-Hardwood Transition Zone? If the answer is YES, read on...

The Boreal Avian Monitoring (BAM) Project, <http://www.borealbirds.ca/>, is amassing all available data sets to answer key questions about the present and future health of the boreal avian community. Originally focusing in Canada, they are now expanding out to all boreal regions of North America (including Bird Conservation Region 12 - Boreal Hardwood Transition Zone). Often called the bird nursery, the boreal region provides nesting habitat to over three billion birds per year.

The BAM Project is a unique, bi-national collaboration among avian and forest researchers, conservation agencies, industry, as well as other funders and end-users of avian research, united to support the conservation of boreal birds by facilitating a better understanding of their ecology.

If you have data on boreal birds and are willing to share them with this important project, please contact Katie Koch (katie_koch@fws.gov; 906-226-1249) or Steve Matsuoka (steve.matsuoka@ales.ualberta.ca; 780-492-1497) today. Thank you!

Visit Midwest Coordinated Bird Monitoring Partnership at:
http://midwestbirdmonitoring.ning.com/?xq_source=msg_mes_network

Wildlife handling course in Bozeman, MT Jan. 31-Feb. 2, 2012

I am pleased to announce that I have scheduled a wildlife chemical immobilization course near Bozeman, Montana Jan. 31-Feb. 2 (Tues-Thurs.), 2012. This course is designed for



state/tribal/private/federal wildlife professionals, captive wildlife organizations, animal control officers, university students, and veterinary professionals.

This is one of the most extensive courses in North America. It is a practical field-oriented course with hands-on labs every day, including 2 labs with live animals. In this course, you will be able to chemically immobilize goats, which simulate deer and other ungulates in an excellent way. Attached is a course announcement. People can register through our website Course Schedule.

Please share this announcement with your colleagues. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Dr. Mark R. Johnson mjohnson@wildliferesources.org



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<p><u>Historian/Archivist</u> John Moriarty john.moriarty@co.ramsey.mn.us</p>	<p><u>Student Relations (co-chairs)</u> Jim Berdeen james.berdeen@gmail.com Mark Hanson Mkhanson@paulbunyan.net</p>	<p><u>Webmaster</u> John Loegering 2900 University Avenue Crookston, MN 56716 (w) 218-281-8132 jloegeri@umn.edu</p>



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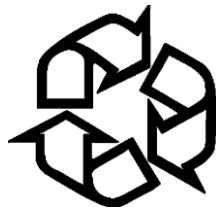
If you are a member of any of the below committees and do not see your name or see your name and are not on that committee, please contact John Loegering for changes.

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