

## NEW MEXICO CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

### President's Message—James Cain

Greetings,

As most of you know, the NM chapter will be hosting the 2015 Joint Annual Meeting (JAM). The Board has decided to hold the 2015 JAM in Las Cruces at the Hotel Encanto on 5–7 February 2015. It has been a long time since the JAM was held in southern New Mexico, and to my knowledge this is the first time it will be held in Las Cruces. The hotel has given us a great rate on a block of rooms, so be sure to reserve your room early (info on page 2). The Board is in the final stages of selecting a plenary theme and setting up workshops and field trips for the meeting, so keep an eye out for an announcement with this information in the near future. We are also still in need of some assistance with planning and execution of the meeting. If you would like to assist please contact me via email at [jwcain@nmsu.edu](mailto:jwcain@nmsu.edu).

We are currently in the process of revising our professional award nomination process to streamline the procedures. The goal is to make nominating someone less onerous and encourage more nominations of deserving chapter members. We will also be adding a student award this year that will be given out to deserving undergraduate or graduate students. More details will be forthcoming once we have finalized the process. Some of you may have noticed a recent announcement that was sent out regarding some major changes to the format for the Best Wildlife Presentation Award competition for students at the Joint Annual Meeting (see details later in the newsletter). Dr. Jennifer Frey is leading the effort to increase the rigor, stature, and judging consistency for the best student presentation award. If you know of any students that are planning to present at the 2015 Joint Annual Meeting, please pass along this information and encourage them to apply for the new student paper competition.

The Southwest Section of TWS announced another round of the Wildlife Certification Scholarship Program ([http://wildlife.org/SW/scholarships\\_grants](http://wildlife.org/SW/scholarships_grants)) which covers part of the fees associated with becoming an Associate Wildlife Biologist® or Certified Wildlife Biologist® through TWS Certification Program. I would encourage those NM Chapter members who are also members of the SW Section to apply for the scholarship if they are interested in becoming certified through TWS.

The Board and I are here to serve the chapter and its membership, so feel free to contact me or one of the Board members and let us know how we can be of assistance.

Cheers,

**Jimmy Cain**

NM-TWS President



Las Conchas fire regrowth

Mark Watson

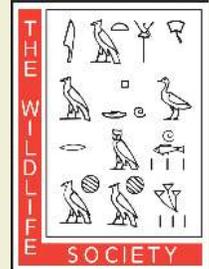
NM-TWS Website: <http://wildlife.org/NM/>

Follow us on Twitter: @NewMexicoTWS

NM-TWS Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Wildlife-Society-New-Mexico-Chapter/122478411098284>

Summer 2014

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48<sup>TH</sup> JOINT  
ANNUAL MEETING  
5-7 FEBRUARY 2015

ARIZONA AND NEW MEXICO CHAPTERS OF  
THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

AND

ARIZONA-NEW MEXICO CHAPTER OF THE  
AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY



LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO

Room rates (plus tax) are \$88 for single or double occupancy.

To make reservations contact:

**Hotel Encanto de Las Cruces**

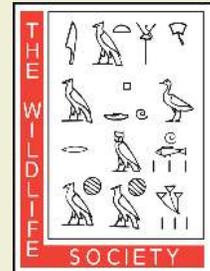
705 S. Telshor Blvd.

Las Cruces, NM 88011

[www.hotelencanto.com](http://www.hotelencanto.com)

866-383-0443

When you make reservations, be sure to tell them you will be attending the AZ/NM Joint Annual Meeting. If you do not identify yourself as attending the meeting you may not get a room because most of the hotel rooms are being held for our use until 31 January 2015.



# 48<sup>TH</sup> JOINT ANNUAL MEETING

REGISTRATION OPEN AT  
[WWW.2015JAM.EVENTZILLA.NET](http://WWW.2015JAM.EVENTZILLA.NET)



## **CURRENT WORKSHOPS:**

**Wildlife Capture and Restraint**

**Program R**

**Piscicide Applications Short Course**

**Law Enforcement**

**Interview and Resume Building**

**Additional Workshops and Field Trips may be added**

## Mule Deer Reserach—Jana Ashling and James Cain, NMSU



Silver City capture

Jana Ashling

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (Department) is currently facing dual management issues with some mule deer populations in the state. Many populations in southern New Mexico have failed to recover from previous population declines. However, mule deer populations near some urban areas have increased, resulting in overabundant populations, leading to increased human-wildlife conflicts including damage to property and increased vehicle collisions. The Department has initiated a translocation program in a simultaneous effort to reduce the high density problem populations and augment low density populations. In 2013, 110 mule deer were captured in Silver City, NM and translocated to the Peloncillo Mountains and the San Francisco River Valley. In 2014, 74 mule deer were captured

and translocated to the same two areas. An additional 49 mule deer were captured on private property near Arabela, NM and released in the San Francisco River Valley. Although, the translocation of ungulates to augment declining populations is commonly used by wildlife management agencies, often there is little follow-up monitoring conducted for most translocation efforts. The Department would like to assess the success of these translocations by monitoring survival and habitat selection of translocated mule deer and has contracted the U.S. Geological Survey, New Mexico Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit at New Mexico State University to lead this research effort. Our objectives are to: 1) assess post-translocation survival, including a comparison of survival and site fidelity with a hard- versus soft-release strategy; 2) determine habitat use patterns of translocated mule deer; and 3) estimate survival of fawns produced by recently translocated deer. Data collection for estimation of adult survival, movements, and habitat selection are ongoing. We have currently captured 8 neonates from translocated females and fawn captures will continue through August. Results from this project will determine if translocations from high density populations are a successful way to augment declining mule deer populations in southern New Mexico. This will allow the Department to manage for the recovery and persistence of mule deer populations in New Mexico while maximizing the efficient use of public resources.



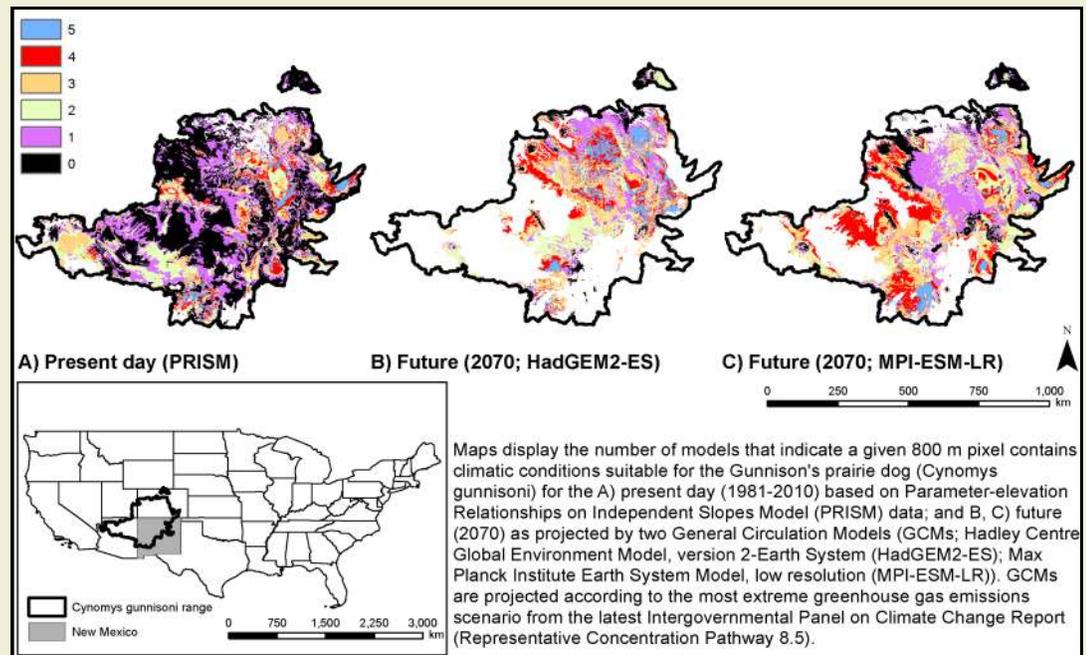
Mule deer fawn capture

Jana Ashling

## Update on research activities at the Center for Applied Spatial Ecology at New Mexico State University—Virginia Seamster

In the last newsletter I outlined current research projects that I'm involved in as a post-doctoral research scientist in the Center for Applied Spatial Ecology (CASE) at New Mexico State University. What follows is an update on a project funded by the South Central Climate Science Center that focuses on assessing the impact that varying climate and land use change scenarios will have on the distribution of key species and unfragmented habitat in the South Central United States. We have developed preliminary bioclimatic-envelope models for our 20 terrestrial vertebrate focal species and projected the present day models to potential future (2070) climatic conditions simulated by two different general circulation models (GCMs, see an example below). We used the scenario from the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report with the highest projected greenhouse gas emissions and limited the model results to the geographic range of each species. This was done to address the fact that the models do not account for species dispersal ability. These preliminary models will be refined and the present day models will be projected to a larger number of potential future conditions based on additional GCMs and emissions scenarios.

The GCMs were selected based on their ability to generate results that are relatively unbiased when simulations are compared to historic observation-based datasets. They were also determined to capture a reasonable range of potential future climatic conditions (both temperatures and rainfall amounts). Pending further model evaluation, the list of focal species may be revised by removal of species for which there is insufficient data and addition of species for which better datasets are available.



I'm also revising a manuscript that describes a process for characterizing a management unit in a broader ecological context and identifying conservation priorities. Our focal area is southwestern New Mexico, specifically the 6 counties included in the Bureau of Land Management's Las Cruces District. We are revising the manuscript to focus on context regions defined by state and ecoregion boundaries. We originally considered regions delineated by simple buffers but have since decided that these buffers have less relevance in the context of agency needs and land management activities. The process for identifying conservation priorities described in the manuscript could potentially be applied to a variety of management units (e.g., National Forests, National Wildlife Refuges, Game Management Units) located anywhere in the United States.

## New Mexico Department of Game and Fish gets a new Director

Alexa Sandoval wanted to be a game warden from the time she was a little girl. May 15, she got much more than her wish when she became director of the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, a position that also carries the title, "State Game Warden".

"It is such an honor for me to have this opportunity to work with so many talented people who are dedicated to conserving our state's wildlife," Sandoval says. "I'm excited about working with our staff and all of our constituents to make our Department a leader in wildlife management across the West and the nation."

Sandoval, who began her 20-year career with the department as a game warden in Clayton, was chosen among 4 finalists for the job by the State Game Commission. As the second woman Director in the department's 101-year history, she will be responsible for managing a state wildlife agency with more than 300 employees and an annual budget of more than \$38 million.

Sandoval moves into the director's chair after serving as the Department's chief financial officer and chief of the Administrative Services Division. She previously served as a district wildlife officer (game warden), wildlife specialist, federal grant manager, and licensing supervisor. She holds a master's degree in Business Administration from New Mexico Highlands University and a bachelor's degree in Wildlife Management from Colorado State University. She also is a recent graduate of the prestigious National Conservation Leadership Institute.

Her passions, Sandoval says, are her family and New Mexico's outdoors. She is married to a retired New Mexico game warden, Ernie Sandoval. They have one daughter in college and two young sons.

"We are avid hunters and anglers and we love the outdoors," she says. "Every opportunity we get, we go camping and we're checking out new places."

In her new position, Sandoval said one focus will be building upon positive partnerships with the state's sportsmen and sportswomen, land owners, livestock operators, conservation groups and other government agencies. "Everybody has a role to play in managing wildlife," she says.

Another focus will be retaining and recruiting a diverse constituency of hunters, anglers, trappers, and wildlife supporters in New Mexico.

"Our state has so much to offer to so many people," she says. "Our wildlife is a resource everyone should respect and enjoy."



## New Mexico sees expansion of Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep into historic range

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (Department) reintroduced Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep into historic bighorn sheep habitat near Cochiti Canyon in the Jemez Mountains of the Santa Fe National Forest.

Several dozen Department staff and volunteers conducted a capture operation 11–14 August near Wheeler Peak in the Carson National Forest. The sheep were released in the treeless burned area created by the Las Conchas Fire in 2011, which has become ideal bighorn sheep habitat.

The Department moved 45 bighorn (29 adult ewes, 2 yearling ewes, 2 mature rams, 2 yearling rams, and 10 lambs) using drop nets and chemical immobilization equipment. Captured bighorn were then transported via helicopter to a staging area where they underwent a health evaluation. After receiving veterinary care, they were transported by trailer to their new home.

This was the 10<sup>th</sup> Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep herd the Department has established since beginning to restore the species in 1978. Biologists anticipate that the herd will expand into Bandelier National Monument and the White Rock Canyon area, and will increase opportunities for New Mexicans to see bighorn in the wild.

As part of a long-term study, the Department placed radio collars on all of the adult bighorn. Twenty of the collars have GPS technology that will give wildlife biologists new insights about the bighorn and their daily routines.

The Department has used the herd of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep near Wheeler Peak, established in 1993, as a source for starting new herds since 2003. The Department most recently transplanted bighorn from the herd of about 350 in 2012.

“More than 170 bighorn sheep have been trapped from the Wheeler Peak population since 2003, and every time is different,” said Eric Rominger, bighorn sheep biologist for the Department.



Bighorn under the drop net

Ryan Walker

## Southwest Section Update—Carol Chambers

I hope your summer is going well. My field season has started off in the mountains of northern Arizona, trying to determine effects of wildfire on bat habitat. So far the work is going well and I'm enjoying some time outside. Here are some updates for the Southwest Section.



**Conservation Affairs Network** Both TWS and the SW Section have been active in Conservation Affairs. At the national level, Assistant Director Norris has been working on web content, a newsletter, and coordinating communications Sections. At the SW Section level, Conservation Affairs Committee Chair Jim Ramakka ([iramakka@aol.com](mailto:iramakka@aol.com)) is organizing responses for the Section to support strong funding for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program, and to support healthy waters and wetlands. Be proud of the active lead that the SW Section is taking in conservation issues and offer your help to Jim.

**Membership** Membership remains steady for the SW Section. TWS has seen numbers drop and we are looking for new approaches to gain new members. The new Wildlife Partner program, which will be launched later this summer, will lead to an influx of new members. Don't forget to encourage your colleagues, students, interns, and other wildlifers to check out the benefits of belonging to TWS.

**Social Media** The Southwest Section is holding steady with 230 likes on its Facebook page. Like us at The Wildlife Society Southwest Section Chapters

Hub (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Wildlife-Society-Southwest-Section-Chapters-Hub/205755042835210>). The TWS Women of Wildlife (WOW) Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/TWS-Women-of-Wildlife/234411723382592>) is now at 804 likes, up from 790 in December.

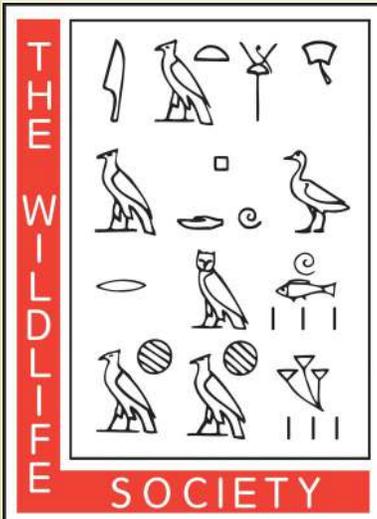
As always if you have questions or comments, please contact me at [Carol.Chambers@nau.edu](mailto:Carol.Chambers@nau.edu) or 928-523-0014 (office).

## Southwest Section Update—Leland Pierce

The executive board of the Southwest Section is busy working on strategies to increase the value of the Section to its members and to build membership in general. One initial idea is to have a contest for current members to sign up new members—look for an announcement shortly. As per discussions held at a luncheon at the Joint Annual Meeting in Pinetop earlier this year, the Section is pursuing the development of a Women of Wildlife committee. Another committee is in development as well, concerning professionals that employ geospatial technologies toward wildlife conservation and management (e.g., GIS, remote sensing, spatial modeling). Lastly, please bear in mind the SW Section offers to offset fees associated with applying for Associate Wildlife Biologist® or Certified Wildlife Biologist® through the TWS Certification Program. For more information, interested members should go to: [http://wildlife.org/sw/scholarships\\_grants](http://wildlife.org/sw/scholarships_grants).

## Information from Carol Chambers

**TWS strategic plan** The draft 5-year TWS strategic plan was posted in The Wildlifer in May after a considerable amount of work by Council and staff. We plan to post it on the Southwest Section website (<http://wildlife.org/SW/home>). The plan is shorter than the previous strategic plan, provides general direction for TWS, and its implementation will be addressed annually with a detailed operational plan. The new plan describes 5 broad strategic themes but maintains the vision of TWS as being a strong and effective voice in representing wildlife conservation and management, and ensuring sustainable wildlife populations in healthy ecosystems. During the fall Council Meeting we will vote to approve the plan so please provide me with your feedback.



**Membership** National membership reached just under 10,000 members for 2013 (we were close to 11,000 in 2012). We hope with firmer financial footing we'll be able to recover lapsed members and encourage new members to join. TWS will launch a new Wildlife Partner Program to encourage new members this summer—since you value TWS, look for an opportunity to get new subscribers into this program or regular membership.

**Conference Developments** Registration for the 2014 21<sup>st</sup> TWS Annual Conference in Pittsburgh (25–30 October) is open at the TWS website. You can contribute to the environment and wildlife by participating in an ongoing Allegheny River Clean-Up effort and paddle while you do so. Other field trips are available and a preliminary schedule for the conference is available at <http://wildlifesociety.org/schedule/>.

Get ready for the 21<sup>st</sup> annual TWS meeting in Pittsburg, 25–30 October 2014.

Information at [wildlifesociety.org](http://wildlifesociety.org)



## C. Hart Merriam Award—New Format for the JAM Wildlife Student Paper Competition

We are pleased to announce an exciting new format for awarding the Best Wildlife Presentation at the upcoming Joint Annual Meeting in February 2015. Due to the large and increasing numbers of student presentations, it has not been possible to provide fair and consistent judging for all wildlife students during Friday sessions. We want to ensure that deserving students are recognized and that the Best Wildlife Presentation Award, means just that. This year we will have an entirely new way of evaluating student research. Student research will be evaluated by a panel of distinguished wildlife biologists representing both chapters. To enter the competition, students must submit a written summary of their research. To be competitive, these should be final or near final results of the student's research. The panel of judges will evaluate the written summary of the student's research (i.e., based on the merits of the research) to determine a short-list of the top 3 students from each state. The 6 finalists then will compete during a special symposium of the meeting on Friday; each student's presentation will be 15 minutes plus 5 minutes for questions. The 6 finalists will be recognized with a certificate at the awards banquet (selection as a finalist is an important accomplishment in itself). The panel of judges will determine the winner from each chapter and the overall best paper. The top paper from each chapter will receive a certificate and cash award, and the overall winner will receive a certificate and bonus cash award.

Experience presenting research at professional meetings is an important part of a student's professional development. Consequently, we strongly encourage all students involved with research to present a poster or presentation. We will continue to strive to provide informal peer review of all student presentations. Poster presentations will be evaluated and will compete for a separate best poster award.

### Benefits

- ◆ Judging will be consistent.
- ◆ The stature of the best wildlife student presentation award will be elevated.
- ◆ Symposium attendees will be able to see all of the "best papers".
- ◆ All 6 finalists will gain better recognition.

### How to Apply

1. Eligibility: Students may be of any rank, including students who have graduated within the preceding 12 months of the JAM. The student must be first author on the research. The student must be a member of either the Arizona or New Mexico Chapter of The Wildlife Society.
2. Prepare your application in a word processor using a standard font no smaller than 11pt, single spacing, and at least one inch margins. Save the completed application as an unsecured PDF with the file name "TWS Student Competition Application—[Last Name]".
3. Application is not to exceed 2 single-spaced pages including tables, figures, and literature citations. Include the following information:
  - ◆ Student name, institutional address, email address
  - ◆ Advisor's name; list of coauthors in order of recognition
  - ◆ Summary of research including title, a brief introduction, methods, results, conclusions, and significance or management implications
4. Attach the PDF of your application to an email addressed to Dr. Jennifer Frey ([jfrey@nmsu.edu](mailto:jfrey@nmsu.edu)) with a subject line "TWS Student Competition Application—[Last Name]".
5. **The deadline for application is Friday 7 November, 5:00 pm MST.**

## Outstanding Student and Wildlife Professional Awards for JAM 2015

Submission Deadline is **15 December 2014**

Submit to Quentin Hays, [quentin.hays@enmu.edu](mailto:quentin.hays@enmu.edu)

### Outstanding Student Award

#### Description:

The Outstanding Student Award is given annually to a student who, while attending college or university in NM, made a significant contribution to wildlife science, management, or conservation within the state. Any undergraduate or graduate student may be nominated for this award, but students pursuing a degree in wildlife or a wildlife-related field will be given preference. The Outstanding Student Award may be given to students for a single exemplary act, or for a more long-term demonstration of outstanding performance.

#### Nomination Format and Evaluation Criteria:

The nomination should be a brief (<1 page), but persuasive summary of the contributions made by the student that are deserving of the Outstanding Student Award. Nominations must also contain a short curriculum vitae (CV) from the student (<2 pages); evidence of academic performance such as grade point average should be included. Selection of award recipients is based on contributions to the classroom, significant undergraduate or graduate research, extracurricular projects that contribute to wildlife conservation efforts in NM, involvement with a student chapter or the NM Chapter of The Wildlife Society, and/or overall academic performance.

### Wildlife Professional Award

#### Description:

The Wildlife Professional Award is bestowed annually upon a wildlife professional for outstanding contributions to their field within NM. Recipients may be practitioners in research, education, management, conservation, law enforcement or legislation, but must have demonstrated excellence in their field related to wildlife in NM. The award is based on the significance of contributions made to the field, and may include contributions made over an entire career or over a shorter period of time. Recipients should be currently employed or recently retired wildlife professionals in 1 of the above-stated fields.

#### Nomination Format and Evaluation Criteria:

The nomination should be a brief (<1 page), but persuasive narrative describing why the nominee is deserving of the Wildlife Professional Award. Nominations should address the specific significance of the contribution(s) to wildlife management or wildlife biology in NM for which the individual is being nominated. These contributions may include pioneering or innovative wildlife research or management strategies, performance exceeding normal job requirements, or exemplary leadership within the array of wildlife-related professions described above. Contributions may also include efforts leading to increased public awareness of a specific wildlife-related issue, or demonstrated excellence in surmounting obstacles in pursuit of improved management and/or conservation. Nominations should also include contact information for the nominee, as well as a synopsis of their educational and professional background.

### Award Decisions

Members of the Board of the NM Chapter of The Wildlife Society review nominations prior to JAM 2015, and present the awards at this meeting. Additional information on recipients may be requested from nominators prior to the award presentation at JAM 2015.

## Help needed with 2015 JAM

NM TWS is hosting the 2015 Arizona/New Mexico American Fisheries Society/The Wildlife Society Joint Annual Meeting. Your help is requested for the following planning committees:

- ◆ Commercial Exhibits and Vendor Sales
- ◆ Student Volunteers
- ◆ Awards for the Photo Contest and Wildlife Posters and Papers
- ◆ Job Board and Message Board

If you are willing to help please email Jimmy Cain, [jwcain@nmsu.edu](mailto:jwcain@nmsu.edu).

## Big Game Rule Development Continues

Beginning in 2011, the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish transitioned all of the big game species rules from 2-year to 4-year rules to allow for improved use of population and harvest information.

Initial rule development began in January and the State Game Commission passed Javelina, Barbary Sheep, Oryx, and Ibex rules at the May meeting.

Up for final vote at the 28 August meeting are Turkey, Migratory Game Birds, Pronghorn, and Bighorn sheep rules, while Department staff suggest changes to the Deer and Elk rules. The final vote for Deer and Elk rules will be made at the 2 October meeting in Socorro, NM.

Go to <http://wildlife.state.nm.us/documents/Ruledevelopmentforthe2014-2019huntingseasons.htm> for the most up-to-date information on the rule development process.



Mule deer in velvet

Jim Stuart

# NEW MEXICO CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

New Mexico Chapter -  
The Wildlife Society  
P.O. Box 35936  
Albuquerque, NM 87176

NMTWS is an active affiliate of The Wildlife Society that is dedicated to promoting sound management and conservation of New Mexico's wildlife resources.

Membership is open to all professionals, students, and laypersons interested in wildlife research, management, education, and administration.

Our chapter works to maintain communication among wildlife professionals; encourages communication between those professionals and the general public; supports continuing education through grants, workshops, and regional meetings; encourages student involvement in the wildlife profession; and actively participates in shaping management and conservation policy through letters, public statements, and resolutions.

## We're on the Web!

Check out our new website that was created last year. <http://wildlife.org/nm>



### Membership Form

<i>First name</i>				
<i>Last name</i>				
<i>Organization</i>				
<i>Address</i>				
<i>City</i>		<i>State</i>		<i>ZIP</i>
<i>Telephone (day)</i>		<i>Fax</i>		
<i>Email</i>				

**Please join or update your membership today!**

**Thank You!**

Please complete the membership form and mail it with your \$8 dues to:

**The Wildlife Society  
New Mexico Chapter  
P.O. Box 35936**

**Albuquerque, NM 87176-3593**

*For updates to your mailing or email address  
please contact Dan Collins, [dan\\_collins@fws.gov](mailto:dan_collins@fws.gov)*