

Throughout this newsletter you will read about numerous proposed changes.

We're retooling our bylaws to allow a more fluid transition of the Section's executive board and enhancing committees to improve function. We've established a new working relationship with the Northeast Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies and have a designated role on the Conference Planning Committee to ensure that your needs, as members, are met at our annual meeting. We're strengthening student support through a revitalized Student Affairs committee. And we're stepping up as a regional leader in wildlife policy through the launch of our new Conservation Affairs committee. The framework is in place – now we need the people.

If you've had a vision for what the Northeast Section can be, now is your time. If you've wanted to engage on a regional level with your professional society, now is your time. If you have been searching for a voice, a calling, a niche, now is your time! Wildlife conservation and management has never been just a profession; it has *always* been a movement. Together, we can restore the Section as a leader in the northeast for wildlife professionals – managers, academics, researchers, administrators, technicians, and students alike.

I've accepted my challenge! Have you accepted yours?

NORTHEAST SECTION TO VOTE ON CHANGES IN THE BYLAWS

In April the NETWS board voted to approve for member vote a suite of bylaws changes and a new position statement titled *Managing Chronically Overabundant Deer in the Northeast*. In the coming months we will be working with TWS Headquarters to develop an on-line ballot for you to cast your vote on these topics and the election of new officers (Secretary and President-elect). Pursuant to our bylaws, these initiative need to be made available for member review and consideration prior to voting. If approved, bylaws changes and the position statement will come into immediate effect.

BYLAWS CHANGES: Proposed changes to NETWS's bylaws include issues related to policy adoption, Section Leadership, and Section level Committees.

INITIATIVE 1: Do you support the inclusion of a new section under *Article III. Organizations* that specifically addresses Resolutions, Position Statements, and Public Statements?

Currently the bylaws do not provide guidance or methodology for the review, drafting, or adoption of resolutions, positions statements, or public statements. The proposed amendment would define policy, position statement, and public statement. The proposal also includes process methodology and approval by Executive Leadership or the Section membership. The Executive Board recommends the adoption of a new Section 3. Resolutions, Position Statements, and Public Statements and the associated clauses.

INITIATIVE 2: Do you support the following changes to *Article IV. Officers*?

Establish the position of Immediate Past-President.

The role of Immediate Past-President existed historically and was removed within the past 10 years in lieu of extending President tenure. This change has not yielded desirable results. The Executive Board recommends the re-establishment of the position of the Immediate Past-President. Among other duties as assigned, this position will serve as the official liaison to the Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference planning committee.

Reduce the tenure of the position of President from two years to one year.

Reduction on President tenure allows a consistent election and succession from President-elect and is more reflective of the Section's historic structure. The Executive Board recommends the reduction of the tenure of Section President.

Change the officer transition process to support progression of President-elect to president to Immediate Past-President.

Clear articulation of transitional processes would allow a three year commitment to the primary leadership positions of the Section.

Each position would be for approximately one year. The Executive Board recommends this transition strategy for Section leadership.

Eliminate the position of Vice President.

The role of the Vice President in the current framework was necessary due to the irregularity terms of service for the President-elect. The aforementioned changes remove the need for the Vice President position. The Executive Board recommends the elimination of the position of Vice President.

INITIATIVE 3: Do you support the following changes proposed to *Article VII. Committees?*

Eliminate the Program Committee, the Publication Committee, and the Wildlife Educators Committee.

All three committees have been inactive for at least 12-20 years and have remained vacant consistently for more than a decade. The Executive Board recommends full elimination of these committees.

Merge the Membership Committee, Nominations Committee and Bylaws Committee into a single Operations Committee.

All three committee contain critical operation and infrastructure responsibilities. Full staffing of these committees have been inconsistent, decreasing reliability and effectiveness. The Executive Board recommends merging these three committees into a single Operations Committee in an effort to increase effectiveness, reliability, and accountability.

Create a Communications Committee.

Communications activities such as Newsletter and Website design and the newly created NE Representative to The Wildlife Professional Editorial Advisory Board do not have a home within the Section bylaws structure. Creation of a Communication Committee would provide a framework for operations and would create an entity to explore expansion of communications opportunities.

Expand the Conservation Affairs Committee.

Guidance from The Wildlife Society has been created to strengthen Conservation Affairs Committees at a Section and Chapter level. The Executive Board recommends the adoption of this guidance to expand and clarify the roles

and responsibilities of the Conservation Affairs Committee.

Strengthen the Student Affairs Committee.

The Student Affairs Committee has struggled with maintaining operations consistently over numerous years. This change would allow for the Chair of the Student Affairs Committee to be an active professional to ensure longevity and consistency across multiple years. This change would also clarify a specific role for the Committee in planning student activities for the Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference.

POSITION STATEMENTS: The following ballot initiative pertains to a proposed position statement for the Northeast Section. This is the first position statement initiated by the Section and, as such, no process exists for member approval. To ensure transparency and support for Section membership we are defaulting to similar subunit policies regarding position statement review and approval.

INITIATIVE 4: Do you support the adoption of the Position Statement titled *Managing Chronically Overabundant Deer* as an official position statement of the Northeast Section?

**DEER POSITION STATEMENT OF THE
NORTHEAST SECTION
MANAGING OVERABUNDANT DEER**

Most ungulate populations throughout the United States, including white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), declined through the 1800s and early 1900s. Unregulated shooting and habitat destruction were the primary causes of the demise of deer across much of their range during this time. However, deer populations recovered during the 20th century with the improvement of habitat, reforestation, near extirpation of predators, and creation and enforcement of game laws. In the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states, where not limited by severe winters, deer populations have generally thrived over the past several decades. Expansion of residential development has created areas of refuge where, due to ample forage from ornamental plantings and little or no hunting pressure,

deer populations experience high productivity, low mortality, and commonly exceed social tolerance levels while also altering native plant communities and possibly impacting other wildlife populations.

Conflicts between deer and humans in developed areas have been common for several decades. Most often, management intervention is prompted when deer-vehicle collisions, concerns about tick-borne disease transmission, and damage to agricultural crops, gardens, and ornamental plantings exceed cultural tolerance levels. Increasingly, community leaders and residents are also valuing local biodiversity and recognizing the dramatic impact that chronically overabundant deer are having on natural areas.

Removal of deer from the population via regulated hunting or shooting is the most effective management option and is generally accepted in areas where a hunting culture exists. In developed areas, managing deer to resolve deer-human conflicts is often controversial and solutions are not easily achieved. Efforts in such areas often lead to intense and emotional debates. Policies addressing management of overabundant deer should be based in sound science, assessment of economic costs and benefits, and understanding of local community values. Approaches put forward should emanate from a defined decision-making process that includes opportunity for deliberative discussion of economic data, community goals and values, and a scientifically informed understanding of the potential of various approaches to achieve community goals. Deer removals conducted by experienced hunters or sharpshooters are accomplished with animal welfare in mind. Resulting venison that cannot be used beyond the needs of hunters should be donated to local charities in need.

Deer management action in developed communities must begin with the most basic question, "Is there a problem?" If a community cannot reach a consensus on whether a problem exists, there should be no expectation of agreement on management action. The values of the community should determine whether a problem exists. Scientific data collection may address problems related to deer impacts to the environment, but citizen values must decide whether deer-human conflicts are unacceptable. Because many state wildlife agencies are legally charged to maintain their State's natural heritage and biological diversity, and because chronically overabundant deer jeopardize that mis-

sion, agencies should ensure that communities are informed of the existing or potential impacts of deer on local biodiversity and are empowered to mitigate those impacts.

Once community-specific deer-related impacts are determined, objectives to evaluate changes in the problems must be identified. These objectives should be specific to each identified problem. For example, if the current level of deer-vehicle collisions is problematic, the objective would likely be to reduce deer-vehicle collisions; therefore, the number of deer-vehicle collisions must be monitored. Attempting to define management objectives based on the density or number of deer should be avoided. Annual estimation of deer population abundance is extremely difficult, results are often disputed, and valuable resources could be better used elsewhere. However, based on scientific methodology, a baseline deer population estimate or index of relative abundance and accompanying measure of precision can be used to help guide management approaches during the initial data collection phase.

Based on previous collective experiences, the following preliminary information and documentation are needed to achieve deer management goals in developed areas:

1. Identify positive and negative deer impacts
2. Define objectives to measure progress towards alleviating or eliminating negative impacts and continuing or enhancing positive impacts
3. Collect data on problematic deer impacts
4. Review management options
5. Invoke decision-making process – legal, social, logistical, and economic
6. Develop and implement a communication plan
7. Ensure state wildlife agency and local government agencies have the ability to authorize regulated harvest and where special local hunts may be needed and enhance management authority where possible
8. Identify permitting requirements
9. Implement management actions
10. Monitor changes in deer impact levels
11. Review and modify management actions

Often when a deer management plan is instituted, the level of involvement and effort to achieve goals is grossly underestimated. Municipalities should be prepared to budget for additional measures beyond the scope of volunteers if significant reductions are warranted.

Based on research and previous experience managing deer in suburban settings, progressive actions are needed to meet goals. It must be made clear that any management plan calling for direct population management or reduction is, of necessity, a long-range plan, not a “one-time only” solution. An evaluation of difference deer management options developed by the Northeast Deer Technical Committee can be viewed here).

The following list provides a progression of actions that communities may consider to address deleterious impacts from overabundant deer. Actions progress from those that are more general to those that are more specialized. Initial actions should continue even as a community progresses through the options, with care to avoid educating deer to the lethal threat as conditioned deer can be very difficult to manage.

1. Modify human behavior, which may include bans on deer feeding, changes in speed limits, or zoning considerations to limit or isolate deer habitat within community centers. Consider use of exclusion fences to protect high-value commercial or natural resource areas.
2. Address municipal projectile discharge ordinances and other local by-laws that may prevent regulated hunting by the public as otherwise authorized by state laws and regulations.
3. Identify lands within the community used by deer where management action may be targeted. The lands may include residential neighborhoods, parks and preserves, riparian areas, cemeteries, golf courses, industrial areas, or transportation corridors.
4. Implement controlled public hunts in defined areas within state-regulated hunting seasons and implement public safety limitations as needed.
5. Where needed, coordinate managed hunting using a participant selection process, safety and shooting proficiency test, and personal interviews, with preference to more skilled and cooperative hunters.
6. Facilitate access to private and public lands for managed hunts.
7. Train hunters in suburban deer hunting techniques.
8. Seek special provisions to make regulated hunting more effective, such as: use of crossbows, muzzle-suppressed firearms from elevated locations, use of bait, and increased

antlerless permit allowance combined with incentives for additional permits for antlered deer.

9. Consider financial incentives to increase hunter effort such as equipment, butchering, or transportation cost reimbursement.

10. Employ professional sharpshooting where regulated hunting options have been insufficient to solve identified problems or are otherwise not feasible.

Later options are not intended to replace early options but rather options should be considered inclusively in sequential order. However, the specific management actions undertaken will be largely dictated by the current biological and social conditions in the affected community.

This position statement is consistent with The Wildlife Society’s more general position statements that include: Conserving Biological Diversity; Environmental Quality through Resource Management; Baiting and Supplemental Feeding of Game Wildlife Species; Hunting; Animal Rights Philosophy and Wildlife Conservation; Conservation Education; Responsible Human Use of Wildlife; The Use of Science in Policy and Management Decisions; Urban Wildlife; Wildlife Damage Management; Invasive Plants and Animals; and, Wildlife Disease with mitigatable implications for humans.

Approved by the Board of Northeast Section of The Wildlife Society for member vote on April 19, 2015 in Newport, Rhode Island.



2015 NE SECTION CONCLAVE

Paul Smith College Hosts Successful Conclave

This year The Wildlife Society held the 2015 Northeast Conclave at Paul Smith's College in New York. The school welcomed 200 enthusiastic students from 19 different colleges to their campus. The first day students got to listen to a panel of professionals offer advice on finding careers in the wildlife field.

Students got to choose from 23 different workshops to attend, which were hosted by numerous organizations and individuals including NY DEC, USDA-APHIS, SUNY and many others. On the final day students participated in different competitions, including mammal ID, bird ID, Tree ID, and game and non-game calling.

In the end the students had the opportunity to get wonderful hands-on experiences, learn new skills, and network with fellow Wildlife Society members from across the Northeast! ~Contributed by Ashley Hodge

Northeast Section hosts 7th annual Field Course – John McDonald

The Northeast Section's popular 2-week Field Course was held this past May 17-30 in Castleton, Vermont. In cooperation with the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife and Castleton State College, the Section provides a wide-ranging, hands-on course where students interact with about 2 dozen volunteer instructors in a relaxed, informal, setting. The students receive 3 or 6 college credits from Castleton, but gain so much more in terms of networking and practical field skills. Students also receive certification in environmental education, through Project Wild, and basic hunter education through Vermont's Hunter Education program. In 2015, we had 19 undergraduate and graduate students from 11 different colleges and universities across North America participate; enrollment is capped at 20 students and we had a student withdraw just before the course started (to take a summer job).

Volunteer instructors came from a variety of state agencies in the Section, private consultants, academics, and federal agencies. We also have a couple of "retired" members who donate their time, including the course co-leader, Dr. Bill Healy. Space prohibits me from listing everyone, but the success of the course and the experience the students have is only possible because these people are willing to participate. Some bring equipment with them for our students to use, others contribute their expertise and enthusiasm for the subjects they are engaged with and wildlife as a career in general. All of the instructors donate their time and travel at their own expense (or that of their employer) to participate and receive in return a bunk in an unheated, rustic cabin, pretty good food, and about 20 new friends. The Pennsylvania Game Commission also donated some used radiocollars from their elk program that will serve us well for a number of years and we appreciate that very much.

As usual, several chapters (New England, New York, and Pennsylvania) offered and awarded scholarships for students to participate in the course. The 2016 course will be held May 15-28; the all-inclusive cost (tuition for 3 credits, room & board) will remain at \$950. Please share the word with any students you think may be interested. If you are interested in volunteering your time as an instructor, either to lead a section or simply to work with students in the field and share your perspective on a career in wildlife, feel free to contact the course leader, John McDonald (twsmcdonald@gmail.com).



2015 Field Course participants

CONGRATUALIONS TO OUR 2015 AWARD RECIPIENTS!

The Northeast Section of The Wildlife Society would like to proudly recognize this year's award recipients. Awardees were honored at the 2015 Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference in Newport, Rhode Island.

JOHN PEARCE MEMORIAL AWARD

Gordon Batcheller (*New York*)

The John Pearce Memorial Award is given to members of the Northeast for outstanding professional accomplishments in Wildlife Conservation in the Northeast. We congratulate John McDonald for joining the ranks of awardees since 1951 for his outstanding contributions of knowledge and leadership.

Gordon has been a member of the Wildlife Society since 1976 and has made contributions to all areas considered for recognition under John Pearce aware: research, management, administration, and education.



Gordon Batcheller 2015 John Pearce Memorial Award winner

P.F. ENGLISH MEMORIAL AWARD

Lucas Price (*West Virginia University*)

The P. F. English Memorial Award is presented to the outstanding undergraduate senior student of wildlife biolo-

gy or wildlife management in the Northeast. First awarded in 1974, the P. F. English Memorial Award recognizes a student's achievements in scholarship, work experience and professional activities. We congratulate Lucas Price for achieving this honor on behalf of the Northeast Section.

Lucas is a senior at WVU majoring in wildlife and fisheries with a GPA of 4.0. He is very involved with the student chapter of The Wildlife Society, serving as president, and has volunteered with numerous research studies.



Lucas Price, 2015 P.F. English Memorial Award Winner



RUN FOR OFFICE!! HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO BECOME MORE INVOLVED

NETWS is looking for nominations for:

- * Secretary (2-year, starting April 2016)
- * President-elect (2016).

This is a wonderful opportunity to become more involved in TWS!

If interested please contact Tim at tgreen@bnl.gov



WELCOME TO OUR NEW OFFICERS!

We would like to introduce your new (and continuing) officers—Terra Rentz (President), Emily Just (Vice-President), Eric Shrading (Secretary), Scott Williams (Treasurer), and Paul Johansen (NE Section Rep).

TERRA RENTZ, PRESIDENT



A recent transplant to upstate New York, Terra is completing her MS/MPA at SUNY ESF and Syracuse University evaluating the management effectiveness of state fish and wildlife agencies. Previously Terra served as the Deputy Director of Government Affairs at TWS and

has been working to promote the use of science in policy and decision making for the past eight years. Terra is extremely excited to serve the Section in her new capacity! When she's not focused on her research she loves working in her garden, drinking wine, and playing in the canoe with her family and her stinky yellow lab.

EMILY JUST, VICE-PRESIDENT



Emily is a certified wildlife biologist working for the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resource's Bureau of Forestry as a wildlife biologist. She loves working with foresters on creating and improving wildlife habitat and managing the Deer Management Assistance program

(DMAP) on Bureau of Forestry land. Previously, Emily worked as a science specialist with TNC's forest conservation office in PA. Emily recently got married and enjoys spending time with her husband, taking hikes with her dog, and riding her horse.

ERIC SCHRADING, SECRETARY



Eric returns for another term as NE Section Secretary. He has been with the US Fish and Wildlife Service at the New Jersey Field Office for 19 years serving in federal activities and private lands restoration and the Private Lands Coordinator for the past 16 years working on habitat restoration projects throughout the State. A Certified Wildlife Biologist, his expertise is in on-the-ground, low-cost habitat restoration projects and invasive species control. Among his many leadership accomplishments, Eric is the former President of the New Jersey Chapter. Eric enjoys the sport of triathlon in his free time and has competed and finished the Ironman World Championship in Hawaii four times!

SCOTT WILLIAMS, TREASURER



Scott has a BA from Connecticut College, MES from Yale University, and Ph.D. from the University of Connecticut in Natural Resources. He works as a research scientist at The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station in New Haven and has been a member of the Wildlife Society since 2000 and a Certified Wildlife Biologist since 2010. He is excited to serve his second term as Treasurer of the Northeast Section to help to facilitate the youth movement, bringing with them new ideals on the new realities occurring in the field of modern wildlife management.

PAUL JOHANSEN, NE SECTION REP TO COUNCIL



Paul is a Certified Wildlife Biologist with more than 32 years of service to the citizens of West Virginia. Currently he serves as Assistant Chief in Charge of Game Management where he is responsible for administering the statewide game management program, including District wildlife management operations and statewide wildlife research projects. He holds a BS in Wildlife Biology from the University of Massachusetts and a MS in Fisheries and Wildlife from Virginia Tech. Paul is happily married to his lovely wife Anne, and together they share the joy of raising their son William.

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NATIONAL TWS RELATED NEWS

RECOGNIZING ONE OF OUR OWN! NORTHEAST SECTION MEMBER ELECTED VICE PRESIDENT OF WILDLIFE SOCIETY

A Pennsylvania native, John McDonald, has been interested in wildlife since he was a teenager growing up hunting and trapping near his home in Sullivan County. Once he found out he could make a career out of his passion, he never looked back.

John joined TWS as a college freshman and since then, has been involved at the local and national level. During his 29 year membership he has served as president of the New England chapter, chair of the Aldo Leopold Memorial Award Committee, and was the TWS Northeast Section Representative from 2009-2014.

This spring John was not only elected Vice President but

was also awarded the John Pearce Award for his outstanding professional accomplishments. After serving as the Northeast Section Representative, McDonald is looking forward to once again working with the organization.

"It is quite an honor to be elected by my colleagues across our membership to lead the society," McDonald said in a statement. "Most of our members are in the U.S. and Canada, but we have members all over the world. It is the highest professional recognition of which I can conceive; it means a lot to me."

John McDonald's vision for TWS is to gain wider recognition for the organization. "I'd like to see...our professional organization recognized more by society at large as the experts in wildlife science," McDonald said, "I'd like to increase our visibility to the rest of the world. There are a lot of issues that people care about that are related to the things that our members do."

McDonald believes that broadening the Society's visibility to the public begins internally. During his tenure he would like to see members become more involved nationally and demonstrate the value of a relationship with TWS beyond the chapter level. He would also like TWS to be even more influential in wildlife policy issues by highlighting the Society's stance on issues that are of concern to both members and the general public.

Currently, he is an assistant professor of environmental science at Westfield State University in Massachusetts. (*Nick Wesdock, The Wildlife Society's editorial intern*)



Northeast section member, John McDonald,

NATIONAL TWS RELATED NEWS CONTINUED...

SAVE THE DATE!

THE 72nd ANNUAL NORTHEAST FISH & WILDLIFE CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD APRIL 3-5, 2016 in ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

The Annual Conference attracts over 500 natural resources professionals in the fields of wildlife biology, fisheries and fisheries management, information and education and law enforcement. The event provides opportunities for education, discussion, and exchanging of ideas.

THE CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS IS NOW OPEN! SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL BY JANUARY 1, 2016 TO BE CONSIDERED.

Presentations will be made in the following subject areas:

- Wildlife
- Inland Fisheries
- Marine Fisheries
- Information & Education
- Law Enforcement

The following formats will be accepted:

- 20 minute oral presentation to be combined with other like topics
- Poster display

Please note: All presenters are required to register and pay to attend the conference.



ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING

“We are The Wildlife Society!” That was the chant set in motion by new TWS President Gary Potts during the Annual Members Meeting.

At the meeting Tuesday, attendees learned about the state of The Wildlife Society and also heard from Past President Rick Baydack as well as Potts, who succeeds Baydack.

Baydack kicked off the meeting with great news — the total count of 1,564 attendees eclipsed the attendance numbers from last year’s conference in Pittsburgh by 12 attendees.

Executive Director of The Wildlife Society Ken Williams then took the stage to brief members on the current state of The Wildlife Society as well as the promising direction in which it’s headed.

“We’re onto something good here,” Williams said. The increase in attendance this year is “indicative of where we’ve come as a society.”

Williams also mentioned changes implemented since the last Annual Conference that have contributed to the success including enhanced communications with members and partners through channels such as the eWildlifer and TWS’ dynamic website, wildlife.org.

“We’re in good shape and going in a positive direction,” he said. “The Society is growing in very important ways.”

Ed Thompson, Chief Operating Officer of The Wildlife Society, announced two new member benefits that will be rolling out over the next three months at no additional cost to members. Starting next year, The Wildlife Professional — one of the Society’s most popular member benefits — will move from being a quarterly publication to a bi-monthly, published six times a year.

NATIONAL TWS RELATED NEWS CONTINUED...

Additionally, as a result of the addition of American Public University as a Strategic Partner, all TWS members will qualify a five-percent discount on courses for credit or professional development through APU.

During the meeting, Executive Director of the American Fisheries Society Doug Austen spoke about a joint annual conference of the two societies that will take place in 2019. Then, Sam Koltinsky from Marvo Entertainment joined Williams on for the announcement of a new TWS award, the Jay N. “Ding” Darling Award for Wildlife Stewardship through Art. The first of this award will be presented at next year’s conference in Raleigh, North Carolina. Surprising attendees, Koltinsky then presented TWS with the “Brush of Excellence” — one of Darling’s brushes that he used to paint.

Toward the end of the event, Baydack completed his last order of business as president of The Wildlife Society — swearing in new council members Fidel Hernández (Southwest Section), Mike Conner (Southeast Section), John McDonald (Vice-President), and student liaison Krysten Zummo. Then, he handed the gavel over to Potts who spoke about what he hopes to accomplish as the next TWS president.

The primary theme of Potts’ presidency will be expanding partnerships and collaboration. He stressed the importance of the Society reaching out to more organizations, especially agencies that can help increase the presence of wildlife management professionals in the ranks of TWS.

Potts also spoke about the value of TWS members and the value available to them through the Society.

There are a lifetime of opportunities for students and early career professionals to get involved with The Wildlife Society,” he said. “We are all part of The Wildlife Society. Every member is important. You are leaders of future generations.”

Potts then started a chant with the audience. “When I say ‘We are’ you say ‘The Wildlife Society!’” Potts said. And as audience members chanted it, everyone’s pride shone through.

“It’s not cheerleading — it’s the strategies and protocols that make us great,” Potts said. “They set the tone for me. We all can set the tone for the future... I hope you rise to the occasion. Because we are...” Potts said. “The Wildlife Society!” the audience concluded.

Awards

The following award winners were honored during the meeting for their outstanding accomplishments and commitment:

Chapter of the Year

The Wyoming Chapter

The Distinguished Service Award

Lu Carbyn – Canadian Section

Warren Aney – NW Section

Randy Spencer – SE Section

Justin Vreeland – NE Section

Dr. Jon Hooper – Western Section

TWS Fellows

John Haufler

Steve Belinda

Ken Higgins

Barb Hill

Eric Hellgren

Dave Hewitt

Kevin Hurley

Jim Ramakka

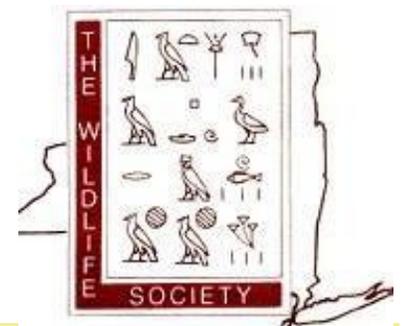
Olin Rhodes

Shawn Riley

Tom Ryder

Don Yasuda

*Adapted from an article
by Dana Kobilinsky*



NATIONAL TWS RELATED NEWS CONTINUED...

NORTHEAST SECTION MEMBER

RECEIVED DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

At the recent TWS Annual Conference in Winnipeg, northeast member Justin Vreeland received the Distinguished Service Award. This award is given to individuals that have been parent Society members for at least 20 years, and have served TWS to further the organizations goals. This award is given to individuals who are always there and can be counted on to serve the Chapter, Section, or parent Society.

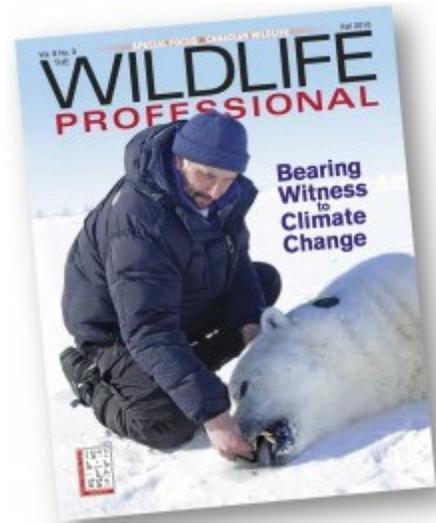
Justin is a certified wildlife biologist working for the Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) as a Wildlife Management Supervisor. Justin has been working as a wildlife biologist for almost 25 years. His professional goal is to help ensure sound, scientific conservation and management of northeastern forests. Justin is very involved with the PA TWS chapter, Northeast Section field course, the TWS Forestry & Wildlife working group, and numerous other activities that further the mission of the Society.



Northeast section member, Justin Vreeland, won the Distinguished Service Award

THE WILDLIFE PROFESSIONAL FALL

ISSUE IS ONLINE



Don't miss the fall issue of The Wildlife Professional. Since we just had The Wildlife Society's 22nd annual conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba, this latest issue examines wildlife management and conservation in Canada including the impact of climate change on polar bears, indigenous perspectives on caribou research, and ongoing collaborations between U.S. and Canadian wildlifers to manage white-tailed deer and white-cedar. Also in this issue, articles by contributing authors highlight the complexities in managing human-wildlife conflicts, the value of camera traps, and the role of trapping in wildlife conservation.

WILDLIFE NEWS OF INTEREST

TWS PROVIDE TESTIMONY ON WILD HORSES

The Wildlife Society's Government Affairs & Partnerships Director Keith Norris provided testimony to the Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board at a meeting in Oklahoma City on Thursday. Norris provided oral testimony on behalf of TWS and the [National Horse & Burro Rangeland Management Coalition](#), of which TWS is a founding member and currently chairs. TWS and the Coalition are concerned about the growing population of free-roaming horses and burros due to the detrimental impacts they have on the rangeland ecosystem.

As in recent meetings, the main topic of discussion was the differing viewpoints on how to best manage the growing population of horses and burros on public rangelands. On BLM rangelands, these horses and burros currently [exceed](#) the BLM-estimated ecologically sustainable level, or Appropriated Management Level (AML), of 26,715 by over 31,000 individuals.

Norris noted in his oral remarks, which summarized [TWS'](#) and the [Coalition's](#) written testimonies, that the increased rates of removals from public rangelands is the most effective and timely way to reach an ecologically tolerable level of horses and burros. He encouraged the expeditious completion of research into population growth suppression methods so they can eventually be applied in the field, but stressed that since no effective or affordable fertility control method currently exists (See [2013 National Academy of Sciences Report](#)) the immediate focus should be on removing horses and burros from the range to protect rangeland health.

Members of the advisory board tasked with discussing items such as the 118% overpopulation of horses and burros on BLM rangelands are from differing perspectives and beliefs as to how horses and burros should be managed in

order to provide a well-rounded evaluation of the tools at the disposal of the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture. These individuals are from fields such as wildlife management, veterinary care, livestock management, and humane advocacy.

A passionate discussion was held by advisory board members regarding the BLM's [emergency gather](#) of horses in the Cold Creek area of southern Nevada. As a result of extreme drought conditions that left the horses of this herd malnourished, the BLM had to step in to remove approximately 200 horses to holding facilities to avoid a die-off. The Cold Creek area is part of the Wheeler Pass Habitat Management Area, which prior to this removal was about 650% over AML. As Norris noted in his testimony, problems such as these are entirely preventable if populations are managed within AML.

Adapted from a TWS article by Caroline Murphy



Horses on the Cold Creek area of southern Nevada

WILDLIFE NEWS OF INTEREST CONTINUED...

SNAKE FUNGAL DISEASE STRIKES AGAIN IN GEORGIA

Snake fungal disease, a deadly and mysterious fungal infection fatal to snakes, has now been confirmed in a third free-ranging snake in Georgia.

Last week, the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study, a state-federal cooperative structure that provides wildlife expertise to state and federal agencies, confirmed that a brown watersnake (*Nerodia taxispilota*) that a volunteer found in a Bulloch County swamp in August tested positive for *Ophidiomyces ophiodiicola*, the fungus associated with the disease.

Prior to the confirmation of the disease in this snake, the same volunteer with The Orianne Society, a non-profit organization focused on conserving imperiled snakes, found a mud snake (*Farancia abacura*) infected with the fungus at the same swamp where the watersnake was found in the summer of 2014. The second case was an eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon couperi*) in south-central Georgia.

The deadly fungus, which consumes keratin, the key ingredient in snake scales, and causes scabs, nodules, abnormal molting, ulcers and other skin issues, now occurs in most states east of the Mississippi, infecting a number of other

snake species including Eastern massasauga rattlesnakes (*Sistrurus catenatus*), timber rattlesnakes (*Crotalus horridus*), black rat snakes (*Elaphe obsoleta obsoleta*) and ribbon snakes (*Thamnophis sauritus*).

[Researchers recently found](#) that the snake fungus paralleled *Pseudogymnoascus destructans*, the deadly fungus that causes white-nose syndrome in bats. While the two fungi inhabit different ecological niches and thrive in different climates and temperatures, they both seem to persist across a range of habitats and infect multiple subspecies of the animals they target, according to the researchers.

Meanwhile, senior wildlife biologist John Jensen with Georgia DNR's Nongame Conservation said in a press release that discovering two infected snakes in the Bulloch County swamp suggests, "that potentially the spores of this fungus are present in the environment, not only the animal." The DNR also hopes that herpetologists become more aware of the disease so that they can report suspicious sightings in order for the DNR to investigate it further.

Aside from snake fungus, snakes also face threats of habitat loss and fragmentation. "We need to pay attention," McGuire said. "Snakes play very important roles in our ecosystems."

By Dana Kobilinsky



WILDLIFE NEWS OF INTEREST CONTINUED...

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO CITES AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is an international treaty designed to control and regulate international trade in animal and plant species that are impacted by trade and are, or may become, threatened with extinction. As a member of CITES, the United States may propose amendments to listings of species under CITES at meetings. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has proposed amendments to be considered at the upcoming meeting in South Africa. Those proposals are available for public comment through October 26, 2015.

[View information on how to submit comments.](#)



An African Grey Parrot, one of the species proposed for amending by the U.S.

FWS PLANNING MEXICAN WOLF RE- LEASE DESPITE STATE OBJECTIONS

Internal documents obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) on October 15 indicate that FWS plans to go forward with the release of up to 10 Mexican wolf pups and a mating pair of adult Mexican wolves into New Mexico, despite the New Mexico Department of

Game and Fish's rejection of permits for the releases.

FWS created the [first Mexican Gray Wolf Recovery Plan](#) in 1982. The prime objective of the plan was "to conserve and ensure the survival of *Canis lupus baileyi* by maintaining a captive breeding program and re-establishing a viable, self-sustaining population of at least 100 Mexican wolves in the middle to high elevations of a 5,000-square-mile area within the Mexican wolf's historic range."

In November 2014, FWS revised their population goals for the Mexican wolf. They tripled the population target, increasing it from 100 to 300-325 wild wolves. The revision, outlined in FWS' [Record of Decision](#), also increased the experimental population area by 33,995 square miles, 28 percent larger than the previously established area.

FWS crafted the "[Replacement Release, Initial Release and Translocation Proposal for 2015](#)" after approving the revisions to the Mexican wolf recovery goals in January 2015. The full proposal, as well as public comments on the proposal, was sent to the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish along with a permit application to release Mexican wolves into the proposed areas.

FWS' [permit application](#) was denied by the Director of the Department of Game and Fish. FWS [appealed](#) the decision to the New Mexico Game Commission, arguing that the decision to deny the permits was arbitrary and not based on law or regulation.

On October 15, in a [draft statement](#) obtained by The Albuquerque Journal, The statement tells the team that the Department of Interior has exempted the Mexican Wolf Recovery Program from its policy of complying with state permits.

FWS has not made an official announcement indicating their plans for the Mexican wolf releases.

This article was adapted from Zachary Sheldon. To view the entire article, go to <http://wildlife.org/fws-planning-mexican-wolf-releases-despite-state-objections/>

CHAPTER NEWS

NEW ENGLAND

Susan Ingalls, NE Chapter Secretary/Treasurer

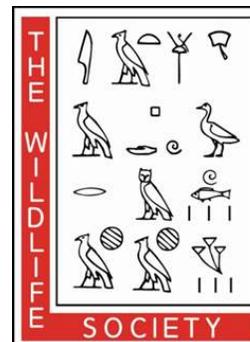
In April, the New England Chapter of the Wildlife Society elected Susan Ingalls as the new Secretary/Treasurer. Susan is a Wildlife Biologist with the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife at the Field Headquarters where she works with lead game biologists on deer, moose, furbearer, black bear, wild turkey, upland game, and waterfowl projects and has been a member of the Wildlife Society since she was an undergraduate at UMass, Amherst.

The New England Chapter of the Wildlife Society hosted the annual spring workshop April 16th, 2015 on “New England Wildlife Diseases and Sampling”. The workshop was hosted at the new Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife Field Headquarters where the expansive meeting space and laboratories provided an ideal setting for the event. The morning session of the workshop consisted of five presentations including talks on the Wellfleet Bay Virus, Oral Rabies Vaccine Program, White-Nose Syndrome, establishment of the New England Wildlife Disease Cooperative, and Ranavirus. The afternoon session of the workshop consisted of veterinarian-led necropsies of River Otter and numerous disease sampling demonstrations including Chronic Wasting Disease sampling and gross physical examination of various wildlife species.

The Chapter will host its annual fall workshop on October 15th at the Nashua River Watershed Association River Resource Center in Groton, MA. The topic discussed will be “Wildlife and Sustainable Energy” and morning presentations shall include “Wind Development and Bat Populations”, “Massachusetts Rare Species and Solar Arrays”, and “Impact of Wind Development on Black Bears”. Following a lunch break, the group will tour a wind and solar energy facility.

Interested in Contributing to the NEXT Edition of the Northeast Section Newsletter??

Contact Emily Just (emjust@pa.gov) to contribute your ideas, articles, news updates, or photos. It's your Section! It's your news!



NORTHEAST SECTION OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

Membership Application

Stay connected and engaged! Please use this form to apply for membership in the Northeast Section of The Wildlife Society:

Regular Membership [] (\$8 per year)

Student Membership [] (\$5 per year)

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Make checks payable to: "The Northeast Section, TWS."

Mail to: **Eric Schradling**
US Fish and Wildlife Service
New Jersey Field Office
927 North Main Street, Building D
Pleasantville, NJ 08232
P: (609) 383-3938 x 31
Email: eric_schradling@fws.gov

Name: _____

Date: _____

Institution/Address: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State/Province: _____

Country/Zip (Postal) Code: _____

Daytime telephone number: (____) _____

E-mail: _____

Alternatively—apply for or renew your Section membership when you apply for or renew your National membership online! Visit <http://wildlife.org/membership> to complete your application.

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