**TWS NE Section Executive Committee Teleconference**

**April 19, 2015 2:00 pm**

**Attendees**

Tim Green – Membership Chair

Jennifer Higbie – Awards Chair – by phone

Terra Rentz – NE Section President

Emily Boyd – PA Chapter Rep

Eric Schrading – NE Section Secretary

Scott Williams – NE Section Treasurer
Tom Serfass – Conservation Affairs

Shawn Haskell – NE Section VP

James Cardoza – NE Section Archivist

Tom Decker – Deer and furbearer tech committee

**Furbearer publication** – lead Tom Decker

Identified that the furbearer publication is in review. There will be about 20,000 copies to be published. NE section to put $500 toward publication

**NE Section Dues Proposal –** lead Terra

The proposal would be that all members of State chapters in the northeast would automatically be considered members of the NE Section and State Chapters would be asked to voluntarily collect dues for the NE Section as part of their dues collection for Chapter dues. All NE Section members would receive the NE Section newsletter. The current proposal would reduce NE Section due to $1 and fully merge Section membership with Chapter membership. As such, Section dues would be collected by State Chapters as part of their normal membership process. Currently the New Jersey and Maine Chapters concurred with the proposed concept. NE Chapter was undecided about the proposal and will bring up the issue with its members. Other chapters discussed but did not formally make a decision. In order for the proposal to move forward all chapters have to agree to proceed. A discussion followed in which State chapter reps identified that the proposal should be brought back to their membership.

An official change will require a change of the bylaws and dues structure which would need a majority of the NE Section membership to pass. Before moving forward with an official change to the Bylaws, it was agreed to formulate an official proposal and distribute that to the chapters.

Additionally the dues paid through the TWS website would have to be the same as that collected by the chapters.

Justification for the proposal is unifying the section and chapter dues and improving communication among membership and the NE Section.

**Action Items by May 30**

**Terra will follow-up with Central Mountain Section on how they collects dues this way.**

**Tim will draft an official proposal for the dues change.**

**Eric will follow-up with all chapters to see if we have consensus.**

Option – wait to have National change bylaws unifying dues and require through membership vote. And then change bylaws

If we get chapters to concur the dues proposal will be posted on the TWS website for an official vote.

**Awards –** lead Jennifer

The following awards will be presented at NEAFWA Conference on April 20, 2015

Nominations for Pierce award – Don Pierce – Gordon Batcheller

Nominations for P.F. English student award – Lucas Price

Best student presentation award – Megan Napoli

Student presentation award is a hassle – logistically award is a nightmare. 3 people per student presentation in each session must provide review of presentation. Getting results is difficult at times. Currently presentations are compared among bachelors, Masters, PhD. – it does not appear to be fair. In addition, it is difficult to get the student list from conference organizers. It is also difficult getting students to participate. Moderators need to take responsibility to have critiques done by 3 people. There is some concern about consistency of reviewers.

**Action – NE Section will request conference organizers to separate out student status (undergrad, grad – Masters, PhD) and provide list to awards committee.**

Discussion involved eliminating the plaque in lieu of a formal letter from section, certificate, and monetary gift for award. The group also discussed whether to send the students their critiques. It would be possible if we eliminate name of reviewer and add a comments section and provide to students.

**By consensus proposal to eliminate plaque for student and its associated distribution Agreed to send out a letter, certificate, and check for $100 to each of the top undergrad and top graduate (Masters, PhD).**

The group nominated Justin Vreeland for Distinguished Service Award.

**Bylaws changes** – lead Terra

The bylaws changes would streamline the NE Section. Currently we need 30 members to staff all committees – the new proposal would merge and eliminate committees so that we would only need 15 members to fully staff committees.

Proposal includes:

Eliminating – Program, Wildlife Educators, and Publications committees

Create Operations committee by merging membership, bylaws, and nomination committees

Create Communications committee to include newsletter, webmaster, NE Representative to The Wildlife Professional Editorial Advisory Board.

Other committees remain (e.g., Audit, Awards, Conservation Affairs, Student Affairs)

There is a need to ensure if TWS mandates what committees are needed (e.g., Audit committee is mandated) or if it sufficient to capture the responsibilities of a given committee elsewhere in the organization.

**See attached bylaws proposal.**

Changes to officers in bylaws include creating sequence from President elect, president, and past president in order to keep continuity - each is a yearly position. This would involve eliminating the vice president position. Also change to have past-President work as liaison to NEAFWA conference committee. The president- elect will be on the nominating committee to solicit for new president-elect.

Bylaws changes need to be sent to national for review and official vote occurs through electronic ballot through national website. This upcoming ballot will not include proposed dues change as part of this bylaws change in order to provide sufficient time to chapters for discussion and endorsement.

The group also discussed periodicity of newsletter and responsibility of the newsletter editor as a more long term position. Proposal is to continue to have newsletter remain twice a year (spring and fall).

For future officer nominations the group discussed soliciting leadership institute folks for possible candidates.

**Elections**

Elections –Terra stays on as president for one more year in 2016 with Stacy not able to completer her full term. Election of president-elect will occur in 2016 along with the election of Secretary (2-year term). Terra appointed Scott for another year as Treasurer through 2017.

Vice president election had 3 excellent candidates for 2015. If bylaws changes pass term will be for 1 year, but if not term will remain for 2 years.

**Vice President Elections – Emily Just elected as VP.**

Future nominees may be solicited from Justin Vreeland’s survey and those who identified an interest in serving and being engaged.

**Conservation Affairs –** lead by Tom Serfass

Not a lot of membership engagement – no request for assistance – should conservation affairs identify issues and solicit feedback as opposed to waiting for chapters to identify issues.

Intent is to have every chapter have conservation affairs and conservation affairs folks share information collectively among Section and with TWS national.

Involvement with Section conservation affairs committee allows opportunity for members to participate and speak up and allow some anonymity to provide input. There is benefit that this committee relieves issues of retribution from organization that member works for.

Deer position will be sent to national for consistency and then sent with bylaw changes to voting membership for adoption.

**Chapter Reports**

**PA Chapter** – Glad TWS national meeting is over. Waterproof bags available. Spring meeting had about 2/3 of its members (about 148) showed up. About 50% were students. Meeting on wildlife disease. 231 members.

**NE Chapter** – Meeting in Mass. -70 folks attended (50% students) . Wildlife disease (rabies dispersal, tick borne, frog ranavirus, white nose) was the meeting topic. Rotated among necropsy tables. Laura Connlee is incoming President and Sue Ingles is the Secretary / Treasurer

**NJ Chapter**- upcoming meeting. Rutgers student chapter starting up hopefully. .

**Maine Chapter** – New student chapter Unity. The UMaine chapter went to the Pittsburgh TWS Meeting. The UMaine attended the quiz bowl and came in 2nd. Professor leading chapter is leaving. Game banquet and meeting is coming up.

**Maryland Delaware** – End of April meeting (usually about 60 members attend). Meeting will be in western Maryland. Student chapters that participate in chapter include Frostburg 30-40, and UMaryland – 5-6 participants.

**NY** – Spring meeting March – communication theme speakers from DEC. Included 3 different universities 75% students, 70 people, game potluck in evening. Paul Smith hosted student conclave. Field techniques meeting in October at SUNY ESF’s Ranger School - TBD – Targeting both professionals and students.

**NEAFWA meeting coordination**

NE Section is working with AFS – Terra and John Cooper (AFS) meeting with Directors to get more involved in conference planning. The idea would be to help organize student activities and services, provide input to technical sessions, and minimize conflict with NE Natural History Conference. Cindy Delaney (NEAFWA conference organizer) is in agreement from operations standpoint with increase TWS and AFS involvement. Support within AFS…positive feedback.

Executive ended at 5:15 pm

Respectfully Submitted by:

Eric Schrading, TWS NE Section Secretary