



# THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

*Leaders in Wildlife Science, Management and Conservation*

## LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

The Wildlife Society established its Leadership Institute in 2006 to provide a select group of TWS members with basic leadership training that will prepare them to move into leadership positions, both in their workplace and in the Society. With nearly 70 percent of leaders in the wildlife profession projected to retire in the next decade, TWS has a responsibility to prepare its members to meet the pressing need for well-prepared professionals.

### Who Should Participate?

The Leadership Institute is geared toward young professionals, those individuals who are two to three years out of school and currently working full- or part-time in a professional position in wildlife management or conservation. Applicants should also be able to show evidence of leadership potential. In addition, a small number of slots are available for recent graduates who have shown strong evidence of leadership skills. All applicants must be members of The Wildlife Society and of a Chapter or Section of The Wildlife Society.

### How Do I Apply?

TWS accepts applications at the beginning of each year, with the deadline usually in the first week of March. Check the TWS website in January for more details ([www.wildlife.org](http://www.wildlife.org)).

Applicants are required to submit:

- Cover letter, with evidence of leadership capacity or potential, such as previous leadership positions held in TWS Chapters or Student Chapters or in other organizations
- Résumé, which includes a list of publications, awards, etc.
- Academic transcripts
- Two letters of recommendation from supervisors, academic advisors, professors, or others in leadership positions with whom you have worked and who are familiar with your leadership potential, commitment to TWS, and commitment to wildlife management and conservation
- An essay, which succinctly summarizes (1) your concept of leadership, (2) your aspiration for your role within TWS in five to 10 years, and (3) why you are an ideal candidate for the Institute

Selection is based upon:

- An excellent academic record
- Demonstrated leadership capability or potential
- Demonstrated level of excellence in current position

Preference goes to individuals who are currently employed by a state or federal agency, research organization, or relevant non-governmental organization and who are working on some aspect of wildlife management or conservation. A committee of TWS members who all have experience with or interest in leadership training selects participants. The committee also helps to develop

each year's curriculum and facilitates discussion meetings during the Annual Conference.

### **What Happens if I'm Selected?**

From May through September, the 10 candidates who are selected for the Leadership Institute participate in a variety of distance learning and hands-on projects, which include reading and interpreting leadership materials, presenting to peer groups, working collaboratively with each other, leading discussions, and developing summary documents regarding professional leadership.

For example, participants are required to read the TWS publication *The Leadership Workbook: Building Leadership Skills in the Natural Resource Professions and Beyond*, present their responses to the workbook exercises to a group of participants, and then organize a discussion among colleagues or others about a leadership issue. Participants also conduct interviews with leaders in wildlife management and conservation, through the Society's Conserving our Wildlife Conservation Heritage program.

The experience culminates at the TWS Annual Conference (participants receive free registration and a travel grant), where Institute graduates will participate in intensive mentoring activities and leadership workshops.

### **What are Graduates of the Program Saying?**

"Few opportunities exist for young professionals to enhance their experiences for career development, and more specifically, for becoming active leaders within their professional realms. Therefore, this was a unique opportunity indeed."

- Graduate of TWS Leadership Institute, Class of 2006

"I am very appreciative of this opportunity, and found the experience very rewarding. Council and staff were all very welcoming and interested in the LI participants and the program. I learned a great deal about TWS, and feel my dedication to the society has increased."

- Marsha Ward, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Graduate of TWS Leadership Institute, Class of 2007

For more information, contact:

Laura Bies, Leadership Institute Coordinator

E-mail: [laura@wildlife.org](mailto:laura@wildlife.org)