



# THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

*Leaders in Wildlife Science, Management and Conservation*

## Code of Ethics Violation

Censure and suspension or revocation of certification for violation of the [Code of Ethics and Standards for Professional Conduct](#) as prescribed by The Wildlife Society is a serious matter that reflects unfavorably on the entire profession. Considerable effort must be expended to ensure equitable treatment of all concerned.

The Wildlife Society assumes no liability for charges of misconduct filed by or against an Associate Wildlife Biologist® or Certified Wildlife Biologist® (AWB®/CWB®) and the Society provides no financial or legal assistance to either the person(s) bringing a charge of misconduct or the individual charged with misconduct. The following procedure below is to be followed unless changed by TWS membership bylaws:

- A. A charge of misconduct against an AWB® or CWB® may be filed by transmitting to the Board of Inquiry (BOI) of The Wildlife Society (425 Barlow Place, Suite 200, Bethesda, MD 20814) a sealed statement of the charge. Such statement shall be accompanied by an affidavit of the complainant setting forth the allegations on which the charge is based, including dates, and the specific conduct involved. The Chairman of the BOI shall transmit copies of the charge, affidavit, and supporting documentation to the Certification Review Board (CRB). The CRB shall review the charge and, within ten (10) days from receipt of the charge, report to the BOI its opinion as to whether the charge should be further investigated. The BOI shall determine, within twenty (20) days from receipt of the charge, whether an investigation of the charge will be made.
- B. If the BOI determines that an investigation of the charge should be made, the Chairman of the BOI shall notify the AWB®/CWB® of the specific charges filed by forwarding to him/her copies of the charge, affidavit, and all supporting documentation and request him/her to file a written answer with the BOI within thirty (30) days. Upon receiving the written answer of the accused AWB®/CWB®, the Chairman shall forward copies of the answer and any supporting documents to the person who filed the charge and request him/her to file a response within thirty (30) days. Upon receipt of a written response from the person filing the charge, the Board of Inquiry shall deliberate and within thirty (30) days from receipt of said response either dismiss the charge or issue a complaint against the accused AWB®/CWB® detailing the charge.
- C. If the BOI shall issue a complaint, copies shall be sent by certified mail to the AWB®/CWB® and to the person who filed the charge. Copies also shall be sent to the President of The Wildlife Society, the President of the Section where the AWB®/CWB® resides, and the Chief Executive Officer of The Wildlife Society.
- D. Within twenty (20) days of receipt of the complaint, the AWB®/CWB® shall file an answer to the BOI. Each allegation in the complaint shall be admitted or denied in the answer. If an allegation is denied, the answer also may include a statement of the AWB®/CWB®'s account of the occurrence or circumstances. If the AWB®/CWB® fails to timely answer the complaint, the allegations shall be deemed admitted, unless the AWB®/CWB® shows extenuating circumstances warranting an extension of time. A copy of the answer shall be forwarded by the Board of Inquiry by certified mail to the person filing the charge.
- E. If the AWB®/CWB®'s answer denies the allegations and charge in the complaint, the BOI, upon thirty (30) days written notice to the person filing the charge and to the AWB®/CWB®, shall hold a hearing at which time the person filing the charge and the AWB®/CWB® may testify and present witnesses to testify and document evidence for consideration by the Board of Inquiry. The person filing the charge



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- and the AWB®/CWB® shall have the right to cross-examine and to be represented by attorneys. After the hearing, the BOI shall review the evidence and find the AWB®/CWB® guilty as charged or dismiss the complaint within sixty (60) days. The BOI will send written notice of its decision and any disciplinary action to be taken by certified mail to the person filing the charge, the President of The Wildlife Society, the President of the Section where the AWB®/CWB® resides, and the Executive Director of The Wildlife Society. In the event the charge of complaint is dismissed at any stage of these procedures, the AWB®/CWB® may request public disclosure of the dismissed charges and/or removal of all statements and procedural correspondence dealing with the charges and their deliberation from the files of The Wildlife Society. All such documents are to be returned to their respective origins.
- F. The AWB®/CWB® shall have the right to appeal the decision of the BOI to the Council of The Wildlife Society by filing a written notice of appeal with the Council (425 Barlow Place, Suite 200, Bethesda, MD 20814) within thirty (30) days from the date of the decision of the BOI. The Council shall mail a copy of the notice of appeal to the BOI and the person who filed the charge. The Board of Inquiry shall deliver to the Council, within ten (10) days from receipt of the notice of appeal, other evidence submitted to it by the person filing the charge and copies of the answer, documentation, transcript of witnesses' testimony, if any, and any other evidence or memoranda submitted to it by the AWB®/CWB®.
- G. The AWB®/CWB® shall file with the Council of The Wildlife Society a memorandum in support of his/her appeal within thirty (30) days from the date he/she filed the notice of appeal. The Council shall forward a copy of the memorandum filed by the AWB®/CWB® to the person filing the charge. The latter may, but is not required to, file a memorandum in opposition to the appeal within thirty (30) days from the date the memorandum of the AWB®/CWB® was mailed to him/her. Upon receipt of the response filed by the person who filed the charge, the Council of The Wildlife Society shall mail a copy to the AWB®/CWB® who shall have twenty (20) days to answer the response from the date it was mailed to him/her. The Council, in its discretion, upon fifteen (15) days written notice, after all memoranda have been filed or time for filing has expired, may hold a hearing at which time the AWB®/CWB® and the person filing the charge, or their counsel, may present oral argument to the Council.
- H. The Council within sixty (60) days after the time to file all memoranda has expired, or within sixty (60) days after the presentation of oral argument, whichever shall last occur, shall issue a decision affirming or reversing the decision of the BOI and shall send by certified mail a copy of its decision to the BOI, the person filing the charge, and the AWB®/CWB®. If the decision of the Council is to deny the appeal and affirm the decision of the BOI, the Council also shall set forth in its written decision the disciplinary action to be taken.
- I. The disciplinary action that may be taken by the BOI or the Council against an AWB®/CWB® who has been found by the Board or the Council to demonstrate consistent incompetence and/or be in violation of provisions of the [Code of Ethics and Standards for Professional Conduct](#) of The Wildlife Society shall be censure, suspension of certification for a specified time, or permanent revocation of certification.