

## **A Guide to TWS Position Statements**

### **Introduction:**

The Wildlife Society, as the scientific society for professional wildlife conservationists, has a responsibility to address national and international issues that affect the current and future status of wildlife in North America and throughout the world. The diligent development of authoritative statements on wildlife issues is essential for interjecting wildlife concerns into decision-making processes. This document articulates the Society's approach to development, distribution, and review of position statements.

A "position statement" is a carefully prepared and concise exposition on a wildlife issue that defines the issue, contains factual background data, describes the most probable biological, social, and economics results of alternative actions, and may also contain a recommended course(s) of action. These statements are adopted by The Wildlife Society Council, following a period of review and comment by the membership. In deciding whether to prepare a position statement, Council should consider whether the issue is of major importance to wildlife resources, whether it is within the expertise of The Wildlife Society members, and whether there is adequate time available to acquire data and thoughtfully develop a position.

### **Position Statement Process:**

1. Council approves drafting of a position statement, either following completion of a technical review on the subject or in response to a proposal from a TWS member, TWS Section/Chapter, or TWS staff.
2. When a committee has recently completed a technical review on the subject, that same committee generally is charged with preparing the draft position statement. In other instances, TWS Council may appoint a special committee or ask the Council Position Statements Subcommittee to prepare the draft. If a technical review committee or special committee prepares the first draft of a position statement, the statement becomes property of TWS upon submission to Council and Council has discretion to change or edit the statement before submission to the membership for review and comment.
3. Once a draft position statement is ready, it is submitted to Council, which votes on whether to publish the draft statement in the membership newsletter/magazine (or other appropriate forum) for member review and comment.
4. Upon approval by TWS Council, the draft is published in membership newsletter/magazine (or other appropriate forum) and members are allowed 60 days to submit comments.
5. TWS staff collects and reviews comments from members and works with the Council Position Statements Subcommittee to incorporate the comments as appropriate.
6. The Council Position Statements Subcommittee decides whether to recommend Council approval or disapproval of the revised draft statement.
7. Council receives the recommendation and votes on whether to approve the position statement. A simple majority vote is needed to approve a position statement.
8. If approved by Council, the position statement is published in the membership newsletter/magazine (or other appropriate forum) as a final position statement and posted on The Wildlife Society's website. All final statements are marked with the month and year of their approval and expiration.

9. Position statements are approved for a five-year period, after which they are reviewed by the Council Position Statements Subcommittee, which makes a recommendation to Council to retain, update, or rescind the statement. Council may rescind position statements before they expire by a simple majority vote.
10. Position statements are distributed by TWS staff to TWS Sections/Chapters, other NGOs, state and federal agencies, and Congressional offices, as appropriate.

Approved by TWS Council March 2006.