

**South Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society Annual Meeting Minutes –
February 26, 2013
Cedar Shore Resort and Convention Center, Oacoma, SD**

Past-President Rocco Murano called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. at Cedar Shore Resort and Convention Center in Oacoma, SD. Past-President Murano recognized a quorum was present and recognized Paul Coughlin as the meeting parliamentarian. Interim Secretary/Treasurer Mark Norton presented the Minutes of the 2012 annual meeting to the attendees. Carl Madsen motioned to accept the report, Corey Huxoll seconded. Motion passed. Norton presented the 2012 annual financial report. Dave Ode motioned to accept the report, Corey Huxoll seconded. Motion passed.

National Update – Gary White

White provided an update from the National Chapter. 2012 was the 75th Anniversary. Byron Ken Williams will be the new Executive Director starting March 4th, 2013. Membership was a record high in 2011 and final numbers are still being counted for 2012, but it could be the 3rd straight year of record membership. The last annual meeting was in Portland and was the 2nd highest attended meeting in history.

Technical Reviews that came out this last year included the North American Model, Management of Ungulates in National Parks, Biofuels, Oil and Gas in the Rocky Mountains, and Large Mammalian Carnivores. There is one in process in the CMPS on Controlled Burning. The editor of these reviews is Ted Bookhout. No new position statements were published in 2012. Usually position statements are reviewed every 5 years. There is currently an Ad Hoc committee on deer farming/deer breeding industry to look at penned deer hunts, drugged deer, and genetic manipulation.

Financially, TWS has been about \$200,000 in the red. The goal is to balance the budget for 2013. Ideas to get balanced include not filling the government affairs associate position, having a webmaster on contract, and cutting the Leadership Institute costs out of the budget.

The Wildlife Society Bulletin has just over 1,100 subscriptions. TWS was hoping for 3,000. TWS is losing money on it and it may not be continued. Evie Merrill and Chris Ribbic are the current editors.

7th edition of the Wildlife Techniques Manual has been completed.

Federal Leadership in Professional Societies has been fixed by Laura Bies from the top down. Now federal agency employees can serve in leadership roles for TWS.

20th Annual Conference will be in Milwaukee, WI October 5-10, 2013. There is an annual conference justification toolkit available to help members justify attendance.

Leadership Institute was launched in 2006. This program was cut from the parent chapter's budget and now the cost is being funded by state chapters and section chapters. There is currently an effort underway to raise money for the LI. Past graduates of LI are being sought to teach the institute now.

The sections are donating \$1-2,000 apiece to the LI. They need \$15,000 total. Gary wasn't sure what other state chapters have donated but would check and get back to the board.

TWS Distinguished Service Award recognizing someone who has been a member for 20 years and always contributed to the society. South Dakota doesn't have anybody who has won this award, but likely has many deserving candidates.

CMPS Annual meeting will be Aug 13-15 in Cedar City, Utah. Bill Vodehnal is the current CMPS section president and is in attendance. Bill addressed the meeting and encouraged attendance at the year's CMPS annual meeting. Newsletter will be coming out around 1st of April with some changes to by-laws pertaining to how voting is completed by moving it up to 2-3 weeks in advance of the meeting so they can make the meeting if they are elected. The next meeting will be in Colorado or Wyoming.

Elections

All candidates gave a few comments on their background and reasons for running for a position.

President Elect

Mark Norton

Executive Board Member

Casey Mehls

Jacquie Ermer

Lee Erickson

Secretary Treasurer

Dr. Troy Grovenburg

Jacquie and Troy were unable to attend, so Rocco read their bios. The election was conducted. Lee Erickson motioned to cease nominations and Dennie Mann seconded it. Motion carried.

Election Results

President Elect- Mark Norton

Board Member – Casey Mehls

Secretary/Treasurer – Troy Grovenburg

Dennie Mann moved to accept the election results seconded by Corey Huxoll. Motion carried. Lee Erickson motioned to accept the new members. Seconded by Dennie Mann

Old Business

Committee Reports

Audit – Rocco Murano

Examination of the checkbook did not find any discrepancies.

Awards – Nora Kohlenberg & Nathan Baker

One nomination was received for the Wildlife Professional of the Year Award and one nomination for the Citizens Award. We also received one nomination for the MS student of the year award and one nomination for the PhD student of the year award. Awards will be presented tonight during the Awards Banquet. Student and open presentation award plaques were again procured, as was one for our outgoing chapter president. Additionally, two gift certificates were also procured for the auctioneers as a token of our appreciation for the many years they have donated their time to make our fundraising auction successful.

Conservation Review – No Report

Education and Information – No Report

Membership- Mark Norton

There are 14 new members this year and 4 new life members. New members include: Luke Winge, Stephanie Engelmeier, Heather Jo Runeberg, Chris Goldade, Paul Mammenga, Jarrett Pfrimmer, Cole Driskill, Julie DeJong, Kylee Shtkoski,

Program - Silka Kempema

Thanked the speakers that came from out of state to be here. Cedar Shores Resort has been good to work with.

Resolutions – Dan Hubbard – No Report

Arrangements – Travis Runia

Cedar Shores has been very good to work with for arranging the meeting. Please let him know if any recommendations for the future.

Certification - No Report

Chapter History – No Report

Wind Energy Subcommittee Report – KC Jensen & Silka Kempema

The federal Production Tax Credit for wind energy has been extended for one year.

Three potential wind farm have seemed to begin to actively pursue development

- Northern Wind in Roberts Co.,
- Lake Andes, Charles Mix County, and
- Wind Quarry in Butte Co.

The USFWS Land-Based Wind Energy Guidelines have been out for almost a year. They can be found on the USFWS website.

The USFWS continues to work on version of their Draft Eagle Conservation Plan Guidance (2011). Completion of an eagle plan is an important step for developers wanting a take permit for eagles at their wind farms. To date, there have not been any applications made for a permit in South Dakota.

A consortium of 19 wind energy companies, collectively called the Wind Energy Whooping Crane Action Group or WEWAG, has applied for an incidental take permit under the Endangered Species Act. Species included on the incidental take permit application include the whooping crane, lesser prairie-chicken, interior least tern and piping plover. The area affected includes private land within an approximately 200-mile wide corridor from the Gulf Coast of Texas north to the Canadian border. This permit would be supported by a Habitat Conservation Plan and the proposed permit and associated plan are undergoing a National Environmental Policy Act analysis. Coordination with state wildlife agencies has continued as plan components are drafted.

Biofuels – No Report

Fee Hunting and Ownership of Wildlife – No Report

Fund Raising – Casey Mehls

We raised \$1,605 on the silent and live auction. \$70 was raised through the laser shot game. DakotaMart and Runnings of Pierre donated many of the camping items that were on the auction. Casey and Carl will be selling raffle tickets for the muzzleloader through the end of the meeting.

Grasslands – Lee Erickson

HB 1007 failed this year. It would have limited permanent conservation easements to 30 years.

Newsletter – Charlie Bessken – No Report

Public Lands – Dennie Mann

The public lands committee did not comment on any issues on public land management in 2012. There are a lot of issues out there from pine beetle infestations to oil and gas exploration. The committee will respond to any requests for information and inform the TWS board of any issues that surface or are brought to our attention!

Tribal Fish & Wildlife - No Report

Wetlands - No Report

Kurt Forman is stepping down from this committee. We need somebody else to join this committee.

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD): From July 1, 2012 to January 31, 2013 a total of 216 samples (112 elk, 23 mule deer, and 81 white-tailed deer) were collected from southwestern South Dakota, northeastern South Dakota, and the Black Hills of South Dakota. As of January 31, 2013 all results are in except for 7 pending results, and we have found 2 CWD positive elk, 6 CWD positive white-tailed deer, and 1 CWD positive mule deer. Since testing began in 1997, South Dakota has documented 226 cases of CWD (69 elk and 157 deer) in free ranging deer and elk. Wind Cave National Park accounts for 52 of these animals (42 elk and 10 deer). Custer State Park has found five elk and one deer. A total of 24,846 wild deer and elk have been tested for CWD since 1997.

This fiscal year marked a change in our surveillance with the ending of USDA APHIS funding for CWD surveillance. We are collecting all elk samples as we have in the past, but only sample deer heads from CWD units that are submitted to the Rapid City Regional Office. We continue to test any suspect animals from across the state.

Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease: In the late summer and fall of 2012, we experienced the largest die-off of in recent history of white-tailed deer in South Dakota. A few mule deer were also reported, and a couple of elk were diagnosed with EHD. Mortalities were reported in 51 counties of South Dakota with large die-offs in the southeastern, central, and western parts of South Dakota. Approximately 3,714 total deer were found dead, with more that were probably unreported. A total of 15 counties had laboratory confirmed cases of EHD with 2 cases of confirmed Blue tongue. It was an historic year for this disease all across the country this year with large die-offs reported in many states.

Pneumonia in Bighorn Sheep: SDGFP is concluding research through SDSU on bighorn sheep. We have captured bighorn sheep lambs over the last 3 years, and have wrapped up that portion of the study. Preliminary data continues to show that lamb recruitment is low in all of our herds in the Rapid Creek, Spring Creek, and Hill City herds. We are experiencing some early predation on our lambs, but pneumonia is a very large factor in lamb survival. We have documented the pneumonia complex in our adult bighorns, and have experienced some adult mortality due to pneumonia. We look forward to the final report and analysis.

Tuberculosis: Bovine TB was found in a Hutchinson county cattle herd in 2011. We have been working with the State Veterinarian to monitor for the disease in wild cervid populations. Samples were collected from deer in 2011, and an attempt was made again in 2012, but EHD reduced our deer populations, and with the reduction in tags, we did not collect many samples. Staff knows what to look for, and we are looking for any abnormalities in harvested cervids to monitor for the disease in our cervid populations. We have not found anything in our deer or elk that would suggest that TB is in the wild cervid populations in any area around these cattle operations.

Other: Diseases that we are aware of and monitoring for in South Dakota include White Nose syndrome in bats, plague in prairie dogs, rabies, and West Nile virus. A lot of this monitoring is done through the South Dakota Department of Health, and we work well with the Animal Industry Board on other disease issues.

Wildlife Diversity - Eileen Dowd Stukel and Silka Kempema

National funding for wildlife diversity: At the time this report was prepared, the budget impasse remained. As with other funds tied to the federal government, State and Tribal Wildlife Grants are in limbo. The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies continues to coordinate activities of the Teaming with Wildlife Coalition to work for continuation of this grant program as well as the broader need to identify a stable, long-term funding source to fund unmet fish and wildlife needs (<http://teaming.com/>). South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (SDGFP) continues to conduct and cooperate on projects that assist in implementation of the South Dakota Wildlife Action Plan. The agency's website contains a description of all projects that have been funded with this source.

South Dakota Wildlife Action Plan revision: In return for accepting State Wildlife Grants funding, SDGFP completed a comprehensive wildlife conservation plan (Wildlife Action Plan) in 2006. SDGFP is currently revising the plan. The draft revision is expected to be available for review during the summer of 2013.

Black Hills, Badlands and Lakes Birding Trail: Our chapter helped sponsor the fourth and final regional birding trail guide, which covers much of western South Dakota. The guide is titled "Black Hills, Badlands and Lakes Birding Trail." As with the previous 3 regional birding trail guides, this guide can be downloaded from various websites, including those of the departments of Tourism and SDGFP.

Federal listing activities related to rare prairie butterfly species: As part of a settlement agreement, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are preparing a proposed rule to determine whether the candidate species Dakota skipper and Poweshiek skipperling warrant listing under the Endangered Species Act. The proposal may recommend listing and possible critical habitat. Both aspects of the proposal will be open for public comment.

Black-footed ferret update: Black-footed ferret populations have suffered from reduced prairie dog acreage due to sylvatic plague. Recent estimates of ferret populations include roughly 100 animals in the Conata Basin/Badlands National Park and 40+ animals in Wind Cave National Park. In the Conata Basin in southwestern South Dakota, the only prairie dog colonies remaining are those that are treated with an insecticide to kill fleas on prairie dog colonies by the Forest Service and other partners. South Dakota has three sites participating in upcoming trials of an oral plague vaccine and bait to be fed to prairie dogs to provide immunity from sylvatic plague. Sites are located on the Conata Basin (Forest Service); Lower Brule Reservation, and Wind Cave National Park.

MO River Issues – No Report

Cliff Stone will be stepping down as committee Chair; we need somebody to take this committee over.

Other Reports

SDSU Student Chapter Report –Jessica Ring VP of student Chapter.

I would like to thank the South Dakota chapter of the Wildlife Society for helping the club pay for their trip to the National TWS conference that was held in Portland, OR. It was a great

experience. The symposiums were very educational along with speaking with professionals in the field and colleagues. We have done a few research projects dealing with turkeys and raccoons. A few members attended Waubay to inform 1st and 2nd graders about migration and how negative impacts on habitat is effecting migration. The club helps with the State FFA conference by handling the Natural Resource Department. We are currently preparing for the annual Buffalo Banquet that is scheduled for April 16th.

New Business

Approval of New Members

Tom Wickstrom moved to destroy the ballots, seconded by Corey Huxoll. Motion carried.

Transfer of Gavel – Past president Rocco Murano transferred the gavel to President Silka Kempema.

Motion to adjourn by Pete Bergman and seconded by Randy Meidinger. Motion carried and meeting was adjourned at 9:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Norton', written in a cursive style.

Mark Norton, Interim Secretary/Treasurer