

**SDTWS Annual Meeting
24 February 2015**

Call To Order

President Norton called the meeting to order at 8:03 AM. He recognized a quorum and Paul Coughlin as the parliamentarian.

President Norton announced that Secretary/Treasurer Grovenburg was not able to attend the meeting as he is in the hospital with pneumonia. Thus there were no meeting minutes from the 2014 Annual Meeting. President Norton will send out the meeting minutes via email and the membership will review and approve the minutes that way.

Annual Treasures report was passed out and reviewed by membership. Chapter has \$ 371.95 in Wells Fargo Business checking account and \$23, 226.33 in Wells Fargo Market Rate Savings. President Norton asked for additions, corrections or credits. None provided. Dennie Mann made a motion to accept minutes. Scott Larson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Old Business

Standing Committee Reports

Nominations and Elections Committee: President-elect John Kanta thanked the existing board. Nathan Baker and Chuck Pyle were candidates for President-elect. Both candidates spoke. Julie DeJong and Lauren Weichmann were candidates for Secretary/Treasurer. Julie DeJong spoke. Lauren Wiechmann was not present. Ben Lardy withdrew his name from the ballot.

Audit committee

Needed documents were not present at the meeting. Past-president Silka Kempema shared the Boards proposal that the beginning and ending annual bank statements will be compared with the secretaries report presented earlier at the meeting.

Awards Committee

A nomination was received for the Wildlife Professional of the Year Award and no nominations were received for the Citizens Award. We also received two nominations for the M.S. student of the year award. The Ph.D. student award is offered every other year, and will be offered this year. There were two nominations for the Ph.D. 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.

Conservation Review Committee

Paul Coughlin provided the following report. As outlined in the Chapter Bylaws, the Conservation Review Committee is charged with reviewing legislative proposals and NEPA related documents that may affect wildlife or wildlife habitat in South Dakota, then making recommendations to the Executive Board regarding possible action by the Board or Chapter.

2014 Activities:

In 2014, one issue was brought to the Conservation Review Committee for its consideration. The Committee and the Wildlife Diversity Committee were asked to review a draft Memorandum of Understanding between the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Pesticide Programs and the

Department of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service to protect migratory birds. Owing to the proficiency and professionalism of the Wildlife Diversity Committee, a thorough review of the draft MOU was completed, and recommendations made to the Board for its comment letter.

Conservation Affairs Network:

Paul Coughlin provided the report.

In June 2014, the Chapter's Executive Board tasked the Conservation Review Committee to serve as the Chapter's representative to the newly formed Conservation Affairs Network (CAN). The CAN - launched in early 2014 under the leadership of TWS - serves to engage and unify efforts by Chapters, Sections, and the parent Chapter in wildlife conservation policy issues at the national, regional, and local levels. The CAN is a venue for streamlined communication, collaboration, and cooperation on policy matters important to wildlife professionals.

The overall Network operates through Conservation Affairs Committees (CAC) within each Section and Chapter. These Chapter and Section committees are charged with identifying and addressing policy priorities within their state or region, and communicating their activities and needs with other CACs and TWS staff via the Network. This way CACs and TWS staff support each other in their policy activities, lending experience and expertise to enhance individual Chapter and Section efforts. SDTWS's Conservation Review Committee functions as our Chapter's CAC, with the role of communicating "up" to the CMPS CAC, as well as functioning as the "policy issues" pipeline from the CMPS CAC to the SDTWS Executive Board and Chapter.

2015 Activities and Committee Priorities:

While the Committee continues to monitor a variety issues, the Executive Board and Chapter membership are encouraged to engage and utilize the Committee as a resource for addressing legislative, policy, and environmental issues affecting South Dakota wildlife and their habitats.

The Committee has identified the following priorities for 2015:

1. Address issues relating to and contributing to wetland and grassland loss in South Dakota
2. Engage Chapter members, Committees, and the Executive Board to identify relevant legislative, policy, and environmental issues facing South Dakota wildlife
3. Take full advantage of resources available through the Conservation Affairs Network

Education and Information Committee

No report.

Membership committee

Nora formally chaired this committee. Currently there is no chair or members. No report provided.

Program Committee

President-election John Kanta thanked Matt Schwarz for his assistance in setting up the program.

Resolutions and Public Statements Committee

No committee chair; no report provided.

President Norton described how committees work and encouraged members to step up and fill empty committee chair vacancies.

Special Committee Reports

Arrangements Committee

President Norton reported. We've continued to stay at Cedar Shore Resort as they are easy to work with have met our needs and we've established a long working history.

Certification Committee

No committee chair or members. President Norton shared that the board has discussed the need for this committee. Students continue to ask for assistance in filling out certification paperwork. Parent chapter has information on the website, but questions still seem to remain.

Chapter History

Committee Chair Corey Huxell described committee duties are to provide a location to archive historical documents and electronic files. Corey has transferred scanned files from a CD to flash drive. If you are interested in state chapter historical information, contact Corey.

Energy

Silka Kempema shared that the Board decided to dissolve the wind and biofuels subcommittees and combine them into one general energy committee. No additional report provided.

Top issues regarding wind energy:

1. Unregulated development
2. Lack of regulatory authority by the state wildlife agencies
3. Need more information on wildlife population impacts, especially bats

Fundraising Committee

Committee Chair Casey Heimerl reported that during the live and silent auction we raised \$1, 845. Casey thanked those that donated and those that spent money on the auction. Casey reminded members that the gun raffle is still ongoing and encouraged members to buy tickets.

Grasslands Committee

Committee member Joel Murano provided the following report.

Grassland committee's top three grassland issues facing SD.

1. Native Grassland Conversion
 - a. Actual use taxation – promotes "highest and best" use.
2. Continued Annual Challenging of Perpetual Easements
3. Management of CRP – Currently there are restrictions that prevent fires from occurring at optimum times.

This year there were a few house bills that were purposed that were of concern. Of the ones we were watching none of them made it out of committee. We are still watching the legislative session.

Missouri River Issues

No report.

Newsletter Committee

Charlie will be stepping down as this chair and as the webmaster. No report provided.

Public Lands Committee

Committee Co-chair Dennie Mann shared information on comment letters drafted by this committee:

1. Kelly land exchange near Badlands National park. SDTWS supported.
2. Forest Service Elk Mnt reforestation plan. SDTWS apposed.
3. Hell Canyon reforestation. SDTWS apposed.

Top issues regarding public lands:

1. Habitat enhancement on public lands
2. Access to public lands

Tribal Fish and Wildlife Committee

No report.

Wetlands Committee

Ben Bigalke no longer chairperson. Randy Meitinger is new committee chair. No report provided. President Norton shared that the chapter signed on to proposed NRCS off-site methods approved by SDTWS board

Wildlife Diseases Committee

No report provided.

Wildlife Diversity Committee

Eileen Stukel provided report.

South Dakota Wildlife Action Plan revision: In return for accepting State Wildlife Grants funding, South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (SDGFP) must complete a comprehensive wildlife conservation plan, commonly called a Wildlife Action Plan, and revise it at least every 10 years. SDGFP submitted the South Dakota plan revision to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) in June of 2014 and is awaiting final approval. State Wildlife Grants is an annual appropriation that is not guaranteed and must be fought for every year. Seventeen State Wildlife Grant-funded projects are in progress on a variety of research and monitoring efforts. Funding must be used for habitat and species conservation related to the Wildlife Action Plan. Projects that are strictly focused on environmental education or wildlife-associated recreation are not eligible.

Blue Ribbon Panel: An exciting development in wildlife funding is the recent formation of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources. Led by Co-Chairs John Morris of Bass Pro Shops and former Wyoming Governor David Freudenthal, the panel will reinvigorate the discussion about the need to sustainably fund conservation for all fish and wildlife. The result of the panel will be funding solutions and policy options to help us move this important effort forward. South Dakota rancher Jim Falstich, our chapter's 2008 citizen award winner, is a member of the Blue Ribbon Panel. For more information, visit the Teaming with Wildlife website:

<http://teaming.com/blueribbonpanel>

Bald Eagle Awareness Days: Our chapter continues its support for this educational event. The 2014 event was held in late February and featured presentations in Sioux Falls and Pierre, with school programs in Lower Brule, featuring live birds of prey brought by educators from The Raptor Center, located at the University of Minnesota. The 2015 event will take place February 26 – 28, again featuring programs at the SDGFP Outdoor Campus East in Sioux Falls, school programs in Pierre and presentations

at the Ramkota River Centre in Pierre. The SDGFP Outdoor Campus West in Rapid City holds a companion event called a Raptor Open House during Bald Eagle Awareness Week.

Recent federal listing activities pertaining to South Dakota:

- gray wolf: During the fall of 2014, D.C. District Court decisions resulted in the gray wolf reverting to previous statuses in Wyoming and portions of the Midwest. The gray wolf in Wyoming is now listed as a nonessential experimental population. The gray wolf is again a federal endangered species throughout South Dakota.
- Dakota skipper and Poweshiek skipperling: As of November 2014, the Dakota skipper is a federal threatened species and the Poweshiek skipperling is a federal endangered species. When listing a species as threatened, the Service can develop a 4(d) rule that identifies activities that would not constitute “take” if such take is incidental to legal, exempted practices. In the case of the Dakota skipper, activities associated with routine livestock operations and mowing recreational trails were identified in the 4(d) rule as exempt from take. The Service has not yet finalized critical habitat for these species. Our chapter submitted a comment letter urging the Service to show as much flexibility as possible when designating critical habitat on private lands. We were concerned that landowners who had allowed access for rare species surveys would perceive that they were being penalized by having their property designated as critical habitat.
- northern long-eared bat: In October 2013, the Service proposed to list this species as endangered due primarily to population reduction from white-nose syndrome. The northern long-eared bat is potentially found statewide in South Dakota, but primarily in the Black Hills and Badlands. In January 2015, the Service offered another comment opportunity by listing the activities that would be exempt from take under a 4(d) rule if the species is listed as a federal threatened species. This comment period ends on March 17, 2015.
- monarch: On December 31, 2014, the Service announced a finding that listing of this species may be warranted. They are now conducting a status review to determine if listing is warranted.
- rufa red knot: In December 2014, the Service announced that the rufa subspecies of the red knot is a federal threatened species. This is a rare migrant in South Dakota.

Black-tailed Prairie Dog Colony Mapping: The South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks recently finalized its most recent survey report of prairie dog colonies through visual interpretation of aerial photographs taken in 2012. Photographs were obtained from the USDA’s Farm Service Agency National Agricultural Imagery Program (NAIP). The report will soon be available for viewing and downloading from the SDGFP website.

Top Issues

1. Impact of Federal Threatened and Endangered species on state agencies and residents and influence on negative attitudes towards wildlife diversity
2. Lack of stable long term funding source
3. Lack of biological data for species in state making management, monitoring and recover difficult

Workshop Committee

Report provided by Casey Heimerl. Reminded folks that this year was the chapter’s first recent attempt at a workshop. She encouraged feedback and comments as well as suggestions for future workshops.

TWS Council report

Bob Lanka is Central Mountains and Plains Section representative to TWS. Next Council meeting will be March 8-9 in Omaha Nebraska at the Hilton. Bob gave a brief update on the following topics: Budget, Membership, Policy, Awards, Student Chapters, Certification.

1. How to combine education and experience towards certification
2. FY15 projected to be 122,000 in the black right now. Previously in the red. Wiley publishing contract provided a \$535,000 signing bonus. 1/7 of this amount will be added to the budget each year.
3. 7-8% annual decline in TWS membership for the past 2 years. Most new signups are students or young professionals. They can join at a cheaper rate which has financial implications. Membership decline has been mostly in the professional ranks which again has budget implications.
4. There is a new webmaster for TWS.
5. Keith Norris is the TWS lead on the Conservation Affairs Network. CMPS-Bill Vodenhal is representing CMPS on the Conservation Affairs Network.
6. A Values and Principles document is currently being put together which will combine many of the existing position statements that are core to the beliefs of TWS into one document.
7. Awards: Leopold, McDonough, Fellows, Chapter, Student Chapter and Student Chapter Advisor, Leadership Institute.
 - a. Need to be certified wildlife bio for Jim McDonough award; stipend awarded.
 - b. Fellows: 2 nominations made from the section. Candidates support and are involved at TWS at all levels.
 - c. Outstanding student chapter gets money for board members to attend national meeting
 - d. LI students get to attend national TWS meeting. These students present results of their LI project to Council at the annual meeting
8. Conclave: There is a concern that SDSU and many other student chapters within CMPS are not active with the western student conclave. Fewer and fewer student chapters are active in this section. TWS has expanded parent chapter support for Conclave by allocating up to \$1,000 for each section. So CMPS student chapters could host their own. Reduce travel would be a benefit. OK, if student chapters want to combine efforts and have a joint conclave with another section.
9. Questions:
 - a. Contact information for conclaves on website.
 - b. Certification. Is it relevant? Has TWS been trying to make it relevant to peoples' careers? Private industry gives it value. Witnesses with TWS certification are more credible in a court of law. TWS is engaging with WAFWA, AFWA to help push certification value. Certification is very close to federal requirements to become a wildlife biologist.

CMPS section report

New section president is Kari Decker. Silka Kempema is a new board member. Kempema reported on the joint meeting with CMPS and the Wyoming state chapter (50th Anniversary). Some of the items the CMPS Board has discussed and/or addressed include lifetime section membership, how to focus funding requests, funding of CMPS social at the TWS meeting in Winnipeg, and recognizing a long-time supporter and student chapter advisor at the University of Nebraska.

SDSU chapter report

The new President of the Wildlife and Fisheries Conservation Club provided report. Activities that the chapter has been involved include: camping, trap shooting, McCrory gardens bird banding, recruitment picnic, Ag day, buffalo banquet, fundraising events (pizza ranch fundraising event raised the most money), attended presentations given by graduate student, participated in field work with Richardson's

ground squirrels, participated in Sioux Falls water festival for 4th graders, built bird house with boys and girls club, raccoon trapping and collaring, organized a photo contest, and will conduct a spring clean-up on campus

Election results

President-elect: Nathan Baker

Secretary-treasurer: Julie DeJong

Board Member-Alex Solem

A motion to destroy the ballots was made by Dennie Mann.

Lee Erickson seconded the motion.

Motion carried. Ballots destroyed.

New Business

Approval of New Members

List of new members was not available.

Hubbard motioned to approve new members.

Lee Erickson seconded the motion.

Discussion regarding approval of new members without reading of names.

Motion carried.

Meeting site and dates

\$30/plate in Rapid City based on Dennie Mann's experience

Next year is 50th anniversary. John Kanta asked for support and information from long-standing members for assistance. What about holding meeting during spring break? Graduate students cautioned that Great Plains Natural Science Society-sponsored workshops are now held during spring break.

What about holding a joint meeting with Dakota American Fisheries Society? They hold their annual meeting every other year in South Dakota. Also, what about joint meetings with other societies? There has been joint meetings in the past (AFS and a soils society) that were held in Pierre. Nebraska state chapter has expressed interest in holding a joint meeting with SDTWS.

Lee Erickson motioned to let board decide on holding the annual TWS meeting jointly with other chapters.

Dan Hubbard seconded motion.

Motion carried.

Other New Business

Gavel was transferred to new President John Kanta.

Motion to adjourn meeting by Corey Huxell.

Motioned seconded by Lee Erickson.

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 10:08.

Respectfully submitted

Silka Kempema

Past-president

After meeting: Red Lizard out of Rapid City or TWS chapter. Red Lizard will take content and incorporate into a web page. \$1, 500 cost. \$130 per year.