

SOUTH DAKOTA CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY
Annual Business Meeting Agenda

1 March 2016 – Cedar Shore Resort, Oacoma, SD

Call to order – President John Kanta

Recognition of a quorum

Recognition of a Parliamentarian Paul Coughlin

Minutes from 2015 Annual Meeting – Julie DeJong

Discussion on unclear wording at the very end of the 2015 meeting minutes. The end of annual meeting minutes from 2015 will be amended to show that we decided to go with parent chapter for our website rather than a private contractor

Motion to approve with edits discussed: Nathan Baker

Second: Alex Solem

Annual Treasurer's Report – Julie DeJong

Motion to approve: Dennie Mann

Second: Lee Erickson

Old Business

Standing Committee Reports:

1. Nominations and Elections – Nathan Baker

*Comments from the Candidates

President – Josh Stafford

Board – Nick Markl, Ben Lardy

*Casting of the Ballots

Audit – Mark Norton - approved

Awards – Nathan Baker

Three nominations were 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 MS student of the year award. The PhD student award is offered every other year, and will not be offered this year. 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.

2. Conservation Review – Paul Coughlin

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.

2015 Activities:

In 2014, no specific issues were brought to the Conservation Review Committee for its consideration.

Conservation Affairs Network:

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.

2016 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, and take full advantage of resources available through the Conservation Affairs Network.

3. Education and Information – Laura Hubers

Nothing to report at this time.

4. Membership – Chuck Pyle

Annual membership 2012-2015

Accomplishments:

SDTWS Board approved setting up electronic membership payment online. Julie DeJong set up electronic payment system with PayPal and is online/ functioning. Letter for membership support and annual meeting attendance went out to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, South Dakota Refuge Supervisor, Denver, CO, February 2016. 80 Members signed up to receive information through SDTWS Facebook Group Site (February 29, 2016)

Please send information to Chuck Pyle, via email (goosemansd@hotmail.com) for information to be posted on Facebook site (Events, information links, etc.)

If other members think of possible opportunities to retain or gain membership please feel free to pass information on to SDTWS Board.

4. Program – Nathan Baker

Report presented concerning arrangements for the program.

5. Resolutions and Public Statements – Vacant

6. Arrangements – Mark Norton

Report presented concerning arrangements for the meeting.

7. Certification – Troy Grovenburg

Nothing to report at this time.

8. Chapter History – Corey Huxoll

Nothing to report at this time.

9. Energy –KC Jensen and Silka Kempema

Nothing to report at this time.

10. Fee Hunting and Ownership of Wildlife – Andy Lindbloom

No report

11. Fundraising – Vacant

12. Grassland Issues –Lee Erickson

As in the past years many of the threats to South Dakota grasslands remain the same. Last year we were asked to generate a list of three of the top issues that South Dakota faces. Those issues have remained the same for 2016. In 2016 multiple bills have caught our attention this year but none have passed. We are still monitoring the legislative session.

1. Native Grassland Conversion
 - a. Taxation – promotes conversion.
2. Continued Annual Challenging of Perpetual Easements
3. Management of CRP – Currently there are restrictions that prevent fires from occurring at optimum times because of overlap of nesting season dates.

13. Missouri River Issues – Nathan Baker

Nothing to report at this time.

14. Newsletter – Jennifer Briggs

Nothing to report at this time.

15. Public Lands – Dennie Mann / Tom LeFaive / Eddie Childers

Deadman Trail Addition and Sturgis BAM-15miles of non-motorized trail expansion, impacts on Davenport cave. Trails would be used by mountain bikes during summer months.

West Hell Reforestation CE- We believe this project is ill-advised because of the impacts it would have on the bighorn sheep currently inhabiting the Hell Canyon area, identified as West Hell Reforestation East. The Elk Mountain Reforestation project was postponed, which we greatly appreciate. We hope a similar resolution can be made for West Hell Reforestation. We urge BHNF to use every available directive and law to avoid irretrievable, detrimental impacts to this population of bighorn sheep in Hell Canyon.

Cheyenne River Area Range Allotment Management Plan-With the evaluation of the proposed alternatives the South Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society is supporting Alternative 3 (Adaptive Management). Adaptive management has the options to address various issues as listed in our above comments. Alternative 3 will be

successful only with proper and intense monitoring of the allotments to achieve desired ecological conditions for riparian areas (with incorporation of additional triggers and backing off from >60% use), vegetative structure, and native species composition.

Mystic Ranger District MVUM 2016-Comments were mostly agreeable to the motor vehicle management plan but proposed changes to include vehicle use to provide access to some areas during hunting seasons.

Sportsman's Act of 2015-South Dakota has a rich history of hunting and fishing opportunity for both resident and non-resident sportsmen and women. Access to public lands is the number one issue for America's sportsmen and women. The Sportsmen's Act includes a broad array of bipartisan measures to enhance opportunities for hunters, anglers, and outdoor recreation enthusiasts, reauthorize key conservation programs, improve access to public lands, and help boost the outdoor recreation economy.

16. Tribal Fish & Wildlife – Diane Mann-Klager

Haven't been able to reach Diane – do we need a new chair?

17. Wetlands – Randy Meidinger

Report presented by Steve Huber

Report prepared by Randy Meidinger – Committee Chair

In June of 2016 the wetland committee considered a request for the SD Chapter to sign on to a letter encouraging State Representative, Kristy Nome, to support the reauthorization of NAWCA by co-sponsoring H.R. 2346. This bill was intended to extend the authorization of appropriations for allocation to carry out approved wetlands conservation projects under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act through fiscal year 2020. It was recommended by the wetland committee that the SD Chapter sign on to this letter. This bill was eventually passed by the US House and the US Senate, and signed into law by the President.

In June of 2016 the wetland committee reviewed a 7-page letter containing comments and suggested changes to the draft agricultural wetland mitigation bank framework developed by the South Dakota Farm Bureau. This mitigation bank project resulted from a \$75,000 Conservation Initiative Grant awarded by the NRCS. The letter indicated the current draft framework should be modified to adopt the following suggested important changes (and other framework modifications not listed here):

1. Improve transparency on how the final framework process will be developed and ultimately implemented.
2. Ensure NRCS does not automatically adopt framework without further formal comments and external review from other stakeholders.
3. Allow mitigation bank locations to become public knowledge.
4. Adopt a broader and more diverse list of potential members of a Technical Evaluation Panel to represent a wider array of stakeholders and technical experts.
5. Mitigation banks must avoid consolidation of multiple smaller lost wetlands being mitigated for as one large wetland. Also, the Geographic Service Area of individually mitigated wetlands should be limited to the same USGS watershed boundaries in which the original wetland was lost.

6. Wetland mitigation should involve restoration of quality wetlands similar in type and function to the converted wetlands, with replacement at a minimum of a 1:1 acreage ratio.
7. Previously restored or preserved wetlands must remain ineligible as bank sites, and wetland creation projects should be limited or ineligible for credit development.
8. Reduce the percent of credits available for initial release prior to attainment of ecological performance standards of restored wetlands from 30% to 20% of the estimated total credit yield for approved mitigation banks.
9. At a minimum, all mitigation bank sites should be monitored for 5 years and until all ecological objectives are met.
10. Approved mitigation banks must meet high ecological performance and monitoring standards outlined in the Mitigation Bank Instrument.
11. Bank sponsors should be required to provide USDA with a warranty deed for mitigation bank lands, and these easements should be perpetual in nature.

It was recommended by the committee that the SD Chapter sign on to this letter to join other conservation groups that had already done so, or indicated their willingness to do so.

18. Wildlife Diseases – Steve Griffin

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD): From July 1, 2015 to February 15, 2016 a total of 188 samples (162 elk, 7 mule deer, and 19 white-tailed deer) were collected from southwestern South Dakota, northeastern South Dakota, and the Black Hills of South Dakota. As of February 15, 2016 all results are in except for 2 pending results, and we have found 4 CWD positive elk, 4 CWD positive white-tailed deer, and 4 CWD positive mule deer. Since testing began in 1997, South Dakota has documented 294 cases of CWD (108 elk and 186 deer) in free ranging deer and elk. Wind Cave National Park accounts for 77 of these animals (67 elk and 10 deer). Custer State Park has found thirteen elk and one deer. A total of 25,485 wild deer and elk have been tested for CWD since 1997.

We are collecting all voluntary hunter harvested 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.

Hemorrhagic Disease: The State of South Dakota experienced one area of significant white-tailed deer mortality due to Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) or Blue Tongue (BT) in 2015. This occurred in Sully County where a documented 108 deer were found dead, and one white-tailed deer was confirmed with the EHD virus. Other areas of South Dakota did not experience any significant die-off of deer during 2015, although one positive EHD white-tailed deer was confirmed in Pennington County. Overall, there were a total of 127 deer reported as suspect EHD in South Dakota in 2015. Region 2 reported a total of 114 dead deer in 2 counties (Sully and Dewey), and Region 1 reported a total of 13 dead deer in 3 counties (Bennett, Custer and Pennington). Region 3 and Region 4 reported no suspected EHD in 2015. The two samples that were confirmed with EHD from Pennington County and Sully County were confirmed at the lab at SDSU as the most common serotype of the EHD virus (ehdv-2). Due to the large number of white-tailed deer that were being lost to the disease in western Sully County, the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish, and Parks offered refunds to hunters who previously received a license for western Sully County if they voluntarily returned their licenses. License returns included a total of 122 licenses (211 tags).

Pneumonia in Bighorn Sheep: SDGFP is working on research investigating the occurrence of pneumonia in our bighorn sheep herds in Custer State Park, Rapid City, Spring Creek, and Hill City. This research will look at bighorn sheep as potential shedders of the pneumonia complex. Research started last summer, and is really getting started in all areas of the Black Hills with the capture of bighorns for radio-collaring and disease testing this winter.

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. Another disease that resurfaced in 2015 was avian influenza, and an update was not available at the time of this report. A lot of this monitoring is done through the South Dakota Department of Health, and we continue to work with the Animal Industry Board on other disease issues.

19. Wildlife Diversity – Presented by Eileen Dowd Stukel and Silka Kempema

Committee Members: Casey Heimerl, Laura Hubers, Tom LeFaivre, Mike Gutzmer

South Dakota Wildlife Action Plan revision: In return for accepting State Wildlife Grants funding, South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (SDGFP) completed a revised Wildlife Action Plan. The plan is available on the GFP website along with additional information on South Dakota wildlife, habitats, conservation challenges and solutions. Legislative efforts continue to promote State and Tribal Wildlife Grants while working on more permanent funding sources.

Blue Ribbon Panel: The Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources continued meeting during the past year. This effort to identify long-term funding for wildlife is led by Co-Chairs John Morris of Bass Pro Shops and former Wyoming Governor David Freudenthal. According to the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' website: "The Panelists will work together over the course of a year to produce recommendations and Congressional policy options on the most sustainable and equitable model to fund conservation of the full array of fish and wildlife species."

Bald Eagle Awareness Days: Our chapter continues its support for this educational event. The 2015 event was held in late February with the total audience estimated at 1,200 people. The event featured presentations in Sioux Falls and Pierre, with school programs in Pierre, including live birds of prey brought by educators from The Raptor Center, located at the University of Minnesota. The 2016 event took place from February 25 – 27, again featuring programs at the SDGFP Outdoor Campus East in Sioux Falls, school programs in Plankinton 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.

SDGFP status reviews of state listed species: SDGFP Wildlife Diversity Program staff have been examining the status of species listed as state threatened or endangered. A status review includes a summary of what is known about a species, relevant conservation or research actions, and a recommendation as to whether the species should continue to be listed. If sufficient information is available, a review also includes recommended delisting and recovery criteria. This effort will add accountability

to the process of delisting and downlisting species. Draft status reviews will soon be shared with Wildlife Division staff, with a goal of making these reviews available for public review during 2016.

Recent federal listing activities pertaining to South Dakota:

- Greater Sage-Grouse: Following a status review, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) announced in September 2015 that listing of this species under the Endangered Species Act was not warranted. The FWS cited landscape-scale conservation efforts across the western U.S. as justification for this decision, which means this species is no longer a federal candidate.
- northern long-eared bat: This species was listed as a federal threatened species in April 2015 due to the impact of white-nose syndrome in eastern North America. The northern long-eared bat likely occurs through much of South Dakota, with known breeding along the Missouri River and in the Black Hills. This bat hibernates in caves and mines. Maternity roosts may be in buildings or under loose tree bark. The FWS recently released a final 4(d) rule for this species. A 4(d) rule is an option for federal threatened species that helps prioritize conservation actions that have the most impact on threats. The rule offers more flexibility for activities that have limited impact on identified threats. At this point, the white-nose syndrome zone only includes extreme southeastern South Dakota. This disease and the fungus that causes it have not yet been documented in the state.
- monarch: The FWS continues to review the status of this species to determine whether listing is warranted. Concern about monarchs and pollinators in general has resulted in greater emphasis among conservation organizations, landowners and government entities. The Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies hosted a Monarch Conservation Workshop in Des Moines, Iowa in October 2015. Many states have hosted or plan to host monarch or pollinator workshops to improve coordination among partners, including commitments to produce state monarch or pollinator plans.

Black-tailed Prairie Dog Colony Mapping: The South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks 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 final report can be viewed or downloaded from the SDGFP website (<http://gfp.sd.gov/hunting/docs/prairiedogmappingreport.pdf>).

20. Workshop – Travis Runia and Casey Heimerl

The falconry workshop last year was well received. Ask members to submit new ideas.

Other Reports:

1. Central Mountains and Plains Section Update – Bob Lanka

The TWS President's Challenge is to expand partnerships and outreach to sections and chapters. The Upcoming Annual Conference Schedule is Raleigh NC from October 15-20 2016, and Albuquerque NM from September 23-27 2017. The Budget and Finance committee needed work to get back in order and now 2015 was the second year in the black. The Membership was declining 7%/yr in 2013, and in 2014 – 2015 there were 9403 members. The goal is to increase membership by 3.2%. Demographic analysis of the membership shows that it consists of 94% Caucasian, 70% Male/30% Female, 14% are students, 5.5% from CMPS, and only 0.4% (40) are from SD). The goal is to

increase 1-5 new members this year. Bob also gave brief reports on Policy (Government affairs and partnerships), Awards (Fellows and Group Achievement Awards Nominations are Due Feb. 15, 2017). He also spoke about the Leadership Institute which includes 10-15 people/year. There is a need for new leaders in the organization and the cost is paid by TWS.

2. SDSU Student Chapter Report – Josh Goeman

The SDSU Student Chapter has been busy but the President states he has even more ideas to get the students involved with the public and outdoor activities. They assisted with Ag Day in Sioux Falls, Water festival in Sioux Falls, Buffalo Banquet, held a trap shoot recruitment event, sent 3 members to the TWS National Meeting, and went to student conclave. They have a camping trip for recruitment in the fall, and would like to increase involvement with the Boys and Girls club in Brookings, increase volunteer classes at the Outdoor Adventure Center in Brookings, and help with Step Outside program, and NASP (National Archery in the Schools Program).

3. President Gary Potts – The President had suggestions for the chapter. He suggested that students need speakers at meetings and that they should utilize retirees for these speakers. Some interesting workshops that foster these relationships are “Beginning your professional journey” by John Logering Uof M Crookston. Bob Lanka does a great job with CMPS as representative. Please support the parent society and check out the website regularly. We should use the COWCH program, which interviews retirees and then put an article together and play the video throughout the conference next year. As for people on committees, estimate how much time it takes per year and let people know that. We should also encourage relationships between retired professionals and students.

Election Results – Nathan Baker and John Kanta
President Elect -Dr. Josh Stafford
Board – Ben Lardy

Other Old Business - none

New Business
Approval of New Members – John Kanta

Meeting site/dates for the 2017 Annual Meeting - Cedar Shores most likely, no other suggestions at this time

Other New Business
Environmental Assessment at Badlands NP, expand bison range, open for comments soon, NPS Centennial this year - Eddie Childers

Transfer of Gavel to President-Elect Nathan Baker
Presentation of Past-President plaque

Adjourn
Motion to adjourn: Silka Kempema
Second by: Corey Huxoll