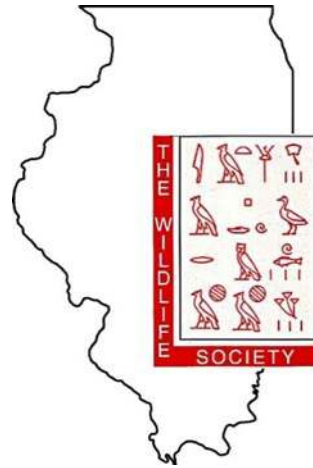


Illinois Chapter of The Wildlife Society



Excellence in Wildlife Conservation through Science and Education

Edited by Paul Brewer, President-Elect

President's Corner

In This Issue

- Presidents Corner
- Pre-meeting Networking 2016
- 2016 Annual Meeting
- North American Prairie Conference Comes to Illinois
- Member Publications
- Upcoming Meetings
- Minutes and Financial Report - 2016 Meeting
- Newsletter Article Request
- Student Chapter Info and Websites
- TWS Executive Board

As I reflected back over the last few months in preparation for writing this article (my first as this year's ICTWS president), I tried desperately to think about something other than the fiscal challenges faced by our state. I didn't have much luck...

As many of you know (dare I say everyone in the Midwest and beyond), Illinois is facing a few challenges as a result of no FY2016 budget. The impacts of the budget impasse on Illinoisans vary dramatically depending on the distance of oneself from state funding. Regardless, many in the wildlife profession are currently dealing with hiring freezes, allocation and spending issues, budget deficits, and even worse scenarios.

Most major universities have initiated cuts and even staff layoffs. State agency personnel are dealing with travel restrictions and back pay or reimbursement issues. Private consultants and non-profit organizations must overcome delayed payments, suspended or delayed grants programs, or worse. It's a bad situation for many of our ICTWS members and colleagues, but the situation can be equally as dire for our wildlife.

The public must recognize that wildlife professionals play an important role managing wildlife populations and their habitats. Without financial

resources to pump water, many wetlands could remain too full or too dry to provide habitat for our wetland-dependent critters at our state-managed areas this coming fall. Prairies need controlled burns and forests need thinning and understory management to remain in the correct seral stages for species of conservation concern. Even on private lands, state funding and technical assistance are important to ensure proper management of wildlife, since they are a public trust (*SIDENOTE*: If it's been a while since you looked over the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, give it a google).

In our urbanized, cultivated, and otherwise highly modified landscape, wildlife professionals have a very important role in caring for wildlife and their ever-declining habitats. Unfortunately, the effects of the current fiscal uncertainty in Illinois are likely trickling down to wildlife. Perhaps the current lag will result in enhanced job security for wildlife professionals in the future with the backlog of habitat projects, research questions, and planning meetings currently piling up. I would be willing to wager that invasive species continue to find their ways into our public waters, woody vegetation keeps popping up in our few remaining prairies, and disease continues to plague some of our most treasured tree species in the state regardless of our state budget impasse.

Regardless of the current fiscal environment, I am proud to call myself a member of the ICTWS and a wildlife professional in Illinois. I know each of you will continue acting in the best interest of wildlife no matter what fiscal challenges come our way in the coming days. Many species of wildlife are incredibly resilient to the vagaries of man and here's to hoping that resilience continues...

Heath Hagy - - President, ICTWS

Pre-Meeting Networking - - Clay Shoot

If you did not participate in this year's pre-conference clay shoot, you missed a great opportunity for networking with fellow ICTWS members. Despite a little bit of rain, a brisk breeze blowing some of the clays out of range very quickly (yep, that's my story), a total lack of marksmanship on the part of some attendees (not mentioning any names), and a remote location, more than 15 people participated in the clay shoot at the Rend Lake Shooting Club.

Kudos to John O'Connell and other organizers from SIU for pulling together the event at the last minute. Someone even managed to get the rain-soaked charcoal grill fired up under an awning and prepare a nice mess of 'dogs and burgers. Hopefully, we can continue networking events such as these at future chapter meetings.

- Heath Hagy



2016 ICTWS Meeting Highlights

There were 66 registrants for the 2016 annual meeting of the Illinois Chapter of the Wildlife Society held at the Touch of Nature complex near Carbondale.



There were 32 oral presentations and 16 poster presentations delivered by a great mix of graduate students, agency biologists, and other wildlife professionals.



There was a special session devoted to the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan. Thanks to all of the IDNR biologists for participating!



TWS national president Gary Potts attended the ICTWS meeting and spoke on challenges and opportunities in the wildlife profession.



UIUC's Brett Dorak won best MS student presentation award. Great Job!
President Scott Meister makes the presentations.



SIU's Esmarie Boyles won best Ph.D. student presentation award. Great Job!

North American Prairie Conference Comes to Illinois

The 24th North American Prairie Conference (NAPC) was recently held on the ISU campus in Normal, Illinois, from July 17-20th. The NAPC is always an enjoyable and thought-provoking conference that brings together scientists, photographers, land managers, poets, and prairie enthusiasts from across North America. More information about this past conference can be found here:

<http://nap2016.illinoisstate.edu>



Bison graze at Nauchusa Grassland on NAPC field trip.

Paul Brewer photo

ICTWS Member Publications

From Bob Bluett:

Hulin, A.C., E.P. Golden, and R.D. Bluett. 2015. Monitoring occupancy of the Illinois chorus frog (*Pseudacris streckeri illinoensis*): are plots or ponds the best fine-scaled sampling unit for call surveys? *Transactions of the Illinois State Academy of Science* 108:53-58.

From Dr. Jeff Levensgood:

- England, J.C. 2016. Intestinal Helminth Infections, Distributions, and Associations with Health Parameters of Spring-Migrating Female Lesser Scaup in the Upper Midwest. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, IL, USA. (Levensgood/Hagy Co-advisors)
- England C., J. Levensgood, H. Hagy and J Osborn. 2016. The Intestinal Helminths of Lesser Scaup: A Different Can of Worms. INHS Reports June 2016 No. 414.
- Osborn, JM, HM Hagy, JM Levensgood, AP Yetter, JEngland, MM Horath, CS Hine, & DR McClain. 2016. Intrinsic and Extrinsic Factors Determining Diving Duck Condition and Habitat Quality during Spring Migration in the Upper Midwest: Final Report. INHS Technical Report 2016 (22).

From Dr. Clay Nielsen:

- Nielsen, C. K. 2016. Ecology and conservation of semi-aquatic mammals and their habitats: implications for policy. *Journal of Contemporary Water Research & Education* 157:1-2.
- Nielsen, C. K. 2016. Modeling population growth and response to harvest for river otters in Illinois. *Journal of Contemporary Water Research & Education* 157:14-22.
- Nielsen, C. K., and V. L. Kelly. 2016. Wildlife habitat is similar at mined versus unmined sites 30 years following strip mining for coal in southern Illinois. *Journal of Contemporary Water Research & Education* 157:23-32.

Upcoming Meetings

The 23rd TWS Annual Conference

October 15–19, Raleigh, NC

<http://www.twsconference.org/>

Minutes and Financial Report 2016 ICTWS Meeting - - Heath Hagy

ICTWS Business Meeting Notes

04/12/2016

Call to Order: 10:25AM

- 1) 2015 meeting minutes (Brewer / Clevensline, approved unanimously)

- 2) Treasurer's Report (2015) (Motion to approve, Clevensline / Brewer (approved))
 - a. Beginning balance (1/31/2015): \$10,136.66

- i. Income: \$5,886.13
 - ii. Expenses: \$3,947.45
- b. Ending Balance (1/31/2016): \$12,075.34
 - i. Savings: \$5,683.57
 - ii. Checking: \$6,391.77
- c. John Griesbaum provided accounting information but was not present. H. Hagy reported the data and H. Hagy and S. Beckerman served as the auditing committee.

3) Fees Collected at Meeting (Hagy provided update to Chapter)

- a. Online Pre-conference: \$2,760.00
- b. Card (swiped): \$2,575.00 (27 transactions)
- c. Check: \$215.00 (2 transactions)
- d. Cash: \$210.00 (14 transactions)
- e. Card (keyed): \$200.00 (2 transactions)
- f. Fees: \$174.03 (mean = 2.9%)
- g. Total Paypal Balance: \$5,785.97 (\$5,960.00 - \$174.03)
- h. Motion to continue using Paypal in the future or similar system and absorb fees by Chapter until future time as changed by motion. (Hagy/Clevenstine - Approved unanimously)

4) Election Results (Scott Meister)

- a. President Elect – Paul Brewer
- b. Council-person-at-large – Travis Guerrant

5) WIU student chapter: Emma Trone provided an update on behalf of the Chapter noting number of student members and current activities.

- a. Motion - Provide ~\$400 to WIU student chapter to defray IRS fine associated with non-filing of taxes from 2009-present. This will allow reinstatement of tax-exempt status. (Ludwig/Potts - approved)

6) Big Rivers Update (Bob Clevenstine)

- a. The Corps of Engineers' Upper Mississippi River Restoration Environmental Management Program took a \$12 M funding hit this FY after enjoying its full appropriation of \$33 M for a couple years.
- b. To date 55 projects have been completed under this program, with 13 done in Illinois.

- c. Several projects are under construction, including Rice Lake, which sustained some damages to the electrical box in the water control structure pumps as a result of two historic floods in one year on the Illinois River. The Rock Island District anticipates repairing the damages soon; Pool 12 Overwintering, which is in stage II construction and stage II design. Other projects in design are Keithsburg in Pool 18, but due to the State's inability to sponsor any projects at this time, Boston Bay is being replaced by proposed restoration at Great River NWR's Del Air Division in Pike County.
- d. Rip Rap Landing, Piasa and Eagle's Nest Islands, are planning priorities for St Louis District, as is Wilkinson Island on the Open River. They anticipate Batchtown closeout this FY. They are currently working performance evaluations for a few projects, in Illinois its Calhoun Point.
- e. The UMRR-Coordinating Committee approved the program's second Habitat Needs Assessment. As the "first generation" of habitat projects are completed over the next couple years, the river coordination teams will be tasked with generating the second generation, using outputs from the second HNA as well as a Resiliency Assessment being led by the Upper Midwest Science Center. An interagency workgroup convened a January 5-7, 2016 workshop to discuss the theoretical definitions of resilience and begin to brainstorm how conceptual models might be used to understand resilience at different spatial scales, at different locations, and in terms of different ecosystem processes. The workgroup was facilitated by Dr. Lance Gunderson from Emory U., and Dr. Allyson Quinlan of the Resilience Alliance. A post workshop summary paper is due any time.
- f. The Illinois River Basin Restoration Comprehensive Study, aka 5 19 Program - The program has fallen victim to the State's budget impasse. Although included as an item in the President's budget, the Corps was forced to withdraw it from their budget request due to the loss of sponsorship.
- g. Consequently feasibility work is suspended for Ten Mile Creek (Peoria) and Fox River Fish Passage. Both were to be completed in 2017.
- h. Starved Rock Pool, Pekin Lake SFWA Northern and Southern Units were ready to move to construction pending funding. Discussions are taking place about moving Pekin Lake into the EMP, since feasibility and design work had been completed
- i. From our River Refuges: SOMEBODY TURN OFF THE SPIGOT!!!

7) Conservation Affairs Network (Paul Brewer)

- a. TWS National policy issues and processes
- b. Information exchange (bottom up and top down flow) and sharing
- c. For more information, contact ICTWS representative Paul Brewer and TWS Keith Norris

8) TWS National Updates (Gary Potts)

- a. Leadership Training
 - i. New TWS initiative focused on leadership of mid-career individuals

1. First training workshop held at Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference in 2016
- b. TWS National member benefits will increase substantially in 2016
- c. Funding sources (annual conference sponsors) are increasingly scrutinized for environmental practices
- d. New website is highly functional and frequently updated

9) Old Business

- a. Send amended

10) New Business

- a. IL House Bill 4671 (Feral Cats) – ICTWS authored a letter against the bill which was led by executive board
 - i. Do members have any issues with the executive board taking positions consistent with TWS position statements and policies?
 - ii. Members can sign witness slips or contact house representatives to convey their individual thoughts on the proposed bill
- b. 2017 annual meeting
 - i. General support for on campus meeting at WIU
 - ii. Lack of undergraduates at ICTWS meetings
 1. Offer workshops or trainings to attract undergraduates
 2. Talk to undergraduate clubs to encourage attendance
 3. Invite student chapters explicitly
 4. Provide travel assistance in new ways
 5. Job/fair mixer for undergraduates – tables for research, state jobs, federal jobs, etc. with signage to encourage students to come and chat with professionals
 6. Mentoring information and contacts on webpage
 7. Speed talk session or panel early in the conference to break ice – specifically invite student chapters to a panel discussion using agency and research folks to talk about job opportunities
 8. Involve student chapters or ICTWS in social media or start

Adjourn: 11:42 AM

ICTWS Newsletter Submissions

Don't wait for solicitation to provide any contributions to the next ICTWS Newsletter! We accept news, awards notices, recent publications, upcoming conferences, or any item that could be valuable to members throughout the entire year.

Please email Paul Brewer, at fireboss@mchsi.com any contributions.

Student Chapter Information and Websites

Eastern Illinois University

Advisors: Jill Deppe, jldeppe@eiu.edu
Webpage: http://www.eiu.edu/slo/rso/rso_info.php?id=145

Southern Illinois University

Advisor: Eric Schaubert, schauber@siu.edu
Webpage: <http://wildlifezoology.rso.siu.edu>

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Advisors: Steve Buck, sbuck@illinois.edu
Bob Schooley, schooley@illinois.edu
Webpage: <https://illinois.collegiatelink.net/organization/thewildlifesociety>

Western Illinois University

Advisors: Chris Jacques, CN-Jacques@wiu.edu
Webpage: COMING SOON!

Resources

The Wildlife Society staff and Council actively encourage the success of student chapters and provide ongoing assistance to them. For more information on resources available to student chapters including annual conclaves, the TWS Leadership Institute, Career Development and Job Board visit: <http://wildlife.org/next-generation/>

Travel Grant

Matt Springer from SIU received a \$450 travel grant to attend the annual conference in Raleigh. Congratulations Matt!

ICTWS Executive Board

Heath Hagy, President

Illinois Natural History Survey

hhagy@illinois.edu

(309) 543-3950

Paul Brewer, President-elect

Retired IDNR Wildlife Biologist

fireboss@mchsi.com

(217) 962-0709

Scott Meister, Past-President

Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

smeister@dupageforest.org

(630) 933-7081

John Griesbaum, Secretary/Treasurer

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

john.griesbaum@illinois.gov

(217) 421-0900

Stefanie Fitzsimons, Councilperson-at-Large

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

stefanie.fitzsimmons@illinois.gov

(815) 675-2386 ext 215

Travis Guerrant, Councilperson-at-Large

USDA APHIS Wildlife Services

travis.guerrant@aphis.usda.gov

(217) 241-5731