

REPORT TO COUNCIL

DATE: 17 September 2014

REPORT TO: TWS Council

FROM: Kristina Boyd, Interim-Chair, Early Career Professional Working Group

SUBJECT: Annual Report of the Early Career Professional Working Group

RECOMMENDATION(S) TO COUNCIL:

- 1) We would like Council to grant permanent status to the Early Career Professional Working Group

One goal of this working group is to increase the membership and engagement of early career professionals in TWS. While there are no near-term direct financial implications to the permanency of this working group, our hope is that it will have a positive effect on TWS financial health in the future.

- 2) We would like Council to respond to our petition for National TWS support of the Land Management Workforce Flexibility Act, as presented by Mark Davis, Vice-President of the National Federation of Federal Employees, and Kristina Boyd, working group Interim-Chair.

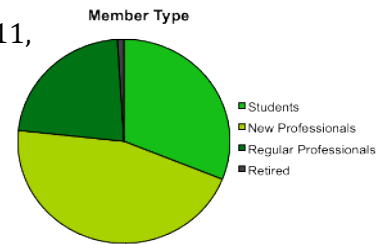
Advocating for this act does not have any negative financial implications for TWS above and beyond its current advocacy of or opposition to other federal policies. In its current form, this act gives temporary federal employees the opportunity to compete for agency positions on an equal footing with other federal employees if they've worked at least 24 months of service time and their performance was satisfactory. However, there are potential positive financial implications for TWS above and beyond its current reach. Advocating for this act is a step outside of pure wildlife policy and offers an opportunity for TWS as a third party to advocate for many of its constituents, or potential constituents, who have no other champion, thereby gaining a personal connection to young professionals with a lifetime of support for TWS ahead of them.

- 3) We would like this report to be approved by Council.

MEMBERSHIP

Our membership is currently 103. Since our inception in 2011, membership has waxed and waned, but has remained above 100 since 2012. During our first mid-year report in 2012, membership was 106. It peaked at 145 in mid-January 2013, and we hope to regain and exceed that level soon.

We have seen high turn-over rates in the past, but it is not clear whether this is due to gains or losses of National TWS subscriptions by early career professionals (ECPs) or a time lag in membership renewals, whether this is typical variation in working group membership, or if it is a result of working group administration. We will continue to monitor our membership, and we hope to explore sources of turn-over in the future.



BOARD ACTIVITIES and ACTIONS

Our board has been conducting business on a maintenance level over the past year due to health complications of its Interim-Chair. However, we have maintained a presence with members and TWS national in several ways. We remain strong, with significant support, and are in the process of revitalizing and re-engaging our membership. We are currently holding elections for new executive board members, as well as holding a vote on the revision of our charter. Voting will close on October 8th, and results will be available to Council during the Annual Conference.

A Facebook page for the working group was initiated in January 2012 and is currently our primary mode of communication with membership, through which we distribute board activity information, promote discussion topics of interest, and recruit committee members. We also email updates and newsletters directly to our membership, the latest being early this September. Our website is under construction.

Because ECPs are generally not able to participate in national conference activities, our ultimate goal is to develop a presence advocating and enabling programs for ECPs at a section and chapter level as well as the national level. The logistical groundwork for this type of involvement is being fleshed out, and on-the-ground activities at local levels have not yet begun.

Activity by the working group to date has been primarily at the national level. Completed activities in the past year include:

- A revision of our charter that is currently being voted on by membership.
- An election for new executive board members that is currently being held.
- An article published in the Spring 2014 issue of *The Wildlife Professional*, "Surmounting the Technician Trap: How TWS is working for early career professional development."
- 2013 national TWS conference sponsorships and activities:
 - 1) Workshop - Behind the Scenes of Scientific Publication and Critical Review (co-sponsored by the Student Development working group (SD WG))
 - 2) Workshop - Resume & Interview Strategies for the Early Career Professional. Unfortunately, the presenter of this workshop could not attend the conference due to the Federal sequestration.

- 3) Associated Meeting - ECP WG Annual meeting
- 4) Associated Meeting - National Working Group Executive Board Summit – ECP Interim-Chair as meeting coordinator and chair.
- 5) Associated Meeting – TWS Council: Sponsored Mark Davis, Vice-President of the National Federation of Federal Employees, to speak on the Land Management Workforce Flexibility Act and petitioned Council for official support of the legislation by TWS.
- 6) ECP off-campus mixer with guest speaker Mark Davis.

As noted above, activity by the working group in the coming year is also expected to remain at the national level. In-progress activities for the current year include:

- Creation of a grant process for AWB/CWB applicant education shortfalls, in collaboration with National TWS.
- Further advocacy of the Land Management Workforce Flexibility Act.
- Mid-year membership meeting to be held in March.
- Logistical support for a job board compilation website - www.pherkad.com
- Logo contest
- 2014 national TWS conference sponsorships and activities:
 - 1) Associated Meeting - ECP WG Annual Meeting
 - 2) Associated Meeting - SD WG Annual Meeting
 - 3) Associated Meeting – Meeting of all Working Groups
 - 4) ECP off- or on-campus mixer