

CENTRAL MOUNTIANS & PLAINS SECTION OF
THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

WHERE DID IT ALL BEGIN?

Jerry Kobriger, Retired

CMPS annual meeting

Sheridan, WY

August, 2014

Since CMPS is a part of The Wildlife Society (TWS), to learn about the beginning of CMPS one needs to go back to formation of TWS as without TWS, there would be no CMPS. A brief summary of the beginnings of TWS is necessary to see where and how CMPS came to be.

On December 5-7, 1935, in Urbana, Illinois, The First North Central States Fish and Game Conference, sponsored by the Illinois Natural History Survey was held. At that meeting, a group of persons interested in wildlife management expressed the need for a journal for the rapidly expanding profession of wildlife management. Also, informal discussions also included the possibility of formation of a professional society. On February 3, 1936 some of those same persons later attended the North American Wildlife Conference in Washington, D.C. They presented their ideas at an informal dinner gathering and a committee was appointed to “consider the general desirability, and the present advisability, of the formation of an association of those interested from a professional point of view in wildlife management and research”. In three days the committee presented its report on February 6. W. L. McAtee presided over the meeting and stated: the need exists and the time is ripe for inauguration of a professional society, which should, however, continue to cooperate with the General Wildlife Federation and other organizations with similar objectives. The group then named themselves The Society of Wildlife Specialists. Officers were elected and a constitution was adopted. In addition to elected officers, the governing board included a regional Advisory Board of 13 members, geographically distributed but no information was found on who these members were or their location.

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The following year, on February 27, 1937, at a meeting in St. Louis, MO, after a lot of discussion on the need and advisability of a new organization, the name was changed to The Wildlife Society, and members agreed to publish a journal called The Journal of Wildlife Management.

Regional or geographic segregation of membership with appropriate representation to the Council has been a feature of the administrative structure of the Society since its origin. Initially six regions were established. Most of the States in the current CMPS were included in Region 4, as were Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and possibly Alberta and the Northwest Territories since records simply indicate that Canadian Provinces were incorporated into the US region adjacent to each Province's border.

Region 4, 1936



In 1946, Canada became a separate Region, Region 7, so the Canadian provinces adjacent to Region 4 left Region 4.

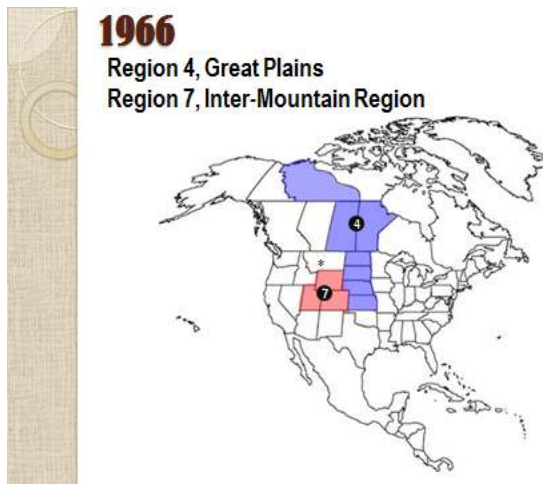
Region 4, 1946

(All of Canada was Region 7)

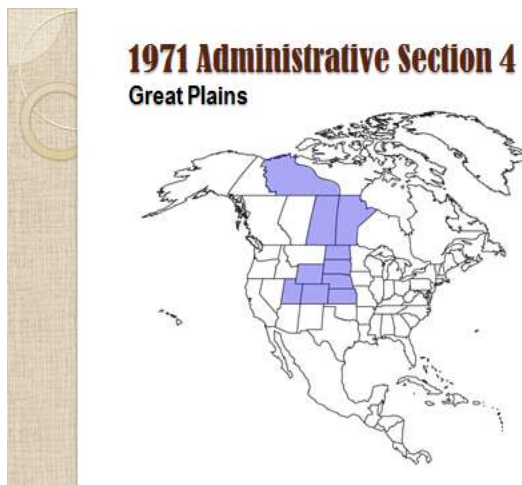


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In 1955, a committee was appointed to revisit alignment of the Regions but no committee report could be located. However the CMPS historical Review states that in 1966 Regional boundaries were changed, and the Great Plains (Region 4) now included Nebraska, South and North Dakota, Kansas, Manitoba, Northwest Territory and Saskatchewan. Region 7, which had been the Canadian Region, was dropped with the Canadian Provinces moving back to the US Regions along the border. Region 7 was now the Inter-Mountain Region and included Colorado, Wyoming and Utah. Apparently this reorganization was when Montana left Region 4, never to return. A letter from TWS indicated that these changes occurred in 1968 rather than 1966 so you can take your pick as to which year this occurred.

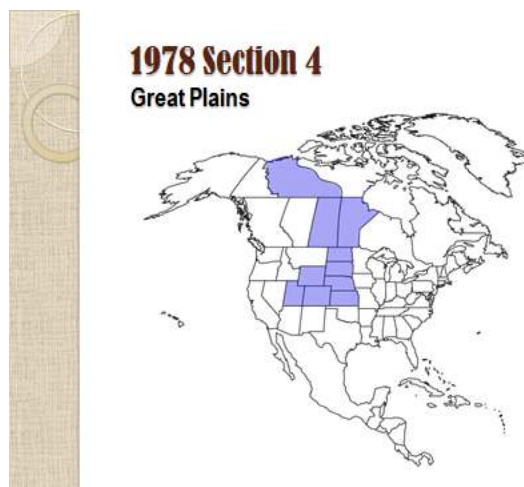


In 1971 Regions were changed to Administrative Sections and the former Regions 4 and 7 became Administrative Section 4, so Colorado, Wyoming and Utah rejoined former Region 4 members.



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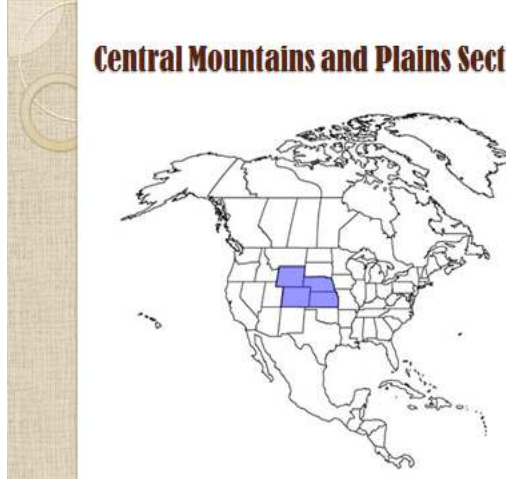
In 1978 the word Administrative was dropped from the title and Section 4 was termed the Great Plains Section.



The original constitution of TWS authorized the establishment of sections by petition of ten or more members in any designated area within the boundaries of Regions, but could transgress regional boundaries when convenience so requires. Thus there could be more than one Section in a Region. At that time regulations required that sections must adopt bylaws that need be approved by Council, that annual reports would be made to the Society, and that all section members must also be bona fide members of the parent organization. In this manner the section became an integral and functional part of the Society at a level where it could best promote community interest in the organization. The Northeast Section was the first to be authorized by Council in 1938. On February 20, 1954, as part of the Forester's Day program at Colorado A & M, Lee Yeager, Representative for Region 4, called a meeting to discuss the Wildlife Society, its objectives, and the possibility of forming a Section within Region 4. Twenty-four people attended this meeting and Smoky Till moved that a definite organization for Region 4 be formed. The motion passed 23 to 1 and CMPS was thus formed. On October 28, 1954, Region 4 Representative Yeager wrote that Region 4 was too large and proposed that CMPS be composed of Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska and Wyoming. In March of 1955, a formal petition was submitted to Council forming CMPS, and the petition was accepted by Council in April, 1955.

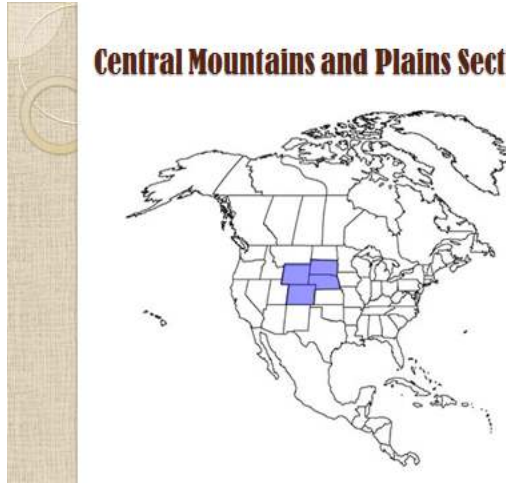
WHERE DID IT ALL BEGIN?

Central Mountains and Plains Section 1954



Also in April of 1955, a brief business meeting of CMPS was held and a recommendation to hold an annual “convention” for the purpose of giving papers and carrying on other Section business. A committee was appointed to study this proposal, and in August, 1956, the first CMPS Summer Conference was held in Colorado. In 1962 South Dakota officially joined CMPS while Kansas “unofficially” withdrew.

Central Mountains and Plains Section 1962



In 1969 Kansas was once again represented on CMPS governing board but no official announcement could be found indicating whether Kansas had officially rejoined or not.

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Central Mountains and Plains Section 1969



By the summer conference in 1973, North Dakota, Utah, and Manitoba had joined CMPS.

Central Mountains and Plains Section 1973



In 1975, Saskatchewan was represented on the CMPS governing board and remained through 1981 when they again dropped out. Saskatchewan has never hosted a CMPS meeting and has not been active in the Section. Officially Saskatchewan was still a member of CMPS, just had not been active.

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Central Mountains and Plains Section 1975



In 2007, a Canadian Section was again formed so Manitoba and Saskatchewan left CMPS to become part of the new Canadian Section. To date, this is the last member change for CMPS.

Central Mountains and Plains Section 2007



In 1957, CMPS was the first chapter or section to promote a reduced membership fee for students and recommended establishment of student chapters. In 1959 Yeager, CMPS representative reported that Council had taken this suggestion under advisement. In 1960, Yeager reported that two additional Sections had also promoted that suggestion.

In 1971, CMPS sponsored its first sectional workshop, The Canada Goose Workshop in Jamestown, ND. Since 1971, the section has hosted or supported 23 workshops or symposia, ranging from bison, to least terns to grasslands.

Membership increased steadily in CMPS from 1954 to 1980, but fluctuated from about 250 to 550 for the next 25 years. In 2005, a dollar from the dues of each member of each chapter within the section was forwarded to the section as dues to the section.

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Thus all dues paying members of a chapter automatically became members of the section. Membership took a big jump after that, reaching nearly 2,000 members in 2010.

YEAR	MEMBERSHIP
1955	39
1960	78
1965	85
1970	102
1975	295
1980	403
1985	263
1990	274
1995	546
2000	483
2005	322
2010	1,987
2013	1,411

From the beginning in 1954, the annual business meeting was held in conjunction with Forester's Day at Colorado A & M, later Colorado State. In 1961, CMPS decided to hold the annual business meeting at the summer conference. When CMPS was formed (1954), dues were \$0.50 per year. They are now \$1.00 so inflation hasn't been a serious factor for Section dues. On February 22, 1956, the treasurer reported a balance of \$2.22. The section treasury was fairly low until fundraising began in earnest sometime between 1980 and 1985 and has been fairly healthy ever since.

YEAR	ACCOUNT BALANCE
1955	5.81
1960	425.60
1965	110.94
1970	243.14
1975	1,203.34
1980	572.69
1985	5,785.59
1990	7,221.74
1995	12,177.37
2000	13,933.00
2005	5,861.70
2010	8,814.88
2013	9,726.30

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In 1975, when TWS was conducting a fund drive to establish permanent headquarters in Washington, a motion to donate \$100.00 to that TWS building fund failed to pass. One of our more prominent members commented: “Let those people live in tents”.

However, three years later in 1978, CMPS voted unanimously to support TWS building fund and in 1980 the proceeds from the annual auction (\$768.54) were donated to that fund.

In 1986 an Ad Hoc committee was appointed to develop administrative procedures to resolve interstate, national, and international issues involving two or more TWS Chapters. Joe Gabig was chair of this committee and a final report was accepted by the Section in 1989. The report was forwarded to TWS in Washington and it was put on the agenda for the parent society’s annual meeting in October, 1989 (item 5b(1)). However no one in the Washington office could find any record of action taken by the parent society on this issue. It was never discussed again.



Ad Hoc Committee on Inter-chapter Coordination of Resource Issues

- **Natural resource issues, even when perceived to be local in scope, frequently affect resources that cross state, regional, or international boundaries. To enhance coordination within TWS and avoid misunderstandings between chapters, it is desirable for chapters to coordinate policy statements on sensitive issues dealing with shared natural resources.**
- **Determination of need for coordination**
Before developing a formal position on a natural resource issue, chapters initiating such action should determine if the affected resource is shared by neighboring states or provinces.

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CMPS section representatives to TWS Council.



CENTRAL MOUNTAINS & PLAINS SECTION REPRESENTATIVES

REPRESENTATIVE	YEARS
LEE YEAGER*	1954-1961
ROBERT ENG	1962
W. ROBINETTE	1963-1964
C. LOVELESS	1965
PAUL SPRINGER	1966-1971
M. STEINHOFF	1966-1969
WAYNE SANDFORT	1970-1973
LEE QUEAL	1974
RAY LINDER	1975-1977
HARVEY MILLER	1978-1983
CLAIT BRAUN*	1984-1990
LEN CARPENTER*	1991-1996
ROBERT WOOD	1997-1999
JERRY KOBRIGER	2000-2002
TOM RYDER*	2003-2008
GARY WHITE	2009-2014
BOB LANKA	2015-

Four presidents of TWS have been presidents of CMPS:

Alan Wentz



Clait Brawn



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Len Carpenter



Tom Ryder

