

CMPS Newsletter

Excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education

<http://drupal.wildlife.org/CMP>

Photo by Amanda Hicks

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A Message from the President

Karie Decker — Nebraska



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Karie Decker

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Fellow Wildlifers,

It is with great pleasure that I begin my tenure as TWS Central Mountains and Plains Section President for the next two years. Officially, my service began during the annual CMPS meeting in Cheyenne, WY in August. I fill a position that was formerly held by Bill Vodehnal, and I'd like to formally thank Bill for his commitment to TWS and CMPS over the many years. As CMPS President, Bill passed along his passion for conservation through various communications, actions taken on by the Section, and attendance at meetings across the region. He challenged us to become more connected as states and to have an active role at all levels of TWS. While Bill's role as CMPS President has concluded, his motivation to continue TWS efforts has not subsided. Bill is taking on a very important role representing CMPS as part of the Conservation Affairs Network - a venue for streamlined communication, collaboration, and cooperation on policy matters important to wildlife professionals – organized by the States, Sections, and the Parent TWS Chapter.

As your new CMPS President, I'd like to challenge myself to a couple of goals during the next 2 years. While relatively new to this region of the country, I have seen how passionate the Central Mountains and Plains states are about what they do. I think it's important that we share that passion and our experiences with colleagues, so I'd like to work towards facilitating connections among states. In addition, there seems to always be discussion about the structure and different roles of chapters and sections. I'd like to work on understanding what the state chapter needs are, how CMPS can help achieve state goals and how to better serve in a networking capacity with the parent chapter.

Please consider my 'door' to be open and feel free to contact me with any questions or suggestions. I am also a big fan of field-based meetings – let's find an excuse to meet up somewhere and enjoy what the central mountains and plains states has to offer!

Have a great fall everyone!

Karie Decker

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CMPS Conservation Affairs Network

The Government Affairs Program (GAP) of The Wildlife Society (TWS) has a mission to engage wildlife professionals in the policy process and ensure that science is used to inform wildlife management and conservation policies, laws, and regulations, thereby ensuring that these are scientifically-based and practical. In order to achieve this mission, GAP has developed a Conservation Affairs Network (CAN) to foster greater communication and collaboration at the parent society, sections, and state chapter levels to track and monitor conservation issues at the local and regional levels. This process is just getting underway in CMPS and will begin discussions with the CMPS committee following a CAN meeting at the annual TWS meeting in Pittsburg. Bill Vodehnal (Nebraska) has offered to chair the CMPS committee and will be assisted by Chris Wood (Utah), Kory Richardson (North Dakota), Matt Smith (Kansas), Paul Coughlin (South Dakota), Randy Ghormley (Colorado), and Greg Schenbeck (Nebraska).

TWS Council Report

Gary C. White, Ex-Central Mountain and Plains Section Representative

TWS Council met October 24–25 at the 2014 annual TWS meeting in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. This was my last Council meeting, as I'm term-limited after 2 3-year terms, plus I found that I was getting "burned-out" limited.

TWS Budget

As in past years, the budget was one of the main items of discussion for Council. I'm glad to say that the 2013 budget was in the BLACK, to the tune of \$76,941 compared to \$195,508 in the red in 2012. TWS is back on the road to financial health. The projection for 2014 is well into the black. Executive Director Williams has done a fantastic job of bringing TWS through this crisis. He didn't take the Executive Director's job to become an accounting specialist, but that is what he had to do and has done.

Federal Employees Participation in TWS

I've been telling folks at the chapter meetings I attended last year that this problem was fixed. Turns out that the problem may be fixed at the top level of the agencies, but the change has not worked down to the ethics officers that most of you have to respond to. Laura Bies, Director of Government Affairs and Partnerships, had this item on the list of priorities for 2015. So if you encounter problems, let her know, and be persistent. You ARE allowed to serve TWS, so don't take NO for an answer.

Leadership Institute

We had another first this year with the Leadership Institute – 2 people from Utah were part of the class of 11—the first LI members for Utah. Congratulations to David Dahlgren, Extension Associate, Utah State University, and Michel Kohl, Research Associate/Doctoral Student, Utah State University, for stepping up. The Leadership Institute has contributed greatly to the CMPS – many of our current and past chapter board members and officers have been graduates of the Leadership Institute. I'm sure you see Dave and Mike stepping forward as well.

Make sure to get several folks nominated for 2015. Pick out some of the up and coming stars. The

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deadline is February 15, but it never hurts to be early.

TWS Strategic Plan

Council “suffered” through a 2-day session in Milwaukee last year prior to the regular Council meeting to develop a new 5-year Strategic Plan for TWS. During the past year, you’ve all had a chance to comment on the draft, and Council approved the final version in Pittsburg, which will soon to be available on the TWS web site. The plan builds on and captures the key strategic thrusts identified in the Council retreat, including:

- A sustainability theme, focusing on the TWS bequest and legacy to future generations
- A TWS leadership theme, focusing on the positioning and connectivity of TWS in the conservation community
- A member services theme, emphasizing the value of the services and benefits TWS provides to its members
- An integration and networking theme promoting effective integration and connections among the chapters and sections and working groups and TWS international
- A business theme mandating and promoting the comprehensive use of good business management throughout TWS

In its retreat last fall the Council emphasized these themes as encompassing critical elements of our vision for the Society, at the level of the chapter, section, working group, and headquarters. The Council has also emphasized the importance of implementation as well as vision, so the plan also includes an implementation process involving the development each year of annual operational plans that focus on programmatic areas and measureable goals and actions to be undertaken that year.

Connecting Chapters to the Parent Society

One of the biggest issues facing TWS is connecting the chapters with the parent society. The handwriting is on the wall with the parent society losing ~7% of its members each of the last 2 years. You’ve all heard me say that about 50% of your state chapter members are not members of the parent society. The lack of a unified membership structure is the root of the issue, but that issue is not fixable at this time.

Rather, the parent society needs to provide benefits that all state chapter members desire, and hence are anxious to join the parent society. One of these initiatives is the Conservation Affairs Network, but this effort is just getting off the ground. Thus, there needs to be some selling done – some face-to-face contact. A meeting of the Conservation Affairs Network folks was held in Pittsburg, but I recognize that many of the chapter officers in the CMP Section are not able to attend national meetings.

I reported above that the TWS budget is back in the black, but part of the reason is the drastic curtailment of travel by staff. So I’m throwing out an idea to the chapters. Fund more travel! Ask for donors to fund travel. Ask TWS staff to attend your state chapter meetings next year, and provide funds to make it happen. All the state chapters in the Section possess healthy budgets. To help your chapter invest in the Conservation Affairs Network, invite and fund Keith Norris (keith.norris@wildlife.org), Assistant Director of Government Affairs & Partnerships, to attend your next chapter meeting. Likewise,

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fund one or more of your chapter officers to attend the national meeting next year in Winnipeg. The linkage between TWS chapters and the parent society must improve, so let's hear some more ideas on this topic. The decline in membership must be turned around.

New CMPS Fellow

Jane Austin, North Dakota, is the newest TWS Fellow from the Section. Congratulations to Jane. Dr. Austin has been a leader in the North Dakota Chapter of TWS, and certainly provided a role model for young women in this Chapter. Her TWS activities extend beyond North Dakota. She has been a member of The Wildlife Society since 1978 and a member of NDCTWS and the Central Mountains and Plains Section of TWS since 1989.

- The Wildlife Society (TWS), 1978–present
 - Chair, Caesar Kleberg Research Award for Excellence in Applied Research Committee, 2013
 - Support of Symposia and Conferences Committee, 1996, Chair 1997
 - Publication Awards Committee, 2001;
 - Program Committee and Workshop Subcommittee for 2002 Annual Conference
- North Dakota Chapter TWS, 1989–present
 - President-Elect / President / Past President, 2009–2012
- Midwest Regional Chapter TWS, 1983–1988
- Central Mountains and Plains Section TWS, 1989–present

I'm Finished, but not Done!

As I said above, I've finished my second 3-year term on Council. Getting to know many of you or staying in touch with old friends while attending the chapter meetings over the last 6 years has been the highlight of being on Council (meaning that sitting through 2 2-day Council meetings each year is a low-light). The strength of TWS is the chapters. Keep up the good work. Stay in touch.

New CMPS Council Representative

Bob Lanka, Wyoming, is now your Council representative. Bob is motivated and excited – and will do an incredible job the next 3 years. He is a Past-President of the CMP Section, and already knows many of you.

His contact info is:

Bob Lanka, Certified Wildlife Biologist®

Statewide Wildlife and Habitat Management Supervisor

Wyoming Game and Fish Department

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Next TWS Annual Conference

The 22nd Annual Conference is being held in Winnipeg, Manitoba on October 17-21, 2015. More details about the conference will be available on the TWS website by December 1, 2014.

The 2016 Annual Conference will be held in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Wyoming and CMPS Celebrate Milestones

Lots to celebrate at the joint WY TWS and CMPS annual meeting: “Manifesting the destiny of wildlife and habitat science, stewardship, and solvency,” in Sheridan this year. Congrats to Wyoming on their 40th Anniversary and CMPS with its 60th. This year’s conference was well attended and full of fascinating oral and poster presentations, 8 mini-workshops, 3 field trips, and an exciting banquet. A special thank you goes out to all those who donated items for the live and silent auctions. Nearly 30 past-presidents as well as current TWS president Jon Haufler and Executive Director Ken Williams provided insights to leadership from the chapter to national levels during formal and informal presentations. The meeting proceedings can be found here:<http://drupal.wildlife.org/CMP/sites/wildlife.org/CMP/files/images/2014.pdf>

A very big THANK YOU goes to the WY Chapter for hosting and to the conference committee for putting on a wonderful meeting.



Thoughts from Bob Lanka—CMPS Representative

My first meeting as CMPS Representative to Council was Wednesday October 29th. Not really much to report from that meeting, standing and ad hoc committee assignments were made, we discussed several issues but no final action was taken. The one issue that is quickly coming to the forefront is TWS membership decline. We have lost about 7% of our members each of the past three years. Obviously a trend that cannot continue. TWS has been very successful lately in attracting student members. Our society has also been successful in getting new professionals to sign up. To date, we have not been very successful in getting first year new professionals to rejoin the Society. Ed Thompson, Chief Operating Officer for TWS is working on some outreach methods for these members. I have been placed on President-elect Gary Potts committee looking at how to increase agency biologist membership in

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TWS. Hopefully the results of this survey will shed some light on this issue. I welcome input and ideas from CMPS members on how we can not only increase agency biologist membership but also how we can encourage those who are members of our Sections and Chapters but not members of TWS to join.

Since I am not yet emancipated from my real job, I will be unable to get to each state chapter meeting each year. I hope to get to each one twice and our section meeting each year. Time and the roads will decide. For 2015 I plan to attend the Colorado, South Dakota, Nebraska and Utah meetings. In closing, it is a great honor to have our membership elect me to serve on Council. I look forward to meeting many of you over the next 3 years and hearing your ideas.

Congratulations to the 2014 CMPS Award Recipients

Multiple deserving nominations were received for the CMPS Citizen's Conservation Achievement Award and The Professional Award in 2014. We recognize the fabulous work that all have done, congratulate the 2014 Award Recipients, and encourage folks to submit their nominations when requested for the 2015 Awards. Students don't forget about the travel grant application next fall!

Congratulations to Mary Ann Mann of Rapid City, SD, recipient of ***The Citizen's Conservation Achievement Award*** from the Central Mountains and Plains Section of The Wildlife Society. Her efforts in volunteerism for Ducks Unlimited, Mule Deer Foundation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and Greater Dacotah Chapter of Safari Club International has not gone unnoticed and has truly been recognized by your peers and colleagues in the conservation world.

Congratulations to Dr. Dan Hubbard, recipient of ***The Professional Award*** from the Central Mountains and Plains Section of The Wildlife Society. His outstanding career at South Dakota State University in the wildlife profession has truly been recognized by his peers in the profession. Since the late 70's, Dr. Hubbard has influenced hundreds (perhaps thousands) of students through his teaching and advising efforts, stressing the importance of maintaining sustainable wildlife populations and functional habitats. In addition, Dr. Hubbard designed and created the first professional course on the role of Human Dimensions in wildlife and fisheries management in South Dakota, and taught that course for nearly 20 years, until his retirement in 2013.

Also of note are the recipients of The Wildlife Society Central Mountains and Plains Section **2014 Wayne Sandfort Student Travel Grant**. Congratulations to Amanda Saul of University of North Dakota Student Chapter and Toryn Schafer of Colorado State University Student Chapter.

CMPS Awards Nominations – Summer 2015 – Start planning now!

The Central Mountains and Plains Section (CMPS) of The Wildlife Society gives two awards annually to honor the accomplishments of worthy individuals. The Professional Award is given to a professional individual or group and the Citizen's Conservation Achievement Award is given to an individual or group of citizens to recognize an outstanding contribution towards furthering the enhancement of wildlife endeavors within the Section. Nominations for an award must include a nomination letter emphasizing the basis for determining 'an outstanding contribution towards furthering the enhancement of wildlife endeavors within the Section.' In addition, at least one supporting letter of nomination is

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required (from a separate individual). More details to follow in the spring!

CMPS Bylaws Revision 2014 (passed by CMPS Members, Summer 2014)

CLAUSE F – AWARDS. Recognize and commend outstanding achievement in wildlife-related activities within the Section through an Awards Program.

- i. An Awards Committee shall consist of the Executive Board and shall be chaired by the Vice-President.
- ii. The Awards Committee shall develop minimum requirements for a nomination application and will develop criteria for ranking applications. These requirements and the subsequent ranking of applications are at the discretion of the Awards Committee.
- iii. Nominations applications for awards shall be presented in writing to the Vice-President prior to 15 June.
- iv. The awards shall be presented at the Annual Section Meeting. Every effort should be made to encourage the award winners to attend this meeting.
- v. The Awards that may be bestowed include:

Meet the CMPS New Officers!

New officers started at the CMPS Annual Meeting in August. Many thanks to our past officers, Max Post van der Burg, Mike Conover, and Randy Larson!

Vice President Jim Hays

Jim currently works for The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Kansas (since December of 2007) and worked for Kansas Fish and Game Commission/Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks for 30+ years prior; in a variety of positions (including Fish Culturist, Wildlife Biologist, Wildlife Ecologist, and Environmental Services Section Chief). Jim earned his B.S. Degree in Wildlife Biology, from Colorado State University, in 1976. Jim is a lifelong resident of Kansas and continues to work on private lands and TNC preserves, serves on the Kansas Technical Committee for NRCS in Kansas, serves on the



Kansas Forestry Association board, serves on the KS Nongame Advisory Committee, maintains certification for prescribed burning, works with conservation easements in Kansas, assists with environmental policy issues at state and federal levels, coordinates with energy related industry to minimize environmental impacts across the landscape, and enjoys working with conservation partners across the region. His job is highly diverse and offers the opportunity to work on a wide range of natural resource issues and challenges; from wind development to water issues and invasive species control to climate change questions. Jim has been involved with the Kansas Chapter since the early 1980's and CMPS since the early 1990's and has served as a board member and Vice-President for the Section, in years past.

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Board Members- At Large

Mindy Rice

I have been the spatial ecologist researcher for Colorado Parks and Wildlife for the past 6 years. My job involves utilizing spatial models to explain habitat use, movement, and spatial patterns of mammal and avian populations across Colorado. Currently I am developing projects with mule deer, sage grouse, and wetlands in cooperation with other researchers. I did my undergraduate work at Colorado State University in zoology and biology and graduated in 2001. I got my master's degree in conservation biology in 2003 from Manchester Metropolitan University in northern England studying black rhino bedding sites in Sweetwaters reserve, Kenya. I came back to the states and worked as a technician monitoring peregrine falcon nests in Colorado and then worked in Black Canyon National Park with invasive plants. I went on to get my PhD at Texas Tech University in wildlife management in 2006 modeling the possible natural recolonization of black bear into the Trans-Pecos region of Texas. I then worked as a post-doc looking at northern pintail ducks and spatial patterns of survival from band recoveries. I have been a board member at-large, president-elect, president for 2 years, and I am currently in my second year of past president for the Colorado chapter. I enjoyed my time on the board as we increased membership as well as increased the number of grants and money given to our student chapters while I was president. We also maintain a sizeable savings for a rainy day and have increased the quality of speakers and workshops at our annual meetings in February. I look forward to stepping up to the sectional level of the Wildlife Society and hopefully working to increase the services for members of CMPS. Outside of work, I am a huge traveler and love hiking, biking, and racing in triathlons or half marathons.



Silka Kempema

Hello, I am a biologist in the Wildlife Diversity Program at South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks in Pierre. I am involved with a variety of bird and mammal survey and management issues (grassland birds, raptors, migratory birds and bats, river otters and black-tailed prairie dogs) and environmental review (wind energy and power lines). I have bachelor's degree in wildlife and fisheries sciences and environmental management from South Dakota State University (SDSU). After graduation, I traveled and worked as a technician for variety of entities including U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Service, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, Missouri Department of Conservation, University of Idaho and University of Wisconsin. I then went on to earn my Master's degree in wildlife ecology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln where I studied the influence of grazing systems on grassland birds in the Nebraska Sandhills (a wonderful place!).



Throughout all of these years, The Wildlife Society has been a constant and positive influence. I have

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gained much from my association and involvement with this organization. I've been a member of the South Dakota Chapter and the parent society since my days as an undergraduate student in 1997 (minus a few years hiatus when money got tight as a technician). As a student at SDSU, I was involved as a committee chair and board member. As a professional, I have been involved at the state level as a committee chair, board member, president-elect, president, and current past-president. In 2006, I was selected to be a member of the first Leadership Institute class. My participation in TWS and willingness to serve is a chance for me to give back to the society and continue my professional development. As one of your section's board members-at large, my goal is to support the operations of the section and be-come familiar enough with the section and its member states to recognize needs that should be addressed.

Upcoming Officer Nominations to CMPS Board

In the spring of 2015, CMPS will be seeking candidates to fill 3 positions that will become vacant during the fall Annual Meeting. Two At-Large Board positions will be filled (2-year terms) as well as President-elect. The President-elect position is selected in odd-number years will succeed to a 2-year term as President after serving a year as President Elect. We desire to have the list of candidates in the Summer Newsletter and voting to end 14 days prior to the annual meeting. A board committee has been formed and will be calling for potential candidates, but if you desire to be considered, please email Bill Vodehnal (bill.vodehnal@nebraska.gov). Please consider serving at the Section level for TWS! More details to follow in the spring.

Chapter Updates

Colorado State University

Fall for the Colorado State University chapter of the Wildlife Society brings our annual fundraiser, the Fall Banquet. This year, we rebranded the evening of good food and fun as "the Fall Social" to create a better atmosphere for students and professionals to mix and mingle. The program for the evening included a 20-item silent auction, door prizes, a CSU TWS update, and ended with s'mores over a fire. Our outdoor venue also allowed the 85 guests that attended to play volleyball and corn-hole, and participate in an archery competition. The funds from the Fall Social will help us send three students to the National Conference in Pittsburgh and helped us invest more into two of our projects mentioned below, the Raptor Monitoring program and the Camera Project.

The Raptor Monitoring project has been successfully operating since April. Our two organizers lead teams of students twice a month to monitor birds of prey and their nests at Boyd Lake State Park. The program provides important data for the park and has helped our students develop their birding and data collection techniques. We have helped the project grow with funds from the silent auction by investing in a birding scope and binoculars so all TWS students may have access to proper birding equipment.

The CSU Wildlife Society's Camera Project (TWSCP) has also had exciting developments. On September

3rd, 2014 endangered black-footed ferrets were released into two prairie dog colonies at Soapstone Natural Area just north of Fort Collins. TWSCP was invited to monitor the reintroduction of these ferrets with their remote triggered wildlife cameras. On September 10th our cameras captured the first photo of a black-footed ferret near the entrance of a burrow in the Roman House prairie dog colony. To find out more about the camera project and keep updated on the black-footed ferrets, visit TWS-CP's website at twscameraproject.wordpress.com.



The first black-footed ferret picture captured at the newly released Soapstone Natural Area population.

The Colorado State University student chapter of The Wildlife Society (CSU TWS) was recently given the opportunity to manage an educational outreach camera trap study in Fort Collins, CO by Dr. Kevin Crooks, Colorado State University Department of Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Biology. Undergraduate members of CSU TWS began to manage and maintain six wildlife camera traps in Pineridge Natural Area in the Fall of 2013. Photos collected were used to assist local 6th grade students at Boltz Middle School and their teacher Jordan Baumgartner in a unit on local ecology. Beginning in 2014, CSU TWS created a Camera Project committee to develop ideas, increase member interest in the project and set goals for the future of the study.

The CSU TWS Camera Project plans to increase its educational reach with a key tool bringing easily accessible information to young students: a new website. The goal of the website is to provide teachers such as Baumgartner with wildlife photos from Pineridge and basic data for classroom ecology lessons. This increased accessibility aims to engage additional K-12 schools in Fort Collins with local wildlife data and provide corresponding lesson plan ideas.

Additionally, CSU TWS has adopted this project as an avenue with which CSU TWS members can gain exposure to field research utilizing the camera traps as well as provide an opportunity to present findings in educational and scientific settings. A March CSU TWS meeting introduced the Camera Project to chapter members and a short testing season was conducted over the course of four weeks to introduce undergraduate students to the Pineridge study site, camera trap methodology and a database developed by Colorado Parks and Wildlife to help with sorting the photos.

CSU TWS Camera Project's efforts have received positive feedback from Boltz students, Baumgartner, CSU students, and the greater scientific community. This spring alone, the findings were presented at

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TWS Colorado State Chapter Meeting, the Front Range Student Ecology Symposium, the Celebrate Undergraduate Research and Creativity Fair, the Fort Collins Museum of Discovery, and the Nature at Noon series presented by the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Department.

CSU TWS is eager to continue developing this Camera Project alongside the continued guidance of Dr. Crooks, CSU TWS advisors Dr. Larissa Bailey and Dr. Stewart Breck, as well as support from Fort Collins Natural Areas and the Poudre School District. Follow along with the website's pilot year beginning with updates for the upcoming Fall 2014 collaboration with Boltz Middle School.

Website: <http://twscameraproject.wordpress.com/>

Contact: twscameraproject@gmail.com



Kansas State University

The year has been off to a great start here on the campus of K-State. The campus is buzzing with talk of classes, and other activities, one of those activities being the KSU Chapter of the Wildlife Society. The chapter meetings are starting off strong, with an average attendance of 30 people and many great speakers coming in and sharing their expertise with students. So far we have had Dr. Eva Horne, a herpetologist here at K-State, come and talk about the variety of reptiles and amphibians that call the Konza Prairie their home and some of the interesting adaptations that they must acquire in order to survive. We have also had Ph. D student Andrew Ricketts give us an overview on what education beyond the undergraduate level looks like and reasons for pursuing these higher levels of education.

Aside from the bi-monthly meetings our chapter has also hosted some exciting events to build community and get to know fellow members of The Wildlife Society. The first of these events was the semi-annual Black-Footed Ferret Survey which took place from October 2- October 12 in Logan County, KS. Over a dozen students from our chapter headed down to help during the first weekend of the survey and came back with many memorable experiences and exciting stories to tell. Another event of ours took place the following weekend which was a float trip down the Kansas River. Twelve members got together Saturday afternoon and set out in 6 Canoes down the river. As the day wore on and evening set in we pulled off on a nice sand bank and set up camp complete with a campfire and the sounds of Coyotes howling in the distance. As morning came we packed up camp and headed down the river arriving in St. George several hours later. We left that trip with new friends, great stories, and a lot of extra sand in tow.

Along with social events our chapter has participated in several fundraising events that not only help raise money for our chapter but also allows the public to get a glimpse of what goes on in The Wildlife

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Society. One such event took place on September 27th at Konza Visitor's Day which is a day where the general public has access to areas which are otherwise only for designated research projects on the Konza Prairie. During the day the KSU Chapter of The Wildlife Society set up a booth which had information about our events along with food which people could purchase throughout the day. Through this event we were able to advertise as well as fundraise for our organization and in the process we raised over \$800.00 for future events of our society.

Prospects of our chapter of the Wildlife Society are high as we continue to learn about projects and opportunities involving wildlife and the outdoors, host fun events, participate in a variety of fieldwork opportunities, and in all of these, appreciating the beauty that the outdoors has to offer.

Western State Colorado University

The Western State Colorado Chapter of The Wildlife Society began this semester with an adventurous service project for the Colorado 14ers Initiative, helping to build and maintain trails on El Diente Peak. Our Faculty Advisor and a student were excited to attend the International Wildlife Management Congress in Estes Park, and one of the attendees, Ryan Wilbur, later gave a presentation to our chapter members on Human & Wildlife Interactions and his experience working in the field of Wildlife Management. In early October, some of our chapter members took a tour and learned about some of the research that's being done at nearby Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratories. What's next? Early November will bring a presentation by a local Falconer on Raptors.



TWS Members and other volunteers helping to clear a trail on El Diente Peak.

Wyoming Chapter

Exploring wildlife management and conservation issues in Wyoming: The 2014 WY-TWS Fellowship Experience

The Wyoming Chapter of The Wildlife Society (WY-TWS) takes an active role in mentoring future wildlife stewards, most notably through a unique 10 week summer fellowship program designed to expose one aspiring wildlife professional (usually an upper-level college student or recent graduate) to the practical aspects of wildlife management and conservation in Wyoming.

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As this year's WY-TWS fellow, I was lucky enough to get exposure to multiple aspects of the work being done by a diverse group of agencies, non-government organizations, researchers, educators, and other wildlife professionals throughout the 2014 summer. By shadowing over 20 of mentors, I gained first-hand experiences ranging from working in the field and in the lab to assisting with science education. I traveled throughout Wyoming to learn how to collect wildlife population and habitat data for threatened, endangered and common bird, mammal and plant species. I also attended a variety of professional meetings and engaged with members of the public to gain a better understanding of the complexities surrounding wildlife conservation and management.

This summer I had many exhilarating wildlife experiences! I had the opportunity to chemically immobilize a bighorn sheep and collect biological samples to help support research at the Wyoming Game and Fish Department's (WGFD) Tom Thorne/Beth Williams Wildlife Research Center at Sybille. I also had the opportunity to work with a Brucellosis Feedground Habitat Biologist to track vaginally implanted transmitters (VIT) while identifying parturition sites. This was an especially memorable experience; to know that just a few hours prior to our arrival an elk calf was born at the same spot I was now standing on was both touching and riveting. I also had the opportunity to work with the WGFD Large Carnivore Crew near the Upper Green River Basin. There, I assisted wildlife managers in arranging culvert and snare traps to capture grizzly bears for livestock depredation research. It was exciting to ride along with these biologists, hear their many wildlife-handling stories, and practice capture methods that bear biologists have been using across the country for decades. In addition to these field experiences, here are some examples of the activities I participated in throughout the fellowship: tracked and conducted nest checks on Great Grey Owls, set gill nets with a fisheries biologist on Jackson Lake, worked with a reclamation biologist, helped educate youth on the significance of wildlife science, captured song birds and recorded demographic data, assisted the Jackson Game Wardens, participated in a state game and fish and NGO meetings, and much more!

And these experiences were just a sampling of my ten weeks; I visited with many other dedicated professionals on a variety of important wildlife issues. I had the opportunity to learn new field methods and hone in on a skillset that I could apply towards graduate school and beyond. This multifaceted approach helped me develop a sense for the diversity of careers within the wildlife and natural resource fields, and also taught me the duties and responsibilities necessary to become a successful professional in these fields. By spending time with wildlife professionals in the field I was able to learn about their ambitions, the challenges they face, and other factors encountered by their organization. The WY-TWS fellowship has encouraged me to think more critically about wildlife management issues, greatly enriched the knowledge I obtained during my undergraduate education, and affirmed my commitment to pursuing a meaningful career in the wildlife field.

I appreciate the special opportunity afforded to me by the WY-TWS fellowship committee and the many mentors that I worked with. The relationships and experiences made available to me through this fellowship have made a wonderfully dramatic impact in my life. The mentors that I worked with were exceptional and offered their time, experience, passions, and expertise. The level of mentorship that I experienced in this fellowship is unparalleled and I hope that undergrads will recognize the significance of this valuable and rare fellowship opportunity. Through the generosity of the members of

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the Wyoming Chapter of the Wildlife Society, I had an amazing opportunity this summer to work with a variety of wildlife, but more importantly, I gained invaluable insight from incredible wildlife leaders.



Biological samples that were collected from a bighorn sheep are processed at the Wyoming Game and Fish Department-Wildlife Veterinary Research Services in Laramie, WY. Above, I am plating colonies of pneumonia for disease research.



Working with a brucellosis feed ground habitat biologist near Jackson, WY, I had the opportunity to identify parturition sites and track a female elk with a vaginally implanted transmitter (VIT) using radio-telemetry. A parturition site is pictured above with two significant features: the arrow on the bottom points to a VIT, while the arrow on top points to newborn calf tracks. —>

If you would like to learn more about the WY-TWS Fellowship (to be part of the Fellowship Committee or become a mentor for next summer) please feel free to contact WY-TWS chapter president-elect Eric Maichak at Eric.Maichak@wyo.gov or WY-TWS committee chair Daly Edmunds at Dedmunds@audubon.org.

Upcoming Events

Kansas

The Kansas Natural Resources Conference will be held January 29-30, 2015 at the Double Tree Hilton Hotel at the Wichita Airport in Wichita Kansas. The conference theme will be: "Partnerships in Conservation: Bridging the Gap Between Science and Politics". Plenary speakers include: Becky Humphries with the National Wild Turkey Federation; John Organ, the U.S. Geological Survey and Rob Manes with The Nature Conservancy in Kansas.

Information on the conference can be found at: <http://www.kansasnrc.org>

A call for papers can be found on the conference website. Abstracts are due by November 7th, 2014.

Upcoming Events

The Kansas Chapter of the Wildlife Society will hold its spring meeting during the conference.

Colorado

The Colorado Chapter of The Wildlife Society will hold their annual meeting February 4-6, 2015 in Grand Junction, Colorado.

North Dakota

The North Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society will hold their annual meeting February 11-13, 2015 at the Seven Seas Hotel in Mandan, North Dakota.

South Dakota

The South Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society will hold their annual meeting February 23-25, 2015 at Cedar Shores Resort in Oacoma, South Dakota.

Nebraska

The 2015 Nebraska Chapter of The Wildlife Society (NETWS)

Annual Meeting

“Wildlife Management: the cow, the plow and the match”

-- Call for Papers --

From Wildlife Professionals and Students

February 26th, 2015 Ogallala, NE

The Nebraska Chapter of The Wildlife Society (NETWS) will hold its annual meeting in Ogallala, NE at the Quality Inn Hotel February 26th, 2015. The theme for the meeting is “Wildlife Management: the cow, the plow, and the match”. The meeting will include oral presentations, a student poster competition, our regular business meeting, banquet, and auction. More information will follow concerning a student-professional workshop hosted by NETWS on February 27th, 2015.

The Program Committee is now accepting abstracts for presentations pertaining to this theme (first consideration) and other topics in all areas of wildlife ecology and conservation. Abstracts for the student poster competition are also being accepted at this time.

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Abstracts should pertain to the meeting theme or other topics of wildlife ecology and conservation.

All wildlife related abstracts will be considered.

Deadline: Submitted electronically by **December 19, 2014** to jessica.jurzenski@fhueng.com

Submissions must include:

1. Corresponding author, contact information (name, full address, email, telephone), and abstract text

Prepare an abstract according to the following requirements:

- a. Single space and left justify all lines. Do not use hard returns. Do not hyphenate words at ends of lines.
- b. Abstract citation should include name of author(s), title of presentation, and address of author(s). Uppercase and bold all author names.

Upcoming Events

- c. Do not use scientific names in title unless common names are confusing or not widely recognized. Do not abbreviate place names (e.g., state or country) in title.
- d. Abstract text should include a statement of objectives, brief description of methods, principal results, and conclusions.
- e. The entire abstract, including citation, should be no longer than 300 words.

All successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified by the middle of January 2015. More information concerning this meeting and registration will be posted at <http://wildlife.org/nebraska/>.

Program R Workshop

9-13 March 2015

Great Plains Natural Science Society

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Department of Natural Resource Management at

South Dakota State University

The Great Plains Natural Science Society and the Department of Natural Resource Management at South Dakota State University will host a Program R workshop in Brookings, SD. The 4.5-day workshop will be presented by Dr. Darryl MacKenzie at the Swiftel Center. The Workshop will cover many beginning and intermediate level topics and participants will be introduced to various statistical procedures through worked examples. Topics to be covered include:

- Basic Operators
- Plotting
- Functions
- Arrays and Matrices
- Descriptive Analysis
- Basic Statistical Tests
- Linear Models
- Generalized Linear Models
- Simulation
- Complex Plots

Registration fee is \$650.

Please contact Dr. Troy Grovenburg (troy.grovenburg@sdstate.edu) or visit <http://sdstate.edu/nrm/organizations/gpnss> for additional information and registration details.

Modeling Patterns and Dynamics of

Species Occurrence Workshop

16-20 March 2015

Great Plains Natural Science Society

&

Department of Natural Resource Management at

South Dakota State University

Upcoming Events

The Great Plains Natural Science Society and the Department of Natural Resource Management at South Dakota State University will host a Modeling Patterns and Dynamics of Species Occurrence workshop in Brookings, SD. The 4.5-day workshop will be presented by Dr. Darryl MacKenzie at the Swiftel Center. The workshop will cover many of the latest methods for modeling patterns and dynamics of species occurrences in a landscape while accounting for imperfect detection of the species. Participants will be introduced to available software through worked examples, and there will be special emphasis on aspects of study design. While primarily aimed at the beginner and intermediate level, more experienced researchers also will benefit from attending. Topics to be covered include:

- Single-season occupancy models for patterns in species occurrence
- Building predictive models of species occurrence
- Creating maps of species occurrence probabilities, e.g., species distribution maps
- Multiple-season occupancy models for dynamics of species occurrence and changes in distribution
- Important study design considerations
- Sample size determination

Registration fee is \$850 and space is strictly limited.

Please contact Dr. Troy Grovenburg (troy.grovenburg@sdstate.edu) or visit <http://www.sdstate.edu/nrm/organizations/gpnss> for additional information and registration details.

Utah

The Utah Chapter of The Wildlife Society will hold their annual meeting March 18-20, 2015 at Red Cliffs Lodge near Moab, Utah.

Central Mountains and Plains Section

The Central Mountains and Plains Section of The Wildlife Society will hold their annual meeting in the Fall of 2015 in Kansas. More details will follow.

Wyoming

The Wyoming Chapter of The Wildlife Society will hold their annual meeting November 30-December 4, 2015 in Lander, Wyoming.

Central Mountains and Plains Section Directory

COLORADO

State Chapter

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Central Mountains and Plains Section Directory

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