



The Alaskan Wildlifer

Newsletter of the Alaska Chapter of the Wildlife Society

Spring Issue - March 2013



Message from President Jerry Hupp

When I was a student, there was a poster in our graduate seminar room at Colorado State University – Charlie Brown on the pitcher’s mound, glove hanging at his side, a dejected look on his face. The caption, “We never win any games but we always have an interesting discussion.”

When it comes to predator control and intensive management of Alaska’s ungulates, the discussion is always interesting.

Briefly, for those not familiar with the issue of intensive management, in 1994 the Alaska State Legislature enacted a law that required the Alaska Board of Game (BOG) to identify ungulate populations that should be managed for high human harvest. The BOG is precluded from significantly reducing hunter harvest of ungulates in those populations without considering intensive management, which typically involves predator control. The law includes provisions in which intensive management may not be implemented if scientific evidence shows it would be ineffective, it is precluded due to patterns of land-ownership, or it would adversely affect subsistence uses.

The law is popular with many sport hunters and some subsistence users. Yet, there are also many citizens who object to legislatively mandated predator control. Some within our profession view intensive management as an important tool to enhance ungulate populations and harvest. Others have raised concerns about the effects of intensive management on the long-term health of predator populations and ecosystem function. So, there are plenty of diverse views on this issue both within our profession and without.

Should the Alaska Chapter of TWS take a position on intensive management? I think so.

For better or worse, the law mandates actions that ultimately can affect wildlife populations. It affects how management decisions are reached, and it influences public perceptions of wildlife managers. It has also had an effect on how we in the profession who work for different agencies interact with each other. All of these are of interest to TWS.

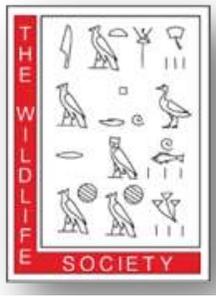
The Chapter in fact adopted a position statement on intensive management in 1995, which is available on our website (<http://joomla.wildlife.org/alaska/>). However, much has happened in the past 18 years. Foremost is implementation of intensive management programs, and the opportunity for biologists to review their outcomes. Second, is the publication of scientific papers that provide insight on various aspects of this topic. Last, is a protocol developed by biologists in the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=intensivemanagement.main>) that provides professional guidance on implementation of intensive management programs. So, a review and revision of our position statement was in order.

A Committee of four Chapter members undertook that revision. They completed a draft that was submitted to the Chapter for review in 2010. Based on member comments, the Executive Board asked the Committee to further revise the document. The Committee completed their work in May 2012 and forwarded their draft to the Executive Board.

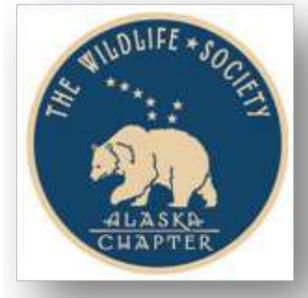
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Issue Highlights

- Upcoming TWS-AK Chapter Conference, p. 2
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- Disease Risk Position Statement, p. 5



Joint Meeting Alaska Chapter and Northwest Section of The Wildlife Society



April 3-5, 2013

Wood Campus Center – University of Alaska Fairbanks

You are invited to gather with colleagues and friends from across Alaska for the annual meeting of the Alaska Chapter of The Wildlife Society. The meeting will be jointly held with the Northwest Section of TWS. Please join us and consider submitting an abstract for poster or oral presentation. Meeting information, online registration, and abstract submission are available at: <http://twsalaskameeting.com>.

PROGRAM

Wednesday, April 3

AM Workshop 1: Machine Learning – Fauk Huettmann, UAF
AM Workshop 2: Structured Decision Making – Angela Romito, U. of Georgia
Afternoon Plenary Speaker: Dr. Wayne Regelin
Contributed Oral Presentations
Poster Session and Student Mixer

Thursday, April 4

Special Session: Implications of managing fire succession and forest biomass productions on wildlife habitat
Northwest Section Business Meeting (Lunch hour)
Evening Banquet
Keynote Address: Marvin Eng, M.Sc., RPBio
*“The mountain pine beetle in British Columbia:
Reflections of a deckhand during a perfect storm”*

Friday, April 5

Contributed Oral Presentations
TWS Business Meeting (Lunch hour)
Continued Contributed Oral Presentations



Message from President Jerry Hupp continued from p. 1.

The Executive Board has made further revisions to the document to clarify some statements and try to make it acceptable to at least two-thirds of voting members. That's the minimum needed under our bylaws for the Chapter to adopt a position statement. Following the Board's revisions, we had the statement reviewed by six members who are highly knowledgeable about intensive management and have diverse perspectives on the subject. We incorporated many of their recommendations.

So, we now have a draft position statement on intensive management that has undergone extensive professional review and is ready for further member comment. You'll receive it shortly. Pending your comments, our goal is to revise the document and submit it for a member vote later this spring or summer.

Our objectives for this statement were largely dictated by the intended audience. That audience includes the Board of Game, State Legislature, and the Commissioner's Office at ADF&G. Decisions regarding implementation and support for intensive management generally lie within these entities. Given this target audience, here are my views on our major objectives for this position statement. The statement should:

- Provide a brief but objective review of the scientific basis for predator reduction as means to enhance ungulate populations or harvest.
- Identify the uncertainties regarding the efficacy of predator control as a management tool and its effects on predator populations, and recommend research needed to address those uncertainties.
- Emphasize that the expense associated with intensive management programs may reduce funds available for other wildlife programs in ADF&G, and indicate that legislative expectations for intensive management should be accompanied by adequate funding for scientifically appropriate implementation.

- Indicate support for the ADF&G protocol as a tool to guide review and revision of intensive management programs. We also advocate for the use of outcomes that serve to terminate an intensive management program either because it has reached ungulate population objectives, or because it has become apparent that the objectives cannot be reached.

The current draft does not make recommendations that could only be achieved through repeal or major amendment to the intensive management statute. This law has been on the books for almost 19 years and is unlikely to go away. Instead, the statement focuses on how the law is implemented. This is appropriate given the intended audience.

I realize some members of the Chapter may not be satisfied with this draft position statement and will ask that we go further in one direction or the other in our support for intensive management. However, given the diversity of views among wildlife professionals, I believe it important that the Chapter advocate neither for nor against intensive management. I believe we should advocate for science-based implementation and assessment, and identify where research is needed. My hope is that regardless of your views on intensive management, you can agree that the findings and recommendations in our position statement are objective, valid, and worthy of Chapter support.

I'm not sure if we'll win anything through this effort, but it has truly been an interesting discussion. I expect this will provide fodder for discussion at our upcoming annual meeting. Elsewhere in the newsletter is information on our annual meeting in Fairbanks, April 3-5. Also, I'd like to draw your attention to the article on a proposed bylaws revision regarding how we adopt position statements. I'm looking forward to the annual meeting in Fairbanks, and federal travel restrictions or no, hope to see many of you there.

-Jerry Hupp, President, TWS-AK Chapter



Regional News

Southcentral

Cara Staab, Southcentral Representative

Mike Rehberg is the new Steller sea lion program leader for ADF&G within the statewide Marine Mammals program. Mike joined ADF&G in 1999 as a wildlife biologist working with the harbor seal and Steller sea lion research programs, focusing on telemetry, mapping and foraging behavior. He earned a Masters of Science at the University of Alaska Anchorage. Before working for ADF&G, Mike was a technician with the USGS walrus and polar bear programs, focused on GIS applications and field work. He earned his Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Management at the State University of New York.

Merben Cebrian is the new subsistence biologist for the BLM Anchorage Field Office. Merben first joined BLM in 2008, previously working in both Fairbanks and Glennallen. Merben is also a new dad and is working on his PhD, so if anyone has tips on squeezing more hours into a day, please pass them on to him.

Claire Colegrove was recently promoted by Defenders of Wildlife to be the new Alaska Representative. Claire previously worked at Defenders Washington DC headquarters with the Climate Change, Federal Lands, Legal and International Programs. Claire is the team leader of the Coasts and Seascapes chapter of a climate vulnerability assessment that will inform the Chugach National Forest Plan (early adopter) revision process. She is also working with the US Fish & Wildlife Service on wildlife and climate change adaptation in the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge and on the Kenai Peninsula. Claire is originally from Bainbridge Island, Washington. She earned her B.A. in Environmental Studies from Hamilton College.

Southeast

Karen Blejwas, Southeast Representative

Tim Miles was recently hired by ADF&G to serve as the Division of Wildlife Conservation's Program Technician in the Douglas office. Tim comes with a broad background and involvement with resource management. He replaces Brenda Bowers, who transferred to ADF&G's Boards Support Section at HQ.

Northern

Kaiti Ott, Northern Representative

No current news from Northern.



TWS-Alaska Chapter Regions
(Northern, Southcentral, Southeast)

New memberships and renewals are available online at The Wildlife Society (<http://joomla.wildlife.org>). Click on membership to obtain membership forms.



Chapter Position Statements

Chapter Adopts Position Statement on Dall's Sheep and Mountain Goat Disease Risk

Initially stimulated by concerns about the potential for pack goats in Dall's sheep habitat to transmit disease, a committee of the AK Chapter analyzed disease risks from domestic livestock and recommended actions to reduce those risks. Members of the Alaska Chapter recently voted to adopt the resulting position statement on the disease risk that domestic livestock pose to Dall's sheep and mountain goats. This statement can be found on our web site: http://joomla.wildlife.org/alaska/images/documents/Position_Statements/. This is an important document that draws attention to the potential for domestic goats and sheep to introduce pathogens that result in pneumonia and other illness to Dall's sheep and mountain goats. Diseases introduced by domestic sheep have severely impacted wild sheep populations elsewhere in the United States and Canada. However, Alaska's wild sheep and goat populations have yet to be severely affected by domestic livestock pathogens. But, the risk is present, may be increasing, and needs to be managed. Our position statement provides recommendations for how state and federal agencies can reduce the likelihood of disease introduction in Alaska and includes an excellent review of the scientific basis for our concerns. The position statement provided background for the Chapter's recent testimony to the Alaska Board of Game as it considered a proposal to prohibit use of domestic goats and sheep as pack animals for hunting of Dall's sheep, mountain goats, and musk-ox. The Board of Game adopted the proposal. Now, we would like to continue to advance awareness of this issue and work to minimize the risk to Alaskan wildlife. Our annual meeting provides an opportunity for us to discuss for how to do so. Many thanks to the Chapter members that drafted this excellent position statement.

Retirements

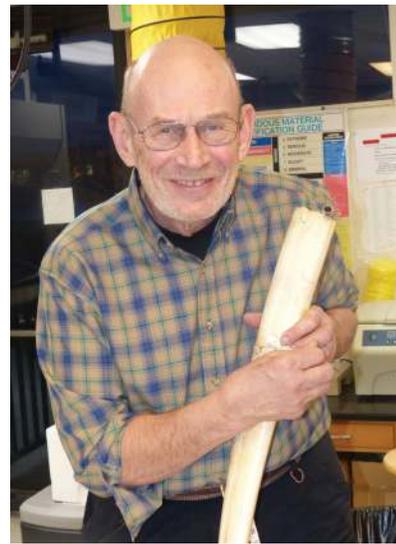
John Trent Retires from USFWS

Last issue was full of retirement news but we missed one. John Trent Ph.D., CWB also retired at the end of 2012. Most recently John worked for USFWS in Anchorage as a marine mammals biologist in an "encore career" that began in 2004.

Before his stint with the Service, John worked as a wildlife management biologist for almost 30 years beginning in 1969. He was a game biologist (I&E) at Fairbanks, Barrow area biologist, management coordinator during the Exxon Valdez incident and statewide rural issues coordinator for ADF&G.

John still thinks of himself as an Alaska wildlife biologist who seeks communications solutions to complex wildlife management issues. He will probably attend the Alaska Chapter meeting in Fairbanks to see what is going on and to visit old friends.

John can be reached at the following address:
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Recent Publications by TWS-AK Chapter Members

We would like to highlight the contributions of Chapter members to wildlife science. If you or your colleagues have recently published articles in peer-reviewed journals, please send the citation to Elizabeth Manning (elizabeth.manning@alaska.gov). The following are some papers that were recently published by Chapter members.

Bean, W. T., R. Stafford, L. R. Prugh, H. Scott Butterfield, and J. S. Brashares. 2012. An evaluation of monitoring methods for the endangered giant kangaroo rat. *Wildlife Society Bulletin* 36:587-593.

Chen, W., D. E. Russell, A. Gunn, B. Croft, W. R. Chen, R. Fernandes, H. Zhao, J. Li, Y. Zhang, K. Koehler, I. Olthof, R. H. Fraser, S. G. Leblanc, G. R. Henry, R. G. White, and G. L. Finstad. 2013. Monitoring habitat condition changes during winter and pre-calving migration for Bathurst caribou in northern Canada. *Biodiversity* 14:36-44. DOI:10.1080/14888386.2012.705110

Cuyler, C., R. G. White, K. Lewis, C. Soulliere, A. Gunn, D. E. Russell, and C. Daniel. 2012. Are warbles and bot related to reproductive status in West Greenland caribou. *Rangifer* 20:243-257.

Hilderbrand, G.V., and H. N. Golden. 2013. Body composition of free-ranging wolves (*Canis lupus*). *Canadian Journal of Zoology* 91:1-6. DOI:10.1139/cjz-2012-0205

Roffler, G.H., Adams, L.G., Talbot, S.L., Sage, G.K., Dale, B.W. 2012. Range overlap and individual movements during breeding season influence genetic relationships of caribou herds in south-central Alaska. *Journal of Mammalogy* 93(5): 1318-1330. DOI: 10.1644/11-MAMM-A-275.1

Shanley, C., S. Pyare, and W. Smith. 2013. Response of an ecological indicator to landscape composition and structure: Implications for functional units of temperate rainforest ecosystems. *Ecological Indicators* 24:68-75. DOI:10.1016/j.ecolind.2012.05.027

Shenoy, A., K. Kielland, and J. Johnstone. 2013. Effects of fire severity on plant nutrient uptake reinforce alternate pathways of succession in boreal forests. *Plant Ecology (Early View)*. DOI:10.1007/s11258-013-0191-0

Udevitz, M. S., R. L. Taylor, J. L. Garlich-Miller, L. T. Quakenbush, and J. A. Snyder. 2013. Potential population-level effects of increased haulout-related mortality of Pacific walrus calves. *Polar Biology* 36:291-298. DOI:10.1007/s00300-012-1259-3

Wilson, H. M., J. S. Hall, P. L. Flint, J. C. Franson, C. R. Ely, J. A. Schumtz, and M. D. Samuel. 2013. High seroprevalence of antibodies to avian influenza viruses among wild waterfowl in Alaska: Implications for surveillance. *PloS One* 8(3):e58308. DOI:10.1371/journal.pone.00

Wilson, R., A. Bartsch, K. Joly, J. Reynolds, A. Orlando, and W. Loya. Frequency, timing, extent, and size of winter thaw-refreeze events in Alaska 2001-2008 detected by remotely sensed microwave backscatter data. 2013. *Polar Biology* 36:419-427. DOI:10.1007/s00300-012-1272-6



Proposed Bylaws Revisions-Please review

At our annual business meeting in Fairbanks on April 4, the Chapter's Executive Board would like members to consider a revision to those parts of our bylaws that address the adoption of resolutions and position statements (Article VII, Section 5 and Article VIII, Section 2, Clause F). Position statements are one of the main means by which the Chapter establishes policy on an issue. They are intended to represent the view of the overwhelming majority of Chapter members. In fact, it takes a 2/3 vote of approval for us to adopt a position statement. So, the manner in which we create them is important and should reflect that the Chapter as a whole takes ownership of the document.

The proposed changes to the Chapter's bylaws are intended to clarify the steps necessary for adoption and to ensure that Chapter members have an opportunity to provide input in drafting a statement. The revision also clarifies the role of the Executive Board in developing position statements, and provides for creation of an ad hoc committee to draft an initial document. Finally, the revision provides for online voting. The proposed changes are modeled after the guidelines for adoption of position statements at the national level (<http://wildlife.org/policy/position-statements-guide>), with the exception that Chapter members vote their approval, whereas at the national level approval is based on a vote by TWS Council.

This proposed revision will be a discussion item during the business meeting. If called, a vote will be held on the revision.

Here are the proposed changes:

Article VII, Section 5

Current Wording:

RESOLUTIONS AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS –
Two or more members may submit resolutions

or statements to the Resolutions and Public Statements Committee (Article VIII, Section 2F) for consideration by the Chapter's Executive Board. These shall be accepted or rejected by the Board and, if involving new policy, prepared for submission to the Chapter membership. Such new items must be approved by two-thirds of the Chapter membership voting and must be transmitted to The Wildlife Society, the Northwest Section Representative, and the Northwest Section President, if approved. Actions falling within previously established Chapter policies may be carried out by any Chapter officer upon unanimous approval of the Executive Board. On issues where there are not previously established Chapter policies and that demand action on a reasonably short notice, the President, or designated representative, may present a Public Statement on behalf of the Chapter, provided that: 1) the concept of the statement be brought to the Executive Board's attention and accepted by them prior to the public issuing of the statement; and 2) copies of the statement are sent to the membership within 15 days after public issuing of the statement. Furthermore, the Alaska Chapter may issue statements pertaining to subjects in its locale: a) when the content of the statement falls within the established policy of The Wildlife Society; and b) in the absence of existing position statements by The Wildlife Society.

The Alaska Chapter will not issue statements that may be in conflict with the policy of The Wildlife Society without prior approval of The Society's Council. All statements will follow the "Guidelines for Wildlife Policy Activities" (Appendix 4.421 of the Operations Manual). The Chapter membership, The Wildlife Society, the Northwest Section Representative, and the Northwest Section President must receive copies of any approved Resolution or Public Statement within 15 days of such action.



Proposed Bylaws Revisions-Continued

Proposed Revision:

RESOLUTIONS AND POSITION STATEMENTS

– Two or more members may submit resolutions or position statements, or topics for consideration as resolutions or position statements to the Chapter’s Executive Board. Members that submit proposed position statements or resolutions must complete the Questionnaire for Resolutions and Position Statements, adopted in January 2005, or a similar form approved by the Board. The Board shall forward the proposed resolution or position statement, and completed questionnaire for further consideration to either the Resolutions and Public Statements Committee (Article VIII, Section 2, Clause F) or an ad-hoc Committee of members knowledgeable about the topic that is appointed by the Board. The Chapter adopts a resolution or position statement after the following steps:

1. The Committee recommends to the Executive Board whether the topic is suitable for consideration as a Chapter resolution or position statement, and identifies the intended audience and objectives. If a majority of the Executive Board agrees that a resolution or position statement is warranted, the Committee writes the initial draft of the document or may revise the document submitted by members.
2. Upon completion of the initial draft resolution or position statement by the Committee, the Executive Board assumes control of the document and may either (1) return the document to the Committee with requests for revision, (2) revise the document in preparation for release to members, or (3) accept the document from the Committee without further revision prior to release to members.
3. When the draft has approved for release by a majority of the Executive Board, the document will be distributed to members by email, and members allowed at least 14 days to comment.
4. The Executive Board collects and reviews comments from members and works with the Committee that drafted the document

to incorporate appropriate revisions. The Committee that authored the original document then recommends to the Executive Board whether to approve or disapprove the revised document. This recommendation is advisory and does not bind subsequent actions by the Executive Board.

5. The Executive Board votes whether to release the final document to Chapter members for a vote of approval. A simple majority among the Executive Board is sufficient to authorize a Chapter-wide vote. The final version of the resolution or position statement is distributed to Chapter members via email.

6. Voting is conducted via an online ballot that shall remain open for 30 days. Members that wish can request a paper ballot from the Secretary/Treasurer. A resolution or position statement is adopted by the Chapter if it is supported by two-thirds of the Chapter membership that vote on the document.

Actions falling within previously established Chapter policies may be carried out by any Chapter officer upon unanimous approval of the Executive Board. On issues where there are not previously established Chapter policies and that demand action on a reasonably short notice, the President, or designated representative, may present a Public Statement on behalf of the Chapter, provided that: 1) the concept of the statement be brought to the Executive Board’s attention and accepted by them prior to the public issuing of the statement; and 2) copies of the statement are sent to the membership within 15 days after public issuing of the statement. Furthermore, the Alaska Chapter may issue statements pertaining to subjects in its locale: a) when the content of the statement falls within the established policy of The Wildlife Society; and b) in the absence of existing position statements by The Wildlife Society.

The Alaska Chapter will not issue statements



Proposed Bylaws Revisions-Continued

that may be in conflict with the policy of The Wildlife Society without prior approval of The Society's Council. All statements will follow the "Guidelines for Wildlife Policy Activities" (Appendix 4.421 of the Operations Manual). The President of The Wildlife Society, the Northwest Section Representative, and the Northwest Section President must receive copies of any approved resolution or position Statement within 15 days of such action. All resolutions and position statements adopted by the Chapter will be posted on the Chapter web site.

Article VIII, Section 2, Clause F:

Current Wording:

CLAUSE F – RESOLUTIONS AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS – This committee shall receive proposed resolutions and public statements from Chapter members. A proposed resolution or public statement must be supported by at least two (2) Chapter members. For the committee to consider a topic for a resolution or position statement, the two members must complete the Questionnaire for Resolutions and Position Statements, as approved (January 2005) by the Alaska Chapter or as subsequently revised by the Executive Board and approved by 2/3 of the members attending an annual meeting. The committee will determine if the subject of the proposed resolution or position statement is appropriate for consideration by the Chapter and will submit a recommendation to the Executive Board in accordance with Article VII, Section 5. If approved by the Executive Board, the President will request the Committee Chair work with membership to form a resolution or position statement committee.

Proposed Revision:

CLAUSE F – RESOLUTIONS AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS – This committee shall receive proposed resolutions and public statements that have been submitted to the Executive

Board by Chapter members. The Committee will determine if the subject of the proposed resolution or position statement is appropriate for consideration by the Chapter and will submit a recommendation to the Executive Board in accordance with Article VII, Section 5. If the Executive Board approves further development of a resolution or public statement, this Committee will write a draft document for submission to the Executive Board. The Executive Board may temporarily add members to this committee or create an ad-hoc committee of members that are knowledgeable about the topic. Upon submission of a draft document to the Executive Board, the Committee works with the Board to incorporate member comments, and provides a non-binding recommendation regarding whether the Executive Board should release the final version of the document for a Chapter-wide vote of approval as described in Article VII, Section 5.

You can contribute! We need your story ideas! Help keep AK-TWS members connected.

Are you working on an interesting project you'd like to share with other AK-TWS members? Do you have news to share with colleagues? Please make note of upcoming events, projects, personnel changes, issues, or anything else of interest to other AK-TWS members, and pass them on to your regional representative for the winter issue, due out in early December. If you know of something that would make an interesting newsletter article and can't write it up yourself, please contact newsletter editor Elizabeth Manning at elizabeth.manning@alaska.gov or 907-267-2168. Help us make this an interesting and informative newsletter!



Alaska Chapter Leadership

Your 2010-2012 Executive Board

President: Jerry Hupp, USGS-Alaska Science Center, 4210 University Drive, Anchorage, AK 99508, jhupp@usgs.gov, phone (907) 786-7096.

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Southcentral Representative: Cara Staab, BLM – Alaska State Office, 222 W. 7th Ave. #13, Anchorage, AK 99513, cstaab@blm.gov, phone (907) 271-3128, fax (907) 271-5479.

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Webmaster (non-voting): Elizabeth Solomon, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, 43961 Kalifornsky Beach Rd, Ste. B Soldotna, AK 99669-8367, elizabeth.solomon@alaska.gov, phone (907)260-2927.



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