



THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

Northwest Section

Summer 2015 Newsletter

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President’s Message

The Northwest Section assembled with the Washington Chapter TWS and Society for American Foresters this April. A recurring message at their annual conference was about how to work for common conservation goals across landownership boundaries. The Washington landscape is a complex checkerboard of interests: multiple private timberlands, public lands held by various federal and state entities, tribes, and others. I heard and observed enormous respect for the goals and objectives held by each interest, each group demonstrating how they are present for the long term. Although different, there was a unity of purpose toward conservation and sustainability. I cannot help but see this as an analogy to The Wildlife Society: a unity of wildlife professionals from different geography and different career backgrounds.

Just as the Washington meeting emphasized communication, partnerships, and over-arching goals, so TWS relies on cross-boundary communication and partnerships to support state/provincial, regional, and nationwide goals. Our section has a diverse membership from a large spatial geography. Meetings can be challenging in a time of ever-shrinking travel budgets! But we also are in a time of incredible (and free) digital communication. It may require extra effort, but there is no less need for communication and partnerships today than 50 years ago when many of our state chapters were founded and the Northwest Section was *the* strong

presence which tied us all together. To achieve long-term conservation success – the big picture, those big goals – will require collaboration and communication.

To this end, I encourage and challenge the membership of the Northwest Section to communicate more. Get to know our Conservation Affairs Committee, our board, volunteer with us, and send us any thoughts on how the Northwest Section can enhance your TWS experience. Is there a policy issue your state chapter is wrestling with? Other states may be also. This is where the strength of the Section can assist you. The Northwest Section does not currently host its own meeting. Rather, our board rotates between our five component state chapters, and brings the section to you. Even in the “off years” where the Section is not in your state, the Section is still there to serve. Remember that communication goes both ways, and call or e-mail us! Volunteer on a committee! Any group is only as strong as its membership.

The Northwest Section: Where are we?

The Northwest Section consists of five member states: Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, and Washington. The goal of the Section is to provide enhanced communication and awareness of wildlife science, management, and policy and issues with a regional focus and support the Chapters in their efforts and activities. The Section also serves to enhance communication between/among the national Parent Society and individual state chapters. The Northwest Section is one of 8 sections represented to TWS Parent Society Council as a voting member, helping determine policy and direction for the Parent Society. <http://wildlife.org/leadership-and-values/>

The Northwest Section coordinates and meets with the Chapters annually on a rotating basis, bringing a regional and national focus to state meetings. The Section helps sponsor and support these Chapter meetings, bringing speakers or assisting with costs, and bringing a higher-level of recognition to members through our awards program. Recently, many of our Chapters are celebrating their 50th anniversaries, and the Section board attempts to be present at these events. The recent rotation of conferences has included Oregon 2010, Washington 2011, Montana 2012 – (50th anniversary), Alaska 2013, Idaho 2014 (50th), Washington 2015, Oregon 2016 (50th) and then back to Montana in 2017 and Alaska in 2018.

The Section sponsors and coordinates a separate symposium, workshop, or session every other year in conjunction with meeting with the Chapters. The overall topic is one of regional, multi-state significance that is applicable to a wide range of the Chapters. In 2012 the Section sponsored a carnivore symposium at the National meeting in Portland and in 2014 sponsored a new wildlife technologies, tools and applied research symposium at the joint Section/ ID Chapter meeting. The next Section session will be in 2016 at the joint meeting with Oregon.

The Section strives to represent a diversity of states, organizational/agency background, and expertise in order to sustain a healthy and strong presence and a broad based representation.

Future Meeting Rotation

Pending Chapter concurrence, and if we stay with the recent rotation, here is the projected timeline for Northwest Section attendance to Chapter meetings.

Oregon	2016*
Montana	2017
Alaska	2018*
Idaho	2019
Washington	2020*

* Special symposium/workshop may be offered

Northwest Section Dues

The Northwest Section currently maintains one of the lowest fee structures in the Society. At only \$5 per year, this is less than 2 gallons of gas, less than a fancy coffee, less than a box of shotgun shells... you get the picture. Your dues go to support your state chapter conferences, the special symposia/workshops the NWS hosts at state and at national conferences (NWS has provided \$1,500 to each state host chapter since 2011), the awards that honor our colleagues (see below), and helps assist in travel costs for our CAC, officers, invited speakers, and award winners. An increase in dues would increase our capacity to serve our component chapters by providing more resources we could bring to your annual conferences. We could renew the student travel grants and student scholarships we once hosted.

To this end, we will be establishing a committee to study whether the NWS should increase dues, and by how much. The committee will present their findings at the end of this year concurrent with the election cycle. If warranted, any dues increase will be put forward to the members to vote concurrently with voting for our new officers.

If you are interested in serving on this study committee, or if you would just like to offer an opinion, please contact me at juliecunningham@mt.gov

Meet the Board



President-Elect: Kurt Alt

Kneeling bottom right is Kurt Alt. Hailing from Butte, America, Kurt has been a member of TWS for most of his 40 years in the wildlife profession. Retired from Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks as a field biologist and wildlife manager, Kurt has also worked with Idaho and Wyoming on many resource issues. Kurt has also collaborated with wildlife biologists internationally. He

currently lives in Germany, and plans to use technology to communicate, and he won't let distance keep him from being active in the Section.

President: Julie Cunningham

Julie started in TWS as an undergraduate at University of Montana in 1997, and has been involved ever since. She's served in leadership roles in student chapters, the Montana chapter, is an alumna of TWS's Leadership Institute (2008), and now is thrilled to be serving the section. Julie works as a field biologist with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and will thoroughly enjoy this opportunity as president to "supervise" Kurt Alt, who hired her!





Past-President: Dave Kennedy

Dave has a diverse history in all five member states both in his current job as the NEPA compliance division manager for Bonneville Power Administration and with his past positions at the Federal Highway Administration, as a consultant, with the U.S. Forest Service, and Alaska State Parks. He's been a long-term member and leader within the Oregon Chapter and within the National Chapter – he co-chaired the 2012 National conference and was on the organizing committee for the 1995 National conference.

Vice President: Betsy Glenn

Betsy Glenn works for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Oregon as the northern spotted owl specialist. She has held multiple leadership roles within the Oregon Chapter (president, vice-president, secretary, webmaster, and awards committee chair) and was on the planning committee for the 2012 National conference. Her diverse experience includes work in Montana, Vermont, and Wisconsin.





Secretary/Treasurer: Michelle Commons Kemner

Michelle is a Regional Wildlife Biologist for Idaho Department of Fish and Game. She has been actively involved in TWS since 1996 when she started her career as a student member, and has served in progressive leadership positions at the Idaho state chapter, as Vice President of the Northwest Section, and at national as nominations committee chair.

Conservation Affairs Committee Representative: Leslie Bliss-Ketchum

Leslie is the principal wildlife ecologist with Tall Oaks Environmental Research LLC and has been actively monitoring and researching various wildlife crossings for the past 7 years. Leslie is currently completing her Ph.D. in Environmental Science from Portland State University where her research has focused primarily on issues of habitat connectivity and roads as barriers to wildlife movement. Leslie is a Past-President of the Oregon Chapter, and current board member of the Urban Wildlife Working Group. She is currently co-principle investigator of the Metro Urban Wildlife Habitat Connectivity Project in Portland Oregon.





NW Section Representative to Council: Harriet Allen

Harriet has worked in Washington, Idaho, and Montana and retired in 2013 from a 32-year career with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife managing endangered and threatened species. She has been involved with TWS throughout her career and has served in a number of positions in the Washington Chapter, as Vice President of the Northwest Section, and at national as the Section representative. She is currently on the Board of Directors at Wolf Haven International.

Contact Information

Kurt Alt (MT)	President Elect	altwildlife@yahoo.com
Julie Cunningham (MT)	President	juliecunningham@mt.gov
Dave Kennedy (OR)	Past-President	dave.kennedy@live.com
Betsy Glenn (OR)	Vice-President	betsy_glenn@fws.gov
Michelle Kemner (ID)	Secretary/Treasurer	michelle.common@idfg.idaho.gov
Leslie Bliss-Ketchum (OR)	CAN Representative	bliss.ketchum@gmail.com
Harriet Allen (WA)	Section Rep. to Council	hallen2009@comcast.net

Awards

The Northwest Section hosts two annual awards: the Arthur S. Einarsen Award and the Wildlife Administrator Award. The Arthur S. Einarsen Award recognizes outstanding service to the wildlife profession by individuals residing in our Section. The Wildlife Administrator Award recognizes excellence in areas of wildlife program development, administration, budgeting, planning, and personnel management.

The 2015 winner of the **Arthur S. Einarsen Award** was **Dr. Lisette Waits**. Dr. Waits is a professor and department head in Wildlife Sciences at the University of Idaho. Her work in conservation genetics has been monumentally influential to the wildlife profession. Award presented by Harriet Allen, Representative to Council (left). The winner of the **Wildlife Administrator Award** was **Jim Unsworth**. Jim served as Deputy Director for Idaho Fish and Game, and just this year became the State Director of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Jim has been a long-time member of TWS. Award presented by Bruce Ackerman, outgoing NWS secretary/treasurer (right).





The Northwest Section also nominated **Warren W. Aney** for the parent chapter's **Distinguished Service Award**. Mr. Aney will not be able to travel to Winnipeg, but is planning to meet with the Oregon Chapter and Northwest Section in Seaside, where he will receive this award. Mr. Aney has retired from Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and has served TWS at many levels his whole career. Congratulations, Warren!

Finally, we are excited to announce that two members of our Section were selected for the **2015 TWS Fellows Award!** The Fellows Program of the Parent society recognizes members who have distinguished themselves through exceptional service to the wildlife profession. Recent Northwest Section past-president **Barb Hill** (retired from BLM in Oregon) and **Steve Belinda** (Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, Montana) will be travelling to Winnipeg to receive their awards. Congratulations, Barb and Steve!

Conservation Affairs Network Update

ORTWS Past President Leslie Bliss-Ketchum serves as the Conservation Affairs Network (CAN) Representative for the Northwest Section. She has polled our component state chapters and learned the Oregon chapter already has an established Conservation Affairs Committee (CAC) that provides the framework needed for potential collaboration with different states and/or national on common issues. Montana and Idaho chapters are actively working on developing their CAC's. Washington and Alaska are currently working on other issues that prevent them from putting a concerted effort into CAC development but hope to start the process soon.

While not all states have their CAC's up and running it is clear that we can benefit greatly from open channels of communication for collaboration and policy engagement at all levels of organization within TWS.

Leslie attended the CAN update meeting in Pittsburgh. She met representatives from across the U.S. and Canada from Sections, Chapters and our parent society. TWS Executive Director Ken Williams opened the meeting by emphasizing the objective of enhancing communication and collaboration through the CAN and that need goes beyond issues of policy.

During this meeting several needs were identified including:

- Standardization on comment process for state and national issues
- Documentation on previous issues and activities with contact information, perhaps including a searchable database so chapters and sections could easily find out what has already been done where
- Identification of experts for when policy statements and letters need to be written
- Specific training opportunities for those interested in being involved

Keith Norris, Assistant Director of Government Affairs & Partnerships with TWS has and continues to develop resources to help address these needs and promote communication. Some of the materials developed include a CAN Newsletter and an extensive Policy Toolkit, both available at: <http://wildlife.org/policy-2/conservation-affairs-network/>.

Currently 7 of 8 sections have identified CAN representatives and 16 of 55 Chapters have formed CACs . While there is clearly more work to be done, this initiative promises to make policy engagement easier and more effective across TWS. If you have questions or comments about the Conservation Affairs Network or are interested in being involved at the Section level please let us know by sending an email to bliss.ketchum@gmail.com.

What is the Conservation Affairs Network?

Launched in 2014, the Network creates a venue for streamlined communication, collaboration, and cooperation on policy matters important to wildlife professionals. The Conservation Affairs Network is designed to engage and unify the efforts of The Wildlife Society, The Network operates through Conservation Affairs Committees (CAC) established within TWS Sections and Chapters. These committees are charged with identifying and addressing policy priorities within their region, and communicating their activities and needs with other CACs, Sections and TWS Staff.

Learn more at:

<http://wildlife.org/policy-2/conservation-affairs-network/>

New Student Chapter

The Lewis-Clark State College of Idaho has petitioned The Wildlife Society to establish a student chapter. The Northwest Section supported their petition and is offering them a small start-up grant (\$200). This new student chapter will be on interim status for 3 years with required activities and annual benchmarks. Please help us welcome this new student chapter to our region: if you are near Lewiston, ID, offer to speak to their chapter or give them a workshop/seminar. The faculty contact is **Dr. Matthew Brady** at mjbrady@lcmail.lcsc.edu Dr. Brady and three student officers will also be in Winnipeg, so be sure to greet them!

News from National

TWS has launched a new, free Partner Program for anyone interested in international news from the wildlife profession. The program allows you to receive bulletins, policy updates, wildlife/science news articles, and even some talks/presentations/articles/papers. You can learn more at: <http://wildlife.org/wildlifepartners/>

The 2015 Annual Meeting of The Wildlife Society will be in Winnipeg, Manitoba October 17-21. More information can be found at: <http://www.twsconference.org/>

