



WILDLIFE TRACKS

The Quarterly Newsletter of the
Colorado Chapter of The Wildlife Society

Vol. 43, Issue 5: Spring 2015



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Tony Gurzick

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President's Column

Do you remember your first outdoor experience? Who were the people with you and did they play an important part in your interest in wildlife and ultimately becoming a wildlife professional?

I remember my first outdoor recreation experience. A good friend took my dad and me fishing to Cherry Creek State Park. I can remember a few days before the trip going to the store with my dad to buy our fishing equipment (I'm almost certain we went to Woolco – anyone remember that store?). I was really excited. My dad was originally from Detroit, MI and grew up fishing on Lake Erie and Lake St. Clair. As such, he outfitted us the way he was used to fishing; we bought 20 lbs. test line, steel leaders, and number 2 hooks. After showing our purchases to Mr. Coker, we went back to Woolco's and bought more appropriate Colorado fishing tackle. Tying a yellow plastic weight to my line, Dad had me practice casting in the backyard.

The night before the trip, my dad and I took a couple of flashlights and an empty can of his Captain Black Pipe Tobacco. We went in the back yard and to a nearby park and looked for earth worms. I remember thinking how strong they were when part of their bodies were still in their holes. I don't remember how many we caught but we had enough for the morning's fishing trip.

We left for the reservoir before sunrise. It seemed like an endless drive from northeast Aurora to Cherry Creek. To a five year old, we were driving across the state. Mr. Coker and Dad helped get my pole set up and showed me how to hook the worm. My first cast crossed everyone's line! After a few more attempts, I made a decent cast and waited. I don't remember if I caught a fish that day but I do remember having a great morning. That was the start of my interest in the outdoors.

Why do I bring up these memories and ask you about yours? Simple – people need to have an emotional connection with the outdoors to truly embrace a conservation and land ethic. Natural resource management agencies around the country are looking for ways to increase participation in outdoor recreation. For example, the National Park Service has recently announced the Every Kid in a Park initiative with the goal of getting every 4th grader into a National Park in the coming year. Colorado recently concluded the Partners in the Outdoors conference attended by over 200 people and 100 organizations. The goal of the conference was to facilitate partnerships among organizations in order to get people outdoors.

As wildlife professionals, we have a great opportunity to help people enjoy the outdoors, connect to wildlife and foster conservation principles. I encourage you to find ways to get people outdoors and recreate responsibly. I truly believe that through people's own experiences with wildlife they will come to not only understand the need for wildlife conservation but demand it.

Tony Gurzick

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Colorado Chapter Annual Meeting

The Colorado Chapter of the Wildlife Society hosted one of its most successful west-slope annual meetings in Grand Junction, CO this past February. Over 150 people attended the 3 day event and participated in a variety of workshops, presentations, posters and opportunities to network with old colleagues and meet new ones. For the past few annual meetings, we have offered members the choice of both a technical and a non-technical workshop. Once again, the formula proved successful as both the “Introduction to Spatial Mark-Recapture Analysis” and the “Science Communication: Deceptively Simple Tools to Communicate about Complex Issues” were both at capacity. Dr. Tabitha Graves, a research ecologist with the Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center led the Spatial Mark-Recapture workshop where she explained key concepts underlying spatial mark-recapture and its advantages, discussed important study design and data considerations and illustrated use of spatial mark-recapture analysis with examples using program R. The Communication Workshop was facilitated by Liz Neeley, Assistant Director of Science Outreach at COMPASS. She provided participants with simple and practical tools to help explain their research, management goals and other complex issues to a diverse audience.

As wildlife professionals, conflicts may arise between getting people recreating outdoors and protecting the wildlife resource people want to enjoy. The Thursday plenary session, “Re-evaluating Recreation and Wildlife Conservation,” provided wildlife managers with both philosophical and objective tools to evaluate the impacts of recreation on wildlife and their habitats. Author, conservationist and hunting ethicist, David Petersen, led the plenary session with a talk on the North American Model and Also Leopold’s land ethic. The evening before, David premiered the film On the Wild Edge: Hunting for a Natural Life, a documentary made about David’s annual bow hunting elk hunt and his thoughts and ideas on hunting, natural living, land ethics and the love and support of his wife. The second plenary session of the day, “Re-evaluating Human- Wildlife Conflicts: Understanding wildlife and people,” looked at the role of social science and human dimensions in managing human wildlife conflict.

The final day of the meeting, our technical session, included papers from students and researchers alike. If attendance is any indication of the success, the technical session was as well attended as the plenary sessions giving presenters, especially the students, an interested and engaged audience. In addition to the workshops and speakers, the Colorado Chapter had a successful fundraising auction, student-professional mixer, and a great banquet and award ceremony.

As with any successful event, there were many people working behind the scenes to ensure everything worked smoothly and seamlessly. I would like to thank the CCTWS Board of Directors, both the outgoing and incoming members, as well as committee chairs, committee members, student volunteers and their school sponsors for all of their tireless work and dedication to the Chapter and the Annual Meeting. They were all awesome!

Announcements

Summer-Fall Travel Grants

Two \$500-750 travel grants are available to assist Colorado Chapter of The Wildlife Society members (wildlife professionals and students) in attending a training opportunity, meeting, or conference that will be valuable to their education and career.

Eligibility

Applicants must be members of the Colorado Chapter of The Wildlife Society (CCTWS) before applying for a travel grant.

Applicants who have never received a CCTWS travel grant will be given preference over previous grant recipients. Previous grant recipients who received their funding > 12 months before the application period are given preference over applicants who recently received the CCTWS grant.

Application

Type up a ½ to 1-page description of the meeting, telling CCTWS Board the goals of the conference or training and describing how you would like to use this experience for your occupation or education. Be sure to convince the Board that this meeting would be a valuable contribution to your employment or education as a wildlife professional. Also, explain your need for funding to attend the conference or training. Outline any other support you have and how much funding you need from CCTWS. Include your name and contact information (phone number and email).

Deadline

Email your summary to Stephanie Ferrero (stephanie.ferrero@state.co.us) by June 15, 2015. The Awards Coordinator and CCTWS Board will select 2 winners for summer/fall. The winners will be notified by June 30th. Additional travel grants should be available for winter/spring.

Requirements

Recipients must submit their travel receipts to show how the grant was used and a ½ to 1-page summary of the training, meeting, or conference they attended within one month of their trip. The summary should explain how this experience benefitted the recipient's education and career. Recipients must also report how CCTWS funding was used. Failure to submit this information on time will result in disqualification from future CCTWS travel grants.

Announcements

2015 TWS Annual Conference Travel Grant

A special travel grant is available to Colorado Chapter of The Wildlife Society members (wildlife professional or student) for attending The Wildlife Society Annual Conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba October 17-21, 2015.

Eligibility

Applicants must be members of the Colorado Chapter of The Wildlife Society (CCTWS). Applicants who are 1) active in state, section, national, and/or working groups of TWS, 2) who plan to present at the conference will be given preference. Those who have never received a CCTWS travel grant, or at least not in the past 12 months, are encouraged to apply.

Application

Type up a 1-page summary of:

- How you are active in the state, section, national, and/or working groups of TWS
- Why you want to attend the TWS Annual Conference
- What you plan to do at the TWS Annual Conference
- How being at the conference will benefit you as a wildlife student or professional and CCTWS
- Include your name and contact information (phone number and email)

Deadline

Email your summary to Stephanie Ferrero (stephanie.ferrero@state.co.us) by July 15, 2015. The Awards Coordinator and CCTWS Board will select a recipient. The recipient(s) will be notified by August 1, 2015.

Requirements

Recipients must report their travel expenses to show how the grant was used and a 1-page summary of what they accomplished at the TWS Annual Conference within one month of their trip. The summary should explain how this experience benefitted the recipient's education and career. Failure to submit this information on time will result in disqualification from future CCTWS travel grants.

Announcements

Join our new CMPS facebook page at
www.facebook.com/CMPSTWS

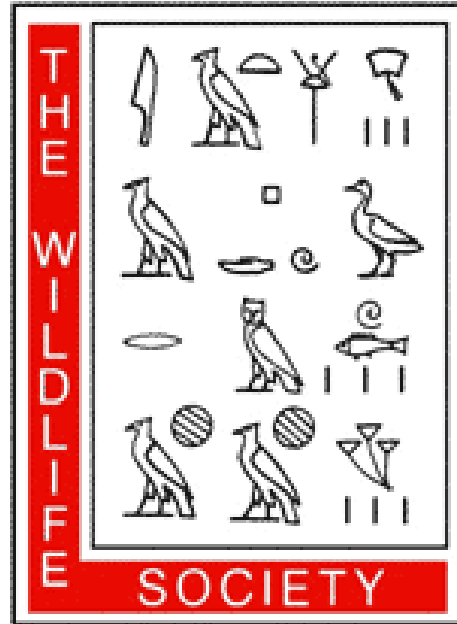
We are looking for any contributions you have that would be relevant to all of the Central Mountain and Plains region in regards to job postings, pictures from field work, great project summaries, etc. Anything to get members engaged at a regional scale. Contact Mindy Rice if you have questions about the page or submitting material at mindy.rice@state.co.us.



Announcements

Let's **COWCH**: Celebrate Our Wildlife Conservation Heritage

We need retired wildlife leaders who want to be interviewed ...



Do you know of someone who has significantly contributed to wildlife conservation in Colorado that we can interview at our annual meeting in Grand Junction (e.g., TWS charter member, chapter award winners, etc.)? We would like learn from them about the history and evolution of the wildlife profession in Colorado.

More information on COWCH can be found at: <http://www.wildlife.org/who-we-are/cowch>

Please send your nominations or notification of your interest to stephanie.ferrero@state.co.us.

The 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.

The Conservation Affairs Network (CAN) has recently been formed to enhance the effectiveness of our entire Society to this mission by increasing communication, collaboration, and coordination between our Chapters, Sections, and TWS headquarters. Establishing better connections among the individual units of TWS is part of a larger strategic effort that will propel our entire Society into the future as a stronger organization and make each of us more effective at achieving our mission.

The Conservation Affairs Network is being launched with an initial focus on wildlife policy issues at the national, regional, and local levels. Wildlife policy issues are currently addressed by all levels of TWS. However, policy activities of individual units are rarely communicated to others in the Society. Given the many similarities in wildlife policy issues among regions, this is an area in which more communication and collaboration could immediately increase our individual and collective effectiveness by allowing us to learn from and assist each other.

The Conservation Affairs Network is not about conducting more policy activities in each Chapter or Section. Rather its purpose is to grow the connections and promote collaboration that will make our actions more efficient and effective.

The Network creates direct linkages among Chapters, Sections, and TWS headquarters through the establishment of Conservation Affairs Committees (CAC) within each Chapter and Section. Regular communication between the CCTWS Committee Chair (Randy Ghormley) and the Central Mountains and Plains Section (CMPS) occurs on a bi-monthly basis via conference calls, emails, and newsletters. Currently, Bill Vodehnal (Nebraska) chairs the committee with assistance by Chris Wood (Utah), Randy Ghormley (Colorado), Matt Smith (Kansas) Paul Coughlin (South Dakota), and Greg Schenbeck (Nebraska).

Moose Conference

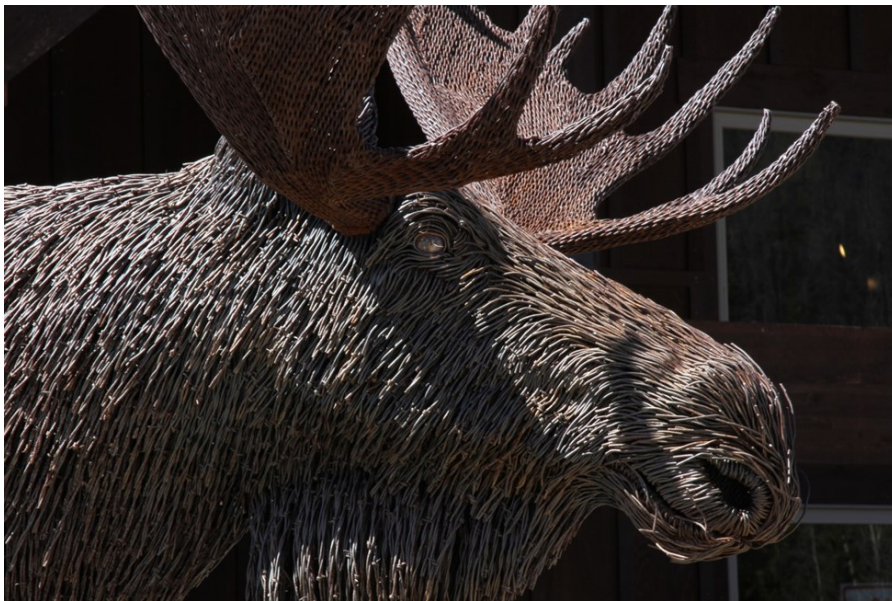


Moose Conference & Workshop
Middle Park, CO

Moose Conference in the Colorado Rockies

The 49th North American Moose Conference and Workshop was held in Middle Park, Colorado April 27th-30th 2015. The conference started with a workshop on adaptive harvest management for moose. Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) representatives received feedback on management metrics for moose. Biological, habitat, and social metrics were identified. Attendees reviewed a model framework for analyzing these metrics.

Six technical sessions included presentations on multiple topics related to moose. Population dynamics, vital rates, inventory methods, habitat use, parasite issues, and climate change effects were some of the themes discussed. In North America, most moose populations are expanding in distribution but several core areas are declining in numbers according to Steve Nadeau with Idaho Fish and Game. Colorado, Oregon, and Utah are among the few states that have reported stable to increasing moose populations. Other states such as Minnesota have faced substantial declines in moose.



Researchers are using the latest technology including mortality implant transmitters to study moose. These transmitters are inserted into the gastrointestinal track and detect instantaneously any drops in temperature associated with death. Another technology being used to learn more about moose populations is aerial thermal surveys. Thermal imagers coupled with high definition cameras can detect moose through computer recognition software. Additionally, LiDAR (light detection and ranging) is helping assess fine scale habitat use of GPS collared moose by creating 3D imagery maps.

Moose Conference cont..

To give conference attendees an example of moose habitat in Colorado, CPW organized a tour of North Park. Participants explored the Moose Visitor Center on the State Forest and heard from a forester about landscape changes including fire and beetle kill. A Commissioner from Jackson County explained the history of moose in North Park and the positive public perspective. Lucky observers got to see a cow moose with her calf from last year at heel along a river nearby. Later on the tour, a ranch manager spoke about how moose on their property have provided hunting opportunities. The tour finished with a trip to Arapahoe National Wildlife Refuge where CPW talked about the utility of public hunting in keeping the numbers of elk in check to reduce habitat competition with moose. Other conference highlights included a poster session, banquet, and awards. Terry Grosz, retired USFWS special agent, presented at the banquet about the value of moose and the need to protect them.



The Colorado Chapter of the Wildlife Society (CCTWS) was very involved with the moose conference. The Chapter provided a webpage and paypal registration system for this conference, which allowed over 100 students and professionals from the United States, Canada, and even Finland to attend. Everyone was impressed with the workshop, technical sessions, and field trip. Several CCTWS members volunteered to help run the event. Eric Bergman, Chair of CCTWS Awards Committee, led the conference planning. Overall, the 49th North American Moose Conference and Workshop was a huge success thanks to CCTWS.

Grant Recipient

Dear Colorado Chapter of the Wildlife Society,

First, I want to thank you for awarding me the travel grant that allowed me to attend this year's CCTWS meeting in Grand Junction, Colorado. It was a wonderful experience and very beneficial. The overall theme of this year's meeting was recreation and wildlife interaction, and included topics that dealt with the concerns, issues, and management suggestions related to successfully managing both recreation activities and wildlife conservation.

As a Biological Technician with the Bureau of Land Management in Colorado, the issue of managing land for public use and enjoyment as well as wildlife habitat and use is something I deal with daily. I have built fences around riparian and wetland areas to inhibit people from driving OHVs on and through them, destroying the necessary habitat for fish, amphibians, migratory birds, and small and large mammals. The BLM has also been in recent news with incidences occurring from the United States v. Bundy case in Nevada. Grazing is another public use that can deteriorate the land if not managed properly. However, as a few of the presentations at this year's meeting noted, there is a lack of public awareness, i.e. why regulations are in place, and a lack of compliance enforcement. In order to deal with the issues though, a plan developed from resource data and the best available science needs to be in place. As Jeff Thompson with Colorado Parks and Wildlife stated in his presentation – action without planning is failure of resource management.



A few studies that I found interesting included Elk Response to Land Management and Vehicle Use by Doug Ouren with USGS and the Temporal and Spatial Changes in Golden Eagle Reproduction in Relation to Increased Off High Vehicle Activity by Karen Steenhof from Boise State University, N. Kochert from USGS, and Jessi Brown from the University of Nevada, Reno. One outcome that the first study found was that an increase of road traffic on public land appeared to result in an increase in the distance to road by elk. Additionally, elk tended to use more public land during the winter and summer months. A suggested management implication is to strive for more/better habitat on public land during winter. I thoroughly agree with this management implication as I have noted much elk use on some lower elevation public lands during the winter – the same land that outdoor recreationalists and cattle ranchers like to use. The second studying found that 205+km of unauthorized trail was created on BLM land with many of those trails being less than 200m from golden eagle nests. This resulted in less golden eagle productivity in OHV-impacted areas during the study period from 2000-2010, reinforcing the need for greater compliance enforcement and/or better partnerships and relationships with OHV users, conservation groups, and stewards.

In conclusion, learning how and striving to manage land for both recreation activities and wildlife conservation is an important task for all natural resources professionals, especially in the unique and popular outdoor environments of Colorado. The “bigger fish to fry” factor noted by Sarah Thomas from the University of Colorado, that in comparison, recreation may seem small compared to oil and gas, logging, etc., is a true factor. However, recreation activities are growing and will continue to grow with the increasing popularity of OHVs. I felt that this year's CCTWS meeting was very beneficial to me as a BLM employee and steward of the land, and I hope it benefitted others as well. Thank you, again, for allowing me the opportunity to attend!

Jillian Groeschel
Bureau of Land Management, Royal Gorge Field Office
Canon City, CO

How my award was used:

Award Amount - \$500
Gas (from Pueblo to Grand Junction RT) – \$100
Lodging – \$180
Meeting Registration – \$160
Food – \$60

Grant Recipient

Apryle Craig

Recipient of The Colorado Chapter of The Wildlife Society Spring 2015 Travel Grant

On Friday, March 27, 2015, I presented the results of my master's research at the Science for Parks, Parks for Science conference in Berkeley, California. During the three days of the conference, I had the opportunity to hear from and speak with many of our nation's leaders in the field of conservation.

Highlights of Wednesday evening's opening ceremony included a speech by Jon Jarvis. In the reception that followed, I spoke with him about the importance of supporting research on the impacts of nature on human health and disease.

On Thursday morning, it was an honor to hear firsthand, E.O. Wilson's bold keynote challenging us to find a way to study and save all biodiversity. Three of my heroes in the field of ecology, Jill Baron, Joel Berger and Daniel Simberloff gave plenary talks. During Berger's talk, I was introduced to new methods of analyzing trail camera footage and took the opportunity later that day to discuss with him how I might incorporate those methods into my PhD research. Dr. Berger offered to be a resource to me in the future. Central to each of the plenary presentations were the themes of communicating science, engaging the public, and building collaborators. As I continue my research, I will look for ways to develop these skills that were identified and echoed throughout the week.

Before the concurrent sessions began on the final day, I sat on a bench with Paul McLaughlin, an old friend and colleague from Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP), reflecting on how RMNP could address some of the concerns and new ideas brought up at the conference. The concurrent sessions gave me new ideas on how to increase diversity of visitors and park job applicants. I reconnected with another former colleague from RMNP, Lindsey Ringer, and discussed her poster presenting her Master's research at CSU.

Presenting my master's research allowed me to gain valuable speaking experience and feedback. After the talk, Dr. Simberloff offered suggestions to make my analysis more robust.

During the three days of the conference, I made connections I can draw on in the future. I met Dr. Regina Rochefort, research advisor at North Cascades National Park, and discussed a knowledge swap: where Park Interpretive Rangers at North Cascades could teach graduate students about communicating science to a non-scientific audience and graduate students could teach Rangers about their research findings. Since returning home, I reached out to Dr. Rochefort and hope to schedule a date for this event.

This conference inspired me to strive harder to make science accessible and keep parks relevant. I took the opportunity during my stay at the Berkeley Piedmont Hostel, to discuss my research and park science with non-scientists who I shared a room and kitchen with. This conference provided so many opportunities. Without the support of The Colorado Chapter of the Wildlife Society, I would not have been able to make this trip.

COLORADO WILDLIFE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please note! You can now renew your membership online at www.wildlife.org/colorado

Name:

Address

City: State: Zip Code:

Work Phone: Home Phone:

E-Mail:

Today's Date:

Affiliation:

Interested in Committee Work? Yes No

Are You a TWS Certified Biologist? Yes No

Areas of Expertise/Interest:

Dues: 1 Year: \$15 2 Years: \$27 3 Years: \$35 Student/Retirees: \$10

MC/Visa: Expiration Date:

Signature:

Print this Form and Mail to: Nathan Seward, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, 300 W. New York Ave., Gunnison, CO 81230
Or fill it out and email it to: ColoradoTWS@gmail.com

2015 Committee Chairs and Liaisons

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Winter Meeting/Workshops: TBD in Summer 2015

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