

Southwest Section Newsletter

Fall 2018 - Vol. 8 Issue #2

President's Message

Ginny Seamster - 2018 President SW Section of The Wildlife Society

Happy Autumn!

I am happy to write this second message to you as the president of the Southwest Section (SWS) of The Wildlife Society – I hope you have all had an excellent and productive summer and beginning to the fall! The SWS has developed a new scholarship for graduate students for which the board is soliciting applications this fall. Applications are due December 15th – see the guidelines in this newsletter and on the chapter website: <http://wildlife.org/sw-section/>. The award will be presented at the 2019 annual meeting of the awardee's TWS chapter. The SWS's Conservation Affairs Committee drafted a letter that was signed on to by the presidents of both the Southwest and Western Sections regarding the ecological effects of the proposed border wall. This letter was sent to representatives for states in the Western and Southwest Sections on the House Committee on Appropriations in May 2018. This letter can be viewed on the SWS website: <http://wildlife.org/sw-section/about/cac/>.



The New Mexico Chapter is making great progress in planning the 2019 Arizona/New Mexico Joint Annual Meeting, which will be held in Albuquerque, NM at the Marriott Pyramid, February 7th-9th. Plans are in the works for a freshwater turtle workshop with presenters from Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas, as well as an occupancy modeling workshop with an instructor from Oregon. A member of the Geospatial Advisory Committee of the SWS will lead a workshop on mobile application. The student-mentor lunch will again give many students opportunities to mingle and ask questions of professionals, and there is an exciting Plenary session, dealing with climate change and how to manage for it and communicate about it effectively, in the works. Abstracts are due December 15th, more details on the New Mexico Chapter website: <http://wildlife.org/nm-chapter/>. The Texas Chapter's annual meeting will be held February 20-23 in Montgomery, TX. The plenary will focus on "Preparing Biologists for the Future." Abstracts are due November 30th and more details can be found on the Texas Chapter website: <http://tctws.org/annual-meeting-2/annual-meeting/>.

The SWS sent a contribution to support the Annual Meeting in Cleveland in October. The SWS board is also discussing the best way to engage with the Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas Chapters in their preparations for their local meetings in February, 2019. We've reached out to the New Mexico Chapter and the Texas Chapter and will be including a poster from the SWS, detailing the activities of the Section and other chapters in the Section, at their annual meetings. The board has also voted to have the section facilitate information exchange between the Arizona/New Mexico and Texas meetings by sponsoring travel by a professional in Texas to the Arizona/New Mexico meeting. They are still deliberating on sponsorship of

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President's Message (cont.)

Ginny Seamster - 2018 President SW Section of The Wildlife Society

the Texas Chapter meeting and travel by a second professional from Texas to the Arizona/New Mexico meeting.

The Southwest has all kinds of interesting wildlife issues that it is facing, not to mention issues popping up at the national level. Recently of interest to the Southwest Section Conservation Affairs Committee were changes proposed to the Endangered Species Act. The introduction of Recovering America's Wildlife Act to the Senate this summer was also big news for the conservation of non-game species. If passed, the Act would appropriate 1.3 billion in funds to support implementation of State Wildlife Action Plans across the US and dramatically increase funds available for conservation actions focused on Species of Greatest Conservation Need as identified by all state wildlife agencies. Please see the article in this newsletter by Tad Theimer, SWS president-elect, for further details. I also want to welcome Romey Swanson from Texas as the new Chair of the Conservation Affairs Committee and congratulate the outgoing Chair, Jim Ramakka, on his new position as Southwest Representative to TWS Council.

If there is anything related to the conservation and management of the wildlife in our section of the world that you would like to share with the membership in one of our Southwest Section newsletters, please email our newsletter co-editors Misty Sumner (mmiisstty@aol.com) and Jamie Killian (7race13@gmail.com); we want to hear from you! Welcome to Jamie, thank you for joining the SWS team, and MANY thanks to outgoing co-editor Carol Chambers for all her efforts on behalf of the SWS. Congratulations to Carol on being elected Vice President of TWS Council.

Here's to a great rest of the fall and winter and many thanks to all SWS members for all the work you do for our region's wildlife. - Ginny



Big Bend National Park. Photo courtesy Jamie Killian.

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Thanks to the following contributors to this newsletter: **Ginny Seamster, Maria F. "Masi" Mejia, Tina Y. Buford, Fidel Hernandez, Tad Theimer, Maria Araujo, Marcelo Fernandez, and Misty Sumner.**

Please contribute to our next newsletter with information related to topics of interest to SW Section members. We would love more State News, articles from student chapters as well as professionals! Deadline for articles is **March 1.**



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Bylaws Revision

Ginny Seamster - 2018 President SW Section of The Wildlife Society

A proposed bylaw revision from the Southwest Section board

MEMBERS: Please consider the below amendment and cast your vote by 5PM MST on December 3rd, 2018.

Do you support the following amendment to the Southwest Section bylaws:

Article V Elections and Officers – Section 1- Clause E – **change from**

"A member may be elected for no more than 2 consecutive terms in the same elected position. With the exception of the Treasurer, who may hold that office for as long as he/she desires, or until a new Treasurer is elected by the membership."

TO

"A member is elected for two consecutive one year terms, and does not have to run for their second term, when elected as Secretary or Treasurer. The two year terms of these two positions are staggered so they can only overlap for one year."

Please cast your **vote** online here: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe-Zb-jsJ6hOeerGfcoALgdqSeYnRzCUUsAwo1IBbupP8PyBoA/viewform?usp=sf_link



Building partnerships is an important part of TWS Government Affairs Program. Here, Keith Norris (TWS Director of Government Affairs & Partnerships) and Jim Miller (TWS Past President and Aldo Leopold Award Winner) take Davia Palmeri (AFWA) and Robert Schoepe (Arizona) on a mentored pheasant hunt as part of the 100th Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow workshop.

Photo courtesy of Keith Norris.

For context, you can view the current bylaws here on the Southwest Section website. <http://wildlife.org/sw-content>

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Southwest Section Tracks

Fidel Hernández, Southwest Section Rep to Council

Autumn is a wonderful season. It is a time of migration for many wildlife, as well as a time of senescence for many plants. In southern Texas, autumn is a special place to observe bird migration, particularly raptors (Figure 1). American kestrels generally are the first to arrive, first being observed in September. About a month or so later, we begin to observe a greater diversity of migrating raptors headed south, some visiting us here for the winter while others are simply passing through, headed for more distant lands. It is amazing to travel the landscape and see the raptor community change from a suite of resident species to a plethora of visiting migrants. The influx of raptors is so amazing that during one particular day afield, I counted 120 raptors within 14-mile stretch of rangeland.



Autumn also signifies the season when we gather as a professional group during the annual conference of The Wildlife Society (TWS). Below, I provide a brief update on TWS activities since my last newsletter.

TWS ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE, AND GENERAL OPERATIONS

Membership. TWS has closed the gap between current membership and the society's goal of 10,000 members! The year-to-date paid member count is 10,187 members, which represents a 4.9% increase compared to last year (August 2017). If members that are enrolled in the Give-Back Program are included (473 members), then the total member count increases to 10,660 members. To help prevent lapses in your TWS membership, make use of the Society's automatic renewal option. TWS' goal is to have most if not all of its members enrolled in this service, which will facilitate the management efficiency of member services. To date, 46% of TWS membership (4,744 members) are taking advantage of the Automatic-Renewal option. Be sure to make use of this convenient service when renewing your membership to avoid membership lapses or breaks in your membership services.



Figure 1. Autumn is a wonderful season to observe avian migration in southern Texas. The region receives an influx of a visiting migrants that tremendously increase the diversity of species, in particular raptors. Photograph by Fidel Hernández

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Southwest Section Tracks

Fidel Hernández, Southwest Section Rep to Council (continued)

Communications. One of the Society's goals is to increase TWS' visibility with members, organizations, and the public. Thus, TWS has a goal to write 3-4 wildlife.org articles per day and to steadily increase its website visits and social-media audience. TWS staff has written 122 wildlife.org articles as of August 31, which is about on target. Website visits are 112,731 as of August 31 and represents a +28% increase compared to last year (August 2017). TWS' social-medial audience also has increased to 113,665 as of August 31 and represents a 2% increase compared to last year (August 2017). Be sure to visit TWS website or its social media to read the latest articles, posts, and stories.

Finance and Business Relations. The Wildlife Society also continues to make steady gains on providing a sound financial footing for the Society. Part of the TWS strategy for financial security involves a mixture of sound accounting practices, conservative investments, and strong partnerships (Figure 2). Below is a brief summary of some of the major business-relations activities happening in this arena since the beginning of this fiscal year through August 2018.

- Net income from organizations and businesses is \$3K (-\$14K vs budget) through July but \$10K is due to the timing of invoicing vs budgeted month
- Added three new conference exhibitors, two Sponsors and one contributor. Total to date is five advertisers, 41 exhibitors, and 36 sponsors.
- TWS' "Drive for 44" organizational-units campaign has generated 30 donations or commitments for \$9,567.
- Invoiced \$19,950 in advertising and added a new commitment of \$19,250 for 2019 advertising.



Figure 2. Building business partnerships is an important part of TWS' strategic plan. Here, TWS CEO Ed Thompson visits with members of The 1,000, a group of TWS members who donate annually to the Society.

Photograph courtesy of The Wildlife Society

Government Affairs. The Program of Government Affairs and Partnerships is lead by Director Keith Norris. Director Norris and his team are responsible for overseeing TWS' policy activities, providing support to TWS Chapters and Sections on conservation policy issues, strategically expanding TWS' engagement with other organizations, and providing direction to the Society's professional development and certification programs. Below is a brief summary of key TWS Government Affairs activities since the beginning of this fiscal year through August 2018.

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Southwest Section Tracks

Fidel Hernández, Southwest Section Rep to Council (continued)

- Presented on the Recovering America's Wildlife Act and grassroots, professional-society member engagement with the American Fisheries Society (AFS) and the National Wildlife Federation at AFS' annual conference
- Developed and distributed resources for the Conservation Affairs Network in support of action related to the Senate version of Recovering America's Wildlife Act
- Collected member comments on proposed USFWS and NMFS regulatory revisions to the Endangered Species Act to inform TWS' comments
- Evaluated TWS' representation on AFWA committees and submitted nominations for 2018-2019

1ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AND ECOLOGY IN MEXICO

I know I noted this conference in my last newsletter, but I believe it is worth mentioning here again.



San Luis Potosi.

Photo courtesy Elizabeth Trevino

The first annual conference of wildlife management and ecology in Mexico is being organized. The conference will convene in San Luis Potosi, Mexico on **13–16 November 2018** and is being organized by long-time TWS members, **Dr. Luis Tarango** (Colegio de Postgraduados, San Luis Potosí, México) and **Dr. Raul Valdez** (New Mexico State University), along with a conference committee comprised of Mexican wildlife professionals. Estimated attendance is 350–450 participants and will be comprised of students, professors, researchers, biologists, landowners, and federal agency personnel. It is anticipated that about 20 Mexican universities will be in attendance. This national conference will be the first of its kind in Mexico and is devoted to Mexican wildlife. It is planned to convene annually with subsequent annual conferences being held in different cities of Mexico.

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Southwest Section Tracks

Fidel Hernández, Southwest Section Rep to Council (continued)

The goal of the conference is to form an established venue whereby Mexican wildlife professionals can learn, network, and engage professionally. As many of you know, there has been a perennial need in México for wildlife biologists to engage in the exchange of current wildlife-science knowledge not only of México but also North America. Presently, there are no effective means for Mexican professionals to become aware of the vast wildlife conservation efforts in North America or to engage with North American wildlife biologists. Drs. Tarango, Valdez, and the organizing committee wish to address these needs by 1) bringing together wildlife professionals in Mexico, 2) providing a venue for information exchange, professional development, and networking opportunities for Mexican wildlife biologists with peers and North American counterparts, and 3) increasing TWS presence and engagement in Mexico. Along with other Mexican organizations and government agencies, TWS has provided financial support for this conference. The call for abstracts and conference information may be found at the following website (<http://conferenciafaunasilvestre.com/>).

Well, that is all for now.

Until next time.

Fidel Hernández

1ST NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION

AMPHIBIANS / REPTILES / BIRDS / MAMMALS
THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR BIODIVERSITY

Meeting of professionals, managers,
students and general public interested in
the management and conservation of wildlife

**November
13-16, 2018**

San Luis Potosí, Mexico
Convention Center

Postgraduate and
Research Unit
Autonomous
University of
San Luis Potosí

INFORMATION:
<http://www.conferenciafaunasilvestre.com>
informacion@conferenciafaunasilvestre.com

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Luis Antonio Tarango Arámbula Ph. D. - President
(Postgraduate College, Campus S.L.P.)

Raul Valdez Ph. D. - Vice President
(New Mexico State University)
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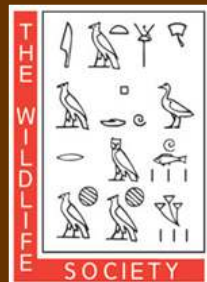
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Mexico

Maria I. Araujo International Affairs Director; Texas Parks & Wildlife

Mexico's state wildlife agencies along the US-Mexico Border and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department continue their traditional close working relationship.

The year began with participation in the Hunt Mexico Seminar sponsored by Safari Club International at the SCI convention to help Mexico showcase its hunting opportunities. Tamaulipas Governor Francisco Javier Garcia Cabeza de Vaca, Baja California Governor Francisco Arturo Vega de Lamadrid and Marco Antonio Valenzuela, Sonora Forestry and Game Department Director General, greeted convention visitors at the booths of their respective states.

In May, Marcelo Fernandez, Tamaulipas Hunting and Fishing Commissioner, attended the Lone Star Land Steward Awards ceremony in Austin where the Leopold Conservation Award for Texas was presented. As an implementation activity of the Tamaulipas-Texas Fisheries MOA, Tamaulipas biologists visited the Marine Development Center in Corpus Christi for a two-week professional development exchange focusing on red drum fish culture. The summer was busy. The Tamaulipas Hunting & Fishing Commission held the 2nd White-winged Dove Festival.

Mexico's Northeast states and the federal wildlife department, USDA-APHIS, and the Veterinary School of Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico met at Chaparral Wildlife Management Area in Texas to continue coordinating feral hog control and to discuss Eurasian collared dove as an emerging threat in the state of Coahuila and other areas. In addition, a number of proposals were discussed including potential Texas Parks and Wildlife internships for students from Mexico and a wildlife management workshop in Chihuahua City.

The Chihuahua Wildlife Department has scheduled the Wildlife Management Workshop for February 28-March 1, 2019. To be added to the invitation list, please send a message to maria.araujo@tpwd.texas.gov



Mexico and Texas wildlife agencies met at Chaparral Wildlife Management Area in South Texas to discuss a number of cross border projects and to plan the Wildlife Management Workshop to be held in Chihuahua City Feb. 28-March 1, 2019.

The decentralization of wildlife management functions to the six Mexican states on the U.S.-Mexico Border began in 2005, and the heads of these new state wildlife agencies appreciate the opportunity to write for the Director's Corner. Marcelo Fernandez, Tamaulipas Hunting & Fishing Commissioner, leads the way in this issue.

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Director's Corner

Marcelo Fernandez, Tamaulipas Mexico Hunting & Fishing Commissioner

We are celebrating the second year of the creation of the Hunting & Fishing Commission of Tamaulipas, a land full of history and traditions where the hunting legacy continues to be passed down from parents to children. The ecological diversity of the state is unique with mountainous oak forests, tropical jungles, the plains of the north and the rugged wetlands of the Laguna Madre.

Dove season is awesome, and we have the largest colony of white-winged doves in America with more than 18 million birds in the heart of the state. Reproduction is abundant every year and the doves grow strong throughout the season.



The White-winged Dove Festival is held the second Friday of August and marks the opening of dove season. It's like a fair where counties with dove hunting opportunities showcase their regional handcrafts, traditional food and folk music and dance. It has the feel of a big family reunion and closes with a trap and skeet competition.

Quail of Tamaulipas, famous for having the fastest and most explosive flight of all, continues to surprise the best hunters. Thirteen different types of ducks and three types of geese, millions of waterfowl spend the winter in Tamaulipas. With the arrival of spring, you can count on the gobblers of turkeys in each valley and mountain.

And most importantly, the white-tailed deer of Tamaulipas which includes three subspecies. The most coveted by hunters is in the northern part of the state where each season, great trophies are harvested of over 200 inches in Boone & Crockett score.

Ranches and hunting camps provide visitors camaraderie and personal attention. In almost every case, hunters receive quality service by the ranch owners in keeping with the Tamaulipas' long tradition of making visitors feel at home.

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Director's Corner (continued)

Marcelo Fernandez, Tamaulipas Mexico Hunting & Fishing Commissioner

Come to Tamaulipas and let us show you that, WE' RE BACK!



Tamaulipas Hunting & Fishing Commission booth at the Safari Club International convention in Las Vegas



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Share with Wildlife Program

Ginny Seamster - 2018 President SW Section of The Wildlife Society

2019 Projects Selected and 2018 Project Update

The Share with Wildlife Program at New Mexico Department of Game and Fish has selected 12 projects for funding in Fiscal Year 2019. These projects will all start in spring 2019. The program will be supporting three wildlife rehabilitation centers, two in northern New Mexico and one in southeastern New Mexico. It will support two education projects, one that focuses on getting thousands of students outside, collecting data in the bosque along the Rio Grande and one that will focus on water quality data collection and research on Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) with students at three schools in northern New Mexico.

There were also seven research projects, focused on a diversity of SGCN, selected for funding. Two deal with birds (the Bendire's thrasher and gray vireo); two with herps (SGCN amphibians, Arizona black rattlesnake); one with a mammal (Peñasco least chipmunk); and two with aquatic species (Chihuahua chub; SGCN springsnails). These projects will help address questions to which Department biologists need answers in order to better conserve and manage the species under their care. These questions include: what are the impacts of different arid land management practices on the nest and fledgling survival of the Bendire's thrasher? And what are the habitat associations of the Peñasco least chipmunk? The Bendire's thrasher has been in decline and much of the species' distribution is on private lands. More information on management practices beneficial to the species is needed to help stem its decline. The Peñasco least chipmunk is endemic to New Mexico and our understanding of its habitat needs has been evolving. More details are needed to identify conservation actions and best management practices to benefit this species within their distribution.

The 10 projects funded for 2018 are well underway. The river otter project, which is using non-invasive genetic techniques to evaluate the success of a river otter reintroduction performed 2008-2010 in northern New Mexico, identified more than 20 latrines where scat samples were collected to aid in development of estimates of otter abundance, density, and genetic diversity. Genetic analyses started this summer and data analysis will be completed this year. The surveys for western river cooter started in May and lead to detection of many turtles, both previously marked and unmarked, in the mark-recapture study being carried out by Dr. Ivana Mali and her team of graduate students at Eastern new Mexico University. Very exciting news this year is that a new population of turtles was detected in Chaves County, well north of any recent observations of live cooters. Ivana and her team were able to carry out a survey at this new site and caught multiple turtles, The first year of the Peñasco least chipmunk study mentioned previously is underway with a strong start.

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Share with Wildlife Program

Ginny Seamster - 2018 President SW Section of The Wildlife Society

2019 Projects Selected and 2018 Project Update (continued)

Surveys at 40 locations have led to capture of Peñasco least chipmunks at five of them. Given how few of these chipmunks have been seen or captured since 2000, this is an excellent beginning. Quantifying habitat features at these sites with successful captures will help to refine our current understanding of this species' habitat needs.

Work will continue to or past the end of 2018 for most of this year's projects. Contracts and other paperwork for the new projects will be getting underway and should be implemented by early 2019. If you have any questions about any Share with Wildlife projects or how to apply for funding in future years, please contact Ginny Seamster (virginia.seamster@state.nm.us).



Stormy skies of West Texas. Photo courtesy of Misty Sumner.

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Funding Conservation

Tad Theimer - 2018 President Elect SW Section of TWS

Recovering America's Wildlife Act

Arguably no legislation has had as large an impact on budgets of state wildlife agencies as the Pittman-Robertson (P-R) and Dingle-Johnson (D-J) Federal-Aid-in-Restoration Acts. We now have the opportunity to pass legislation similar to those two historic acts. Recovering America's Wildlife Act, with bills introduced to the House last December (H.R. 4647) and to the Senate this July (S. 3223), has the potential to provide \$1.3 billion in federal funding to support implementation of State Wildlife Action Plans (SWAPs). Compare that to the State Wildlife Grants programs that have funded these plans since 2000 at about \$50 to \$60 million annually, and you begin to realize the potential this legislation has for altering the funding available for these important programs. SWAPs are blueprints for the conservation of species deemed by states as those in greatest need of conservation, but lack of funding leaves the majority of those plans unimplemented and the species of concern increasingly vulnerable. Recovering America's Wildlife Act could change that by providing funding for conservation, restoration, and recovery programs for those species, as well as for law enforcement activities, conservation education and wildlife-associated recreation projects. Funding for the Recovering America's Wildlife Act would come from royalties from energy and mineral development on federal lands already being collected by the federal government. That funding source, already in place, has the advantage that no new taxes would be required, but it has left some uneasy with the idea of funding conservation through activities that themselves often threaten wildlife populations. Others may see it rather as a round-about form of mitigation for energy development on federal lands, while others focus on the practical issue of access to an existing, rich funding source for woefully underfunded conservation efforts. Similar to P-R and D-J funds, states would be required to provide matching funds at a rate of 25%, which for some states may be a challenge to meet, depending on budget constraints.

As with any legislation, introducing bills is only the first step, and from there bills can face amendment or die a slow death. It is critical, therefore, that these bills receive widespread support if they are to be enacted. The legislation has already received endorsements from both sides of the aisle with sponsors from both Democratic and Republican parties. In the House, 81 representatives have signed on as co-sponsors of the bill, including seven from Texas (Rep. Beto O'Rourke (TX-16), Rep. Gene Green (TX-29), Rep. Pete Sessions (TX-32), Rep. Henry Cuellar (TX-28), Rep. Kay Granger (TX-12), Rep. Filemon Vela (TX-34), Rep. Michael Burgess (TX-26)), one from Arizona (Rep. Kyrsten Sinema (AZ-9)), and one from New Mexico (Rep. Ben Ray Lujan (NM-3)). Unfortunately, an amendment to the Senate bill already has the potential to seriously weaken the legislation. Unlike the original House version of the bill, which designated that funding would be guaranteed to be available from year to year (dedicated funding), the Senate Wildlife website (<http://www.ournatureusa.com/>). Unfortunately you can't edit the letter and have to take the text as they have written it. It's more time consuming, but it is always best to write your own letter, and that way you can push for dedicated funding.

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Funding Conservation

Tad Theimer - 2018 President Elect SW Section of TWS

Recovering America's Wildlife Act (continued)

amendment called for funding to be reauthorized annually, leaving open the possibility that funding could be lost or reduced from year to year and thereby jeopardizing funding and planning for multi-year projects. To be effective, funding needs to be dedicated as it is in the House version, and as is the case for P-R and D-J funds. Therefore, support for the act should be tempered with the request that this Senate amendment be removed.

National TWS has provided further information on the Act here: <http://wildlife.org/policy/recovering-americas-wildlife-act/>. The full text of the bill introduced to the House can be found here: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/4647/text>. If you wish to contact your local representative to encourage them to support these bills, you can get a form letter that will automatically target your representatives at the Alliance for America's Fish and Wildlife website (<http://www.ournatureusa.com/>). Unfortunately you can't edit the letter and have to take the text as they have written it. It's more time consuming, but it is always best to write your own letter, and that way you can push for dedicated funding.



Grand Canyon National Park. Photo courtesy Jamie Killian.

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Student News

Southwestern Wildlife Graduate Student Scholarship

Call for Applications:

The Southwest Section of The Wildlife Society is soliciting applications for the *Southwestern Wildlife Student Scholarship*. This scholarship will be presented at either the 2019 Joint Annual Meeting of the New Mexico and Arizona Chapters of The Wildlife Society and the Arizona/New Mexico Chapter of the American Fisheries Society in Albuquerque, New Mexico or the 2019 Annual Meeting of the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society in Montgomery, Texas. Please submit nominations electronically by December 15th, 2018 to Ginny Seamster, virginia.seamster@state.nm.us.

Southwestern Wildlife Student Scholarship

Description:

The *Southwestern Wildlife Student Scholarship* is a new award in the amount of \$500. Starting in 2019, this scholarship will be given annually to a graduate student who is currently enrolled in a natural resource-oriented program at a college or university in Arizona, New Mexico, or Texas and is studying wildlife. Wildlife includes all fauna and habitat components, excluding fisheries-related studies. Applicants should have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.5. Women, members of minorities, or students who are the first in their family to attend graduate school are especially encouraged to apply. The Southwest Section's Geospatial Advisory Committee encourages exchange of information regarding the application of geospatial technology to wildlife research. In support of the work of this committee, students who are extensively utilizing geospatial data, including satellite imagery or other products of remote sensing technology, and/or generating their own geospatial products through the use of drones, are also encouraged to apply. Incorporation of these technologies in an applicant's graduate research is NOT required; applicants not using these technologies should still apply.

Application Format:

The application package should be addressed to the Southwest Section of The Wildlife Society Board and consists of a **cover letter** and current **resume**. The cover letter should be no longer than one page, and the resume no longer than two pages. Please use standard one inch margins and size 12 font. The application package should contain the following information:

In their **cover letter**, applicants should briefly describe their graduate research project, state their academic and professional goals, and include details on past and anticipated future contributions to the conservation of biodiversity in the Southwestern United States, including Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas, and elsewhere. Applicants should also provide information on relevant leadership experience, either through academic or professional experiences or extracurricular activities. Finally, applicants must provide a brief statement of financial need, including personal indebtedness related to



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Scholarship Opportunities (continued)

education, current scholarships, grants or assistantships, and whether the applicant has previously received the *Southwestern Wildlife Student Scholarship*.

Resumes should contain detailed information on educational experience including: field of study; college or university where currently enrolled and those previously attended; expected date of completion; completed relevant coursework; and cumulative grade point average. Additional information on honors, awards, and/or scholarships previously received is also appropriate. Resumes should also include information on professional experience, whether paid or volunteer, including employers, locations, time periods, and brief descriptions of work responsibilities.

Scholarship Criteria:

The Southwest Section of The Wildlife Society Board reviews applications and determines awardees through a ranked review process based on the following criteria:

Current cumulative grade point average and related educational experience and/or achievements receive the highest consideration during the review process.

Contribution(s) to the field, especially current and anticipated future contributions to the conservation of biodiversity in states within the Southwest Section, receive secondary consideration.

Demonstrated leadership through professional and/or academic experiences is also given consideration during the review process, as is the inclusion of geospatial data and/or technology in a student's graduate research project.

Demonstrated financial need and, in the interest of recognizing students from all states in the Southwest Section, the state of the prior year's scholarship recipient, are considered as final determinative factors to distinguish among applicants who may otherwise receive equal rankings during the review process.

Application Submittals:

Applications for the SWS of TWS *Southwestern Wildlife Student Scholarship* should be submitted electronically to: Ginny Seamster, President of the Southwest Section of The Wildlife Society at virginia.seamster@state.nm.us.

Please write *Southwestern Wildlife Student Scholarship* in the subject line and include the submittal package as one email attachment (pdf is preferred) using the following naming format:

Applicant Name_SWSTWS_SWScholarship_Year

Example: GinnySeamster_SWSTWS_SWScholarship_2019



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Helping Solve the Nature Deficiency Problem

Maria F. "Masi" Mejia & Tina Y. Buford

Education on Private Lands and How Students Learn Firsthand – The East Foundation Way

The East Foundation was formed in 2007 by Robert C. East's estate. Robert was one of three children born to Tom T. East and Alice Gertrudis Kleberg-East. The East Family saw the importance of conserving wildlife and our ranchlands for future generations in Texas, thus the Foundation's efforts are focused on cattle ranching, research, education and outreach.

Ranked 2nd in both population and size, Texas is a massive state with three cities with over 1 million people. State demographers project that the population could double by 2050. As our population goes up, demands on our natural resources rise and with 85% living in urban areas their connection to the land goes down along with their understanding and appreciation of open spaces.

This makes the East Foundation, whose mission is to support wildlife conservation and the other public benefits of ranching and private land stewardship, relevant – bridging the gap between a disconnected society and the working lands of Texas. With six ranches on 215,000 acres in South Texas, the Foundation accomplishes its mission through research, education, and outreach.

Our education program is based on the idea that an educated public understands the real value of wildlife conservation, along with the other public benefits of ranching and private land stewardship. One of our priorities is to expand educational opportunities in South Texas both within the classroom and on our working lands.

We partnered with the Texas Wildlife Association to develop and deploy natural resource, land stewardship focused, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills aligned curriculum within schools. Since beginning the partnership in 2014, we have reached 144,702 students across 12 counties in South Texas.



Photo courtesy Maria F. "Masi" Mejia.

Recognizing that students learn better when inspired by the outdoors, we bring yellow school buses to the Foundation's ranchlands for first-hand learning experiences. These programs help students gain a better understanding of how natural systems work. We get students onto our land through one of two ways:

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Education on Private Lands (continued)

Maria F. "Masi" Mejia & Tina Y. Buford

Field Lessons

A Field Lesson is a tailor-made educational experience built by working with teachers to develop an agenda that includes science topics that their students are weak in, along with our natural resource, land stewardship-based curriculum. Because of their interactive nature, field lessons bring to life how a working cattle ranch provides them with food, fiber, and water while providing habitat for wildlife. Within the last two years over 500 students have participated in East Foundation Field Lessons on our historic San Antonio Viejo Ranch, alone.

Behind the Gates

Behind the Gates (BTG) is a 5-day intensive learning experience where 350 students per day rotate through six stations lead by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Caesar Kleberg Research Institute, the Museum of South Texas History, IDEA Public Schools, East Foundation and the Texas Wildlife Association. Each station has an activity related to one of the following subjects: native wildlife, endangered species conservation, watershed management and impacts on water quality, cattle management, South Texas history, and technology used on ranches. The East Foundation hosts one BTG in the fall for students in Cameron and Hidalgo counties and one in the winter for students in Webb, Jim Hogg, and Brooks counties.



Photo courtesy Maria F. "Masi" Mejia.



Photo courtesy Maria F. "Masi" Mejia.

As our education program grows we continue to work on creating multiple learning opportunities that connect and build understanding of wildlife conservation and the other public benefits ranching and private land stewardship. We aim to achieve awareness of our natural resources, instill a stewardship ethic, and inspire students to act. Our challenge is to make sure our education efforts translate into measurable outcomes with high impact.



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Southwest Section News



Carol Chambers

Misty Sumner, Co-editor SWS Newsletter



There are not sufficient words to thank Carol Chambers for all she has done for the Southwest Section of The Wildlife Society.

Not content to just serve as a phenomenal Section Rep she also served as the SWS Newsletter Editor throughout that time period and after and brought about a powerful initiative in TWS' Women of Wildlife (WoW).

Voted in as Vice President by The Wildlife Society membership at the 2018 TWS Annual Conference, she now steps down as newsletter editor and on to even more responsibilities within The Wildlife Society.

We, and the entire TWS membership, are fortunate that she now sits on the TWS board and will assume the Presidency after serving as Vice President and President Elect.

Photo Courtesy of The Wildlife Society

These positions are just the tip of the iceberg of what Carol does for TWS and the profession. As a professor at Northern Arizona University, she doesn't just teach but mentors her students, performs research, created and maintains the premiere lab for ancient DNA being able to identify species from feces, works with bats, jumping mice and much, much more. As a testament to all she does to further diversity in the wildlife profession as well as within TWS, Carol Chambers was the recipient of The Wildlife Society's 2018 Diversity Award.

Congratulations Dr. Chambers. Keep on raising the bar!



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The Wildlife Society Southwest Section Chapters

Hub Facebook page has 779 followers. Check us out at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Wildlife-Society-Southwest-Section-Chapters-Hub/205755042835210>. A recent article on birdwatching captured >1100 readers' attention. **Bird watching is good for your brain—it can lower stress and boost mental health!** Check it out on FB or at <https://www.rodalorganiclifecommunity.com/wellbeing/health-benefits-of-bird-watching>



Find the latest news from the TWS office at the **TWS** Facebook page with almost 60,000 likes (<https://www.facebook.com/thewildlifesociety/?fref=ts>).

Most of the content being added to **TWS Women of Wildlife (WOW)** Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/TWS-Women-of-Wildlife/234411723382592>) is provided by volunteer Deniz Martinez. The page now has 1966 followers.

The WOW steering committee (many of whom are based in the Southwest Section) supported Minnesota TWS Chapter by providing ideas for adding a **WOW factor at their annual meeting**. The event was popular and inspired

<http://www.newsweek.com/women-science-journals-talent-836796>



Minnesota Chapter members network during their first Women of Wildlife event at their annual meeting in St. Cloud. ©Kelsey Jennings

by the annual TWS meeting last fall. See their story at our FB site or <http://wildlife.org/minnesota-celebrates-wow-factor-at-annual-meeting/>

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SWS Board & Committee Chairs

Current Board

President: **Ginny Seamster** virginia.seamster@state.nm.us 505-476-8111

President-Elect: **Tad Theimer** Tad.Theimer@nau.edu

Past President: **Warren Conway** warren.conway@ttu.edu 806-834-6579

Secretary: **Melanie Culver** melanieculver59@gmail.com

Treasurer: **Ryan O'Shaughnessy** rosshaughnessy@sulross.edu 432-837-8904

Southwest Section Representative to TWS Council

James Ramakka jramakka@aol.com 505-334-6140

Active Committees

Conservation Affairs:

Romey Swanson romeyswanson@gmail.com 512-667-8124

Geospatial Advisory Committee:

Leland Pierce leland.pierce@state.nm.us 505-476-8094 &

Ginny Seamster virginia.seamster@state.nm.us 505-476-8111

Newsletter:

Jamie Killian 7race13@gmail.com 830-480-9043 &

Misty Sumner mmiisstty@aol.com 254-702-1869

Women of Wildlife Committee:

Carol Chambers carol.chambers@nau.edu 928-523-0014

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Join!



Membership Application

Membership Fee \$5.00

First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix
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Mailing Address

City	State	Zip Code	Country
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E-mail address

Phone

Member Type (Please circle one): Student Regular Retired

Please include this form with your payment and mail to: Ryan O'Shaughnessy, Treasurer, Southwest Section of TWS, Assistant Professor, PO Box C-16, Alpine TX 78932.

Membership benefits for the Southwest Section TWS

- SWS TWS Newsletter
- Scholarship opportunities
- Section-level meetings and conferences
- Strengthen your connections to national TWS
- Peer connections through Listserv and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/wildlifesociety)
- Website information at <http://wildlife.org/sw-section/>

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Ryan O'Shaughnessy

Treasurer SWS TWS / Asst. Professor

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