

REPORT TO COUNCIL

DATE: 3 September 2018

REPORT TO: TWS Council

FROM: Krysten Zummo-Strong, Chair, Early Career Professional Working Group

SUBJECT: Request for Council Action

NOTE: *If further explanation is needed during the Council meeting, please call Paul Di Salvo (516-672-1949) who will be available by phone to answer questions.*

Dear Members of The Wildlife Society Council,

Last year's TWS Council approval of the addition of Mentorship categories to the CWB renewal application and Professional Development certificate application ignited the spark for conversation about a formal TWS Mentorship Program. The 2017 Annual Conference's All Working Group meeting was dominated by discussions about mentorship. Additionally, an informal morning gathering of 20+ members, TWS staff, and TWS Council during the conference further stimulated the enthusiasm for a formal program.

Since the 2017 Annual Conference, Paul Di Salvo (Board Member, Early Career Professionals Working Group), Susan Rupp, Krysten Zummo-Strong (Chair, ECPWG), and Kristi Confortin (Chair, Student Development Working Group) had frequent phone calls and email conversations about how to implement a formal mentorship program.

Through this year-long discussion, the draft **Mentorship For Life Strategic Plan** was developed (**attached supplement**). This document outlines the vision and mission of a mentorship program, gives the initiative a working title, and outlines the benefits and possible activities that the program would implement. Mentorship For Life transcends the boundaries of being solely an "ECP-issue" or "Working Group-issue" and is an important professional development resource and retention tool for **all TWS members**. Mentorship For Life can incorporate existing TWS

professional development activities, such as the Leadership Institute and CWB/AWB certification, into a more visible, engaging framework.

While this strategic plan provides a beginning framework with a variety of opportunities and directions for a mentorship program, the plan cannot be implemented further without guidance from TWS Council. After exploring many ideas, including a separate working group, a “United Nations” model of working groups, a subcommittee of the ECPWG, and informal conference activities, we decided these ideas were too specific to certain groups or demographics, when mentorship is an issue pertinent to all members. Therefore, we feel that TWS Council involvement is needed if the Mentorship for Life program is to be viable.

We hope that TWS Council can help steer the direction of how the Mentorship For Life program can fit into the existing TWS structure, engage and meet the professional development needs of all members, and be self-sustaining. Attached are **6 letters and emails of support** from TWS Working Groups, Chapters, and Sections, emphasizing the long-overdue need and desire for a mentorship program.

Therefore, the ECPWG asks TWS Council, through the authority given to the TWS President, to create an external subcommittee of TWS Council to explore and develop a formal Mentorship For Life program to enhance the professional development and networking offerings of The Wildlife Society.

“I, _____, move that the TWS Council charges the TWS President to create an external subcommittee to explore and develop a TWS Mentorship program. The TWS President will appoint members to the subcommittee and present the list of proposed members to TWS Council for approval.”