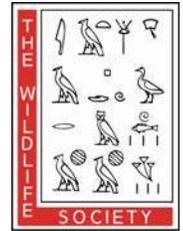




INTELLIGENT TINKERING

Wisconsin Chapter of The Wildlife Society Newsletter

To keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution of Intelligent Tinkering. – Aldo Leopold



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Call for Chapter Officer Nominations

We are looking for up to 4 nominations. They include President-Elect, Executive Board Delegate (2-year term), and possibly both Secretary and Treasurer (if the bylaw revisions are accepted).

Please see [page 8](#) if interested in running or if you know of someone to recommend.

SAVE THE DATE!

WCTWS Annual Winter Meeting February 25-27, 2020

All TWS, Wisconsin Chapter, and Student Chapter members are invited to participate in the upcoming WCTWS Annual Meeting at the Hotel Mead in Wisconsin Rapids on February 25-27, 2020. This year’s theme is “Stronger Together”

Meeting Highlights

- Two concurrent symposia on Herpetofauna and Ruffed Grouse (see page 5)
- Opening Plenary Session with a focus on professionalism and gender equity (see page 6)
- Issues Subcommittee meetings
- WCTWS Annual Business Meeting
- Contributed Poster and Paper Sessions (see page 4 for submission details)
- WCTWS Awards presentations (see page 6 for the call for nominations)
- Leopold Scholarship presentations (see page 7 for the call for nominations)
- Numerous social opportunities, including the Tuesday Evening Social, Morning and Afternoon Breaks, Lunches, Fundraiser, and Banquet

The First Call for Abstracts is available on page 4. Submission deadline is December 15, 2019.

A tentative schedule is available on page 4.

Meeting registration information will be going out to members soon via email and will also be made available on our webpage and Facebook page.

A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends to do otherwise. – Aldo Leopold

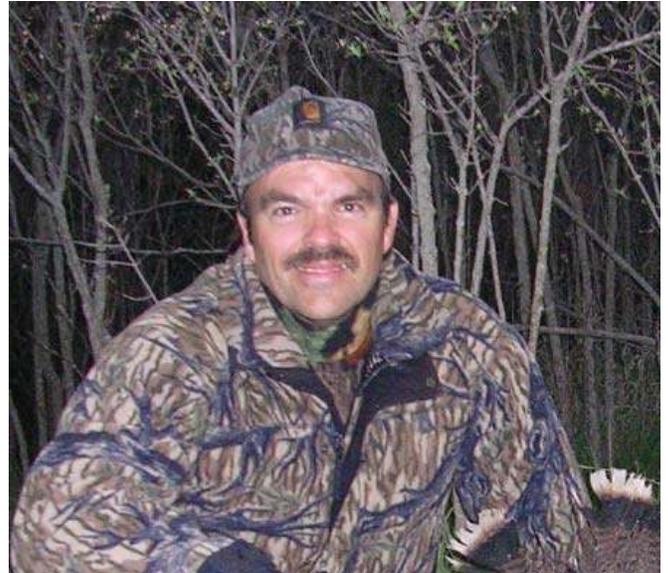
President's Soapbox

By Scott Hygnstrom

I hope you have been able to enjoy the fall and all it has to offer. The change in color, crispness in the air, warmth of a campfire, migrating birds, deer in the woods, muskies in the shallows, canoes on the quiet waters...whatever floats your boat. The sad thing is that it all goes away far too quickly, as the ponds freeze, swans signal the end of the migration, and the cold tends to push many of us indoors. Get out and enjoy it while you can!

Many of the Board and other members have been very active coordinating our upcoming WCTWS Annual Meeting, to be held in Wisconsin Rapids on February 25-27, 2020.

We are trying to express a little innovation by hosting two Concurrent Symposia on Herpetofauna and Ruffed Grouse on the first day that may bring some new interests and members through the door. The Opening Plenary Session will actively engage participants and make you think about gender equity in our profession. We have room for up to three Concurrent Sessions of Contributed Papers, which should provide something for everyone. Issues Subcommittees will meet to discuss several agenda items and all members are encouraged to join us in the WCTWS Annual Business Meeting. Elsewhere in this edition of *Intelligent Tinkering*, you will see calls for nominations for Executive Board positions and the WCTWS annual awards. I encourage you to think deeply about these, talk with others, sharpen your pen, and either step up yourself or write a letter of support for a deserving fellow member.



The revised WCTWS bylaws currently are out for a vote of acceptance by the membership. Please express your position by responding to one of the many email prompts to WCTWS members by Becky Brathal, Secretary/Treasurer. Many of the proposed changes are pretty mundane, but a few, such as a splitting of the Secretary/Treasurer position, change in the selection of the Student Board Representative, and change in the dues setting process should catch your attention. You have until November 30 to express your position, so get out and vote! Thanks to all who have voted or helped with the thankless process of reviewing, revising, and reviewing the bylaws again and again.

I am pleased to say that the first WCTWS Student-Professional Workshop held at Necedah National Wildlife Refuge on October 5 was a big success. Thanks go to chapter members Brad Strobel and Mark Pfof of the USFWS who served as instructors and the 20 students from UWSP and Northland College who participated. Even though it rained most of the day and a good share of our time was spent out in the soggy landscape, the students came away with some hands-on experiences in surveying, wetland restoration, distance sampling, and data analysis using R. Students also had an opportunity to meet with and get to know a few of our most notable wildlife professionals. I hope that this Student-Professional Workshop will be the first of many to be offered across the state in the future.

While it seems like many of the foreboding influences and urgency have lifted from issues in natural resources, we must still remain vigilant, attentive, and engaged. The WCTWS offers several opportunities for you to be involved

with other members of like interests through Standing and appointed Issues Committees. Standing Committees are recognized in our bylaws and include: Nominating and Elections, Membership, Information and Education, Audit, Public Comment, Fundraising and Investments, Awards, and Leopold Scholarships. Issues Subcommittees currently include: Climate Change, Deer Management, Farm-Wildlife, Forestry, Furbearer Issues, Government Affairs, and Wolf Management. Certainly there is something here for everyone, but if there isn't something here that trips your trigger, approach the Board and we may establish a new Issues Subcommittee. The strength of any organization is in its membership and committees are the most efficient and effective way in which members can get involved and influence change. Get involved!

Hey, while I was banging away at the keyboard, the clouds lifted and the sun is now shining. Melting snow is dripping off the roof and it appears to be a good time to get outside to enjoy a bit of what is left of this fall. I hope you can too!

SAVE THE DATE!
WCTWS Annual Meeting
February 25-27, 2020

By Scott Hygnstrom, President

All TWS, Wisconsin Chapter, and Student Chapter members are invited to participate in the upcoming WCTWS Annual Meeting at the Hotel Mead in Wisconsin Rapids on February 25-27, 2020.

We also are spreading our wings and inviting nonmembers to participate in two concurrent symposia on Herpetofauna and Ruffed Grouse on February 25 with hopes that participants see the benefits of becoming members of WCTWS.

The Annual Meeting will provide tremendous opportunities to see old friends and network with fellow members, students, and new acquaintances. Highlighted social opportunities include the Tuesday Evening Social, Morning and Afternoon Breaks, Lunches, Fundraiser, and Annual Awards Banquet. The Opening Plenary Session this year will focus on professionalism and gender equity issues, which is particularly timely, considering the recent articles on gender equity in *The Wildlife Professional*. At the Issues Subcommittee meetings (Climate Change, Deer Management, Farm-Wildlife, Forestry, Furbearer Issues, Wolf Management), you will be able to meet with members of common interest and have an opportunity to move the needle on issues of your choice. At the WCTWS Annual Business Meeting you will be able to meet with over 100 WCTWS members and consider new issues for the Board and membership to address.

Last, but not least, you will be able to participate in several Contributed Poster and Paper Sessions to catch up on current issues, research, and management techniques. A Call for Abstracts is available elsewhere in this edition of *Intelligent Tinkering* that will open the door to you presenting such information with colleagues. Other articles will provide details on other aspects of the 2020 Annual Meeting.

Below is a tentative schedule for your planning efforts. I look forward to seeing you in Rapids!

WCTWS 2020 Annual Meeting Tentative Schedule

February 25, 2020

9:00 am – 4:00 pm Concurrent Symposia on Herpetofauna and Ruffed Grouse
6:30 pm – 9:00 pm Tuesday Evening Social, Poster and Vendor Displays

February 26, 2020

8:30 am – 11:00 am Opening Plenary Session
11:00 am – 12:00 pm Issues Subcommittee Meetings
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm Concurrent (2-3) Contributed Paper Sessions
4:00 pm – 5:30 pm WCTWS Annual Business Meeting
6:00 pm – 9:00 pm Wednesday Evening Social, Fundraiser, and Annual Awards Banquet

February 27, 2020

8:00 am – 12:00 pm Concurrent (2-3) Contributed Paper Sessions

First Call for Abstracts *WCTWS Winter Meeting 2020*

By Robert Holsman, President-Elect

The Wisconsin Chapter of The Wildlife Society is looking for interesting presentations and posters for our annual winter meeting being held February 25-27th, 2020 at the Mead Hotel and Convention Center in Wisconsin Rapids.

This year's meeting will host two day-long special symposia on Ruffed Grouse and on Herps to kick off the meeting. Organizers are accepting talks for these sessions to be held on Tuesday, February 25th. In addition, we are seeking presentations from undergraduate and graduate students for general sessions on Wednesday, Feb 26th, and from other professionals on Thursday, Feb 27th.

Presentation submissions are sought for a variety of topics including research, policy, education, management, professional development, or interesting projects.

Submit your presentations online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WCTWS2020>

The deadline for abstracts is **December 15th, 2019**.

Questions about submissions can be emailed to Robert Holsman at robert.holsman@wisconsin.gov

WCTWS Winter Meeting Symposia Summaries

Get Off that Log (and come to our Ruffed Grouse Symposium)!

By Jason Riddle, Acting Past President

As part of the 2020 WCTWS Winter Meeting, we will be hosting the Upper Midwest Ruffed Grouse Symposium. It will occur on February 25th, which is the first day of the Winter Meeting. The primary objective of the meeting is to identify the regional status, management, and research needs of ruffed grouse.

We will have morning and early afternoon talks, followed by a couple of hours of breakout sessions in which we would develop a brief statement that summarizes the current status, management, and research needs in our region. We also hope to publish this statement along with extended symposium abstracts in *The Passenger Pigeon*.

We are anticipating attendees and speakers from Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. We already have a commitment from Dr. Benjamin Jones, President and CEO of the Ruffed Grouse Society & American Woodcock Society, to speak at our event. We hope to see as many of you in attendance as possible! If you have any questions, please contact members of the Steering Committee: Chris Pollentier (Christopher.Pollentier@wisconsin.gov), Mark Witecha (Mark.Witecha@wisconsin.gov), Jon Steigerwaldt (Jons@ruffedgrousesociety.org), or myself (Jason.Riddle@uwsp.edu).

Herpetology Symposium

*By Jennifer Summers, Program Development Specialist, Wisconsin Center for Wildlife,
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point*

Opening day of The Wisconsin Chapter of The Wildlife Society's (WCTWS) 2020 meeting features an all-day Herpetology Symposium dedicated to research, management, and ecology of midwestern herptiles. Andrew Badje (Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources [WDNR]) and Jennifer Summers (Wisconsin Center for Wildlife) are organizing a symposium dedicated to providing an opportunity for herpetologists to meet, collaborate, present research, and discuss current affairs in herpetology.

The symposium will include thirteen presentations, including invited speakers from around the state, and contributed abstracts. The symposium will conclude with a panel discussion. The proceedings will be published after the symposium in an appropriate publication (e.g. WDNR Research Report).

We invite anyone interested in presenting their research to submit an abstract online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WCTWS2020>. If you have any questions about the symposium, please contact Jennifer Summers at jsummers@uwsp.edu or Andrew Badje at Andrew.Badje@wisconsin.gov. Students welcome! Posters will be presented during the opening evening social. Participation in the symposium is included with the meeting registration fee. This symposium is open to anyone with an interest in research and ecology of herptiles in the Midwest. Hope to see you there!

Incoming TWS President to Kick Off Plenary at Winter Meeting

By Jennifer Merems

Carol Chambers, current President-Elect of The Wildlife Society, will be joining us in Wisconsin Rapids this February as part of the Plenary session. Carol is currently a Professor in Wildlife Ecology at Northern Arizona University (NAU) School of Forestry. Carol's research focuses on habitat relationships of charismatic microfauna including bats, small mammals, and diurnal breeding birds. Throughout her education and career, Carol noticed the lack of women faculty in wildlife and forestry and following the lead of a mentor at Oregon State University, she helped initiate gatherings for women students at NAU. She also helped start a women's network with The Wildlife Society called Women of Wildlife. Carol is co-editing a book on Women in Wildlife Science: Building a Diverse Future targeting an audience of wildlife professionals, professors, and students in public and private sectors.



As wildlife ecologists, we understand the importance of diversity in our ecological communities and our work strives to protect the natural diversity of species. Carol believes that protecting diversity and the uniqueness of species and individuals does not end when we leave 'the field' but is also necessary in our profession. In Wisconsin Rapids, Carol will give us *1406 Reasons Why Diversity is Important* an enlightening tale on the importance of representing the full range of human qualities and attributes in our profession. The parallels between human and wildlife diversity are many, and like diverse communities of wildlife, diverse groups of people raise different questions; questions that drive science, and that move science forward. Just as we recognize and correct for our biases in our work, we must recognize our bias in the office and create connections, take action, and be allies to underrepresented groups in to advance our understanding of wildlife ecology and management. We drive science forward when "we" represents all of us. We couldn't be more pleased to have Carol joining us in Wisconsin Rapids to ask and answer, as Leopold did whether "...the Globe can remain stable without the deliberate retention of diversity. All I can say is I doubt it."

A big thanks to Tim Van Deelen and his lab for their leadership and financial support in planning this year's plenary session.

Call for WCTWS Award Nominations

By Derek Johnson, WCTWS Awards Committee Chair

The WCTWS Awards Committee is seeking nominations for chapter recognition at the annual Winter Meeting. We all work with fantastic wildlife professionals that are worthy of recognition by their peers. **Please think of the deserving people that you know and nominate them today.**

The Wisconsin Award is our chapter's highest recognition of a person or group that exemplifies the wildlife profession in our state. The award is intended to be given out annually and nominees are rated on the basis of their

overall achievement or service to the wildlife profession in the fields of management, research, teaching, public relations, or legislative direction. Nominees may be any member of the wildlife profession and its supporting disciplines including members of governing bodies. Michael Foy was the 2019 recipient of this award.

The Don Rusch Memorial Award is presented annually to a nominee who has made an outstanding contribution to wildlife conservation and meets the following requirements: 1) A wildlife professional actively working in the field of management, research, or education in the State of Wisconsin. 2) A member in good standing of the Wisconsin Chapter of TWS. 3) An active participant in or a strong supporter of the role of hunting in wildlife conservation.

An **Honorary Membership** to the WCTWS can be presented to anyone in recognition of their achievements by a majority vote of the Chapter members in good standing. While allowed by the Bylaws, we haven't exercised this opportunity for quite some time. Please give it some thought.

Nominees are judged on the significance of their contribution to wildlife conservation in the state of Wisconsin for either the short /or long term. The person selected for this award will be the type of individual who is recognized by their peers as an excellent representative of a working wildlife professional. Dr. Scott Walter was the 2019 recipient of the Don Rusch Award.

To submit nominations for these prestigious awards please provide a statement of nomination and any relevant supporting information to Awards Committee Chair Derek Johnson at johnsondj959@gmail.com.

Submission deadline: January 12, 2020

We all know deserving, dedicated people who put their hearts and souls into the wildlife profession. Please nominate them today!

Call for Aldo Leopold Scholarship Nominations

By Lesa Kardash, Leopold Scholarship Committee Chair

The Aldo Leopold Memorial Scholarship provides support and recognition for future wildlife researchers and managers who are continuing their professional training. A total of \$4,000 in scholarships will be awarded to graduate and/or undergraduate students who have made a commitment to the wildlife profession and have shown exceptional commitment to developing themselves professionally. The Committee will determine the number and funding allotted to individual scholarships awarded.

Applicants should be: currently enrolled at a technical school, college, or university within Wisconsin; be majoring in wildlife management, ecology, zoology, biology, or related field, and have a minimum G.P.A. of 3.0.

To apply, students must submit the following: 1) Letter of application, including a statement of professional goals and philosophy, and a summary of experiences or activities that relate to and show a commitment to wildlife conservation; 2) official copy of college/university transcripts; and 3) Two letters of recommendation.

Nomination materials should be emailed no later than **January 12, 2020** to: Lesa Kardash, skuldt@uwalumni.com

A Saucy Call to All Y'all

By Jason Riddle, WCTWS Acting Past President

Just like the McRibb®, I'm back. That's right folks, as interim Past President, I'm chairing the Nominations Committee and it's that time of year again!

This year, we are looking for up to 4 nominations. The first is for President-Elect. This is ultimately a three-year commitment with one year as President-Elect, one year as President, and a final year as Past President. I served in these capacities a few years ago. Now that I'm sitting in again as interim Past President, I'd be lying if I said I didn't miss it. It is truly a wonderful way to serve your fellow wildlifers and a great way to get to know other wildlifers on the Board.

We also have an Executive Board Delegate position that is being vacated by Shawn Crimmins due to the end of his term. This is great way to ease into service on the Executive Board. It is a two-year commitment, but there are no specific requirements as opposed to the other officer positions – just a willingness to serve.

If the bylaw revisions are accepted by general membership (don't forget to vote!), then the Secretary/Treasurer position will be split into two positions. While the mechanics of that split might require some discussion, a likely scenario would be that the current officer, Becky Brathal, would retain the Treasurer role as the paperwork already is in place for her to make financial transactions. As such, the incoming officer would likely assume the role of Secretary for the next two years.

Finally, the Student Representative will rotate to UW-Madison again this year. If the changes to the bylaws are accepted, then each Student Chapter would have the flexibility to nominate the Student Representative from their own ranks when it is that Chapter's year. In the past, the bylaws required that the Student Chapter President assume the role of Student Representative.

We will forward a slate of candidates for an election in January so that we have 30 days to conduct the election and can announce the new Board members at the WCTWS Annual Business Meeting on February 26, 2020. Please let me know if you are interested or would like to nominate someone!

Thanks!

2019 WCTWS Student-Professional Workshop Necedah NWR, October 5, 2019

By Joe Quehl and Brilyn Brecka, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
Student Chapter Members

Weather for Saturday, October 5 showed rain, wind, and cold temperatures. However, that did not stop Northland College and UW - Stevens Point students from attending a Student Professional Workshop at the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge. The Wisconsin Chapter of The Wildlife Society sponsored the workshop with the objective of offering hands-on experiences for students. The day-long workshop focused on areas of work such as distance sampling, habitat monitoring, surveying, and wetland classification. Brad Strobel, Wildlife Biologist and Mark Pfof, Private Lands Biologist with the US Fish and Wildlife Service led the group of students in exploring the field techniques.

When we arrived at Necedah, we explored the beautiful, informative Visitor Center before settling in for the long day ahead of us. Once everyone was settled, Brad and Mark introduced themselves and gave an overview of their jobs and the refuge in general. Not long after, we were split into two groups. One would stay in the warm building for an hour or so and work with Brad while the other group ventured to the cold, wet swamp with Mark.

Students who decided to brave the rain were introduced to a laser level. Mark explained how to use the device and we practiced before receiving a wetland restoration scenario. Some of us were asked to create a wetland scrape for a client and some were to build a ditch plug. Armed with waders, a laser level, and a job book, we took to the wetland to complete our tasks. To build the wetland scrape, we needed to map out an area that was favorable to wetland species, fit the wants of our client, and stay within our budget. Once we determined the area and shape of the scrape, we were tasked with calculating the volume of our wetland and prices. Another component to this situation was creating habitat for all wildlife, and not just the ducks for the client. From



Figure 1. Private Lands Biologist Mark Pfof instructing students on how to use a laser level before they begin mapping out their respective

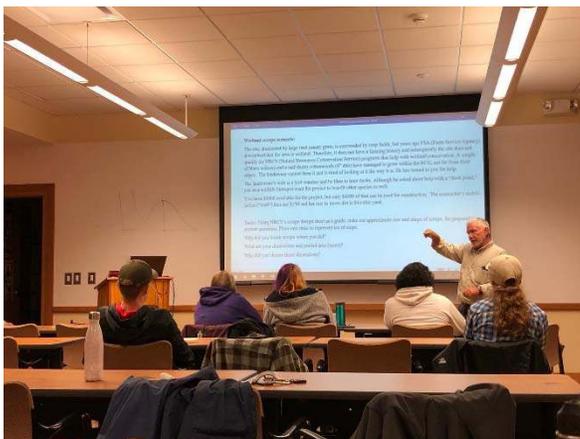


Figure 2. Mark leading a discussion about why we conducted each management action.

our budget, \$1000 was set aside to use at our discretion to provide habitat for other wetland dependent species. While this was going on, the other group of students was building a ditch plug, which is a slightly different way of creating the same wildlife habitat. For this exercise, we were responsible for plugging up an offshoot of a river to create a larger more static system. With our laser level we were responsible for mapping the changes in elevation and depth of the ditch. The next part required a little more math. We then had to figure out how much fill we would need to fill the ditch. Once we had this information, we began determining the expected flooding and calculating the size of the wetland the plug would create. After each of these exercises, we hung up our dripping clothes in the Visitor Center and discussed if the price of each management action

would be worth the effort and how wildlife would use each.

Students working with Brad were shown a survey technique used frequently at the refuge for a variety of species. Distance sampling involves walking transects to determine the density of a certain species of interest in an area. At Necedah, one species of concern is the Karner blue butterfly. We tried this technique of sampling by walking transects in the prairie and looking for little colored plastic frogs while collecting data using ArcCollector. This allowed us to practice measuring distances of the animals from the transect and determine our detection rates. After we trudged back to the building, we were able to analyze our results using R Studio.

Overall this workshop was a great event for networking with professionals in the field and also up-and-coming peers from across the state. In the forming stages of this workshop, Dr. Scott Hygnstrom would like to make this an annual event to provide a setting for students to network and learn valuable hands on skills. We hope to recreate this event next year and begin a tradition of having a Student-Professional Workshop every fall, so that new

and old students from all three TWS student chapters in the state have the opportunity to meet each other. Each year to make logistics easier for all chapters, we will try to and rotate the workshop location so that each year it is more centrally located to a different student chapter. Next year, we hope to move the workshop up to the northwoods so that the Northland students do not have to drive so far! By creating this annual event, we hope to promote unity among our student chapters and get the students among each of the chapters to interact more.

This event provided a great opportunity for the presidents of the student chapters to meet and talk about opportunities to get the chapters more engaged and work together on projects or events. At each chapter, we have unique projects and specialties. Northland's student chapter has the opportunity to work more with wolves and other woodland obligate species, while, Madison's chapter has the ability to work with animals that come from a more urban or suburban setting. Stevens Point's chapter is unique in that they have a wide range of independent research projects that span throughout central Wisconsin. All of these projects offer unique opportunities to any student no matter the chapter and we think that all students throughout the state should be able to collaborate on these opportunities to gain valuable experience. Another step in the path of collaboration is to host joint workshops. These events would be entirely student organized and managed. They would be just another way for students to learn valuable hard and soft skills within the profession. By creating and organizing these types of events, we hope to achieve the goal of having a more unified student body within the Wisconsin Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

As students who attended the workshop, we thought it was a great experience for all who attended, even with the weather being less than stellar. Students had a great time learning how to assess wildlife populations and how to manage wetlands on private lands. In addition to these experiences, the



Figure 3. Students from Northland and UWSP practicing distance sampling in a prairie for the elusive colored frogs.

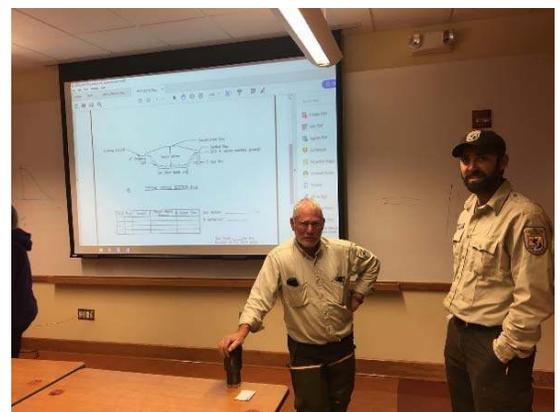


Figure 4. Mark Pfof (left) and Brad Strobel (right) recouping after a long day of teaching students through the rain and cold.

relationships and contacts made at the Student Professional Workshop likely will lead to more collaboration among all three of the student chapters. All aimed at providing more opportunities and learning experiences for students across the state of Wisconsin. Lastly, from all students and WCTWS board members, we would like to thank the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge staff and anyone else who helped organize this event!

ByLaws Revision Process Update

By Becky Brathal, Secretary/Treasurer

The WCTWS bylaws revisions currently are up for a vote of approval by Chapter members. I sent the current draft with proposed revisions to all WCTWS members by email on October 29, 2019, followed by a couple of reminders. Please review the draft and proposed revisions and then click on the link to the survey https://s.surveymonkey.com/k_N54iF4 so that you can either 1) *approve of the revisions* or 2) *disapprove of the revisions*. A *Comments* section is included for you to provide suggestions. The survey will close November 30th, 2019.

Many inert editorial revisions were made to improve the flow and style of the WCTWS bylaws. Other revisions were included to bring the draft in line with the current TWS bylaws. The major changes to the bylaws that must be considered include the following:

Modification of the Mission and Objectives (Article I and II)

Changes in the Dues structure (Article IV, Section 4)

Splitting of the Secretary-Treasurer position (Article V, Section 3, Clauses D and E)

Changes in the Student Representative position (Article V, Section 3, Clause G)

Renamed Issues Subcommittees to Conservation Affairs Subcommittees (Article VIII, Section 2, Clause C)

Added a Special Recognition Award (Article IX, Section 1, Clause D).

We appreciate the efforts of the Bylaws Committee members, including Alan Crossley, John Olson, and Jeremy Holtz for their reviews and suggestions.

Act now...the survey will close November 30th, 2019!

INTELLIGENT TINKERING

Published by Wisconsin Chapter of The Wildlife Society. TWS is an international nonprofit organization of wildlife professionals. Subscriptions available with Chapter membership. The editor invites comments and articles for possible publication. Email submissions to: skuldt@uwalumni.com

Submission Deadline: Spring Issue: 3/1/20

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