

Nebraska Chapter of The Wildlife Society
Annual Business Meeting
February 22, 2022
Notes



2021-2022 NETWS Board

President-elect: Andrew Little (2021-2022)

President: Will Inselman (2021-2022)

Past-president: Shelly McPherron (2021-2022)*

Secretary: Jennifer Corman (2021-2023)

Treasurer: Matthew Gruntorad (2020-2022)

At-large board members: Sarah Nevison (2020-2022)*, Jenny Prenosil (2020-2022)*, Larkin Powell (2021-2023), Chelsea Forehead (2021-2023)

Newly elected board members

At-large board members: Sarah Nevison (2022-2024), Jon Soper (2022-2024)

President-elect: Erin Considine

*Outgoing board members: position filled by vote in previous week.

Will Inselman called the virtual Zoom meeting to order at 12:02 pm CT

All board members introduced themselves with the position they hold on the board and their professional position. Attending board members: Erin Considine, Jen Corman, Chelsea Forehead, Matt Gruntorad, Will Inselman, Andy Little, Shelly McPherron, Sarah Nevison.

About 38 members participated in the virtual meeting.

Secretary's Report

Corman summarized the 2021 Annual Business Meeting while sharing the meeting notes on the screen for attendees to follow along. Summary highlighted primary topics of discussion, new policies or changes in policy, and action items. There were no additions or discussion requests from attendees. Sarah Nevison motioned to approve minutes. Andy Little seconded. Minutes approved by unanimous voice vote.

Treasurer's Report

End of Year Report: NETWS's net worth is now \$41,758.02, up from \$35,145.17 last year. This year's income included a delayed payment for NGPC staff's annual conference registrations in 2019 and 2020. Because of the virtual format for the annual meeting, income from registrations, booth exhibitors, etc. were absent. However, expenses were low, at just \$515, because there were no expenses for catering, facility rental, or keynote speaker travel. Expenses for the annual meeting did include "facility expenses" for the photo contest and auction web platforms. The only discretionary expense was a member's reimbursement for TWS certification.

2022 proposed budget: Similar to last year's budget, due to the virtual format for the 2022 annual meeting. The chapter did purchase auction items this year, totaling \$500. The budget

includes \$500 for lobbying and \$1,025 to reimburse members for TWS certification. Total budgeted expenses are \$1,485.00 and total budgeted income is \$2,400.00.

With healthy checking and savings accounts, the board has been discussing the best use of funds. They want to ensure that the organization uses funds to benefit members. The board welcomes suggestions from members and encouraged meeting attendees to add suggestions to the Jamboard (online meeting interface) for consideration. The board can designate funds at any time of year in response to funding requests.

Chelsea Forehead motioned to accept the proposed budget. Jessica Jurzenski seconded. Budget approved by a unanimous voice vote.

Committee Reports

Nominating Committee, chair Shelly Mcpherron: Elections closed last week. Erin Considine was elected president-elect, Matt Gruntorad was re-elected Treasurer, Sarah Nevison was re-elected board member at-large, and Jon Soper is a new at-large board member.

Membership Committee, chair Shaun Dunn: We currently have 110 members, up from 93 members last year. Presentations on TWS certification recruited some new members.

Programs Committee, chair Andy Little: Big “Thank You” to everyone pulling together for a virtual annual meeting this year. For the next three years we will hold the annual meeting as an in-person event at the Younes Conference Center in Kearney.

Conservation Review Committee, chair Eric Zach: Larkin Powell and Carl Wolfe submitted a letter on behalf of the NETWS board to major newspapers across the state. The letter supported the “30x30 Initiative” (a.k.a. America the Beautiful Plan) and provided a positive perspective on the initiative. The legislative session has been quiet. One bill of concern is LB1135, which would limit the ability of private landowners to establish a conservation easement on their property. The committee is monitoring project funding evaluations at the Nebraska Environmental Trust. NETWS is also exploring a potential cooperative agreement with Ducks Unlimited and Audubon to support a conservation lobbyist. The committee is currently seeking a retired member of NETWS to be its lobbying voice.

Greg Wright asked if NETWS could provide standard wording for bills it supports or opposes, for example a letter for members to send to their legislators in support of the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act or to oppose LB1135. Will Inselman stated that the board is exploring automated letter writing or letter templates that can be customized by members to contact legislators.

Information and Education Committee, chair Erin Considine: Amanda Ciurij and Erin Considine put together two newsletters emailed out to members for April 2021 and January 2022. They have also updated the NETWS web page. Members should please let Considine know if they have any ideas or requests. She is still looking for help with social media. Contact Amanda Ciurej (NETWS newsletter editor) with items to include in the newsletter. Note that the newsletter is not published frequently, so avoid timely announcements and events.

Awards Committee, chair Andy Little: This year we had nominees for both Professional of the Year and Career Professional; this is an improvement because last year we had no nominees for either award. NETWS lists past award recipients on its website. Members should please review the list and let Little know if they see anything that is missing or needs correction.

Certification Committee, chair Carl Wolfe: 30 people in the chapter are certified. Out of those 30, nine are retired, “which means there is a huge group of old geezers sitting down and not doing a lot.” Members should encourage peers, colleagues, and friends to join the chapter and, if possible, to get certified. It is important for the professional side of wildlife conservation to be represented. The process is now transparent and well documented with information available on how to do it, and financial support in the form of NETWS partial reimbursement for chapter members’ certification.

Student Chapter Reports

UNL - Kaitlyn Dozler, Vice President: Covid was a major challenge in 2020 with little participation in virtual meetings, but 2021 is much improved and the club averages about 20 students at each meeting. Activities included their annual canoe and camping trip to the Niobrara National Scenic River, working with the Fly Fishing Club, Range Club, and other groups for collaborative events, stream cleanup on Dead Man’s Run, deer and bird aging workshops, and volunteer nights through CASNR to teach campus community about wildlife. Speakers included Chasin’ the Dream TV and wildlife career path presentations. A representative from the Big Game Society will also come to speak. Undergrads and grad students discuss work and learning opportunities. The club is planning the first End of Year Banquet that they have had in two years.

UNK - Phoebe Dunbar, President: The club is excited to be back to doing things in person again. 2021 was a rebuilding year focused on social events, skills-building events, and networking between students and professors. The club averaged 10-15 students at most of their events. Events included a fishing night, board game night, owl pellet dissection, fox necropsy, radio telemetry, and trivia nights.

Wayne State College - Madison Jenkins, President: As for the other schools, the covid pandemic reduced membership and participation, especially in the first semester. Wayne held a Club Fest and that provided an opportunity to recruit new members. The second semester was better for membership. Ed Brogie talked to the club about eBird. The club also helped support a symposium at the school’s Museum of Natural History. The club meeting for March will be a tour and behind-the-scenes view of the museum. Looking forward to hosting Sarah Nevison, of NGPC and TWS at-large board member, as a speaker.

Chadron State College - Chelsea Forehead proxied with their report: The club had good member recruitment in 2021-2022. Events included assisting at NGPC deer check stations, car smash stress relief, assisting with NGPC grouse surveys, a big game feed, a bird banding demo, and assisting with a Special Youth Challenge (SYC) deer hunt and processing of the deer afterward. Students attended meetings on job applications and career paths. Sarah Nevison gave a talk on career advice. Events scheduled for this spring: an SYC turkey hunt, mist-netting with USFS, tree and shrub planting, NGPC grouse surveys, and some students will be attending the

Nebraska Forest Service's Wildland Fire Academy. Most of the opportunities offered by NETWS are located in the eastern half of the state, 5-9 hours away, and are too far to attend.

Central Mountains and Plains Section

Shelly Deisch explained how CMPS fits into the organizational structure of TWS. CMPS can be the connection between NETWS and national TWS if there is trouble communicating. CMPS does not have NETWS member emails, so NETWS leadership should forward relevant emails to NETWS membership. CMPS experienced difficulties with their bank account this year so NETWS members should be patient when paying membership dues.

CMPS's annual meeting was this February with the Kansas chapter as part of the Kansas Natural Resource Conference in February 2022; 400 people attended. CMPS provided funding, ran a student quiz bowl, hosted a silent auction, moderated some sessions, and offered a workshop on certification. CMPS has a liaison, Dr. David Haukos, for certification. Next year CMPS will hold its annual conference with Colorado. They confer three awards each year and offer student travel grants to the national meeting in November.

Old Business

The NETWS board has established a Student Engagement Committee and connected individual board members with each student chapter and the Biology Club at Peru State College. Members should please let the board know if they would like to be involved with student chapters or coordinate an event to engage students.

New Business

Audubon and Ducks Unlimited released a video that addresses LB1135 as a potential road block for landowners and wildlife conservation, because it allows county officials to deny conservation easements and limits easement lengths to 99 years. Carl Wolfe proposed a contest for student chapters to take the video to their communities, NRD boards, etc. to provide their perspectives on the bill and speak to organizations and agencies they might be working with in their future careers. Perhaps NETWS could provide an award for the student chapter that gives the most presentations.

NETWS will host Lunch with a Professional tomorrow.

Amanda Ciurej requested allocating some funding for advertising and holding trainings and workshops for skills development that could count towards TWS Certification. Specifically, she would like to request funding and support to host an internationally recognized Wildlife Tracker Certification course: <https://trackercertification.com/>. Amanda is willing to coordinate the effort. She noted that no one in Nebraska is certified for instructing on tracking. She will write a written proposal, send it to Andy Little, and join the next quarterly board meeting to discuss the specifics.

Will Inselman introduced Andy Little as the new President and will now transition to Past-President.

Chelsea Forehead moved to adjourn the meeting. Andy Little seconded. Unanimous approval by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 1:29 pm CT.

2022-2023 NETWS Board Members

- President-elect: Erin Considine*
- President: Andy Little
- Past President: Will Inselman
- Treasurer: Matt Gruntorad
- Secretary: Jen Corman
- At-Large members: Sarah Nevison*, Jon Soper*, Chelsea Forehead, Larkin Powell

*Newly elected board members

2022 NETWS Award winners

Joe Gabig Award (presented by Chris Chizinski): Katherine Graham
Professional of the Year (presented by Andy Little): John Laux
Career Professional of the Year (presented by Andy Little): Dan Schulz
 There was no Student Poster session this year because the annual meeting was virtual.

CMPS and National Awards Presented by Stephanie Ferrero

CMPS Executive Group Achievement Award: Rainwater Basin Joint Venture
TWS Distinguished Service Award: Greg Schenbeck
TWS Conservation Education Award: Dennis Ferraro

Photo Contest Winners

Wildlife category: John Sidle
 Plants and Scenery: Jen Corman
 Education in Working Landscapes: Phoebe Dunbar
 Wildlife Profession from a student perspective: Phoebe Dunbar
 Best in Show: Marissa Jensen

2022 Auction Items

Auction Item	Donated By:
Nebraska State Park permit	Purchased by NETWS
Family Experience at Lincoln Children’s Zoo	Purchased by NETWS
Family Experience at Omaha’s Henry Doorly Zoo	Purchased by NETWS
Two-night stay at a Nebraska state park	Purchased by NETWS
C.G. Pritchard print: Bob White	Phyllis Bachman via Larkin Powell
C.G. Pritchard print: Golden-crowned Kinglets	Phyllis Bachman via Larkin Powell
C.G. Pritchard print: Red Crossbills	Phyllis Bachman via Larkin Powell
C.G. Pritchard print: Bohemian Waxwing	Phyllis Bachman via Larkin Powell
C.G. Pritchard print: Mallards in Flight	Phyllis Bachman via Larkin Powell
Lana Koepke Johnson quilted fabric collage: Mr. Dodo	Shaun Dunn
Metal sign: Pheasant Crossing	Pheasants Forever