

Executive Board Meeting Minutes
Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society
Virtual Teams Meeting
3 October 2023

ATTENDEES

<u>Executive Board</u>	<u>Position</u>
Kelly Douglass	President
Dr. Dan Greene	President-elect
Dr. Lisa Muller	SE Section Rep to Council

Board members not in attendance: Dr. Ray Iglay (Past President) and Lynn Lewis (Secretary/Treasurer).

Members in attendance: Katie Edwards, Vanessa Lane, Mercedes Maddox, Bronson Strickland, Lora Smith, Christina Wampler, Scott Klopfer, Travis DeVault, Jamie Feddersen, Marcella Kelly, Michel Kohl, Derek Colbert.

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 P.M. EST.

Welcome and Opening: Kelly Douglass welcomed everyone.

Meeting Minutes: No meeting minutes were received. Kelly Douglass tabled review of the last Board meeting minutes (10 April 2023) and will send the final version via email to Board members for their review and acceptance.

Secretary's Report: We currently have 625 SETWS members. Kelly Douglass and Dan Greene took notes, since Lynn Lewis was not in attendance, and drafted the meeting minutes.

Treasurer's Report: No Treasurer's Report was received, but Lynn Lewis shared her budgeting excel spreadsheet with Kelly who gave updated account balance. The current account balance is \$38,296.93. The current Fur Resources Committee funds balance is \$3,333.21. One outstanding check for the field course is pending, for \$6,375.00, which puts the current available balance at \$28,588.72.

Lynn Lewis provided Kelly with the 2023 budget, covering the calendar year to date (1 January 2023 – 28 September 2023) predicted and actual income and expenses, which Kelly reviewed for the group. The Section continues to maintain a self-mandated baseline balance of \$10,000 in our account, to cover average Section expenditures for two calendar years if necessary. Dues income is on par with last year (membership remains relatively the same) although it remains below the estimated \$6,000 in income; the Section should receive the remainder of anticipated membership dues (for Quarter 3) from The Wildlife Society in mid-October. Monetary student awards (\$700), the Newsletter Editor/Webmaster (\$1,500), and any plaque/award costs (up to \$350) will

be expended at the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife (SEAFWA) Conference 15-18 October 2023 or shortly thereafter (but before the end of the calendar year). The SEAFWA did not request funds for hosting their annual conference, and since it is also not being held in the Southeastern Region, that budget line item remains \$0. The Wildlife Society (TWS) also did not request funds for hosting the 2023 TWS Conference, although the conference is being held within the Southeastern Region; therefore, the allocated \$1,000 funds have not yet been expended. Funds for the 2023 Southeastern Wildlife Conclave, at Cleveland State Community College on 16-18 March 2023, were not requested (\$1,000 line item) by the hosting student chapter this year, thus the funds remain unexpended for this calendar year. Funds to support the 2023 SETWS Wildlife and Forestry Field Techniques Course were fully expended, for a total of \$22,472.83. Although it appears the Section went over budget on this line item (estimated expenditures were \$19,000), part of this expense included a payment to Castleton University that was overlooked in 2022 and paid in 2023; once that expenditure was taken into account, 2023 expenditures were close to the \$19,000 in planned expenditures.

Newsletter Update: Katie Edwards continues to serve as Newsletter Editor & Webmaster and provided a verbal update. The fall issue of the newsletter will be published Sunday 8 October 2023, after submission of the president's address this week. The issue will include candidate biographies and a ballot for the upcoming elections. Katie requested newsletter submissions from state and student chapters, to augment newsletter content in future issues.

SE Section Rep to Council: Lisa Muller provided a verbal report. TWS continues to plan for the annual conference in Louisville, KY 5-9 November 2023. TWS leadership is looking for volunteers on committees and requesting input on the draft strategic plan. Lisa's first term as SE Section Rep to Council ends at the 2024 TWS Conference.

Committee Reports

Standing Committees

Audit: Rachael Urbanek is chair. No report. Committee activities will resume in January 2024 with the transition of Secretary/Treasurer.

Conservation Affairs: Lisa Lord is chair. Lisa has served as chair of this committee for four years and will be stepping down in December 2023. She is currently polling the committee members for interest for a potential replacement chair, starting in January 2024.

Deer: Steve Shea is chair. No report.

Fur Resources: Colleen Olfenbuttel is chair. No report.

Membership: Jake Shurba is chair. No report. Jake is currently populating his committee. The committee is staffed by state chapter Section Reps. If a state chapter does not have a Section Rep position/officer, they can delegate a person to serve in this role. Jake is currently reviewing the Section roster to clarify the residency and/or professional activity of members with mailing addresses found geographically outside of Section boundaries, for voting status (member,

affiliate, etc.) in the upcoming election. The committee is also assessing how we can recruit more TWS members located in the Southeast to become members of SETWS.

Nominating: Dan Greene is chair. Ray Iglay and Kelly Douglass are committee members. Elections will open within the next month. Two positions will be filled: President-elect and Secretary/Treasurer. Two candidates each have accepted their nominations: Dr. Rachel Urbanek and Dr. Travis DeVault for President-Elect, and Dr. Vanessa Lane and Dr. Kristine Evans for Secretary/Treasurer. Dan is working with Aniket Gajare, TWS Software Developer, to assist the Section with an online voting platform. Election materials (candidate biographies and ballot) will be published in the upcoming newsletter. Voting instructions will be emailed to Section members, with the link to the online voting platform, when the election opens, most likely within the next few weeks.

Publication [Awards]: Lora Smith is chair. A written report was submitted. Micah Perkins (Owensboro Community and Technical College) and Aubrey Greene (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission) serve on the committee. Lora has served on the committee since 2018. Seven wildlife manuscripts were published in the 2023 *Journal of Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies*. The committee reviewed the seven manuscripts and selected the paper by Beau A. Bauer, Richard M. Kaminski, Patrick D. Gerard, Ernie P. Wiggers, and J. Drew Lanham titled “Aquatic Invertebrate Biomass in Coastal South Carolina Impoundments Managed for Waterfowl” for the SEAFWA 2023 Outstanding Technical Paper Award. The winner will be announced at the SEAFWA Conference awards banquet in Corpus Christi.

[Resolutions and] Bylaws: Ray Iglay is chair. No report. There are numerous revisions that need to be made to the bylaws; the Board will review the bylaws in 2024 and propose changes in 2024-2025.

[Student] Awards: Andy Madison is chair. No report. Andy will not be able to attend the SEAFWA Conference this year, so Kelly and Lisa Muller will coordinate the student presentation and poster judging in his stead. The committee received five applications for Best Student Chapter Award this year and has selected a winner, which will be announced along with the Best Student Poster Award and Best Student Presentation Award at the SEAFWA Conference awards banquet. Kelly Douglass will assist with preparing the award certificates.

Wildlife Management Excellence Award (WMEA): Travis DeVault is chair. No nominations were received this year. A few ideas for encouraging nominations next year were discussed; discussions will continue with the WMEA committee in 2024.

Ad-hoc Committees

SETWS Field Course: Dan Greene is chair. Dan provided a verbal update. Seventeen students attended the 2023 SETWS Wildlife & Forestry Field Techniques Course; these students were from 15 colleges/universities in 10 states and included two graduate students and two ‘second career’ students. Nine students received partial or full funding via state chapter sponsored scholarships. In the inaugural two years, 34 students have attended the field course (18 male, 16

female) from 22 universities in 12 states. More than 50 individuals from The Jones Center and the SETWS were involved in hosting the field course. The Section is unlikely to host a field course in 2024 and may shift to hosting the course biennially.

Joint Party Committees

CW Watson Award: Chris Racey is chair. Lisa Muller's term on this committee ended June 2023; Vanessa Lane was appointed to replace her as Section Rep on this committee. Vanessa will serve a 3-year term, ending summer 2026, and will automatically serve as chair of this committee in her last year. No report. The committee is currently reviewing nominations and will announce the winner of the CW Watson Award at the SEAFWA Conference awards banquet on 17 October 2023.

Wetland Wildlife: Jamie Feddersen is chair. Jamie provided a verbal update. No new activity has occurred since the last update. There is not a Wetland Wildlife committee meeting scheduled at the upcoming SEAFWA conference.

Section Representatives on SEAFWA Committees/Journals

Minorities in Natural Resources Conservation (MINRC): Dr. Marcella Kelly is Section Rep on this committee. Marcella and Mercedes Maddox (MINRC Committee Vice-Chair) provided a verbal update. The MINRC Committee is technically a SEAFWA committee but has always functioned more like a joint party committee. In order to define and strengthen the relationship between SEAFWA and SETWS on minority issues, a new member position was established on the MINRC Committee to serve as the SETWS Rep. Dr. Marcella Kelly was appointed to serve in this capacity. The MINRC Committee is currently working through scholarship and fellow applications; they had applicants from almost all Southeastern states. There will be 23 fellows at the SEAFWA Conference this year. MINRC is also hosting a professional workshop on the afternoon of Monday 16 October 2013 at the conference, entitled "Relevancy – Advancing the Conservation Profession Through Inclusion." Lisa Muller will serve on the panel discussion as a representative for the Southeastern Section of TWS.

Journal of SEAFWA: Dr. Dan Greene (Weyerhaeuser) is Associate Editor. Dr. Ray Iglay (Mississippi State University) is Assistant Editor. Dan provided a verbal update. Ray started his term Assistant Editor this year. Twenty-four wildlife manuscripts were submitted this year; reviews are underway.

Section Representatives on TWS Committees/Boards

The Wildlife Professional Editorial Advisory Board: Matt Chopp is Section Rep on this board. No report. Kelly's meeting invitation to Matt bounced back; she will follow up with Matt via the email address listed for him in the Section roster.

Certification Review Board: Brett Dunlap is Section Rep on this board. No report.

Retired Wildlife Professionals Committee: TWS Past President Bruce Tompson (current chair of the TWS Retired Wildlife Professionals Committee) requested a Section rep to serve on this committee. Dean Stauffer was appointed in June 2023 to fill the vacated term of Dr. Bruce Leopold who passed away in September 2022. Dean will fill the unexpired term through fall 2023 and will remain in that position to assume a full 3-year term after that (ending fall 2026). No report.

Conference Planning – Special Sessions Subcommittee: TWS President Don Yasuda requested a Section rep to serve on this committee (as subcommittee chair) for 2023. Noelle Thompson was appointed in February 2023. No report.

Conference Planning – Poster Subcommittee: TWS President Don Yasuda requested a Section rep to serve on this committee (as subcommittee chair) for 2023. Matthew Springer was appointed in April 2023. No report.

State Chapter Updates

Alabama: Mercedes Maddox (AL Chapter President-elect) provided a verbal update. Her term as President begins 1 January 2024 (term is one year). The AL Chapter annual meeting was held in August and focused on drone applications in the field. USDA showed how they use drones for feral swine control. They had one of the highest attendance rates for an annual meeting post-covid. They also held a professional and student mixer with speed networking and received a presentation from one of the students that attended the SETWS field course. The AL Chapter is very supportive of the SETWS field course and committed to sponsoring a person next year to attend (student or early career professional). The Chapter started their third year of their mentor program; the last few years have been very successful, with 10 plus mentor pairs. This year, they have developed several committees – membership, awards, conservation policy, outreach, and social media. Nick Sharp received the Wildlife Biologist of the Year Award. Eric Soran received the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Georgia: Vanessa Lane (ABAC student chapter advisor) and Michel Kohl (GA Chapter President-elect) provided a verbal update. The GA Chapter annual meeting was held in Macon this year and will be held in Dahlonga in 2024. The first day of the meeting included presentations and the second day included field trips. GA was very successful at conclave this year; UGA won quiz bowl. ABAC will not attend the SEAFWA Conference this year because of limited budgets, but they will attend the TWS Conference in Louisville. UGA will only have a few individuals in attendance at SEAFWA because of the travel distance to Corpus Christi, TX. The GA Chapter is considering the potential to hold a joint AL-GA Annual Meeting in 2025.

Kentucky: Nothing to report.

Mississippi: Bronson Strickland (MS Chapter President) provided a verbal update. Their annual meeting was held three weeks ago, for the first time in three years (for an in-person meeting). The meeting was oriented towards students to give them the opportunity to give a presentation in a professional/friendly environment. They had 16 presentations (11 were students, 5 were professionals) and had an agency/organization update. Dr. Kristine Evans received the Sam K.

Riffell Award for Conservation Excellence. Randy Spencer received the Dale H. Arner Honorary Membership Award.

North Carolina: Kelsey Pistner is the Section Rep. A written report was submitted. The Chapter's annual meeting will be held at the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly in Black Mountain on 2-4 April 2024. The meeting theme is 'Partnerships in Habitat Conservation for At-risk Species'. Haywood Community College's 16th Annual Brook and Beast Feast is Friday 27 October 2023 at 6pm at the Smoky Mountain Event Center (aka Haywood County Fairgrounds); this is the student chapter's annual fundraising event. The Chapter has a new online store where members (and non-members) can purchase shirts, hoodies, decals, koozies, and other great swag with the new Chapter logo: <https://my-store-bdff14-2.creator-spring.com/>. For additional news and upcoming events, check out the summer newsletter (*NC Wildlifer*) on the Chapter website at www.nctws.org/wordpress/. The Nature Conservancy is bringing the Hunters of Color Program to North Carolina; the Chapter will be making a small monetary contribution to help start the program and are hoping to have members become more involved moving forward, either as mentors or volunteers.

Tennessee: Lisa Muller (Southeastern Section Rep to Council) provided a verbal update. Brett Dunlap received the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Virginia: Marcella Kelly (Virginia Tech student chapter advisor) provided a verbal update. The VA Chapter held its annual meeting in February 2023, with approximately 120 in attendance. Nancy Moncrief received the Achievement Award this year.

Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, Maryland/Delaware, Oklahoma, and South Carolina state chapters were not in attendance.

New Business

Southeastern Wildlife Conclave: Murray State University will be hosting the 2024 Southeastern Wildlife Conclave on 14-16 March 2024 in Murray, KY. Andrea Darracq, the student chapter advisor, submitted a written request to the Board on 6 September 2023 for donations to support conclave. Kelly tabled the vote to be conducted via email at a later time, since all Board members were not in attendance.

Kelly emailed a motion to the SETWS Executive Board on 3 October 2023 to support the 2024 Southeastern Wildlife Conclave at \$1,000, as per the planned expenditures for this calendar year. Dan Greene seconded the motion; all were in favor and the motion passed on 4 October 2023. Kelly informed Murray State University via email on 4 October 2023.

TWS Conference Travel Grant: Discussions were had on potentially creating a travel grant for SETWS members, to either the SEAFWA Conference or TWS Conference. Vanessa Lane suggested keeping the travel grant focused on undergraduate students, because of the increased opportunity for travel for graduate students.

Kelly emailed the SETWS Executive Board on 4 October 2023 to poll board members regarding needed for financial support from the Section to travel to/attend the TWS Conference in Louisville, KY. Since no members expressed a need, and since TWS did not request financial support from the SETWS for the conference (\$1000 line item in the budget), Kelly proposed the line-item amount be used to support the Out in the Field (OiTF) initiative at the 2023 TWS Conference [the line item is specifically allocated/saved for years in which the TWS conference is held in Section boundaries]. Lisa supported the proposal and made a motion to sponsor the OiTF initiative at \$1,000 this year since TWS conference is located in our Section. Kelly seconded the motion.

Lisa also made a motion, in the same email string as the motion above, to allocate \$500 annually for a diversity award to help support a student or early career professional to attend the SETWS field course. Kelly seconded the motion.

Discussions were lengthy and thoughtful, and included the following alternate ideas:

- To award travel grants (general undergrad, diversity, early career) to the SEAFWA and/or TWS Conferences
- To award service awards (among multiple categories such as service to students, chapter, and section) to SETWS members
- To provide field course support and/or sponsorships
- To provide support for other TWS organization units (any level) to include a larger fraction of DEI initiatives
- To cover the costs for an invited speaker at the conference or field course
- To co-host state chapter events
- To host a workshop for SETWS members
- To co-fund a symposium
- To pay someone to manage a portion of Section funds in an investment account
- To support an annual conference for SETWS members outside of the SEAFWA Conference

These alternatives could include opportunities for member engagement through the nomination process, developing scholarships/awards that are openly competitive and dedicated to members who truly need the funds (i.e., would not attend the conference/course without financial support from the Section), and would allow for additional planning considerations for annual/periodic donations in the Section budget.

Voting closed on 12 October 2023 with a majority voting in favor for both motions. The motions passed. Kelly informed Colleen Olfenbuttel, one of the OiTF organizers, of the SETWS \$1,000 donation on 12 October 2023. Kelly agreed that the Section should develop procedures for gifting donations, as well as if/how to spend unrequested line items in the budget, in the future, and proposed that the Board to make the new diversity award (process for implementation, etc.) and budgeting procedures a topic of discussion for the next board meeting.

Other Business

Field Equipment Exchange: Michel Kohl is working to develop a field equipment exchange program in Georgia for students and will be creating and sharing a document that lists field equipment that could be available for new projects.

Subunit Communication: To increase communication among the Section's organization units, a short discussion was held to brainstorm ideas. Conclave was identified as a good forum for giving updates and increasing communication, especially with the 35 student chapters in the Southeast. Advisors could provide additional updates to the SETWS more often on student chapter activities. The same schools tend to show up year after year at the SEAFWA Conference; it would be good to reach out to state chapters and student chapter advisors to encourage attendance from other student chapters as well (advertise the travel grant if/when it is created, etc.).

Dan Greene motioned to adjourn; Lisa Muller seconded. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 3:37 PM ET.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Lewis
SETWS Secretary/Treasurer