



THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

SOUTHWEST SECTION NEWSLETTER

Spring 2025 - Arizona, New Mexico, Texas & Mexico

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SOUTHWEST SECTION NEWSLETTER

Spring 2025 - Arizona, New Mexico, Texas & Mexico

President's Message

RYAN LUNA - SOUTHWEST SECTION PRESIDENT



I have deep ties to the southwest as my family homesteaded in New Mexico in the early 1900's. I was born and raised in New Mexico and spent most of my childhood exploring the mountains adjoining our property and other public lands. I also stayed in the region for all my degrees. I attended Texas Tech University for my under-graduate work, University of Texas at San Antonio for my Master's, and Texas State University for my Doctorate. I have a deep passion for the Southwest's flora and fauna and am happy to serve this region for the next year as your SW Section President.

Greetings Southwest Section of the Wildlife Society!

I want to thank section members for giving me an opportunity to serve you for the next year as your president. For those unfamiliar with me, I currently serve as the Department Chair of Natural Sciences and the Kelly R. Thompson Professor of Quail Management at Sul Ross State University and the Borderlands Research Institute in Alpine, Texas. My research primarily targets scaled quail, Gambel's quail and Montezuma or Mearns quail.

I would be remiss not to bring up concerns that many of our members are currently facing. As the federal workforce is under-going downsizing and restructuring, many of you may be facing uncertain futures. The Wildlife Society stands with our members and colleagues that may be affected by these changes. Our parent society has created a page for members to utilize titled [Tips & Resources for Federal Employee Terminations](#). I urge all members to peruse the page to become informed and see where they may be able to assist.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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On a positive note, for the second year in a row, we were able to award a \$1,000 student scholarship. This year we received 33 applicants, more than doubling the 15 applicants we had last year. Dylan Stewart, a Ph.D. fellow studying ungulate spatial ecology in the Department of Rangeland, Wildlife, and fisheries Management at Texas A&M University was the scholarship recipient. Dylan's research is the first study to assess survival, space use, and group dynamics related to disease transmission, and habitat selection of transplanted desert bighorn sheep in Sonora, Mexico. This research is part of a larger project targeting the reestablishment and supplementation of desert bighorn sheep to regions of Sonora, Mexico. Congratulations Dylan on your scholarship and we look forward to seeing the results of your research.

I would like to thank Nicole Tatman for her leadership over the past year and her continued involvement with the chapter. Regarding leadership for the next year, Tiffany Sprague will be your president elect. Tiffany currently serves as the Heritage Data Program Manager for Arizona Game and Fish and is based in Phoenix, Arizona. Our past president, Nicole Tatman, is the Big Game Program Management for New Mexico Department of Game and Fish in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Our secretary for the next year is Levi Heffelfinger. Levi is the Director of North Texas Research Program based in Lubbock, Texas for the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute. Megan Clayton will serve as Treasurer for another year. Megan is a Professor and Extension Range Specialist with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and is based in Uvalde, Texas.

Editors for our newsletters are Robert Corkren and Madeleine Kaleta. Robert is currently a graduate student at Texas A&M university in the Department of Rangeland, Wildlife and Fisheries Management. Madeleine is the SW Regional Wildlife Biologist for New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. I would like to thank our Section leadership for their continued contributions to the society and the impacts they make for conservation of our Southwestern region.

In closing, I look forward to working with the Southwest Section board members to serve you. I also encourage all members to get involved with your state section, Southwest Section, and our parent Wildlife Society. It is an honor and privilege to serve as your Section President.

-Ryan Luna



SOUTHWEST SECTION NEWS

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Southwest Section Tracks

KATHY GRANILLO – SOUTHWEST SECTION REPRESENTATIVE



You know the saying “the only thing you can count on are death and taxes”? I’d like to add another thing to the list – voting. And it’s that time of year again. Time to vote for the top leadership of TWS. All members of TWS can vote – please exercise that right. Each year, every member can vote for the next Vice President of TWS. That person spends their first year on Council as the VP, then the next year as President-Elect, the third year as President, and their fourth year as Past President.

It is a large time commitment on their part – 4 years of active participation in leading our professional society. Your part, voting, only takes a few minutes. First, check out the two candidates – read their short essays and then cast your vote. Please help determine who our next leader will be. You can review the slate of candidates and their statements at: <https://wildlife.org/2025-tws-elections/>

Electronic ballots will be sent by June 1 to all members with an email address. Members without an email address will receive a paper ballot in the mail. Voting will close June 30. Mailed paper ballots must be postmarked on or before June 30.

In accordance with TWS’ Bylaws, newly elected council members are scheduled

to be installed at the next regular meeting of Council during the 32nd Annual Conference, from Oct. 5-9 in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

Speaking of the Annual Conference, registration will open sometime in June. Be sure to register early to take advantage of the early-bird discounted registration fee. The North American Society for Bat Research (NASBR) is also bringing its conference to Canada this fall and will overlap with TWS. Join us as we explore exciting crossover networking and educational opportunities with our friends at NASBR.

The conference is in Canada, and those traveling to/from Canada will need to have a valid passport. Check your passport expiration date – renewals can take up to 4 months. We hope to see many of you at the conference.



SOUTHWEST SECTION NEWS

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Southwest Section Tracks

The Wildlife Society regularly revisits policy priorities for the U.S. This often coincides with U.S. administration changes. TWS President Rodgers charged the Policy Priorities Committee with this task in January. The Committee solicited input from TWS staff, Working Groups, and also reviewed the policy priorities of our partner organizations. The final priorities were approved by TWS Council on March 10.

These priorities will remain in effect until January 2027 or until otherwise amended by TWS Council:

1. Work to maintain and enhance sources of funding available to wildlife professionals to implement on-the-ground conservation of wildlife and their habitats.
2. Defend and advance the role of science and the expertise of wildlife professionals in wildlife policy and decision making.
3. Advocate for legislation which enables wildlife professionals to sustain and enhance the conservation of biological diversity.

While these priorities and associated principles assist TWS staff and Council in prioritizing how time and resources are best allotted, staff will continue TWS' commitment to monitoring emerging issues in line with the Society's policy engagement principles on behalf of the profession.

TWS recognizes that the new U.S. administration is attempting an overhaul of the federal government.

TWS wants you to know that we stand with our members and colleagues affected by recent federal workforce reductions. We recognize the critical role federal employees play in wildlife conservation and understand the challenges these changes bring. TWS is committed to advocating for and providing resources to support your professional and personal well-being during this time.

If you are a federal agency employee, TWS now has a [website](#) that has information on membership extensions, career opportunities, policy engagement and more.

If you are a terminated federal employee, TWS may extend or provide a membership for six months free of charge. Email membership@wildlife.org to take advantage of this offer. Membership in TWS gives you access to a tool kit for taking action, the job board, and help with your resume. Click [here](#) for TWS federal resources.

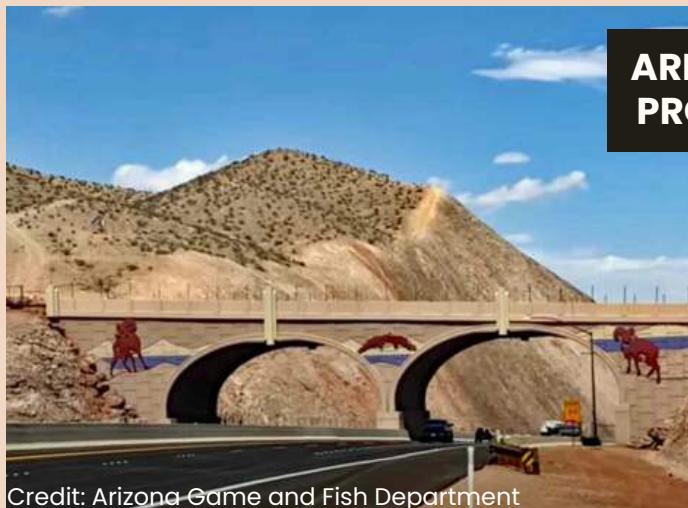
As always, please feel free to email me at kgbirder55@gmail.com.

-Kathy Granillo

CHAPTER NEWS

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Arizona News



Credit: Arizona Game and Fish Department

ARIZONA IS MAKING ROOM FOR NATURE: PROTECTING HABITATS AND HIGHWAYS

Southern Arizona is on track to get its first Urban National Wildlife Refuge along the Santa Cruz River—protecting rare habitats, historic lands, and providing more space for both wildlife and people.

Additionally, in northern Arizona, a new wildlife bridge over I-17 will give elk, bears, and mountain lions a safer passage—connecting ecosystems and making roads safer for all.

TUCSON'S URBAN BOBCATS: LIVING AMONG US

In Tucson, a recent study examined bobcat survival in urban environments, providing insight into human-wildlife coexistence. Through the Bobcats in Tucson Research Project, researchers found that bobcats are often choosing to raise their kittens in urban backyards, returning to the same yard each year. This project also revealed that mothers share home ranges with their daughters.



Credit: The Wildlife Society, Chris Wesselman



Credit: The Wildlife Society, Jacob Bopp

DROUGHT AND DIET: TEQUILA BATS ADAPT TO DRY TIMES

In the face of drought, Mexico's lesser long-nosed bats are shifting their diet. Once reliant on agave nectar, these "tequila bats" are now turning to insects and even sugar water from backyard feeders. Research by Mallory Davies of the University of Arizona reveals how climate change and urbanization are affecting these bats' feeding habits.



CHAPTER NEWS

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Arizona-New Mexico News



Credit: BioGraphic, Chirsitina Shelby

SCIENCE GUIDES GEOGRAPHY OF MEXICAN WOLF RECOVERY

This study supports recovery efforts of the endangered Mexican wolf within its historical range. Despite calls to extend the recovery area north of the historic range boundary (Interstate 40), population viability and genetic studies found that this area is unnecessary for successful recovery. With over 250 wolves in the U.S. and thriving genetic diversity, recovery efforts, including an innovative pup fostering program, are already proving successful.

PREDICTING PUP-REARING HABITAT FOR MEXICAN WOLVES

Predictive models were developed to identify suitable den and rendezvous sites – critical areas for pup-rearing. It was found that Mexican wolves prefer higher elevations, steep and rugged terrain, proximity to permanent water, and low human disturbance for their dens. Wolves also preferred higher elevations and access to water for rendezvous sites. These models can help improve survey efforts and provide more reliable outcomes.

Alternative Views on Recent Research on Mexican Wolf Genetics and Recovery

CLEMENT ET AL. 2024:

Evaluation of Potential inbreeding depression in wild mexican wolves

A recent study on the genetic health of the endangered Mexican wolf found that despite high inbreeding levels, there is little evidence of inbreeding depression affecting recovery. From 2010 to 2022, the population grew by 384% with stable inbreeding levels and a healthy pup production rate, suggesting that current management practices are effectively supporting genetic health and growth.

HENDRICK ET AL. 2025:

Genetics and Inbreeding in Mexican Wolf Recovery: A response to Clement et al. 2024

A response to Clement et al. (2024) challenges their conclusion that inbreeding depression is absent in wild Mexican wolves, citing evidence of its effects on traits like body size and fertility. The critique suggests that supplemental feeding may mask genetic issues. The authors advocate for genetic rescue through range expansion and interbreeding with northern gray wolves.

CLEMENT ET AL. 2025:

Reply to Hedrick et al. on Mexican Wolf Recovery

Clement et al. respond to Hedrick et al.'s critique, stating that their 2024 study found no link between inbreeding and pup recruitment in Mexican wolves. Their larger dataset shows a thriving population, and they argue that hybridizing with northern gray wolves is unnecessary and could harm the subspecies. They also found no evidence of inbreeding depression in food caches or litter data, supporting current recovery efforts.



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New Mexico News



Credit: TWS

OWL ABOUT MIXING IT UP: **SPOTTED OWLS PREFER DIVERSITY IN THEIR FOREST DISTURBANCES**

Spotted Owls in New Mexico are all about variety. GPS tracking revealed that they prefer forests with a mix of disturbances—like areas affected by fire, insects, and timber harvest—over uniform or severely burned forests. The owls favored landscapes with structural diversity, including patches with downed wood and edges between different forest types, highlighting the importance of habitat variety for their survival.

HOME BODIED: **MEXICAN SPOTTED OWLS STICK CLOSE TO PROTECTED AREAS**

To assess how well federally designated Protected Activity Centers (PACs) support the needs of Mexican Spotted Owls, 22 owls were fitted with GPS devices. This study found that owls heavily rely on their designated PACs, with minimal use of others, suggesting these protected areas are effectively conserving key habitats. However, variation in individual owl behavior highlights the need for more flexible and adaptive conservation strategies.



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New Mexico News



Credit: [Friends of Bitter Lake NWR](#)

USING EDNA TO TRACK ENDANGERED SPECIES: INSIGHTS FROM BITTER LAKE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Environmental DNA (eDNA) is proving to be a game-changer for monitoring endangered species. In this study, researchers surveyed five spring-endemic species at Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico using eDNA. The results showed promising success in detecting DNA from four species, providing valuable insights into their habitat preferences. Salinity and dissolved oxygen were key factors influencing species occupancy, highlighting how eDNA can guide targeted conservation efforts for these rare aquatic species.

SHRUBS FOR SURVIVAL: HOW VEGETATION CHANGES AFFECT SCALED QUAIL IN SOUTHEASTERN NEW MEXICO

In the face of increasing woody plant cover across North American grasslands, how do scaled quail respond? This study explored habitat use and survival of quail in southeastern New Mexico and found that both brooding and nonbrooding quail favored areas with dense, tall shrubs like mesquite. Interestingly, while the type of vegetation influenced their habitat preferences, it didn't directly affect survival. Instead, wind speed was the key factor tied to brood survival. These findings underscore the importance of maintaining diverse, shrub-rich habitats in quail management plans.



Credit: [NM Wildlife Magazine](#),
Cody Johnson

New Mexico invests \$50 million for wildlife crossings – the largest amount of any U.S. state.

The funding will kickstart projects identified in the state's Wildlife Corridors Action Plan, improving habitat connectivity and reducing vehicle collisions in key areas like the "Valley of Death" along US 550.



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New Mexico – Texas News

LESSER PRAIRIE-CHICKENS HOLD ONTO GENETIC DIVERSITY DESPITE POPULATION SWINGS



Photo Source: [USFWS](#)

A long-term genetic study of lesser prairie-chickens in New Mexico and Texas found that, despite significant population fluctuations, genetic diversity has remained stable over time. Analyzing samples from three distinct time periods, researchers found no signs of recent genetic bottlenecks or significant inbreeding. These findings suggest ongoing gene flow across the region—but also underscore that continued habitat loss could still threaten long-term resilience. The study highlights the importance of habitat protection and ongoing genetic monitoring for this imperiled species.

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Texas News

Photo: [Texas Highways](#), Dale Weisman



SHARING TIME AND SPACE: SEASONAL PATTERNS OF PECCARIES, WILD PIGS, AND WARTHOGS IN SOUTH TEXAS

In southern Texas, native collared peccaries share the landscape with invasive wild pigs and African warthogs—but how they coexist is complex and seasonal. A recent study using remote camera data found all three species frequently overlapped in space, but their daily activity patterns

shifted depending on the season and presence of competitors. Collared peccaries, for example, adjusted their fall activity in response to wild pigs, becoming more active earlier in the day. These dynamic interactions suggest potential competition and highlight the need for further research on resource use and disease risks to inform wildlife management in mixed-species environments.

A RARE RETURN: PLAINS SPOTTED SKUNK DETECTED IN SOUTH TEXAS AFTER 60 YEARS

In a surprising rediscovery, researchers have documented the presence of the plains spotted skunk (*Spilogale interrupta*) in southern Texas for the first time since 1961. Once thought absent from this region, the finding confirms the species' continued persistence in a long-unreported part of its historical range.

As a species of conservation concern, this new data is vital for updating distribution maps and shaping future conservation strategies across North America.



Photo: [Missouri Dept. of Conservation](#):



CHAPTER NEWS

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Texas News



Photo: Texan by Nature

BOBWHITE DECLINES LINKED TO TREE CANOPY: **A CALL FOR HABITAT MANAGEMENT BEYOND FIRE**

A recent study on northern bobwhite populations in Texas reveals that tree canopy cover plays a significant role in limiting their occupancy, overshadowing the effects of prescribed fire. Despite the well-documented benefits of fire for this game bird, researchers found that bobwhite occupancy was more than 19 times higher in areas with lower canopy cover, highlighting the critical need for forest thinning in addition to fire management. These findings suggest that managing tree cover is essential for maintaining habitat conditions for bobwhites and other species that rely on open forest ecosystems.

THE ROAD AHEAD: **MAMMAL COMMUNITY SHIFTS DURING HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION** **ACROSS LAND USE GRADIENTS**

A new study from southern Texas reveals that highway construction impacts mammal communities across all levels of human land use (HLU)—from rural to more developed areas. Researchers found that mammal diversity declined during construction, with the greatest changes in less developed areas. Notably, many species shifted their daily activity patterns to resemble those in already high-HLU environments. These findings highlight the importance of collecting baseline data and considering both habitat context and behavioral shifts when planning road mitigation strategies to better protect wildlife.



Photo: Press Enterprise



CHAPTER NEWS

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Mexico News

Photo: [TWS](#), Eric Arce



TWS MEXICO CHAPTER JOINS NM-AZ JOINT MEETING

The Mexico Chapter joined Arizona and New Mexico at the 58th Joint Annual Meeting in Albuquerque. Supported by a \$2,000 grant and waived registration fees, five students and four faculty shared research on topics ranging from Montezuma quail to edible insects. The exchange fostered continued scientific partnership between the U.S. and Mexico.

WILDLIFE TOURISM IMPACTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS

This study evaluated how wildlife tourism in Baja California Sur influences tourists' environmental consciousness. While encounters with charismatic species (whale sharks and gray whales) boosted short-term awareness, they had little long-term impact. The findings suggest that charisma is not enough – highlighting the need for locally tailored strategies to foster lasting engagement.



Photo: [ecomigrations](#)



Photo: [TWS](#); Dr. David Schneider

TRACKING SUCCESS: AXOLOTLS THRIVE IN BOTH RESTORED AND ARTIFICIAL WETLANDS

In the battle to save the critically endangered axolotl, a study using VHF telemetry to track captive-bred individuals released into both restored and artificial wetlands. The results show that axolotls can successfully adapt to both environments, with larger home ranges and greater movement observed in artificial ponds. The research also reveals the species' narrow thermal preferences and highlights the need for habitat diversity in conservation efforts. Key recommendations include predator awareness training and ongoing habitat monitoring to improve survival rates.

Mexico News



Photo: Sourced from TWS, Credit: Alejandro Prieto

DIVERSE RANCHER PERSPECTIVE ON JAGUAR-LIVESTOCK INTERACTIONS

A new study highlights the importance of understanding rancher perspectives in jaguar conservation efforts in Mexico's Calakmul region. Researchers surveyed 196 ranchers and found wide-ranging views on forest cover, livestock practices, and jaguar presence. While some support coexistence through reforestation and sustainable ranching, others prefer fewer jaguars and less forest. The findings stress that conservation policies must go beyond wildlife protection to address local needs and reflect the full diversity of community values to foster lasting human-wildlife coexistence.

JAGUAR DENSITY ESTIMATION – THE IMPORTANCE OF HOME RANGE

A new study reveals that standard methods may underestimate jaguar populations in fragmented habitats. In Mexico's Central Pacific Coast, researchers found jaguars move in elongated patterns along coastal corridors, not circular ranges as often assumed. By adjusting spatial capture-recapture models to reflect this, density estimates rose by over 30%. The findings highlight the need to consider habitat-driven movement for more accurate and effective conservation planning.



TRIBAL NEWS

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ARIZONA TRIBAL GAMING GENERATES \$30.8M FOR WILDLIFE AND PUBLIC SERVICES IN Q3

Arizona tribes contributed over \$30.8 million to the state's Arizona Benefits Fund in Q3 of fiscal year 2025—a 7.9% increase from the previous year. These funds support key programs including education, emergency services, tourism, and wildlife conservation. Nearly \$2.2 million was directed specifically to the Arizona Wildlife Conservation Fund, underscoring the important role tribal gaming revenues play in funding statewide conservation efforts. Since 2004, cumulative tribal contributions have surpassed \$2.34 billion, reflecting the long-standing impact of tribal-state gaming partnerships.

RESILIENCE AMID UNCERTAINTY: TRIBAL WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT DURING FEDERAL ROLBACKS

A new report highlights how federal funding freezes under the Trump administration disrupted Tribal wildlife management across the U.S. A survey by the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society found that 60% of Tribes experienced halted grants, and 26% lost funding entirely—jeopardizing conservation work, harvest surveys, and essential resource programs. Communication breakdowns and loss of Native liaison positions have further strained the federal–Tribal relationship. Despite these challenges, Tribal communities remain resilient, continuing their critical work in wildlife stewardship while adapting to uncertain funding and policy shifts.



CONSERVATION AFFAIRS

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The Southwest Sections' *Conservation Affairs Committee (CAC)* is part of The Wildlife Society's *Conservation Affairs Network (CAN)*, which engages and unifies the efforts of TWS to advance wildlife conservation policy issues.



Credit: [USFWS, Ryan Hagerty](#)

► **DOGE may Threaten Sustainability of FWS Waterfowl Limits**

Budget reductions driven by Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) may jeopardize the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's annual waterfowl survey, a key tool in setting sustainable hunting limits. Conservationists warn that cuts to staffing, could undermine efforts to manage waterfowl populations responsibly.

► **USGS Cuts Would Jeopardize Leading Wildlife Research**

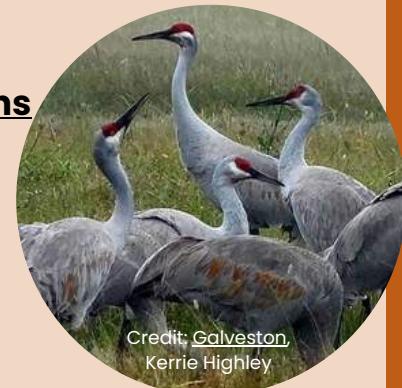
Proposed budget cuts to the USGS Ecosystems Mission Area threaten decades of wildlife science, including research on endangered species, migratory birds, and Yellowstone grizzlies. Eliminating Cooperative Research Units would disrupt partnerships with universities and state agencies, disrupting efforts to monitor wildlife and educate the next generation.

► **White Houses Budget Proposes Deep Cuts to Conservation**

The president's FY 2026 "skinny budget" proposes steep reductions to federal conservation programs, including nearly \$900 million from National Park operations and \$754 million from private lands conservation. Other targeted cuts include the USGS, USFWS, and USFS research programs.

► **New Bills Aim to Strengthen Migratory Bird Protections**

Ahead of Migratory Bird Day, Reps. Jared Huffman and Brian Fitzpatrick introduced two bills to boost bird conservation: the Migratory Bird Protection Act, clarifying protections under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and the Albatross and Petrel Conservation Act, supporting international efforts to protect vulnerable seabirds from fishing threats.



Credit: [Galveston, Kerrie Highley](#)



CONSERVATION AFFAIRS

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TEXTPOLICY IN PRACTICE: THE TEXAS CHAPTER'S LEGISLATIVE ENGAGEMENT SPURS STUDENT ADVOCACY AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Contributed by: Jessica Glasscock, Mary Pearl Meuth, & Matt Wagner – TCTWS

The Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society (TCTWS) has a long-standing commitment to fostering student involvement and providing opportunities for emerging conservation professionals across the state as we continue to advance science-based conservation through active policy engagement. During the 89th Texas Legislative Session, our Conservation Affairs Committee (CAC) built on its long-standing efforts by engaging with key legislation, coordinating testimony, and—perhaps most notably—bringing students directly into the policy process.

On March 20, 2025, TCTWS hosted its inaugural Day at the Capitol, a hands-on advocacy experience that brought together the Executive Board, the CAC, and eight undergraduate and graduate students from across Texas. This event offered students a unique opportunity to engage directly with the legislative process, advocate for science-based wildlife policy, and gain firsthand experience in conservation leadership at the state level.

This program is part of a larger effort to empower student chapters across Texas to engage with conservation policy. Several student chapters in Texas are taking proactive steps to engage in the policy process by forming their own Conservation Affairs Teams and participating in advocacy initiatives. This early involvement reflects a growing awareness among students of the vital role that policy plays in shaping the future of wildlife conservation. Their engagement is not only commendable—it is essential. Our CAC even includes a student member currently attending law school, underscoring the value of multidisciplinary voices and legal expertise in conservation leadership. As future professionals, today's students will one day be addressing increasingly complex challenges such as wildlife disease containment, water resource management, the expansion of renewable energy, and habitat fragmentation.

TCTWS members have also been consistently present at Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission meetings to testify on behalf of wildlife and habitat. This presence ensures that science and field experience remain at the forefront of regulatory decisions.



Photos: "Day at the capitol", Credit: TCTWS



CONSERVATION AFFAIRS

SOUTHWEST SECTION NEWSLETTER – SPRING 2025

TEXT POLICY IN PRACTICE CONTINUED

Contributed by: Jessica Glasscock, Mary Pearl Meuth, & Matt Wagner – TCTWS

TCTWS also joined TWS and other organizations as a signatory on a [legislative statement](#) urging science-based oversight of the captive deer industry in light of ongoing CWD outbreaks. This unified call highlights the importance of strong state-level regulations to protect Texas' wildlife resources, rural economies, and the integrity of the public trust doctrine. These issues affect not only Texas, but also the Southwest and beyond. By encouraging and empowering student advocacy now, we help cultivate a more informed, prepared, and engaged generation of conservation leaders ready to navigate the interconnected environmental challenges of tomorrow.

The TCTWS CAC tracked and engaged on a wide array of legislation this session. Key priority bills included: HB 2018, HB 5259, SB 7, SB 819, SB 1302, SB 2843, SB 2844, SB 2846. Across these bills, the TCTWS policy team prioritized sound science, wildlife health, and landscape-scale conservation planning. Many of the issues we tracked—such as CWD, wildlife corridors, and the siting of renewable energy—resonate across state lines and present opportunities for Southwest Section collaboration.

In addition to state-level advocacy, TCTWS remains active on national conservation priorities. TCTWS recently joined a multi-organization sign-on letter supporting swift federal response to the reemergence of the New World screwworm, including backing Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins' halt on livestock movement across the U.S.–Mexico border to prevent further spread of the parasitic fly. We are also monitoring and encouraging member participation in public comment opportunities for Endangered Species Act listings and related regulatory changes. TCTWS continues to voice concern over proposed cuts to federal conservation funding and threats to the stewardship of our nation's public lands. We believe that science-based policy and coordinated advocacy must extend from the state Capitol to Congress.

As we look ahead, the Texas Chapter remains eager to share resources, strategies, and lessons learned with other state chapters. We invite other chapters to connect with us as we continue to explore innovative ways to elevate science and strengthen wildlife policy in the Southwest.



Photo: "Day at the Capitol"



Photos: "TPWD Commission Meeting", Credit: TCTWS





SW SECTION BOARD AND COMMITTEE

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Current Board

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Thank you to those that contributed to this newsletter!

Do you, or someone you know, have a wildlife-related project, publication, reward, news story, or information in the Southwest (Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, or Mexico) that you would like to share? Please reach out to Madeleine to contribute to our next newsletter!