

The AFWA Strategist

Update for Members and Partners of the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies

Fall 2017

2017-2018 AFWA Officers & Executive Committee

Virgil Moore, Director of the Idaho Fish & Game Department, as its new president during AFWA's 107th Annual Meeting in Snowbird, Utah. The full slate of officers and Executive Committee members include:

2017-2018 AFWA Officers & Executive Committee

Officers:

President: Virgil Moore (ID)

Vice President: Glenn Normandeau (NH)

Secretary/Treasurer: Gordon Myers (NC)

Past President: Nick Wiley (FL)

Executive Committee:

Chair: John Arway (PA-FBC)

Vice Chair: Bob Broscheid (CO)

Members:

Ed Carter (TN)

Jim Douglas (NE)

Kelly Helper (SD)

Carter Smith (TX)

Cathy Sparks (RI)

Tony Wasley (NV)

Ex Officio Voting Members:

Canada: Travis Ripley (AB)

Midwest: Sara Pauley (MO)

Northeast: James Connelly (ME)

Southeast: Alvin Taylor (SC)

Western: Curt Melcher (OR)



The 36 Fellows of Cohort 12 began their intensive 8-month training experience at the National Conservation Training Center in October 2017. They will join an ever-growing network of more than 350 professionals who have come together from conservation organizations across the nation to further develop their leadership capacity through the NCLI experience.



Save the date...

108th AFWA Annual Meeting
Tampa, Florida
September 9-12, 2018

www.fishwildlife.org



Business Meeting Resolutions

AFWA's voting membership passed four resolutions during its September 13th Business Meeting:

SUPPORT FOR THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION RESTORATION PROGRAM FUNDING AND THE ALLIANCE FOR AMERICA'S FISH AND WILDLIFE CAMPAIGN the Association also stands ready to support continuing efforts by the Blue Ribbon Panel to develop recommendations that will ensure state fish and wildlife agencies remain relevant and supported by all citizens well into the future.

SUPPORT FOR GRASSLAND BIRD CONSERVATION, RESEARCH, EVALUATION, AND MONITORING recognizes the urgent plight of North America's grasslands and supports increased trilateral resources for conservation, research, monitoring, and evaluation of grasslands and the fauna that depend on them.

IN SUPPORT OF FUNDING AND RESOURCES FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE DISEASE PREVENTION, DETECTION AND MANAGEMENT urges the Secretaries of Interior, Commerce, and Agriculture to fully fund, staff, and equip those programs, laboratories, and research institutions in their Departments that provide fish and wildlife disease surveillance, diagnostics, training and continuing education, and management-relevant research and information to the state and federal fish and wildlife agencies, and encourage public-private partnerships which can provide additional support and resources for these activities.

IN APPRECIATION OF THE UTAH DIVISION OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES, UTAH DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FOR HOSTING THE AFWA ANNUAL MEETING IN SNOWBIRD, UTAH that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies extends its deep appreciation to Director Fowlks and his staff for hosting the 107th Annual Meeting.

Full resolution text can be found on www.fishwildlife.org

Founded in 1902, the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies represents North America's fish and wildlife agencies to advance science-based management and conservation of species and their habitats for the public's long-term benefit and use.



2017 Annual Awards



Larry Voyles received AFWA's top honor, the **Seth Gordon Award** for lifetime achievement in conserving North America's natural resources in the public trust and contributing to the

programs of the Association.

John Doerr received AFWA's **John L. Morris Award** which recognizes a lifetime commitment to fish and wildlife stewardship by citizen conservationists who have exhibited exemplary leadership at the highest level and demonstrated a steadfast commitment to large scale natural resource challenges.

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's Wildlife Management Division Chief Brad Carner and Communications Division Chief Keith Stephens received AFWA's **Earnest Thompson Seton Award** for leadership in scientific management. This year's recipients were recognized for their extraordinary response to the discovery of chronic wasting disease in Arkansas deer and elk herds in early 2016.

Keith Warnke, program lead for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Hunting for Food program, is the recipient of this year's **Boone and Crockett Award**, which honors an agency and team leader for outstanding achievement in promoting and encouraging outdoor ethics.

Tasha Bauman with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department received the **Mark Reeff Memorial Award** for the outstanding young wildlife management professional under age 35.

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish- Field Operations Division was selected as the 2016 **Conservation Law Enforcement Award** recipient for its work in bringing a to justice a serial poacher.

This year's recipient of AFWA's **Private Lands Fish and Wildlife Stewardship Award** is Louise Klarr and the **Maggie Creek Ranch** for their proactive conservation and environmental practices and exhibiting outstanding stewardship of fish and wildlife resources.

Finally, the Association presented two **special recognition awards** for outstanding commitment to the work of AFWA to **Chris Segal** and **Dr. Steve Kellert**.

Alliance for America's Fish & Wildlife

It's going to be an exciting fall with the expected introduction of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA) any day. There has been a change in lead sponsorship with Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE) now taking the lead on the bill, and Debbie Dingell (D-MI) being the lead co-sponsor. Don Young's office is currently focusing on other priorities and they agreed it would be best to have Mr. Fortenberry take the lead. Rep Fortenberry and Rep Dingell are excited and eager to take the lead on this bill and want to get it dropped in the House ASAP (as early as later this week or next). We will reach out to state fish & wildlife agencies and partners with more details once we get a firm date for the bill's introduction. We are planning a coordinated media strategy and will be prepared with statements from AFWA and the Alliance that we will share as well. *Don't hesitate to contact Sean Saville, Campaign Manager at 202-838-2561 or ssaville@fishwildlife.org*

National Survey Update

Preliminary results from the 2016 National Survey of Hunting, Fishing and Wildlife-Associated Recreation were released recently, showing increases in fishing and wildlife viewing and a decrease in hunting. As in previous years, individual state reports will be released (scheduled for December). However, the source of these state reports is different with this survey. When the AFWA Executive Committee approved funds for the 2016 survey it requested that an evaluation of different methodologies be conducted. Consequently, while the national level survey was conducted by Census and the Fish and Wildlife Service, state level surveys were conducted by a separate organization using different methods. With this in mind States should note the possibility that state level results may potentially not be comparable to those from previous years. An independent evaluation team will submit its report on the two different methodologies at the North American in 2018. The goal of this evaluation is to support a more accurate and cost-effective survey in the future.

Legislative Updates

Technical Guidance for Improving the Endangered Species Act

During AFWA's Annual Meeting, the Executive Committee approved a new direction for AFWA's work on improving the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Staff are amalgamating the General Principles, the draft redline, and administrative policy suggestions into a technical guidance document and more extensive policy statement that can be used to inform the Administration and Congressional committees on how the Act and its implementation could be improved.

Commercial Vessel Incidental Discharge Act Continues to Threaten States' Authorities

CVIDA (S. 168/H.R. 1154) continues to preempt states' current authorities to regulate, protect and manage in state waters the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS), water pollution, and pathogens for all commercial vessels. It also expands a list of exemptions under "discharges incidental to the normal operation of vessel" to include known introduction pathways for spreading AIS. If you are able, please contact your Members of Congress and strongly oppose CVIDA because it preempts current state authority.

Farm Bill Horizon Looms Closer

House Agriculture Committee staff continue drafting of a bipartisan bill that would reauthorize the farm bill. We continue to guard against baseline funding erosion and seek common sense policy improvements that benefit producers and their ability to implement conservation practices on the ground. We expect the Chairman's mark to be released this fall with swift and steady movement early in 2018.

Fire-Borrowing Fix/Federal Forest Reform

A permanent legislative fix to the debilitating need for the US Forest Service and DOI to borrow funds from other budget line items to pay for the escalating costs of suppressing catastrophic fires continues to elude Congress. The White House acknowledged the need for a legislative fix for that, and federal forest management reforms. The types of forest reforms may include a greater use of Categorical Exclusions for certain forest management activities; expedited NEPA review for forest projects developed by a collaborative; a pilot binding arbitration program as an alternative to litigation, and others.

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