



IDAHO CHAPTER

THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

83(2):May

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

As president, I have plotted a future direction for our Chapter involving education of several different publics. Future activities with Project WILD will help us communicate with public school teachers. Sponsorship of symposia will provide an opportunity to communicate with the general public. And, in the last newsletter I volunteered the Idaho Chapter as a source of factual information on wildlife to public servants.

Our first educational effort was the Wolf Symposium in Boise. Considering everything, it went over well and 145 people learned a lot about wolves. As is the case with most endeavors, it had its good and bad points. On the negative side, some special interest groups that attended the original hearings were not in attendance at this one. I assume that's because they are already polarized on the issue of wolves in Idaho and not interested in further discussions. One thing that is hard to understand, though, is why the same groups alerted their members that the Idaho Chapter was trying to push across the Wolf Recovery Plan in Idaho. They were told in person that was not the case and the symposium was meant only to be an educational program. The Chapter, incidentally, still hasn't taken a stand on the Wolf Recovery Plan. On the positive side, many individuals heard some interesting talks about wolves, learned some new facts, and had an opportunity to talk to the researchers. I am especially grateful to Ms. Diana Hunsucker, District Assistant for Senator Jim McClure, and Ms. Marcia Hall, Staff Assistant for Senator Steve Symms. Both of these fine representatives were interested enough to attend the Wolf Symposium. My personal thanks go to

both of them. In the same light, I wonder why the representatives of the other public servants did not attend. They were all invited.

Once again, I want to restate that "I don't believe that public servants are inherently biased against wildlife" and "Many public servants do make an honest effort to get the facts and consider all facets before making decisions that involve wildlife." Our Chapter will continue to try and work with these elected representatives so that the facts are known when making decisions involving wildlife. We welcome the opportunity.

1983-84 MEMBERSHIP DUES

Check the mailing label on this newsletter. If there is a red mark, you owe \$3.00 for your 1983 dues. Please fill out the membership form at the end of the newsletter and send it, along with your check, to Lew Nelson (address on other mailing label). Since 1984 dues will be collected in a few months, consider sending \$6.00 for 1983 and 1984 dues. Then you won't have to bother with it later. Please do this now because we can't send additional newsletters until your renewal is received.

COOPERATIVE WILDLIFE AND FISHERY UNITS PROGRAM UPDATE

On April 19, 1983, the fate of the Cooperative Wildlife and Fishery Research Unit Programs might have been decided for another year. On that day, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Directorate met before the Senate Subcommittee on Appropriations for Interior and Related Agencies, chaired by James A. McClure. For 15 minutes Senator McClure asked questions about the possible closure of the Units and Director Jantzen's February 23, 1983, letter to Unit cooperators.

In Jantzen's letter, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed to continue the Unit programs only if Congress appropriated funds for fiscal year 1984, but without federal employees stationed at the Units. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service itself had not provided for the Units in the 1984 budget because they felt the Units have served their purpose. Instead, they planned to terminate the existing program by September 30, 1983, and to pass available funds on to local cooperators for continuance of cooperative programs.

The April hearing before Senator McClure revealed that the Senate Subcommittee was not in favor of eliminating the Units, but was receptive to program changes for greater efficiency. The Subcommittee also indicated that a formal request for reprogramming of funds is expected before any major changes are made in the Units.

Encouraging letters from the House and Senate, along with support from important members of Congress, have been received by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Chief of the Division of Cooperative Research Units wrote to all

cooperators that "funds will likely be allocated, but the route of action on the personnel issue is not yet definitive. It is quite clear from Senator McClure's comments and others that the tremendous flow of grass roots communications to the committee and to congressional delegations is having a strong impact."

Although consolidation among the existing Units is a definite possibility, the general feeling among people is one of optimism . . . at least for another year.

OUTSTANDING WILDLIFE PROFESSIONAL AWARD

The Idaho Chapter's Outstanding Wildlife Professional Award for 1983 was presented to Jim Peek, Professor in the Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources at the University of Idaho. The following accomplishments, condensed from the nomination letter, illustrate why Jim was selected as the award recipient:

Research:

He is regarded as one of the foremost ungulate biologists in North America. His numerous publications, resulting from his personal research and that accomplished in conjunction with students, are recognized as "state of the art" in ungulate biology. He is frequently called upon for consultation by biologists in numerous western states, Alaska, and western Canada.

Teaching:

His classes in big game management are a successful mix of the practical and the theoretical. He has an excellent grasp of the literature. With this he blends his own experience as an agency management biologist and a university researcher to provide students with realistic insights.

The success of his graduate students in the profession is evidence of his capabilities in this less formal method of teaching. Jim's students all come out of their programs with a solid appreciation for the basics in biology. All approach new assignments as they did their thesis research--with enthusiasm and determination. All of his former students are performing well either in jobs in the profession or in furthering their education. This alone speaks well for the kind of graduate students he turns out.

Service:

Jim Peek has always been a "work horse" for the profession. He has been instrumental in staging three timely workshops on elk and logging, wildlife-livestock grazing, and forest access. These workshops provide a forum for management biologists and bring them up to date. He has also worked with the Northwest Section on symposia on population regulation and on fire.

Currently he is serving as an assistant editor for the Journal of Wildlife Management. He reviews an average of two papers weekly in addition to his regular duties and special assignments.

His latest special assignment was on the Governor's appointed committee to investigate the jack rabbit problem in eastern Idaho. He has regularly accepted such assignments in the past as well as program chairmanships, coordinator posts, etc. for numerous meetings.

Finally, Jim Peek has been a provocative self-critic and critic of our profession. He asks questions of himself and the profession designed to make people think. He is always re-examining his own positions and he asks others to do the same. This is a very good thing--a real service to the profession--and it can only help to strengthen the profession.

When notified of the award, Jim was on a moose research project in Alaska. He stated that "I have to accept this award on behalf of a lot of people." Jim felt that it was important to recognize professionals in other agencies that he works with because he owes a lot to them. He also stated that students with fresh, creative ideas also contributed to him winning the award. "There are a lot of committed people in these areas and I'm pleased to be a part of the wildlife profession in Idaho, to be a part of what's happening," Jim concluded.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 1983 ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The possibility of a tax incentive program encouraging landowners to protect riparian habitat is in the air. The Idaho Conservation League, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, American Fisheries Society, and Soil Conservation Society all support it. This program would give landowners income tax credit, probably through a property tax exemption, for implementing conservation practices on riparian habitat. The benefits of this kind of program include reduced flooding, cleaner water, increased forage use, more soil stability, and improved fish and wildlife habitat. The Idaho Chapter has been asked to get actively involved in deciding how to implement legislation and, if passed, in administering this program in conjunction with Soil Conservation districts. Contact Dan LaPlant if you have any questions or suggestions.

Dick Mackie, Northwest Sectional Representative, gave a report on T.W.S. Council activities, including: an increased publications charge for non-T.W.S. members; the more than 3,000 certified members will probably become the dominant force in the Society; the building fund is nearing completion; it is hoped that all Chapter bylaws will soon be completed; and university wildlife programs can now ask for voluntary accreditation evaluations. Dick left the Chapter with several questions. Where should conservation priorities be assigned? Can we do more at the national level? Should we support Montana's resolution for a moratorium on the privatization of public lands until national guidelines can be developed? What policies can be developed for dealing with professional ethics?

Lew Nelson reported that the Chapter membership increased from 90 members in 1981 to 189 members in 1983. He wants to see the Chapter more involved in conservation issues, communicating more effectively with other conservation organizations, and more involved in educational programs, such as Project WILD.

Symposia on law enforcement and caribou are other possibilities. Lew felt that the Chapter was successful because of the good work done by the members. The future looks very bright.

Other areas of discussion included: (1) The Idaho Chapter is opposed to the closure of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Cooperative Wildlife and Fishery Research Units, (2) contact Carl Nellis for suggestions on improvement of The Wildlife Society publications, (3) the Idaho Chapter has netted over \$300 on belt buckle sales since 1981, (4) certification packets are still available from Lew Nelson, (5) income-generating activities are needed to increase the Elmer Norberg Scholarship Award, and (6) the by-laws revisions were approved.

NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICERS

It is time for members of the Idaho Chapter to begin the process of selecting a president and vice-president for 1984-86. The following people will serve as members of the Nominations Committee:

Dan Davis (Chairperson)
U.S. Forest Service
Route 1, Box 1
Kamiah, ID 83536
476-4541 work
935-0030 home

Bob Autenrieth
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
P.O. Box 428
Jerome, ID 83338
324-4350 work
324-4962 home

Karen Steenhof
Bureau of Land Management
1528 Ralfroy
Boise, ID 83705
334-9277 work
342-3430 home

Because of time constraints, we must observe the following time schedule:

- (1) The Nominations Committee, by August 1, will select two people to run for each office. If you would like to offer suggestions for officers, call one of the committee members by July 10.
- (2) If you want to nominate someone, you will need the signed support of 6 or more members. The nomination must be received by Dan Davis on or before August 10.

- (3) The list of candidates, their statements, and ballots will be included in the September newsletter.

How well you accomplish this task will determine how well your Chapter does for 1984-86.

TED TRUEBLOOD COMMUNICATION AWARD

Ted Trueblood was a great conservation writer, an effective communicator, a liaison between the world of science and the common man. He didn't have to use scientific jargon or detailed graphs and tables to explain biological concepts. What was his secret? Ted Trueblood knew how to communicate; he thoroughly understood that art and worked at perfecting himself.

Too bad Ted's not with us anymore--we could use a few lessons from him. The Wolf Symposium is a good case in point. This was supposed to be for the general public, for interested people to find out more about the wolf. For those that attended, it was a disappointment. Can you blame them? Many of the speakers couched their talks in concepts and terms familiar only to wildlifers and showed graphics that only statisticians could love, much less read without binoculars. Is this how we intend to enlighten the lay public?

If we want people to make educated decisions about wildlife, they must first comprehend what we are telling them. Why not try simpler language, explain things more clearly, and use large, clean graphics? It is our responsibility to get the message out to the lay public and, to do that, we all need to become effective communicators.

To help meet this need, the Idaho Chapter established the Ted Trueblood Communication Award for outstanding public speaking ability. Tim Reynolds had the honor of winning this award during the 1983 Chapter meeting for his excellent presentation and graphics on remote sensing. Thanks, Tim, for being an example for the rest of us.

PROJECT WILD UPDATE

Thanks to an excellent presentation by Ms. Nancy Christensen, elementary school teacher and Project WILD Regional Coordinator, 63 Chapter members volunteered to participate in Project WILD. Specific activities will include (1) helping instruct teacher workshops, (2) attending teacher workshops as a resource person, (3) acting as a regional resource person for teachers, and (4) visiting classrooms as a guest speaker.

Project WILD materials will be available and workshops held during spring 1984. For those members who did not attend the annual meeting, you will have an opportunity to volunteer during a later newsletter. For those of you who volunteered, be patient. Everything is progressing according to schedule.

MY OPINION - "ROADING THE ROADLESS AREAS"

by

Tom Leege

Wildlife Research Biologist

Idaho Department of Fish and Game

Elk and roads get along fine; however, disturbance associated with roads often complicates the relationship. Disturbance is caused by logging activity, wood cutters, cattle grazing, hunters and other forest users, and creates several problems. Hunted elk populations are shy of humans, and studies have shown that elk use is considerably reduced near roads left open for public activity. This can be serious when the road goes through important elk habitat and animals retreat into areas of lesser quality, or perhaps to areas where elk are already adequately stocked. Elk, like humans, do not all react to disturbances in the same way. Some animals will use areas near open roads and, consequently, become more vulnerable to being harvested. When there are no adjacent security areas for elk to disperse to, the entire population becomes subject to over-harvest unless additional regulations are placed on the hunters. These regulations would reduce the number of people that can hunt, shorten the hunting season, and/or restrict the harvest to bulls only.

We still have sizable acreages of roadless areas on our national forests in Idaho. Many of these areas are being considered for entry within the next decade to meet the demands for timber. A conflict is lurking here as some of these areas have high quality elk habitat and have been used for years by people hunting from horseback, backpackers and others desiring a back-country experience. It is evident that careful study is needed of the pros and cons of roads before a decision regarding new access is made.

Roadless hunting opportunities are becoming less available each year. This type of hunting experience is already highly valued by many and will one day be an even greater asset to Idaho's recreation-oriented industries. The wilderness classification preserves roadless recreation opportunities. However, high quality elk habitat and back-country hunting opportunities often occur outside of officially designated wilderness. Where this is the case, strong consideration should be given to these values before making decisions about activities that will degrade them. It should be especially easy to forego the road construction alternative when timber values are low because of undesirable tree species and/or poor access to markets--as is often the situation with areas not yet roaded.

There are unroaded areas where timber values exceed roadless values and the public can be best served by accessing them for timber harvest. When this is done, however, road impact on elk habitat use and hunting can be minimized by taking the following actions: (1) Plan for road construction and logging to occur when elk have nearby "undisturbed" areas to disperse to. (2) Keep roads gated to all activity except that associated with timber harvest. (3) Remove timber in as short a period as possible. (4) Install permanent barriers on roads after timber removal, and make the commitment to leave them closed for at least 20 years before re-entry. If this commitment is made, roads can be constructed to lower standards and can be seeded and "put to bed" after the last activity associated with timber harvest. This type of logging operation

will leave the area in a semi-primitive condition suitable for elk occupancy. The elk hunting experience will be somewhat altered, but because of limited access, the hunting regulations will not have to be seriously adjusted in order to maintain the population.

Access control of this degree would probably result in lower timber volumes because of a lack of flexibility to practice intensive silviculture. Some firewood gatherers and huckleberry pickers might be upset because they can't use areas that have been newly accessed. However, there are substantial values that result from access control as well. Taxpayer's dollars used for road construction and continued road maintenance would be substantially reduced. Hunting success and more liberal hunting regulations could be maintained. Less poaching of wildlife would occur, and elk would continue to utilize their important habitats.

All of our actions have both costs and benefits. The major, and often times only, benefit of constructing roads into forests is that of timber removal and related management. Costs can be heavy in terms of the impact of these roads on elk habitat use and elk hunting. There are some places where costs outweigh benefits and consequently no roads should be constructed. However, in those areas where roading benefits are substantial, costs can be minimized by using some of the methods I have suggested here.

CONSERVATION COMMUNICATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

Stu Murrell, Environmental Education Coordinator for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, has been named Conservation Communicator of the Year by the Idaho Wildlife Federation. The award honors him for his 17 dedicated years of effectively communicating with lay and professional audiences.

During 1982 alone, Stu taped 55 television shows and 395 radio shows on five different stations. He also prepared 54 news releases, 56 weekly columns that were distributed to 14 newspapers, and gave numerous talks to sportsmen, teachers, students, and civic groups.

As a Regional Hunter Education Coordinator, Stu trained 132 volunteer instructors who, in turn, have taught about 45,000 students since the program began in 1980. He was recently given the added responsibility of Nongame Regional Coordinator for the Jerome area.

Besides all that, from 1979-83 Stu helped conduct nine Wildlife Ecology and Management Workshops, each 15 hours in length, for 440 school teachers. And, he was recently appointed by Fish and Game Department Director Jerry Conley as the State Coordinator for Project WILD, a new interdisciplinary educational program involving wildlife.

In 1978 Stu was awarded the Outstanding Wildlife Professional Award by the Idaho Chapter for his educational contributions to wildlife management.

1983-84 APPLICATION FORM

IDAHO CHAPTER - THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

Name _____

Title _____

Agency _____

Address _____

Phone Business _____ Home _____

The Idaho Chapter is interested in providing additional services to its members. In order to do this, we have included some background questions we'd like you to answer. Thank you for your continued support and cooperation.

Education (check highest level completed) Major field of study in each

High School _____

B.S. or B.A. _____

M.S. or M.A. _____

Ph.D. _____

Certification Status

_____ I am a Certified Wildlife Biologist (C.W.B.).

_____ I am a certified Associate Wildlife Biologist (A.W.B.).

_____ I have submitted my forms to the Certification Board.

_____ I am not certified and have not submitted my forms to the Certification Board.