

IDAHO CHAPTER



THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

84(1) :January

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

The annual meeting of the Idaho Chapter is scheduled for February 3-4, 1984, in Boise. Specific details follow this article. This is a special time for wildlife professionals and there are many opportunities to be gained and challenges to be accepted. It is a rare opportunity for conservation officers, biologists, conservation educators, researchers, university educators, administrators, and others to discuss topics of mutual interest and concern. The presentations are enlightening and offer new ideas and philosophies. New directions for our Chapter will be set at the annual business meeting. And, the opportunity is there to see old friends, meet new friends, and rekindle your dedication to wildlife conservation.

This important event only happens once a year. Please plan to attend.
(LN)

IDAHO CHAPTER - ANNUAL MEETING
February 3-4, 1984

Location - Idaho Transportation Department, 3311 State Street, Boise, Idaho

February 3, 1984

- 0730-0820 Registration and coffee (come early and meet your friends)
- 0820-0830 Opening remarks, Lew Nelson, President
- 0830-0855 Maurice Hornocker - Keynote address

- 0855-0920 "Dispersal and migration of raptors from southwest Idaho," Karen Steenhof, Assistant Project Leader - Birds of Prey Research Project, B.L.M., Boise.
- 0920-0945 "Importance of wildlife economics to Idaho," Louis Nelson, Staff Biologist, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Boise.
- 0945-1010 "Weekend habitat improvements using volunteers," Bob McCarty, Wildlife Biologist, B.L.M., Idaho Falls.
- 1010-1030 BREAK
- 1030-1055 (To Be Announced), Jerry Conley, Director, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Boise.
- 1055-1120 "Burrowing owl habitat and nest selection in southcentral Idaho," Terrell Rich, Wildlife Biologist, B.L.M., Shoshone.
- 1120-1145 "Wildlife management in China," Ernie Ables, Professor and Head, Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, University of Idaho, Moscow.
- 1145-1300 LUNCH
- 1300-1325 "The role of law enforcement in the management of wildlife," Dale Baird, Chief, Bureau of Enforcement, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Boise.
- 1325-1350 "Recovery activities for the grizzly bear in the Northern Rocky Mountains," James Gore, Head, Endangered Species Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Boise.
- 1350-1415 "Range Rehabilitation in the Boise District BLM," Mike Pellant, Range Conservationist, and Linda Reichert, Wildlife Biologist, B.L.M., Boise.
- 1415-1440 "Problems in managing Latin America's spotted cats," Wayne Melquist, Wildlife Research Scientist, Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, University of Idaho, Moscow.
- 1440-1500 BREAK
- 1500-1630 Annual business meeting:

- 1) President's report
- 2) Treasurer's report
- 3) Belt buckle sales
- 4) Elmer Norberg Scholarship Award
- 5) Establishment of a new scholarship fund
- 6) Outstanding Wildlife Professional Award
- 7) Membership - Chapter and parent Society
- 8) Project WILD
- 9) Riparian legislation



1700-? Social hour and entertainment

- 1) Location - Round Table Pizza, Glenwood and State (a room has been reserved for our group).
- 2) Multi-media presentation on Idaho wildlife and wild places set to John Denver's "Season Suite," Bill Mullins, Wildlife Biologist, Bureau of Reclamation, Boise.



February 4, 1984

- 0830-0855 "Jackrabbits in southwest Idaho: changing attitudes towards wildlife," Donna Gleisner, Wildlife Graduate Student, Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, University of Idaho, Moscow.
- 0855-0920 "The role of the consulting biologist in environmental planning," Tom Haislip, CH₂M Hill, Boise.
- 0920-0945 "Grizzly bear habitat use, movement, and distribution in the Selkirk Mountains in north Idaho and northeast Washington," Jon Almack, Wildlife Graduate Student, Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, University of Idaho, Moscow.
- 0945-1010 "Is game a 4-letter word?," James Peek, Professor, Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, University of Idaho, Moscow.
- 1010-1030 BREAK
- 1030-1230 Photographic Workshop for Wildlife Professionals - John Marshall, Professional Photographer, Boise.

ELECTION RESULTS

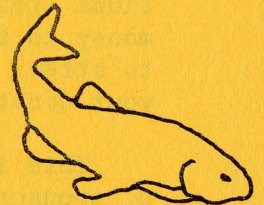
The election results have been tabulated and your new officers are:

President - Lew Nelson

Vice-President - Chuck Blair

Appreciation is extended to all those who ran for an office and voted. Thanks for your support of the Idaho Chapter. (DG)

IDAHO RIPARIAN LAND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM -
A SUMMARY



Riparian lands are the narrow strip of lands bordering Idaho's streams and rivers. This act will provide tax incentives to farmers, ranchers, and other landowners for voluntary riparian land restoration, improvement, or protection projects. Such projects will benefit the landowners and the State of Idaho by reducing soil erosion, improving streambank stability, flood control, increasing stream storage capacity, improving livestock forage, and improving stream water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.

Restoration or improvement projects would include such things as fencing for streambank protection, planting programs to revegetate areas, controlled grazing, or instream structures. The program is strictly voluntary and participation will not require public access to private property. Subject to minimal penalties, a participating landowner can withdraw his land from the program at any time.

This act will set in motion two separate tax incentive programs; a property tax exemption program and a tax credit program. Lands eligible for this property tax exemption would be lands zoned agricultural (including rangeland and forests) and limited to 100 stream miles per county per year. A participating landowner would pay no property tax on lands adjacent to the stream as designated in a management agreement with their local Soil Conservation District. The tax credit covers up to 75 percent of the costs in riparian restoration or improvement projects certified by the Soil Conservation Districts.

This program will be introduced into the Idaho Legislature in January, 1984. It will need lots of support in the form of letters and telephone calls to legislators. Watch for more news about this bill and give it your active support. It holds great potential for improving important fish and wildlife habitat. (CB)



ELMER NORBERG SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The Elmer Norberg Scholarship Fund was initiated to recognize an outstanding wildlife professional and to provide money to a promising wildlife student at the University of Idaho. The objective was to raise enough money so that the scholarship could be paid each year from the interest, which is currently 9-10 percent. Thus, we need approximately \$3,200 to have an annual \$300 scholarship.

As of November 30, 1983, there was \$1,836.18 in the fund, which includes a \$500 donation from the Idaho Chapter in 1983. To meet our goal, we need to collect another \$1,364. A letter has been sent to the Northwest Section of The Wildlife Society asking for financial support but no official word has been received. We will be asking for voluntary donations (tax deductible) at the annual meeting. If you would like to give money to this fund, you may do so at that time. If you will not be able to attend the annual meeting and would like to contribute, please send your donation to Lew Nelson (payable to the Idaho Chapter).

This is an excellent project for our Chapter and one we can be proud of sponsoring. At our annual business meeting I am going to propose that we begin another wildlife scholarship fund once this one is completed. With proper planning, we may be able to get donations from people outside the Chapter. Think about this idea and be ready to discuss it at the annual meeting. (LN)

IDAHO CHAPTER BYLAWS

This communication was recently received from Tom Franklin, Field Director of The Wildlife Society:

"This will acknowledge receipt of the corrected Bylaws for the Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society. They are very well done and meet the Society's requirements for chapters. Therefore, as of August 31, 1983, the revised Bylaws for the Idaho Chapter are approved. Congratulations!"

CERTIFICATION - UNDERSTANDING THE
NEW REQUIREMENTS

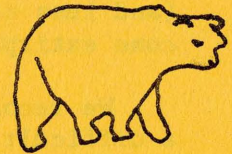
Some confusion and misunderstanding has been encountered by members over the new certification standards. A few people who were planning on getting certified have not done so because they could not meet the new coursework requirements. However, even though you may be short one or more courses, go ahead and apply because of these reasons:

- 1) Intent is a big factor in evaluating your credentials. If you are working in a wildlife-related job, that fact will overshadow your course deficiencies.
- 2) Although you may not have had a specific course (such as natural resource planning and administration), some of the material may have been covered in other courses. Outline that fact in your letter.

The certification standards will not get any easier or cheaper. If you are interested, apply now. A few certification packets are still available through Lew Nelson. (LN)

WE BELIEVE - "COLUMBIAN SHARP-TAILED GROUSE"

(Letter sent to Jerry Conley, Director
Idaho Department of Fish and Game)



On behalf of the Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society, I would like to comment on the Department's possible acquisition of the Sage Creek Basin Ranch, presently owned by Stanley Nelson. The private land, along with state, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Forest Service grazing permits include a large block of foothill and mountainous country, offering habitat for a variety of wildlife. Significant among these is the presence of Columbian sharp-tailed grouse.

As you know, Columbian sharptails have undergone a significant reduction in abundance and distribution. This subspecies is now extirpated in Oregon, California, Nevada, New Mexico and Wyoming. Disjunct remnant populations occur in northern Utah and western Montana. Portions of British Columbia, Washington, Idaho and Colorado retain viable populations. Nevertheless, even these populations are significantly reduced from historic levels.

Available evidence indicates that many remaining populations are relatively stable but others are still declining in Washington, Idaho and Utah. For example, the few remaining birds were lost from northern Idaho about 1970. In Fremont County, hunter success since 1958 indicates a decline in the population in spite of a substantial recovery since 1975. Southwestern Idaho dancing grounds monitored during the 1950s are now unoccupied. Remaining populations in southwestern Idaho now appear to be in severe jeopardy. Populations are small and separated by substantial distances.

The Sage Creek population, with an estimated 50-75 birds, appears to be the best of what is left in this part of Idaho.

Existing information on the biology of Columbian sharptails indicates that habitat changes have been responsible for their relict status. Conversion of native grasslands and grass/shrub environments to agriculture (particularly dry farming) and modification of remaining habitat by livestock grazing are the two most significant inimical factors which have affected this subspecies. These same two factors are likely to continue to adversely modify remaining habitats.

Widespread interest exists to reintroduce Columbian sharptails throughout their historic range. However, two problems exist that may limit the success of reintroductions. First, knowledge of specific habitat requirements for Columbian sharptails is lacking. The current research being conducted by Bob Autenreith of the Department, in cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management, will improve this information base. Second, techniques to successfully re-establish populations are not currently available. Many prior efforts to establish various species of grouse have met with failure. The only reintroduction attempt of Columbian sharptails was at the National Bison Range, and it subsequently failed. Successful techniques may ultimately evolve but their development will be costly. The benefits of retaining existing populations and habitat are likely to be more fruitful (and less costly over the long term) than allowing the populations to become extirpated and then working toward re-establishment.

We recognize that dollars for acquisition are limited and that you have a difficult job deciding where to best use those funds. In addition to thinking about the values received from saving this population of Columbian sharptails, also consider the fact that this property and its attached grazing permits include many other wildlife values. The ranch is occupied by a diverse variety of upland game species, including huntable populations of chukar partridge, hungarian partridge, valley quail, pheasant, blue grouse, ruffed grouse and sage grouse. Elk use of the ranch has increased dramatically in recent years. Based on the experience at the Sand Dunes Wildlife Management Area, these values could be enhanced to an even greater extent if the ranch was under state management. Acquisition would also assure public access to a large amount of wildlife habitat which could be potentially blocked under a new private owner.

In conclusion, the Idaho Chapter feels that the Sage Creek Basin Ranch merits serious consideration for acquisition by the Department. We appreciate your consideration of this matter. (LN)

WE BELIEVE - "DESIGNATION OF WILDERNESS AREAS"

(Letter sent to Senator James McClure)

On behalf of the Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society, I would like to offer a few comments regarding Idaho's forested roadless areas and their possible designation as wilderness areas. As you may recall, The Wildlife

Society is an international organization of professional wildlife biologists. The Idaho Chapter contains about 240 members.

Since the outcome of these deliberations likely represents the last opportunity to make major decisions concerning the fate of Idaho's remaining 6.5 million acres of roadless forest lands, the Idaho Chapter supports the Idaho Wildlife Federation's Proposal 4. This plan calls for the addition of 4.5 million acres of Idaho roadless areas to the Wilderness Preservation System.

The primary reason for our support of Proposal 4 is that it encompasses the preservation of entire ecosystems. All the other proposals seek to preserve only disjointed parcels of land. One of the key principles of ecology is that healthy ecosystems function properly only when left intact. Thus, Proposal 4 seeks to preserve the integrity of entire systems.

The preservation of endangered and threatened species, such as the woodland caribou, is totally dependent on maintaining its habitat as part of a complete, functioning ecosystem. We will eventually lose the caribou and other species in Idaho if preservation of their habitat is not adequate.

Protecting the integrity of entire watersheds also maintains the excellent fishery resources and high water quality we have in Idaho.

Tourism is the second most important industry in Idaho. People come from around the world to backpack in the Sawtooths or float down the Salmon River. Tourists can go anywhere in the west to see deficit timber sales and logging roads but they come to Idaho to enjoy a wilderness experience. And, they will continue to visit Idaho in ever increasing numbers only if we have something unique to offer them.

Finally, we in Idaho have established a system of values to judge our quality of life; a life centered around the enjoyment of vast acreages of unspoiled land. If we do not preserve adequate acres of wild lands where man is but a temporary visitor rather than a despoiler of nature, this quality of life we hold so dear will be severely diminished.

Nearly 40 years ago conservationist and forester Aldo Leopold spoke eloquently of the need to instill within man a land ethic that "changes the role of Homo sapiens from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it." Unlike elsewhere, we in Idaho still have the opportunity to live by such a standard. Our success or failure to embrace a land ethic will be judged by our foresight in maintaining the integrity of Idaho's wilderness.

(LN)

