



# IDAHO CHAPTER

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1990(2):Spring

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We enjoyed another successful winter meeting in Boise. Not only was the meeting well attended, but we also made a little money (see the financial report). I want to express my sincere appreciation to all Chapter members and non-members that helped make this meeting a success. Without you, interest and enthusiasm in the Chapter would be significantly reduced. Please remember that we are always looking for new ideas, suggestions and concerns. If anything is on your mind that the Chapter may be able to help with, don't hesitate to contact me or one of the other officers. Similarly, if the Chapter is doing something you don't agree with, please contact us.

Now, on to other matters. As I suggested in the last newsletter, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has decided that our petition to list the trumpeter swan is not warranted. To the best of our knowledge, they based this finding on a claim that an agreement has been reached to establish a minimum flow of 500 cfs on the Henry's Fork below the Buffalo River (see attached article from the FEDERAL REGISTER). Unfortunately, no such agreement exists, at least not on paper. Moreover, swan biologists generally agree that a 500 cfs flow is not adequate to maintain winter swan habitat. The USFWS also failed to address problems of disease and a very limited winter food resource on the Henry's Fork. This past winter, after totally consuming their winter food supply on the Henry's Fork, 700-900 swans migrated to Red Rocks National Wildlife Refuge where they were maintained on artificial feed. It appears our nation's "lead conservation agency" keeps making one mistake after another.

Needless to say, we are in the process of pointing these errors out to the USFWS. We will keep the Chapter informed of future developments.

## MEETINGS OF INTEREST

March 12-15, 1991. Biodiversity of the Rocky Mountains: A symposium. Colorado State University, Fort Collins. Dr. F.L. Knopf, National Ecology Research Center, 4512 McMurray Avenue, Ft. Collins CO 80524.

April 23-25, 1991. International Canada Goose Symposium. Marc Plaza Hotel, Milwaukee WI. Wisconsin Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, 226 Russel Labs, UW Campus, Madison WI 53706.

## NEWS AND NOTES

### Award Winners

- o Jerry Conley, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, was presented with the Idaho Chapter's Wildlife Professional of the Year Award at the 1990 winter meeting.
- o Tom Hemker, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, was presented with the award for the best professional paper given at the winter meeting.
- o George Pauley, University of Idaho, was presented with the award for the best student paper given at the winter meeting.
- o Chuck Blair, CH<sub>2</sub>M Hill, President-elect of the Northwest Section of The Wildlife Society.

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

### Einarson Award

The Einarson Award Committee seeks nominations for the Arthur S. Einarson Award to be presented at the Annual Meeting of the Northwest Section of The Wildlife Society in Seattle WA in April 1991. The award provides for recognition and commendation of outstanding work in the wildlife profession in the Northwest Section. Consider the accomplishments of individuals over their lifetime, not just those of recent years. Please send your nominations to:

Jack Connelly  
Idaho Department of Fish and Game  
1345 Barton Road  
Pocatello ID 83204

### Wildlife Administrator Award

This is a new award designed to recognize outstanding contributions and achievements by wildlife professionals largely engaged in administrative work. These people are not directly involved in wildlife research, management or teaching. Nevertheless, their efforts are extremely important to the smooth functioning of agencies and universities. Unfortunately, their contributions often go unnoticed.

This award will be presented by the Northwest Section of The Wildlife Society at its annual meeting in Seattle WA during April 1991. Please send your nominations to:

Mr. Al Christiansen  
U.S. Forest Service  
Fisheries and Wildlife  
538 Benton Avenue  
Missoula MT 59801

### 1991 Professional Wildlife Award

The Idaho Chapter, The Wildlife Society, uses the Professional Wildlife Award process to demonstrate that outstanding contributions to Idaho's wildlife resources are appreciated by one's peers. Now is the time to consider and submit nominations for the 1991 Professional Wildlife Award. It is not necessary to present the award every year, but we know the accomplishments in this state by many professional wildlife managers. Now is the opportunity to nominate a deserving person or persons for this prestigious recognition.

Here are a few points to consider when making a nomination: The nominee must be professionally employed in wildlife management, and the work that qualifies the individual for the award must have been performed in Idaho. The term "professionally" employed refers to all facets of the profession, including conservation officers, biologists, information-education personnel, graduate students, volunteers, etc. It is not necessary that the nominee reside in Idaho, but any nominee that does live in Idaho must also be a member of the Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society. The award may be shared if the accomplishment is the work of more than one person.

There are four rating criteria that each nominee will be evaluated for based upon the information provided to the Awards Committee:

1. Contributions to Idaho's wildlife
2. Commitment to the wildlife resource.
3. Contributions to the wildlife profession.
4. Contributions to public understanding of wildlife management and the problems involved in managing wildlife.

The Awards Committee is responsible for screening the applicants and making the final selection. Submit nominations by January 20, 1991 to Dave Koehler, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, 1515 Lincoln Road, Idaho Falls ID 83401. Don't miss this opportunity to highlight someone's efforts in Idaho's wildlife management. Professional Wildlife Awards are presented at the annual meeting of The Wildlife Society.

### Professional Development and You

The Wildlife Society's Professional Development Program is in operation after years of planning. The program is intended to provide all wildlife professionals with a structured incentive for self-improvement through the acquisition of new knowledge and skills by participation in professionally enriching activities. TWS members have indicated a need for such a program, and TWS Council has enthusiastically embraced it. A 1986 membership survey documented that 82 percent of respondents believed "that TWS should take a more active role in developing a series of continuing educational/professional improvement activities."

To participate in the Professional Development Program, you will need to accrue and document 150 contact hours over a 4-year period. These hours can be

distributed among six categories of activities: organized wildlife course work, including that offered at symposia; non-wildlife course work (e.g., computer science, public administration, forestry, and range); providing instruction on wildlife subjects; publications; self-improvement (e.g., reading wildlife literature); and professional service, such as holding appointed or elected office as in TWS. Upon completion of the minimum requirements and approval of your application by TWS, you will receive a certificate acknowledging your commitment to continuing education and professional development within the wildlife profession.

Applications will be accepted immediately (i.e., you seek approval for activities extending back 4 years from now). To acquire an application or for more information, call or write the Northwest Section Professional Development Contact, Kerry P. Reese, College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences, University of Idaho, Moscow ID 83843 (208)885-6435.

**Professional Development Program Needs Support of "Conference Hosts"**

Are you in the planning stages of a conference, symposium, workshop or other organized program of learning related to wildlife biology or management? If so, you are encouraged to contact the Northwest Section Professional Contact once your agenda is finalized.

Organized wildlife course work is one category of The Wildlife Society's new Professional Development Program. Attendees of your "conference" may be able to acquire contact hours for completing the minimum requirements of this program category. It is desirable that the Professional Development Contact evaluates your agenda in advance of promotional mailings. In this way, contact hours can be stated on your promotional literature and, hopefully, serve as an additional incentive to attend.

For more information, contact: Kerry P. Reese, College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences, University of Idaho, Moscow ID 83843 (208)885-6435.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

50 CFR Part 17

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Notice of Finding on Petition to List the Rocky Mountain Population of the Trumpeter Swan.

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of petition finding.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announces a 90-day petition finding for a petition to amend the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife. The petitioner did not present substantial information that listing the Rocky Mountain population of the trumpeter swan (*Cygnus buccinator*) as threatened may be warranted.

**DATES:** The finding announced in this notice was approved on March 23, 1990.

**ADDRESSES:** Questions or comments concerning this finding should be sent to: Chief, Endangered Species and Environmental Contaminants, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Fish and Wildlife Enhancement, P.O. Box 25486, Denver Federal Center, Denver, Colorado 80225. The petition, finding, and supporting data are available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the above office at 134 Union Boulevard, Lakewood, Colorado.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Olin E. Bray at the Denver address (303/236-7398 or FTS 776-7398).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Background**

Section 4(b)(3)(A) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), requires that the Service make a finding on whether a petition to list, delist, or reclassify a species presents substantial scientific or commercial information to demonstrate that the petitioned action may be warranted. To the maximum extent practicable, this finding is to be made within 90 days of receipt of the petition, and the finding is to be published

promptly in the Federal Register. If the finding is positive, the Service is also required to promptly commence a review of the status of the involved species.

**Petition:** The Service has received and made a 90-day finding on the following petition:

A petition dated April 7, 1989, was received from the Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society on May 12, 1989. The petition requested the Service to list the Rocky Mountain population of the trumpeter swan as a threatened species. The petition defines the Rocky Mountain population as all known breeding flocks in the Greater Yellowstone area (the tri-State subpopulation), and in Alberta, British Columbia, Northwest Territories, southeastern Yukon, and Saskatchewan (the Interior Canada subpopulation).

Prior to settlement of North America by Europeans, the trumpeter swan was a migratory species that ranged across most of the United States and Canada. The species was extirpated from most of its historical range by about 1900. A remnant population of trumpeter swans survived in western Canada and the Greater Yellowstone area, and provided the nucleus to rebuild trumpeter swan numbers in North America. Trumpeter swan numbers have increased since restoration efforts for the species began earlier in the century. Most of the trumpeter swans in the Rocky Mountain population winter in the tri-State area. Surveys in February 1989, documented the highest number of trumpeter swans (approximately 1,750) on the wintering grounds since restoration efforts began.

The petition states that although population numbers have been increasing, the Rocky Mountain population of trumpeter swans is extremely vulnerable to severe declines, due in part, to its restricted winter distribution. A single event of disease or adverse environmental conditions at one or more of the limited number of wintering sites could result in severe population impacts. As evidence of the trumpeter swan's vulnerability, the petition documented the loss of at least 50 birds (carcasses collected) last winter presumably due to extremely cold weather and low water flows. Other threats listed in the petition included continued loss or curtailment of habitat due to inadequate water flows, human activity and loss of wetlands; inadequate regulatory mechanisms; and mortality from lead poisoning, powerline collisions, and accidental shootings.

**Service Information:** The Rocky Mountain population of trumpeter swans is believed to be distinct from other populations of trumpeter swans; the Pacific Coast population and the

interior population. There was some question as to whether the Rocky Mountain population was distinct from the Pacific Coast population, but there are no band return data or observations of collared birds to suggest interbreeding between the two populations (pers. comm.: Danny Bystrack, Rod King, and Carl Mitchell, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Dave Moody, Wyoming Game and Fish Department).

Winter habitat is believed to be the limiting factor in Rocky Mountain population trumpeter swan restoration efforts (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1984). Approximately 500 trumpeters (about 30 percent of the Rocky Mountain population) winter on the Henrys Fork of the Snake River (Henrys Fork) at or near Harriman State Park, Idaho. Insufficient water flows to maintain ice-free conditions during extremely cold weather have resulted in the loss of feeding areas for trumpeters. Hazing efforts during November and December of 1988 to move trumpeters away from Harriman State Park prior to extremely cold weather were unsuccessful. For reasons unknown at this time, trumpeters do not leave Harriman State Park and migrate to other wintering areas when the Henrys Fork freezes over. Therefore, the lack of sufficient flows results in the curtailment of important winter habitat.

Although not documented, the actual loss of trumpeters on the Henrys Fork in February 1989, is estimated to be as high as 200 birds (Carl Mitchell, pers. comm.). Even though the documented loss of birds at or near Harriman State Park was fairly low considering total population numbers, the estimated loss is approximately 11 percent of the population. Certain flocks appear to have endured much of that loss. The Grand Prairie flock, the largest Canadian flock in the population, had an estimated overwinter death rate of 48 percent this past winter, compared to an average rate of 24 percent (Rocky Mountain Population Trumpeter Swan Subcommittee).

Production levels for Rocky Mountain population trumpeters in Canada have been increasing in recent years. In 1989 following the previous winter's die off, the number of pairs in the Grand Prairie flock was 18 percent below 1988 levels, and the number of nests was 16 percent below 1988 levels. Production was below that in 1988, but above the 5-year average. Production levels were below average for Montana and Idaho (Rocky Mountain Population Trumpeter Swan Subcommittee), and slightly above average for Wyoming (Dave Moody, pers. comm.).

The congregation of approximately 30 percent of the population in a small area at Harriman State Park and large congregations at Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge and other wintering areas within the tri-State area leave the trumpeters vulnerable to disease.

Management efforts currently underway (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1984) are attempting to expand trumpeter swan winter range within a 150-mile radius of the tri-State wintering area, and initial results appear promising. Successful range expansion could alleviate the need for continued emphasis on water flows at Harriman State Park. It would decrease the population's vulnerability to disease. Regions 1 and 6 of the Service are committed to increasing efforts to expand the winter range of the Rocky Mountain population of the trumpeter swan. The Refuges and Wildlife Divisions in both Regions have increased their range expansion programs. The program is currently progressing quite well, especially in Wyoming where the State has taken a very active role. However, range expansion is a long term process, and without a sufficient minimum flow in the Henrys Fork, curtailment of feeding areas at Harriman State Park will continue to be a threat to trumpeter swan winter habitat until range expansion efforts are completed.

To address the threat of insufficient minimum flows in the Henrys Fork to maintain the swans wintering there, a committee consisting of personnel from the Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and Idaho State University met to establish the minimum flow needed to maintain adequate winter habitat for swans on the Henrys Fork. They established a minimum flow figure of 500 cfs below the Buffalo River. Assuming an average flow of 200 cfs from the Buffalo River, 300 cfs would have to be released from Island Park Reservoir (on the Henrys Fork) to maintain the 500 cfs minimum flow.

Subsequent to the establishment of the 500 cfs minimum flow, the historic flow records for the past 16 years (1974-1989) at the Island Park gaging station were reviewed. This review showed that there was sufficient water to maintain the 500 cfs minimum flow during 6 to 16 years. During the other 10 years, additional water would have to have been released to maintain the 500 cfs. It is believed that sufficient water would have been available for purchase and thus released during most of those 10 years.

A review of the midwinter trumpeter swan survey results for the past 18 years show that the number of swans counted increased from 709 in 1974, to a high of 1,743 in 1989. Some of this increase is probably due to an increase in survey effort, but it is believed that during this period, the Rocky Mountain population has maintained an upward trend. At a meeting in January 1990, Service, waterfowl biologists indicated that the effects of last winter's die off and lower production in 1989 will only be temporary and that the upward trend of the population should continue.

Now that the minimum flow level has been established, the Service has made a commitment to make every effort to purchase the necessary water during those winters when the minimum flow below the Buffalo River drops below 500 cfs. Since the Service is committed to try to purchase the necessary water to maintain a minimum flow of 500 cfs during the winter, it is believed that the major threat to the population has been alleviated. By removing this threat, it will provide the Service with the necessary time to expand the winter range of the species to where it is sufficiently widespread that a catastrophic event in any one part of the population's range will not threaten the existence of the population.

After review of the petition, accompanying documentation, references cited therein, and other information obtained, the Service found that the petition presented information insufficient to conclude that the requested action may be warranted.

#### References Cited

- Rocky Mountain Population Trumpeter Swan Subcommittee. 1989. Report to the Pacific Flyway Study Committee. Idaho Department of Fish and Game. 2pp
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 1984. North American Management Plan for Trumpeter Swans. Prepared by the Trumpeter Swan Subcommittees for the Flyway Councils, Canadian Wildlife Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Office of Migratory Bird Management, Washington, DC 62pp.

#### Author

This notice was prepared by Olin E. Bray (see ADDRESSES).

#### Authority

The authority for this action is the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531-1543).

#### List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 17

Endangered and threatened species, Fish, Marine mammals, Plants (agriculture).

Dated: April 19, 1990.

Bruce Blanchard,

Acting Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

[FR Doc. 90-9664 Filed 4-25-90; 8:45 am]

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IDAHO CHAPTER - THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY FINANCIAL REPORT FOR JUNE 1990

The following summary of Chapter finances for 1989 may be of interest for those who were not able to attend the business session that was conducted as part of our annual meeting. This information may also be compared to our current year figures to better understand our present financial status.

The beginning balance for calendar year 1989 was \$5921.30 which is held in a non-profit premium checking account at the First Interstate Bank in Boise. The total income earned during 1989 was \$6445.85 which included membership funds, registration for the annual meeting and last year's fundraiser which earned \$1920. This total income also includes interest earnings of \$327.85 earned at a rate of 4.3%.

The total expenses for 1989 were \$4931.85. Of this total, the largest expenses were associated with annual meeting which cost nearly \$3340. The Chapter also made a donation of \$500 to provide water to wintering trumpeter swans along the Henry's Fork River. Other expenses include cost of copying newsletters, mailings, etc.

We closed out 1989 with \$7435.30 in the Chapter's account and, of course, started this calendar year with the same sum. This year our annual meeting held jointly with the American Fisheries Society cost about \$3465. The Chapter donated \$1000 to a wildlife viewing guide that is being developed for Idaho in cooperation with other sponsors. The Chapter also renewed its membership in the Region 3 Wildlife Council for \$50.

Our Chapter's earnings to date are primarily associated with the annual meeting. About \$2045 was taken in for registration for the meeting and another \$395 was taken in for membership dues. The auction/raffle fundraiser raised \$1990 for the Chapter, comprised of \$511 brought in by raffle tickets, \$1013 by items purchased during the open auction and \$466 earned by the silent auction. The Chapter's account currently holds about \$7,500.

It is interesting that the 1990 fundraiser earnings coincidentally matched the calendar year. The fundraiser would not be so successful without the generous donations of members and non-members. The enthusiasm of the bidders during the auction was also key to the fundraiser, as was the help of volunteers who helped sell raffle tickets, display items, serve as cashiers and assisted this year's auctioneer. A sincere thank you to all of you who support the Chapter in this way and special thanks to the following folks and organizations:

- |                                  |                                   |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Chuck Blair                      | Matt McCoy                        |
| Gary Burnett                     | Paul Moroz                        |
| Tom Blessinger (1990 auctioneer) | Bill Mullins                      |
| Leslie Carpenter                 | Justin Naderman                   |
| Jack Connelly                    | Kerry Reese                       |
| Erica Craig                      | Roger Rosentreter                 |
| Gene deReus                      | Alan Sands                        |
| Edson Fichter                    | Lewis Tharp                       |
| Jay Gore                         | Barry Whitehill                   |
| Marilyn Hemker                   | Jeri Williams                     |
| Tom Hemker                       | Roger Williams                    |
| Dan Herrig                       | Bogus Basin Ski Resort            |
| Rich Howard                      | Idaho Department of Fish and Game |
| Ann Keysor                       | Marv's Framing, Boise             |
| Phyllis Kockert                  | Pheasants Forever                 |
| Lonn Kuck                        | Red Lion Downtowner               |
| Dave Lockwood                    | Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation     |
| Richard McCabe                   |                                   |

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## IDAHO WILDLIFE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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I want to join the Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society, and enclose \_\_\_\_\_ \$5.00 (1 year), \_\_\_\_\_ \$10.00 (2 years), \_\_\_\_\_ \$15.00 (3 years) in payment of dues. This is a new/renewal membership. It is not necessary to be a member of the parent Wildlife Society to be a member of the Idaho Chapter. Membership is by calendar year. Make checks Payable to "Idaho Wildlife Society", and mail to: Idaho Wildlife Society, c/o Paul Moroz, 2081 N.W. 8th Street, Meridian, ID 83642.

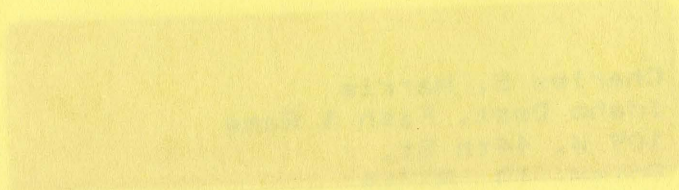
### Directory Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer, Affiliation, School, or Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



IDAHO WILDLIFE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I want to join the Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society, and  
enclose \$2.00 (1 year), \$10.00 (2 years), \$15.00 (3 years) in payment of dues. This is a new/renewal membership. It  
is not necessary to be a member of the parent Wildlife Society to be a  
member of the Idaho Chapter. Membership is by calendar year. Make  
checks payable to "Idaho Wildlife Society", and mail to:  
Wildlife Society, c/o Paul Moran, 2081 N.W. 8th Street, Meridian, ID  
83642.

Directory Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Employer, Affiliation, School, or Agency: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Charles E. Harris  
Idaho Dept. Fish & Game  
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