

# THE WILD TIMES



## IDAHO CHAPTER THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY



Issue 98:3

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**NEXT NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS DUE DECEMBER 1**



## President's Message

### THE CONSTANCIES OF WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

I've been involved with wildlife science and management for 25 years now, and over that time I've seen a lot of people become the new president of an organization. Invariably, a new president produces a message dealing with change: how the profession, organization, information, issues, policies, and people have changed and how change is the only certainty we can count on. I'm not going to do that type of column for this or any other issue of the newsletter!

I will, however, ask you to consider the time period during which you have been a professional or student actively working in wildlife-related fields. The length of this time will vary for each of you, from a year or less to 45 or more years. Now consider this: What in the field of wildlife science and management has remained constant over that time period? Don't read further until you have taken a few moments to really mull over the idea. Your response will be different from others because of your age and individual experiences. There are no right or wrong answers, just your own ideas. Compiling all of our thoughts on this question would reveal much about our organization, our history, and our vision for the future.

Over my own quarter century, what has remained constant in the wildlife field? After some thought, several aspects of wildlife come to mind.

Constant 1. The general public remains under-educated about wildlife and environmental issues. Note that I did not write "uninterested in" or "not concerned about" wildlife and environmental issues, merely under-educated. To me, the loss of Idaho Wildlife magazine hurts, and, though unintended by decision-makers, it helps maintain this constant.

Constant 2. Wildlife and environmental issues receive inadequate attention from elected officials and policy makers. Some of you may rightfully disagree because you get too much attention from your local, state, or national office-holder. However, refer back to constant 1 and consider the benefits that a more environmentally-educated electorate could produce in your local, state, or national public servant. We could see significant change under such an electorate.

Constant 3. At all levels of involvement, wildlife professionals are undervalued and therefore underpaid. No need to elaborate or bemoan the fact, it's been this way since the beginning of the discipline and will probably stay a constant!

Constant 4. Wildlife resources need scientifically-based management. We must continue to learn more

about species, habitats, ecosystems, and landscapes, and about the impacts of humans on them. Do not infer that social aspects of natural resource management are not needed. They are extremely important to successful implementation and completion of most management activities and programs. Indeed, they can help to define what those activities and programs might be. Social aspects of our profession should receive more attention than they currently do. However, wildlife professionals must continue to provide the basic scientific knowledge needed to appropriately serve the resources and society. This will never change.

Constant 5. Intelligent, dedicated, and educated professionals, despite the often dismal prospects for individual species, habitats, or programs, must remain constant in remembering the value of their efforts on behalf of wildlife resources. Continue to retain hope and optimism.

Constant 6. The Wildlife Society, with its publications, programs, and people, remains the primary organization to participate in for wildlife-related information, personal contacts, and the sense of dedication we all need.

You may have slightly or radically different ideas than those presented here. If so, the newsletter editor would be interested in receiving a letter from you for a future issue. Kerry Reese☺

## Editorial

### NEWSLETTER E-MAIL

Beginning with this issue, the newsletter will be sent via electronic mail to the few individuals that have requested so. Unfortunately, only 8 people requested so. Therefore, I'm extending the request period - each and every one of you that requests e-mail versions will save the chapter approximately \$1.50 per issue. Please indicate whether you prefer WordPerfect 6.1 or \*.txt file format. I'm considering sending the newsletter to all IDFG employees via e-mail. Let me know if this will absolutely not work for you.

### WESTERN IDAHO CORRESPONDENT STILL NEEDED

I'm still looking for 1 good person, heck I'd even take a not so good person, to serve as regional correspondent for western Idaho. By the lack of response to my past requests, I can only assume that western Idaho has absolutely no conservation issues worthy of statewide consideration. Please tell me otherwise. BBC ☺



Please send all newsletter correspondence to:  
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Pocatello, ID 83204  
Fax - 233-6430  
Phone - 232-4703  
E-Mail - BCompton@IDFG.STATE.ID.US

## Feature Articles

### 1999 ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE

You may be interested to know what is happening with the ICTWS Annual Meeting in 1999. This meeting will be held in Boise in conjunction with the American Fisheries Society on March 3-6 (Wednesday through Saturday morning). A joint meeting will provide the opportunity to mingle with our colleagues in the aquatic environment and make necessary connections (professionally and otherwise) between the aquatic and the terrestrial environment. The theme of the joint meeting will be salmon and steelhead recovery, with links between the aquatic and terrestrial system as a subcomponent. The AFS and ICTWS are trying to contact a plenary speaker who will be able to address both aquatic and terrestrial components of the salmon and steelhead issue and the importance of anadromous fish to the terrestrial ecosystem. Some very interesting work has been conducted the last several years that opens up new avenues to explore for terrestrial ecologists and wildlife managers. I would encourage you to share with the membership research you are involved in fitting into this general theme of the conference. Alternatively, the focus could be on riparian systems in general. If sufficient interest is expressed, I would like to organize a symposium..

Other activities are also in the planning stage. The ICTWS hosted a workshop on species of special concern (or PETS) in the past years. However, several years have lapsed since we have had an update, which is of particular importance because many changes have taken place. Several ICTWS members have agreed to present a status review on groups of animals (Chuck Peterson, amphibians and reptiles; Sharon Ritter, birds; Lyle Lewis, bats; and Chuck Harris, remaining species). This will be a very informative session and I will update you in the next newsletter about specifics. Furthermore, several members expressed to me a need to have a workshop on the certification process through the Wildlife Society. John Haufler, who is serving on the Certification Committee and Chuck Harris who served on this committee in the past, have kindly agreed to host this workshop.

In finishing, I would like to receive input what you would like to see discussed at the annual meeting. Are there specific burning topics that need to be addressed in a workshop or otherwise? The annual meeting provides the opportunity

for information exchange, education, and having a good time. However, I need your input to make this meeting live up to your expectations. You can reach me by telephone (208-388-2352) or e-mail (AMH6528@idahopower.com). I welcome any suggestions and comments. Toni Holthuijzen ☺

## IDAHO CHAPTER THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY COMMITTEE UPDATES

### Teaming With Wildlife:

No Report.  
Paul Moroz, Chairperson ☺

### Conservation Affairs Committee:

No Report.  
Jon Haufler, Chairperson ☺

### Nominations-Election Committee:

No Report.  
Don Kemner, Chairperson ☺

### Awards Committee:

No Report.  
Bill Wall, Chairperson ☺

### Membership Committee:

No Report.  
Chuck Peterson, Chairperson ☺

## Regional Reports

### North Idaho

#### LOOKING NORTH - MOVING SOUTH

As most of you know the north american lynx has been proposed for listing. Although lynx have been a species of concern for some time this proposed listing has placed the lynx in the environmental limelight. In a pro-active move, the Clearwater National Forest in conjunction with the Idaho Fish and Game and Defenders of Wildlife have taken the first steps in restoring this species of concern to northcentral Idaho. As we speak 2 graduate students under the direction of Wayne Melquist are busy determining if an adequate prey base for lynx exists in the Clearwater area. Preliminary data indicates there is adequate prey to support lynx in the area.

Eventually lynx captured in Canada will be relocated in the area and tracked to determine their habitat preferences. This adaptive management stance will help in determining the viability of reintroducing lynx to this area of Idaho.



**“Further south”.** The first confirmed wolf-caused livestock depredation has occurred in the Salmon area. It has been confirmed that as of early August wolves have been responsible for killing a calf in an allotment on the Salmon-Challis National Forest. Wolves have been implicated in 2 other livestock deaths. As a result of these depredations, 1 subadult and 1 pup were trapped and relocated in the Selway-Bitterroot area of Idaho. Traps are still out and if any more subadults or the alpha male are caught, they will be relocated. Relocated wolves have been fitted with radio collars. If the alpha female or pups are caught, they will be released on-site.

Continued wolf monitoring indicates there are 9 pairs and packs of wolves that have produced pups this year from the Central Idaho population. Pup counts are still underway. Joe Butsick ☺

## Eastern Idaho

### **BRUCELLOSIS UPDATE....**

Supplemental winter feeding of big game is a common classroom topic in Wildlife Management 101 – supplemental feeding allows populations to expand beyond range carrying capacity, and provides potential for the spread of disease – supplemental feeding is bad! Yeah, well that’s all good and fine but the fact is, the public loves winter feeding of big game. A recent survey that asked whether the public favored continued efforts to supplement winter food found over 80% of the respondents in favor of feeding. How can we have too many elk and deer? Well, it appears that we’re gonna have to deal with the prophecy of Wildlife Management 101. The culprit, a microbacteria called *Brucella abortus*, is forcing the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, the Idaho Department of Agriculture, and the Idaho sportsmen to deal with the reality of a diseased elk herd.

Last month, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game and Idaho Department of Agriculture completed work on an ambitious plan to control the incidence and spread of brucellosis in Idaho. The plan was prepared for a Governor’s Task Force initiated on the heels of discovery of the disease in elk at a winter feedground near Swan Valley on the Idaho-Wyoming border this past winter. While the plan includes guidelines for the monitoring of disease in cattle, it deals primarily with control of brucellosis in elk and how winter management of elk must change if we are to avoid the spread of the disease. Brucellosis infects reproductive tissues and the lymphatic system causing the female to abort. Transmission of the disease requires direct contact. As such, feedgrounds are a primary vehicle for spread of the disease.

The presence of brucellosis did not come as any great surprise to IDFG wildlife managers. The difficulty of the situation has been greater in managing public response to the proposed plan than in the agencies analysis of how to manage the disease. Brucellosis is not a great threat to wildlife. Wyoming officials estimate that at the present infection rate, the decrease in elk recruitment is likely

minimal – probably less than 7%. The political concern lies in how the presence of the disease may affect beef cattle buyer perception outside of Idaho. The cattle industry has spent many years and much money combating brucellosis. The mere perception of a potential for spread of the disease from elk to livestock is considered enough to threaten the livestock industry, even though there has never been a reported case of transmission between free-ranging elk and cattle. As such, the need for implementing drastic changes in eastern Idaho elk management is difficult for the public to accept. It has left many believing that the IDFG has “sold out” to the livestock industry – that the cattlemen are running the Fish and Game Department.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. When I listed the reasons artificial feeding is bad in the first paragraph, I left out one – maybe the most important. *Winter feeding of big game may impact how forage is allocated on winter range.* Winter range for wild ungulates is often used as summer range for domestic livestock. Livestock stocking rates can have a large impact on what forage will be available when elk and deer move to these ranges. It can be very difficult to justify prioritizing winter range for deer and elk when winter range has traditionally been provided in the form of a bale of hay. Wyoming is very familiar with this problem. What brucellosis has provided us is another chance – an opportunity for objective assessment of why we have become so dependent on artificial feeding of big game, and license to change our management direction. Paragraph 3 in the Executive Summary of the *Wildlife Brucellosis Task Force Report and Recommendations to the Governor* states: “We recommend that the Governor formally request that the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, in consultation with the Departments of Agriculture and Fish and Game, place a high priority on development of winter range for elk on public lands and request that the U.S. Department of Agriculture increase efforts to enroll and manage Conservation Reserve Program on private lands in the Greater Yellowstone area for use as winter range for wildlife.” We believe this statement will have far-reaching implications given its sponsorship.

Irresponsible range management and uncontrolled human development can no longer be tempered by stacks of hay bales. Eastern Idaho hunters are going to see the consequences of our uncontrolled consumption of winter range, and they should be angry. Elk numbers will be decreased, dramatically in some areas, in order to move populations in line with current habitat carrying capacity. We believe though that with proper management, and a little time, elk herds can begin to grow as range conditions improve. While we can never get back winter range lost to reservoirs, agriculture, and housing developments, this effort should raise our awareness of the consequences of our actions. Hopefully, it may even change our behavior in the future. Jeff Copeland ☺

## **New U of I Master's Program**

University of Idaho, College of Forestry, Wildlife & Range Sciences now offers a new Master's program called Master of Natural Resources (MNR). The MNR is an interdisciplinary degree focused on natural resource management and administration rather than the traditional M.S. research-focused degree. This unique, non-thesis degree is accessible to regional students and will help graduates develop a set of credentials that allow them to compete more effectively for higher-level management positions.

The MNR program requires 30 semester credits.

- \* 28 credits of core courses in 3 emphasis areas: management, human dimensions, and ecology.
- \* 2 credits of colloquia (on the Moscow campus)
- \* a comprehensive, final examination
- \* demonstrated ability to write proficiently

All requirements for graduation are to be completed within eight years. Each semester, a minimum of 2 courses will be offered by the College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences at the UI Boise Center. For more information about the program contact:

Dr. Charley McKletta, Program Coordinator  
Univ. Of Idaho (208-885-2397)

or

Joe Zimmer  
UI Boise Center (208-334-2999)

## **Upcoming Meetings**

Western Section of the Wildlife Society's Natural Resources Communication Workshop.  
January 11-15, Application Deadline of October 30, Cost = \$595.00  
Dr. Jon K. Hooper, California State University, Chico, (530-898-5811)

Restoring the Wolf Forum.  
November 11-15, Doubletree Airport Hotel, Seattle, WA  
Nina Fascione (202-789-2844 Ext. 227)

Idaho Chapter the Wildlife Society Annual Meeting.  
March 3-6, 1999, Boise  
Toni Holthuijzen (208-388-2352)

## **Humor Section**

***You Might Be A Redneck If:***

You've ever freshened up with a Slim Jim.

You've ever water-skied in your underwear.

People hear you car a long time before they see it.

***NEXT NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS DUE BY DECEMBER 1***

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## IDAHO WILDLIFE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

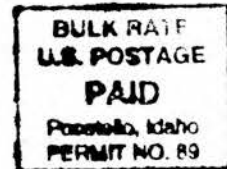
I want to join the Idaho Chapter of the Wildlife Society, and enclose \_\_\_ \$10.00 (1 year), \_\_\_ \$20.00 (2 years), or \_\_\_ \$30.00 (3 years) in payment of dues. This is \_\_\_ new or \_\_\_ renewal membership. It is not necessary to be a member of the parent The Wildlife Society to be a member of the Idaho Chapter of TWS. Membership is by calender year. Make checks payable to: "Idaho Wildlife Society" and mail to Idaho Wildlife Society, c/o Tony Apa, Treasurer, 868 East Main, Jerome, ID 83338 (Telephone 208-324-4359)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

---- Clip-And-Send ----

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