

25 August 1983

Mr. Dale A. Jones, President
The Wildlife Society
5410 Grosvenor Lane
Bethesda, MD 20814

Dear Dale:

I am writing to offer comments on the "unified membership" plans discussed in The Wildlifer. As you stated, this idea has been argued for a long time. There is, of course, no easy answer to this but allow me to make a few comments.

You stated that a major problem involved people taking a public stand on issues that could not be supported by T.W.S. That's true but how widespread is that problem? Also, will the problem be eliminated if we require the same people to be T.W.S. members? I doubt it. The only possible solution would be for all stands to have prior approval of T.W.S. and that's not a workable solution. This, I can't accept this as a valid argument for national membership.

People cannot serve as officers of T.W.S. unless they belong to the national organization. I realize that this has always been a problem but a forced membership would only make it easier for the purpose of bookkeeping. It does not, however, constitute a logical reason for changing the present system.

We must realize that there are valid reasons for belonging to a chapter or section without joining the national organization. These arguments are usually expressed by conservation officers, information/education officers, and administrators. I must agree with them in one sense--we don't spend a lot of effort to provide articles, services, and the like for these groups. Consequently, they end up joining organizations that are more in tune with their jobs. Who can blame them for that? In addition, there are other non-wildlife people who sometimes join chapters. In some areas of the country this may have created a problem, but it should be solved at the chapter or section level rather than making it a general rule for everyone. In Idaho, we have 10 individuals who are not wildlife trained but have an interest in wildlife. This includes three teachers who teach about wildlife, two private citizens (one is deeply involved in caribou research), a fisheries

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biologist, a geneticist, a forest technician, a draftsman, and a veterinarian. Each contributes something to the Idaho Chapter. If a national membership was required, we would lose all of them.

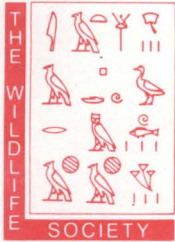
I am also concerned about membership at the national level. However, my belief has always been that the best way to increase membership is to offer more to the members so that they feel it is a great benefit to belong. At this time they apparently do not feel that good about T.W.S. Maybe the correct approach, then, would be to offer more at the national level.

Because of the above stated reasons, I cannot support membership changes at the present time and feel that we should stay with the present system.

Sincerely,

Lewis Nelson, Jr., President
Idaho Chapter--The Wildlife Society

LN:jd



THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

5410 Grosvenor Lane • Bethesda, MD 20814 • Tel. (301) 897-9770

19 July 1983

MEMORANDUM

TO: Sections and Chapters and Student Chapters
FROM: Tom Franklin, Field Director *Tom*
SUBJECT: Unified Dues Structure

The May-June issue of The Wildlifer carried an article by President Jones soliciting member comments on the idea of a "unified membership" that would require every chapter, section, or Society member to become a member of all 3 levels of Society organization. He laid out 4 alternatives for membership and requested each member to take the time to personally evaluate the alternatives and submit his or her choices to him by 15 September 1983. A copy of his "President's Corner" article is attached.

Please share this with your Section or Chapter members, some of whom are not Society members and therefore do not receive The Wildlifer. Kindly make every effort to address this issue in the near future so we will have the benefit of the thinking and opinions of all segments of the Society.

Thank you for your consideration.

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Enclosure

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



DALE A. JONES

Council had an exciting meeting in Kansas City. It didn't match the St. Patrick's Day celebration in the city, but was exciting nonetheless.

One issue that came up for the umpteenth time was the "unified membership" idea that would require every Chapter, Section, or Society member to become a member of all 3 levels of Society organization. The way it stands now, an individual may be a member of a Chapter and/or Section, but is not required to join The Wildlife Society and vice versa.

Council has debated this issue at almost every meeting since Jack Ward Thomas was President. Because the issue is important and affects every member, I agreed to address it in the "President's Corner" of *The Wildlifer*. I want to give each member a crack at letting us know how you feel about unified membership.

Before I describe the idea, let me review some of the problems Council faces with the various levels of membership we now have.

We have had several instances brought to our attention where a person who belongs to a Chapter or Section, but not to the Society, will take a public stand on a conservation issue, perhaps in a "letter to the editor," to an agency, or something similar, and sign as a member of The Wildlife Society. Sometimes that stand cannot be supported by The Wildlife Society.

We also have many individuals serving as officers in Sections, Chapters, and Student Chapters who, for one reason or another, are not members of The Wildlife Society. This is contrary to the Society and their own organization bylaws. How can our leaders effectively speak out and act on behalf of the profession if they don't abide by our requirements and are not members of their professional society? Shouldn't they set the example for their colleagues and encourage all Chapter and Section members to become members of The Wildlife Society?

The original reason for the separate Chapter/Section/Society membership, I believe, was to provide an opportunity to introduce prospective members to TWS without it costing that person an arm and a leg. Apparently, it was thought that as a Chapter or Section member, the individual would get so "hooked" on Society benefits that it only would be a short time before that person joined The Wildlife Society.

I assume this made more sense when the membership dues included the cost of the *Journal* and *Bulletin*, but now this is only one of several membership alternatives available. The basic dues to TWS are presently \$17.00 for Regular members and \$9.00 for Students. Chapter and Section dues vary, but most are in the neighborhood of \$2.00 to \$5.00 each. Admittedly, Section and Chapter dues are less expensive, but in this time of inflation, the total of all three is little more than a conservative bar tab!

Now let's look at how three other professional societies handle their membership. I happen to belong to each, so I can use my own experience as an example.

When I pay my dues to the Society for Range Management, my address indicates to which Section I pay dues (SRM does not have Chapters). Those Section dues were approved by the Section and they vary in cost around the country. If I move, my SRM dues go up or down, even though the basic membership dues remain the same. There is no membership to Sections only. If you join SRM, you pay your Section dues as well.

The Society of American Foresters uses this same dues structure.

However, the American Fisheries Society has a different approach. You can belong to AFS without joining a Chapter or Division, but to belong to a Chapter or Division, you must be a member of AFS.

So what does all this have to do with the price of buttermilk? The Wildlife Society has the right to be different, of course, but Council must do what is best for TWS.

Some people will say that we would be cutting our own throat to change from our present cafeteria approach to a unified membership dues structure. One argument against change is that we could lose a great many prospective members, especially at the Chapter level. However, my recruiting experience does not bear this out.

On the other hand, those who favor the unified membership concept may be correct in thinking that the membership will be stronger and more committed to their professional society.

Then there are those who will say that the change could spell the end of many Student Chapters, since relatively few students are Society members. Will the combined dues for students of about \$15.00 a year make that difference?

Anyhow, my purpose is to solicit comments and suggestions from the membership on this issue. We would really appreciate it if you would spare the time and postage necessary to send us your first and second choices from the following alternatives. We also would like to know why you made your choices.

Alternative 1. Every member of TWS will be a member of his or her Section and Chapter, and every Section or Chapter member will be a member of TWS.

Alternative 2. Every member of a Section or Chapter will belong to TWS, but can belong to TWS without joining a Section and/or Chapter.

Alternative 3. No change in the way TWS membership dues presently are handled.

Alternative 4. (Please describe)

I cannot predict what changes, if any, will result from your efforts, but rest assured that we will seriously consider your opinions and you will be contributing to a lively Council meeting this fall!

We look forward to your responses. Please send them to me by 15 September 1983 at The Wildlife Society, 5410 Grosvenor Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814. Thank you.



NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON COMPUTER USES IN FISH AND WILDLIFE PROGRAMS

This workshop, scheduled for 5-7 December 1983 at VPI and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia, will be a review of computer uses in fish and wildlife programs highlighting innovative computer technologies for research, teaching, extension, and management. Emphasis will be on practical applications and opportunities for exchange of ideas among managers, researchers, educators, administrators, extension specialists, planners, consultants, etc. The workshop will include invited papers, trade shows, poster sessions, work groups, and time for informal discussions. The workshop papers and other materials will be available upon registration at the workshop.

Computer technology is impacting all major program areas in fish and wildlife. The field is developing so rapidly that a state-of-the-art meeting offers some distinct advantages over a more formal conference format. This workshop is designed to speed technology transfer and encourage incorporation of computer systems into existing programs. The national scope will help eliminate costly duplication of research and development efforts in relative isolated situations. The workshop should stimulate dialogue and planning for the future.

Tentatively scheduled sessions include an overview of developing technology, inventory of data bases, analysis procedures, innovative uses of computer technologies, examples of computerized data application, and 4 concurrent sessions on teaching extension, research and management.

Anyone interested in participating in the poster session or in need of further information should contact: **Dr. Gerald H. Cross** at the **Department of Fisheries & Wildlife Sciences, Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, Blacksburg, VA 24061.**