

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, The Wildlife Society, the American Fisheries Society and others have launched a nationwide campaign to support a **Fish and Wildlife Diversity Funding Initiative**. This funding proposal is patterned after the highly successful Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson federal aid programs. It would basically be the same type of program for nongame. There would be a 5% excise tax on the wholesale price of outdoor gear and products such as backpacks, tents, sleeping bags, binoculars, cameras & film, birdseed, field guides, recreational vehicles and some other items. The estimated \$350 million per year generated by this program would be distributed back to the states to be used for wildlife conservation, outdoor recreation and environmental education. The legislation will be introduced this spring.

Sections, state chapters, student chapters and individual members are encouraged to proactively support this funding initiative by informing elected officials and by urging manufacturers to support the initiative. Chapters are being asked to appoint committees, and develop plans to generate support. We will discuss this at our annual meeting in early March.

To:

Mike Gratson

