

THE FAWN



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THE WILD SIDE

Chester Martin – NMFWA President
(Chester.martin@nmfwa.org)

The official NMFWA calendar year (mid-March thru mid-March) is half over and it's time to start thinking about the FY04 Annual Meeting and Training Session in Spokane, Washington. Jim Copeland has put together an excellent program, with nine pertinent breakout sessions on such topics as Installation Natural Resource Management Plans (INRMPs), Ecosystem Management, Technological Advances, Fisheries Management, Prescribed Burning, Endangered Species Issues, and Conservation Law Enforcement on military lands. Jim is to be congratulated for developing a truly dynamic program that features conservation issues and case studies presented primarily by installation personnel (see Jim's information on pages 7-10 of this newsletter).

Congratulations are also in order for several other Board members and members-at-large. The Fort Riley, Kansas, Threatened and Endangered Species Management Team recently received the "Group Achievement

Award" at the 2003 Annual Conference of The Wildlife Society in Burlington, Vermont (see article on page 9). This was quite an honor and I wish to thank the Fort Riley Conservation Division for its contributions to this effort. I would also like to congratulate Scott Belfit for being approved as the new NMFWA Secretary; Scott was unanimously selected by the Board to serve out the term vacated by Hildy Reiser (see paragraph below). I especially wish to congratulate Coralie (and Jess) Cobb and Tammy (and Heath) Conkle on the recent additions to their families. Coralie gave birth to Ethan David on 9 March 2003 and Tammy gave birth to Emma Camille on 15 August 2003. The babies are doing well and have already started to date each other. I've gone ahead and signed them up as NMFWA members. I am also pleased to announce the wedding of long-term NMFWA member Daisan Taylor to Mark Glass; the couple were married in Mesilla, New Mexico, on 11 June 2003.

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Now is the time to submit your articles on events or field studies taking place on your installation.

See **FAWN** deadlines on page 13

The Wild Side — continued

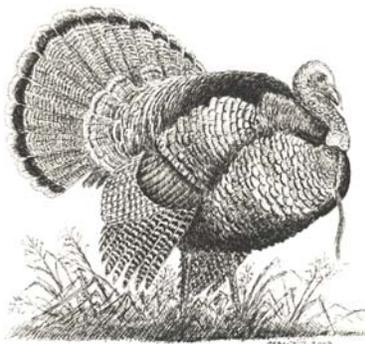
I'd like to take this opportunity to thank two past-NMFWA BOD members for their dedication and exemplary service to the Association. Julie Eliason served as Secretary from March 2001 thru March 2003 and was a long-term participant in NMFWA meetings and activities; her outstanding wildlife photographs will always be remembered as a highlight of NMFWA meetings. Julie now works for San Luis Obispo County, CA as an Environmental Resource Specialist. Hildy Reiser served as Western Director from March 2001 to March 2003 and Secretary from March to September 2003. Hildy is the new Director of the Chihuahuan Desert Network Inventory and Monitoring Program with the National Park Service in New Mexico and western Texas. Their contributions have helped to make NMFWA a better Association, and they will be sorely missed at future meetings.

Most of you are aware that NMFWA members participate in other professional meetings and conferences throughout the year. The Association recently held a general membership meeting at the 10th Annual Conference of The Wildlife Society in Burlington, Vermont. The meeting represented an opportunity for members to attend the TWS Conference, interact with the NMFWA Board, and hear reports on the Association's activities since the March Annual Meeting. Thanks go to Jim Beemer for making arrangements for the meeting and to Mark Hagan for acting as Secretary during the session. Mark's meeting notes are located on page 8. As usual, there are always some interesting highlights at these meetings. As previously noted, we were delighted by the special award that went to Fort Riley. Another action item was my five-hour stay in the emergency room at the Burlington Hospital. It all began when I was having a luncheon meeting with Junior Kerns, Chair of the NMFWA Government Affairs Committee. I suddenly started to feel queasy and uncomfortable (which is not all that unusual when dealing with Government Affairs), but it got worse and worse and I began to suffer streaks of pain in my lower back. This didn't bother Junior since he's always looking for a "first" and he was

excited to realize that we've never had a NMFWA President die in office. Junior had to rush off to another meeting (or so he said), so I cornered our FAWN Editor, Mike Passmore, and asked him to take me to the nearest emergency room, which he did. Luckily, I was just having a kidney stone attack (which can be awfully painful), but I survived and will continue to serve out my term.

On a more serious note, I recently communicated with Junior Kerns regarding the status of Sikes Act reauthorization. According to Junior, there has been no change in the Act since June. In other words, the House version (published as part of HR1497) is the standing version (reference <http://thomas.loc.gov>). To confuse matters, just a bit, the Sikes reauthorization was then merged into the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2004 (HR1588). The Defense Authorization Bill is now in the House-Senate Conference Committee, where the Senate and House versions will be reconciled. The latest word is that we do not anticipate any changes to the Sikes Act provisions, as passed by the House. Once it comes out of Conference, it receives one final vote by both the House and Senate; it then goes to the President for signature. The Bill should become Law in November 2003.

In closing, I want to again encourage all members to plan on participating in the upcoming NMFWA Annual Meeting and Training Session in Spokane. This meeting is NMFWA's major activity for the year and provides an opportunity for DoD personnel from all service branches to interact, catch up on the latest technological advances, and learn from the experiences of others. As mentioned in my June 2003 *Wild Side* article, I also wish to encourage our newer members to step forward and become active on committees and in working groups. You are the future of the Association.



**HAPPY
THANKSGIVING!!!**

**Membership is
Still Free!!!**

NMFWA Board of Directors Meeting March 28, 2003

New President Chester Martin called meeting to order at 0809. He thanked the Board of Directors (BOD), Host Committee and all participants for making the training sessions a success. There is a need to set-up evaluation forms.

Jim Beemer, immediate past-President, said one should be set-up on the website. Rhys Evans, At-Large Director, will set-up/create a form that would cover the program as well as the facilities. He envisioned a form similar to what was provided for the Environmental Concerns Workshop held in Tucson 2002.

Jim Copeland is the new 2004 Program Chair. The BOD had a discussion on how to decide on topics and how to get commitments from folks as technical session chairs. There was a general discussion on the papers themselves. How to solicit papers? In order to get new members involved, session chairs might actively solicit a new member to co-chair the session. Another suggestion to get new members involved was to have an award for best technical presentation by a new member. Copeland continued with saying that he wanted to have commitments for session chairs by May, with a preliminary announcement in the June FAWN.

Host Committee Discussion: There is no host committee for the 2004 meetings. Gerald Johnson from Fairchild, WA was a possibility. Tammy Conkle suggested that maybe an Army/Air Force effort would work best (Ft. Lewis/Yakima/Fairchild/maybe the Walla Walla Army Corps of Engineer District). It would spread the effort to get audio-visual support and solicitations for give-aways. Marjorie McHenry, US Army, Idaho, as past President, would be willing to act in an advisory capacity.

Thomas Wray will help with the DC Training Session (2005), and would also act as an advisor

for the Host Committee. Wray will continue working with Wildlife Management Institute.

Preliminary session topics were not listed yet, but by September/early October NMFWA needs to get into the preliminary brochures. It is important that we coordinate our program with WMI. The Endangered Species Act workshop that was held on Sunday was an issue with WMI. Workshop schedules should be coordinated through WMI. Michael Passmore, Newsletter Editor/ Bailey/ Evans/ Conkle: All had questions on the room situation. Saturday night bookings could be a problem. Evans: WMI should be commended for finding a less expensive hotel this year. NMFWA should make a statement at DOD Conservation Conference (CC) about the need for coordination. Currently NMFWA is committed to WMI through 2005. Junior Kerns: Looking ahead, should there be links between DOD Conservation Conferences and NMFWA meetings? In addition, ESA workshops will probably be at DOD CC vs. NMFWA meeting. The BOD needs to develop a long-term strategy.

Conkle: Would like to see the WMI pre-registration materials ahead of time. She asked why WMI does not give times for NMFWA registration in the pre-registration material?

2003-2004 Committee chairs were announced:

Government Affairs – Junior Kerns
Audit – Rafael Corral
WMI – Thomas Wray
Membership and Newsletter – Mike Passmore
Outreach – Rhys Evans
Awards – Jim Hessil
2004 Program – Jim Copeland
Nominations – Jim Beemer
2004 Host – (Jerry Johnson)
Law Enforcement – Michael Dunning
Archives – Tom Warren

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BOD Minutes — continued

With this announcement, a discussion on Law Enforcement (LE) issues ensued:

Evans: Mark Sledge said that the LE committee may try to become a Working Group vs staying as a committee. Jim Duncan: He might be a possibility to chair the Working Group. How does NMFWA get the LE folks more involved? Kerns: LE has not typically been a big participant unless specific technical session given. They have their own training session, so it is a problem getting them here.

New Topics –

Working Groups (WG)

Bailey/Martin/Conkle/Evans: All suggested that WG meetings be held concurrently. The BASH committee needs to seek official WG status (develop a charter, formally apply to NMFWA, get approval, etc.). The BASH meetings do not presently represent an official NMFWA WG, but meetings have been held at NMFWA conferences at the request of the Air Force/Navy BASH program.

Wray: The program chair needs to look at space requirements for 2004.

Outreach Committee Report

Evans: He is now sole chair of Outreach Committee. Wanda Deal will no longer be a co-chair. Poster is going back with J. Beemer. Wray/Kerns: The poster needs major revamping. NMFWA should buy another backboard. Buy a showier set-up. Evans: Will look into new styles. This will require a motion to expend the funds. This led to a discussion on posters; need a new logo, new photos, but a new poster display would be a good investment. Evans: He has a NMFWA's TV in his garage. What should be done with it? Sell it and donate the proceeds to the organization?

Business Meeting Attendance

Martin/Kerns/Bailey: Why aren't we getting more attendance at Business Meeting? Evans: At Western Section of TWS, there was free beer. They had 200 attendees. We could solicit a local microbrew to donate beer. Kerns: Maybe the low attendance means that folks are satisfied with how

things are. Hessil/Evans: Let's change name to Members Forum vs. Business Meeting to more accurately reflect what goes on. Hessil: People are turned-off by the length.

Rafael Corral: How is the organization structured? Maybe have a page in the program that shows a chart with the responsibilities of each committee/WG, etc. This might generate more interest. He found it confusing on what the BOD does, etc. Evans: Put chart on the website, vs. a lot of text.

2004 Training Session, Spokane, Washington

The next training session will be 15-19 March 2004, Spokane, Washington. Banquet held at a winery is a possibility. Kerns: We need to make decision on meeting pins. Do we want them or not? Maybe we could get a collection of pins from all of the past meetings and auction them off? Conkle: We generally order 200-250, but we always have a lot left over from each meeting. Beemer: Motion made that pins are ordered for next 2 meetings (WA and D.C.). Evans seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Association with Wildlife Management Institute

Evans: Motion that NMFWA commit to WMI through 2007 meeting.

Beemer: seconded the motion. **Motion passed. Wray will write letter to WMI to that effect.**

Discussion followed on why we have this association with WMI? Bailey: Why can't we hold meeting on an installation like ITAM conferences? Kerns/Conkle/Copeland: All stated that they would like to go to an installation and see stuff on the ground. Bailey: If we are not associated with WMI then we don't have time constraints. Mello: History with WMI goes back to Gene Stout. Griffiths: There would still be competition for facilities even if not with WMI. Hessil: He would also like to go to installations, but likes the association with WMI because of the "schmooz" factor. Being able to talk to and listen to the "big guns" like federal agency directors, etc. Evans: Everyone likes going to an installation, and we should do it when one is close. The host committee should be responsible for

trying to set this up. Copeland countered that if an installation wants to be involved to that degree they should be responsible for sponsoring the meeting.

Quick shift to discussion on official sponsorship to WMI: Kerns: Approach Peter Boice for DOD to be official sponsor, let's say for \$1500. Wray: WMI has said that our relationship will not change whether we officially sponsor or not. There are 3 levels of sponsorship (Gold, Silver and Bronze). Bronze is approximately \$1K to \$1.5K. Wray recommends that we sponsor WMI. Kerns: Concurred as the cost of doing business. Conkle: As Treasurer, she questions whether this is something NMFWA can afford to do. Wray: The letter requesting sponsorship comes out in August. The Board will need to address the letter.

Sponsorship of TWS

Martin: TWS sent a letter to Tom Poole requesting sponsorship for the 2004 meetings. Evans: Motion to provide funds as a sponsor of the national TWS meetings in Burlington, VA. Beemer: seconded the motion. **Motion did not pass.**

WMI Input

Wray: He needs input (policy related) for the 7 April meeting with WMI. Remember he needs 2-3 sentence statements on the topic you would be proposing for the WMI program/agenda at next year's meeting in WA.

Reserve Account

Kerns: He wanted to know if the Treasurer could be a part of the formal board/ad hoc committee on the Reserve Account. Beemer: the President does Selection of the Reserve Account Board. 1 member serves a 1-year term, 2 members – 2 yr terms, and 2 members hold 3 yr terms. Again, the President appoints the 5-member board.

Scott Smith, Rick Griffiths and Tom Poole would be willing to participate on the board. Conkle said she would serve on the board for the 1-yr. Term. One member is needed from the membership at large. Past presidents cannot serve on this board. It was proposed that Jim Duncan be named to represent the membership at large.

NMFWA History Photographs

Kerns: To be a part of history, please send in your stories and photos for the 20-yr anniversary of NMFWA. He will scan the info into PDF files. Ultimately the collection of photos and stories will be put on CDs and distributed to the association.

Association with Other Professional Organizations

Martin: The association is reasonably solvent. We are making a mistake by not getting formally involved with other professional organizations like TWS, AFS (American Fisheries Society), WMI, and others. Beemer: We need to engage the leadership of other professional associations; we need to pursue recognition of our organization among the other associations.

NMFWA Training Session “Give-a-ways”

Conkle: NMFWA has run out of plastic logo bags we use for the annual meetings. Copeland: Should we consider t-shirts, or canvas bags or folders for next year's meeting?

Training Session Costs

Terry Bashore: Can the board consider spousal deference regarding cost of conference, i.e., should spouses should have to pay for events where food is offered?

Coordination with WMI

Dick McCabe (WMI) would like better coordination with NMFWA program chair. He would like to keep it at 1 person to communicate with (i.e., host chair), but program chair should be working closer together. Program chair sends info to Host chair who then should be communicating with WMI. Another suggestion was to develop a standardized procedure for the exchange of information to WMI. Evans: The President-elect vs. the past president should be responsible for identifying the Host chair. Don Cockman: Suggested that the recent past host and program chairs develop this standardized procedure with responsibilities better assigned.

BOD Minutes — continued**Other topics:**

Martin: He'll send thank you letter to Julie Eliason for her past service on behalf of NMFWA.

Beemer: remove PEER and WMI from front page to links page for political reasons when using government computers.

Evans: What do folks think about starting recognition of an installation of the month or quarter? We could feature their Natural Resources Program. Conkle: Suggest you put it the FAWN to ask for participants.

Evans: Motion to adjourn. Cockman: seconded the motion. **Motion passed.**

Meeting adjourned at 1016.

Attendees: Board members: C. Martin, J. Beemer, J. Bailey, J. Copeland, H. Reiser, T. Conkle, J. Hovis, S. Smith, R. Corral, R. Evans, M. Passmore Others: T. Wray, J. Kerns, K. Mello, T. Bashore, R. Griffiths, B. Morrill, D. Cockman, J. Duncan

At-Large Director Report

Here comes the normal website update. Our site (www.nmfwa.org) continues to provide information and other resources to our members and visitors. And I realize that most of you are reading this on the web! That's great... Though visitation clearly and understandably peaks immediately before our annual meeting, we have had at least 3000 independent visits to the site each month for more than a year now.

Apparently (tell us if you think otherwise), not too many people mind the primarily electronic distribution of our newsletter – it's the second most popular portion of the website (the Employment and Jobs Bulletin Board is #1). Michael might address this elsewhere in the newsletter, but the printing and postage savings are easily more than \$1000 per year.

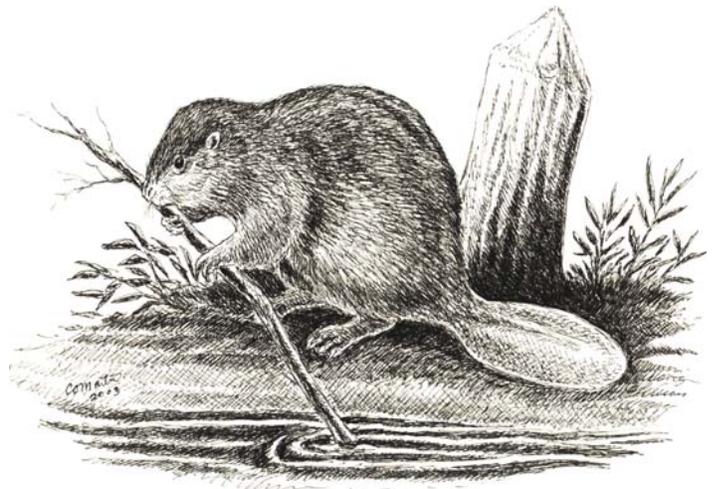
The Jobs and Employment Bulletin Board has a steady supply of interesting career opportunities. There's always room for more, so if you know of a vacancy announcement, post it! The more jobs we post, the more visits we will get. Please remember to include closing dates, as applicable. Of course, many of the people looking for natural resources work are "outsiders" to the organization, so this is a great introduction for them into the interesting things in which our members are involved.

The "regular" Bulletin Board continues to get moderate use, but I always write that we'd like to see more. If you have a question or concern, post it! If you have an answer or an experience to share, please help!

Finally, there's some information on our Spokane meeting posted now, there will be more posted at least once a month, and as the dates approach, you can look for new info every week. The NMFWA website it there for you, please continue to use it!

If members have any concerns for your Directors, please let us know... We have had some problems with the e-mails and phone numbers posted on the web, so if you don't get through to us, keep trying. By having our addresses posted prominently on the website, your officers and directors are also getting hit by more Spam, but we tolerate that nonsense as a service to you. That's it for now.

Rhys Evans (Rhys.evans@nmfwa.org)





SPOKANE — 2004

With the new fiscal year and every available Defense dollar going to the War on Terror, it is not too early to start thinking about finding a way to get to Spokane, March 15-19. Already, a host of presenters and a Host Committee are working hard to see you educated (and fed and entertained) when you get there.

Your suggestions from NMFWA 2003 have been molded into a program that is sure to inform and inspire folks from every part of our vast land, from Alaska to Florida. The program is now about 90% complete. Yet the actual training is yet to come and its success depends totally on all of us. We will do our best to present our knowledge and experience. But everyone will cast the final vote by our presence or absence in Spokane, and by our continued support of NMFWA, an organization of the people, for the people, and by the people; the people who manage the natural resources of the lands held by the Department of Defense and thereby help train the finest fighting force this planet has ever known.

We will follow in the footsteps of the original baseline survey of the flora and fauna of the Pacific Northwest, on our Voyage of Rediscovery. That will be evident in Session 4, Fisheries: New Frontiers in the Footsteps of Lewis and Clark. We will be Burning for You in Session 5. Want to hear more about INRMPs and Ecosystem Management? Go to Sessions 1 and 2. Technology is turning the tide on terror and also in modern biological monitoring; check it out in Session 3. The war on terror has affected hunting and law enforcement on military lands and more in Session 7. Session 6 takes the Common Ground between the Endangered Species Act and the Military Mission. Then there are the Working Groups: Herpetology, Invasive Species, Bats, and BASH, the DoD Partners-In-Flight, the DoD meeting, the Armed Services breakouts, a Show and Tell with posters, Icebreaker Social, and a dinner cruise on the most beautiful lake in the Northwest, Lake Coeur d'Alene.



**Beautiful Lake Coeur d'Alene —
Join us for the Dinner Cruise !! --
18 March 2004**

That is not to mention all the activities in conjunction with the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference, the possibilities for leave in conjunction with travel, the skiing, or the contacts, the friends, and the fellowship of being with folks of like mind and passion, education and expertise. If you cannot make it to Spokane, you will miss a lot and we sure will miss you as well.

We are honored to serve you by working on the program and by the willingness and eagerness of so many of you to step forward and share with all of us. It is truly humbling to work with so many dedicated people. Thank you. May God bless you and our troops.

Jim Copeland, Program Chair
(Jim.copeland@nmfwa.org)



2004 NMFVA Training Sessions

Knight.Robert@sbeach.navy.mil

Cochair - Rhys Evans, *MAGTFTC*
Twentynine Palms, CA, (760) 830-7396 x234, DSN
 230-7396 X234

1. INRMPs: Part I. How Well are They Implemented?

Integrated Natural Resources Management Plans were required by the Sikes Act Improvement Act of 1997 and have been written for most installations since then. How are INRMPs being implemented and how effective they are, is the focus of this session.

Chair - Ron Smith, (404) 464-8752, Ronald.Smith4@usarc-emh2.army.mil

2. INRMPs: Part II. Implementing INRMPs On A Shoestring?

The session will highlight installations that successfully implement their INRMPs with minimum funding: the ways they team with other units on base and partner with off-base groups. It will share ideas, lessons learned, and stories from both sides of the coin -- the good, the bad, and the ugly.

Chair - Mary Anderson, *AFCEE Brooks City-Base TX*, (DSN 240-3808, COM: 210/536-3808) mary.anderson@brooks.af.mil

3. Can We/Are We doing Ecosystem Management on the Installations?

Looking at handling some tough issues with ecosystem management.

Chair - Jean O'Neil, DSN 446-3641, COM 601-634-3641, L.Jean.O'Neil@erdc.usace.army.mil

4. Basic Biology, Modern Technology.

Return to some of the fundamentals of biology (population monitoring, species identification, density estimations) with today's technology (satellite telemetry, remote cameras, Personal Digital Assistants and laptops). In the field examples of data analysis and management that will be worthwhile to every field biologist, and for those of us bureaucrats who longingly look back on our days in the field, see how modern equipment can do in minutes what used to take hours.

Chair - Robbie Knight, *Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach, Det. Fallbrook (code N45WK)*, (760) 731-3425; DSN 873-3425;

5. Fisheries: New Frontiers in the Footsteps of Lewis and Clark.

Part I – Evolving Fisheries Issues in the Pacific Northwest.

Chair - Bob Johnson, *Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL), Richland, WA*, COM 509-372-0999, bob.johnson@pnl.gov

6. Fisheries: Part II – Alaska's Recreational Fisheries And Agency Interactions With The Army, Air Force, and Coast Guard.

Chair - Charlie Swanton, *Alaska Department of Fish and Game*, charles_swanton@fishgame.state.ak.us

7. Burning for You: Prescribed Fire.

Military lands, especially firing ranges, preserve some of the last fire-dependent ecosystems left in North America. This session will look at the use of fire as a tool in ecosystem management and restoration, changes in DoD Fire Policy, and ways to help natural resources managers restore fire to the installation.

Chair – Dan Gonnering, *Volk Field, WI*, DSN 871-1397, Daniel.Gonnering@wicrtc.ang.af.mil

8. The Endangered Species Act and the Military Mission: Is There a Common Ground?

The session will address the challenges to the military mission that ESA poses and some ways that we have found to deal with them.

Ideally, we would like several presentations on good news stories from installations, one or two from installations where ESA is negatively impacting the mission, and one or two presentations from the military or higher command point of view. Cochairs – Jim Hessel, *Fort Huachuca, AZ*, DSN 821-7084, james.hessel@us.army.mil, and Kim Mello, *Fort McCoy, WI*, DSN 280-5766, kim.mello@emh2.mccoy.army.mil

BOD Minutes — continued

9. Hunting, Fishing and Wildlife Law Enforcement after September 11.

Conservation law enforcement in the military took on new roles and responsibilities in light of terrorist threats. The hunting program also changed due to stricter controls on access and firearms. This session examines the changes. Chair – Brian Hostetter, *Natural Resources Program Manager, NAB Little Creek Storefront, VA*, (757) 462-8564 (ext. 391), DSN 253-8564 (ext. 391), hostettereb@pwcnorva.navy.mil



SHOW & TELL/SILENT AUCTION

Show & Tell

What are you doing on your installation that may be of interest to others? Would you like to showcase it to your peers without having to make a formal presentation? The Show and Tell may be the time and place. You can relax and relate in one-on-one in an informal setting over beverages and hors d'oeuvres. Some bring posters showing their latest research, some contractors use the forum to show their expertise. Think about what you can contribute!

Silent Auction

You have never seen an auction like the NMFWA Silent Auction! Folks from all over the country bring something that shows off their region. Kim Mello brings cheese from Wisconsin, Jim Beemer a bottle of New York wine, others homemade crafts or food. But anything goes and it all benefits the NMFWA Reserve Account, funds to fight the contracting of our Natural Resources jobs. Whatever you have to donate, bring it on. Some people will bid hilariously outrageous amounts for your trinkets (and you may be one of them).



Preliminary 2004 NMFWA Schedule

(Registration times to be announced)

Sunday, 14 March 2004

1200-1600 BOD
1900-2200 BOD meeting

Monday, 15 March 2004

0800-0945 Herp Working Group
1000-1145 Bat Working Group
1300-1315 Welcome & Opening Remarks
1315-1445 DoD meeting
1500-1730 Service Breakouts
1730-1900 Icebreaker Social

Tuesday, 16 March 2004

0800-0945 Invasive Species Working Group
0800-0945 BASH Session
1000-1145 **Session 1.** INRMPs: How Well are They Implemented?
1315-1500 **Session 2.** Implementing INRMPs On A Shoestring? **AND 3.** Can We/Are We doing Ecosystem Management on the Installations?
1515-1700 **Session 4.** Basic Biology, Modern Technology.
1900-2200 New BOD meeting

Wednesday, 17 March 2004

0900-1200 WMI Plenary
1315-1500 Partners in Flight
1515-1700 **Sessions 5&6.** Fisheries Sessions
1900-2200 Show and Tell, hors d'oeuvres
Thursday, 18 March 2004
0800-0945 **Session 7.** Burning for You: Prescribed Fire.
1000-1145 **Session 8.** The Endangered Species Act and the Military Mission: Is There a Common Ground?
1300-1445 **Session 9.** Hunting, Fishing and Wildlife Law Enforcement after September 11
1500-1600 Business meeting
1615-2200 Buses leave/return from Dinner Cruise on Lake Coeur d'Alene

Friday, 19 March 2004

0800-1130 **Field trip to Fairchild AFB**
1330-1600 BOD meeting



SPOKANE SCENE

The Doubletree Hotel, the headquarters for the Spokane conference sits on the beautiful Spokane River. In March the flows could be spectacular. This area is also the site of the 1974 World's Fair. Many reminders are still present including an IMAX theater, walking bridges over the river and a historical carousel. Shopping opportunities abound with the River Park Square shopping center that includes dozens of stores, multi-screen movie theater and a host of excellent restaurants all connected by skywalks to keep you out of the weather. The area boasts 6 ski resorts within easy driving distance.

The weather can be temperamental so come prepared for anything from snowy, cool and breezy or early summer-like. There are many activities for the whole family so come out and enjoy the great Northwest.

NMFVA MEETS AT TWS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

NMFVA held a general membership meeting during The Wildlife Society Annual Conference in Burlington, Vermont. President Chester Martin called the meeting to order at 1940 on 9 Sep 2003.

Congratulations were given to personnel at Fort Riley, Kansas for winning the Team Award for Endangered Species Management, presented by The Wildlife Society (TWS). An article and web site posting will be issued on this topic.

Congratulations to Coralie Cobb and Tammy Conkle on their recent family additions.

Hildy Reiser has resigned from the Secretary position. She has gone to work for the National Park Service. The Board of Directors (BOD) has appointed Scott Belfit to fill the remaining term of Secretary.

The last NMFVA BOD meeting minutes from Winston-Salem have not been published in the newsletter yet. The minutes will be published in the October 2003 FAWN.

In February 2003, President Martin testified before a Congressional Committee working on reauthorization of the Sikes Act. The House version has clear language that outsourcing will not be used for natural resource positions. It also includes provisions for funding Integrated Natural Resource Management Plans (INRMP). It is hoped that the House version will be passed. The final version should be checked for these items.

The Department of the Navy filed a formal ethics complaint regarding material posted on the NMFVA web site. This situation has been rectified. Care should be taken regarding placing government email addresses and phone numbers on the web site.

Articles are needed for the FAWN. Input is needed by 15 Oct 2003 for the next issue.

There have been some new NMFVA members since the last FAWN was distributed. There are now over 1,000 NMFVA members.

Working groups need to get information in the FAWN and on the web site. Working groups include Herps, Invasive Species, and Bats.

The NMFVA received a request from the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) for a listing of installation biologists. They want to mail out a recently signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NWTF and Department of Defense. This MOU would have potential benefit for some installations. Perhaps the MOU can be placed on the NMFVA website to make the information available. It may also be possible to provide a link to NWTF on the NMFVA web site.

The next NMFVA meeting will be held in Spokane, Washington on March 15-19, 2004. On 14 March there is only a BOD meeting scheduled. The program is coming together nicely, but papers

are still needed for some sessions. The tentative program schedule includes sessions on INRMPs, ecosystem management, Endangered Species Act, prescribed fire, hunting/fishing/law enforcement, fisheries, and basic biology and new technology. Junior Kerns may have an opportunity to advise people interested in becoming Certified Wildlife Biologists by TWS at the next NMFWA meeting.

The Host Committee is still working on meeting details. Volunteers are needed to assist the Host Committee in making meeting arrangements.

A good slate of candidates is being put together for elections next year. Everyone is still encouraged to run for a NMFWA office or serve on a committee. More people need to become involved in NMFWA business and interact with the BOD.

Fort Stewart has an excellent web site on hunting and fishing. Other installations may want to consider developing similar web sites to promote natural resource programs.

Ms. Laura Henze is the new Sikes Act coordinator for the US Fish & Wildlife Service. She would like to visit some of the military installations.

The meeting was adjourned at 2040.

Attendees:

Chester Martin, Jim Beemer, Mike Passmore, Mark Hagan, Joe Haffner, Tim Beaty, Gino Guimarro, Joseph Campo, Gary Pelton, Eric Spadgenske, Bert Bivings, Sheridan Stone, Jean O’Neil, Mike Jones, Ray Rainbolt, Lee Mitchell, Rich LeClerc.



The Wildlife Society is pleased to honor the Threatened and Endangered Species Management (TESM) team at Fort Riley, Kansas, with its 2003 Group Achievement Award for outstanding collaborative efforts on behalf of wildlife conservation. The Threatened and Endangered Species Management Team is a group of biologists dedicated to the protection and conservation of the threatened and endangered

species and habitats of the tallgrass prairie ecosystem on which Fort Riley is situated. The TESM team operates as part of the Conservation Division of the Directorate of Environment and Safety (DES) at Fort Riley, Kansas. The singular efforts of this team have helped establish portions of Fort Riley's Endangered Species Management Plan (ESMP) as a hallmark for endangered species management, contributing to the protection of bald eagle, Henslow's sparrow, and Topeka shiner.

The dedication of the TESM team to the protection and preservation of the tallgrass prairie, its threatened and endangered species, and their habitats has achieved significant success in species management for some of the most at-risk species in this region. This achievement would be no small feat under any circumstance, but because it was accomplished while supporting a military mission on a live-fire training installation, it is that much more remarkable. The tireless efforts of this team have successfully preserved and enhanced habitat for the Henslow's sparrow and greater prairie-chicken. Work by the team to protect and enhance bald eagle habitat has brought Fort Riley the distinction of hosting one of the largest bald eagle roosts in the continental United States. In defense of a small but important minnow, members of the team have established a benchmark species management program the USFWS has identified as a prime example of successful Topeka shiner management. In support of these and other conservation projects, the TESM team provides outreach and education to Fort Riley personnel, as well as the local community, through media presentations, distribution of printed information and the coordination of special events designed to heighten awareness of threatened and endangered species concerns. As an installation, Fort Riley shares the success of the TESM team through regulatory compliance and recognition. As a steward of public land, Fort Riley owes much of its success to the efforts of this group.

Yanin (Janine) Walker
The Wildlife Society

THE PARADOX OF BIODIVERSITY ON MILITARY LANDS

While DoD may be the third largest Federal (departmental) land manager, it only manages 25 million acres in the U.S. It is apparent that these limited acres support a disproportionate number of rare species (on a global and state level) and in some cases provides habitat for species that other public lands lack. I think everyone that manages natural resources on military lands has a story or example that demonstrates this situation. So, why is this?

The underlying factor may simply be that DoD acquired land that nobody wanted (cheap or otherwise easy to purchase) and over the years has done or not done something that other landowners have or have not.

What do we do on military installations to achieve our mission of training soldiers, sailors, airman, and marines that wildlife likes? How can wildlife survive in areas that are subjected to bullets, bombs, jets, tanks, and combat boots? I can think of a couple: (1) In some states the only place that a fire regime or a refreshing, non-destructive soil disturbance occurs is at military training sites. Many followers of this school of thought point to the Intermediate Disturbance Theory though this has not been well documented in the scientific literature. The way I explain this is that we hit the land hard with training exercises in certain areas over time and then let it alone and train elsewhere. It appears that mechanized infantry training simulates the farming practices of a Depression-era farmer which would explain why many species that have declined on farmlands (gamebirds, grassland birds, prairie insects and plants) are found on installations. This creates a heterogeneous network of habitats of different ages of diverse habitats to varying degrees across the landscape. This leads to something for everyone or a wildlife habitat smorgasbord. (2) Another thing that occurs on training sites is the creation of no-go zones for

military personnel and most certainly the general public. Areas such as impact areas (proper, buffer, blast areas), ammo bunkers, and ranges create de facto wilderness areas. Quite simply, we have put up a fence and kept out the public. The threat of trespass prosecution may have dissuaded unsavory characters from collecting rare herps, plants, and butterflies. Generally the military does not train in wetlands, riparian areas, or steep slopes as these areas have limited tactical value.

While it may seem counter intuitive, the creation of access fees as per the Sikes Act illustrates the inherent value of wildlife by bringing all wildlife species and their habitat to the forefront. By assigning a monetary value to wildlife, all species are given value and the funding needed to manage habitat. Most installations charge a user fee that goes directly back into the wildlife program and limited access often creates a sense of pride and land stewardship by the users, staff, and command. It is odd that I work for an entity whose primary mission is not wildlife yet the command brings wildlife to the vanguard and continually reminds the public, agencies, and regulators of our program, projects, and commitment. We also manage wildlife and the environment in an organized and comprehensive manner. Unlike federal and state wildlife programs, environmental agencies, and other land managers we typically manage wildlife as a “one-stop-shop” with close coordination with all stakeholders and avoid the fragmentation of responsibility, authority, and oversight common to wildlife management across the US.

What we don't do also leads to the proliferation of wildlife. Since the majority of training sites were obtained and created early in the 20th century (WWI and WWII) there are areas of prime habitat that have never seen the modern plow or been subjected to pesticides and intensive industrial agriculture. Another factor may simply be benign neglect. There are a lot of areas that are relatively unimpacted by humans due to airspace management or are unsuitable for training (steep slopes or wetlands).

While the cantonment areas of installations may resemble small cities, the training areas themselves are relatively undeveloped; quite simply, we usually do not build housing developments in the woods or pave farmland. We have allowed land to stay in state similar to Depression era; the irony is that military installations have not been subjected as severely to post-WWII development as the rest of the U.S. Often training sites are surrounded by commercial, agriculture, and residential development to the point that they are “islands of green.” This is often referred to as the “Noah’s Ark syndrome” and Camp Pendleton is a prime example of this.

Due to Sikes Act and DOD/Army guidance, economics does not direct Forestry Management. This is well documented by the lack of wide scale timber harvest and long rotation ages on most installations - in fact, all timber sales where I work are in support of military training projects. The limited harvest of large-diameter trees has led to Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Spotted Owls thriving on some bases and many training sites have forest stands that are either old growth or are close to it. It is quite apparent the forestry programs in DoD do not follow the prevailing trends in timber management due to market drivers. We do not rush to get the “cut out,” but we also do not follow some of the practices of other public lands. A good example of this is the current size restriction of clear cuts to less than 50 acres in Pennsylvania. We have a Tactical Vehicle Maneuver Area with numerous 75 –100 % canopy removals that are larger than this arbitrary acreage guideline. In these training areas we have substantial oak regeneration and healthy Ruffed Grouse, Woodcock, songbird, and white-tailed deer populations that are not found on surrounding public lands.

Finally, the real reason that we have so many species is that we look for them and we have adequate staff or funds to identify and catalog.

We may not think we have enough staff to manage the natural resources and support the military mission, but on a per acre basis I believe that DoD land managers have more expertise and time to

commit to the management of natural resources in an ecosystem fashion than other federal or state agencies. The take home point is that camouflage uniforms and combat vehicles are the same color as quality habitat; wildlife require the same thing as training - large chunks of quality habitat in which to do their thing without public interference or constraints of our society. I believe, from my experience as a biologist, that DoD does a better job of ecosystem management, as described by Aldo Leopold, than other organizations, even before the term became a popular cliché!

This article is provided for NMFWA members. in hopes of stimulating comments.

Joseph Hovis (jhovis@state.pa.us)



**DEADLINES FOR SUBMITTING
ARTICLES TO EDITOR FOR
UPCOMING FAWN EDITIONS:**

**31 DECEMBER for JANUARY
2004**

Articles on installation activities or other issues relevant to the association may be submitted through your respective Regional Directors (Eastern Region—Scott Smith and Joe Hovis; Western Region — Coralie Cobb or Rafael Corral) or send directly to me.

Electronic files should preferably be in MS Word®, Times New Roman font (12). One or two clear pictures (JPG) may be beneficial (more may be negotiated) and will be used, barring space constraints.

Mike Passmore
(michael.f.passmore@erdc.usace.army.mil)

Wildlife office has been actively monitoring its shortnose sturgeon population for almost 10 years.

Bryce and his qualified staff of aquatic biologists, with the help of the Army Environmental Center, the Corps of Engineer's Waterways Experiment Station, and the Coastal Resources Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, has determined the population of adult shortnose sturgeon to be less than 300 individuals. This population is small and appears to be suffering from reduced recruitment of young juvenile sturgeon. Whether the problem is degraded spawning habitat, reduced water quality, or diminished ground waters, Bryce believes the answers can only be found by building additional partnerships with conservation agencies and organizations and tapping into the expertise of other shortnose sturgeon experts, as he hopes to do during this Savannah conference. Although the installation works hard to ensure that it does not impact the river and the fish, Bryce feels that the possible causes of this species decline are regional in scope. Consequently, a team approach is needed among local and regional specialists to identify the limiting factors. Historically, most shortnose sturgeon populations have declined throughout their range from the construction of dams, deteriorated water quality, habitat degradation and commercial fishing.

When asked about how this conference might benefit the shortnose, Vince Mudrak, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Warm Springs Regional Fisheries Center said, "The USFWS has been involved with shortnose sturgeon recovery work for about twenty years in the southeast. During that time key advancements in knowledge have taken place, but on-the-ground implementation of recovery actions for improving sturgeon populations has been minimal. This conference can serve as the springboard for the formation of implementation teams to accomplish this kind of work. Resource partners could be encouraged to combine their very limited but important human and technical resources, and agree to work in harmony in specific rivers, to assess and improve the status of our fish populations."

Several key events took place during the sturgeon meeting that make this gathering unique and historical. The National Marine Fisheries Service, the federal agency tasked with protective jurisdiction over the endangered fish, assembled a number of its sturgeon program managers to reexamine the Shortnose Sturgeon Recovery Plan and reassess its implementation. The Recovery Plan is a regulatory document that directs recovery actions for the purpose of restoring the population of a federally protected species with the ultimate goal of removing it from the endangered species list. Additionally, Fort Stewart was instrumental in forging the first multi-agency, river basin-specific working group to address recovery actions for the shortnose sturgeon (Ogeechee River Shortnose Sturgeon Working Group). And lastly, the participants had the unique opportunity to learn how the sturgeon is fairing in every state throughout its range and gain a greater appreciation for the accomplishments that have been made outside of their respective river system or state. "This meeting seeks to improve communication and information exchange among all of us who want to recover endangered shortnose sturgeon," said Bill Hogarth, Director of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries). Hogarth went on to say, "NOAA Fisheries hopes the meeting will lead to enhanced partnerships and a greater sense of teamwork among the federal, state and private entities working to recover this very important species."

When approached about the conference, Armstrong Atlantic State University's Biology Department Chairman, Dr. Ken Relyea, confirmed Director Hogarth's desires by saying, "I believe all left the conference feeling that much had been accomplished and that a framework for future recovery and conservation activities and cooperation had been established." Bryce further supported this idea by praising the National Marine Fisheries Service team on their cooperative efforts in promoting an atmosphere for future achievements in recovery success.

When asked why the Army was able to play such a strategic role in bringing this diverse group

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NOTE: *Titles and affiliations are for informational purposes only and do not present the individuals as spokespersons of the Department of Defense or agency/installation listed.*

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