

THE WILD TIMES



IDAHO CHAPTER THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

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Newsletter Articles Due
January 10

President's Message

The July 31, 2001 deadline for submitting bids for the 2004 Annual Conference of The Wildlife Society has come and gone, and the Idaho Chapter did not submit a bid. I only heard from 6 members who volunteered to serve as one of the 12 committee chairs or as a committee member, and no one expressed an interest in serving as the overall chair and vice chair of the Arrangements Committee. Having talked with other TWS Chapters and Sections who have hosted past annual conferences, there was no way we had the minimum core group required to pull off a successful meeting.

This is clearly a case where we are better off not to have tried than to have tried and failed. Northwest Section cities that have submitted bids to host the 2004 annual conference include Calgary and Edmonton (Alberta Chapter TWS) and Anchorage (Alaska Chapter TWS). Sandra Staples-Bortner, TWS Program Director, will visit each of these cities and submit a recommendation to TWS Council for a decision at their March 2002 meeting.

Any of these locales will be a wonderful site for the annual conference, and I expect that the ICTWS will support the host chapter financially as well as having many members participate in the meeting. If you have never been to an Annual Conference of The Wildlife Society, make plans to attend this one.

You may have noticed that there was no July newsletter. This is because no one sent Joe Butsick (newsletter editor) any materials. The newsletter is our principal means of communication between annual chapter meetings, and it is the responsibility of all of us to help with this communication and the exchange of information relevant to our profession.

My president's message for the July newsletter consisted of the Chapter's response to Secretary of Interior Gayle Norton's plan to take no action to restore grizzly bears to the Bitterroot Ecosystem as per the November 2000 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Record of Decision. I greatly appreciate the efforts of several Chapter members who contributed

their time, knowledge of, and passion for grizzly bears to the letter (I had to edit out some of the more "passionate" remarks expressed towards our governor, legislature, and congressional delegation). Because there was no newsletter, we put the letter on the Chapter's web site in hopes that the members would have a chance to see it. If you have not visited the web site <http://www.ictws.org/> for a while, check it out. If you do not have access to the web site and want to see a copy of the letter, contact me and I will send you one.

As a friendly reminder, the January newsletter will be Joe's last. He has moved to Montana and we need someone to take over the reigns of newsletter editor. If you have an interest in this important Chapter position, please contact Joe jbuticks@fs.fed.us or me charris@idfg.state.id.us (a past newsletter editor) and we can fill you in on the details.

We are striving to eliminate printed copies of the newsletter and request that each of you (if you haven't already) contact us with your e-mail address. Electronic mailing of the newsletter this past year has saved the Chapter hundreds of dollars in mailing expenses.

Soon all future issues will be sent to your email address and posted on the web site. It is therefore very important that Michelle Commons mcommons@idfg.state.id.us has your correct e-mail address. Also if you have not sent us an e-mail address but are able to access the web let us know if your name can be dropped from the hard copy list. For those members who do not have access to email or our web site, we will continue to provide you with hard copies of the newsletter.

I hope you all had a wonderful summer, a good field season (for those of you who still get out from behind the desk and into the field), and that you are taking time to enjoy Idaho's wildlife and wild places this fall.

Policy News

2002 Farm Bill

The House of Representatives passed their Farm Bill on 5 October, despite opposition from the Bush administration, an uncertain budget and a country at war. The bill was debated for three days before passing by a 291-120 vote.

One of the more heated disputes centered on the Boehlert-Kind-Gilchrest-Dingell Amendment offered by Representative Boehlert (R-NY) to completely replace the conservation title of H.R. 2646. The amendment would have shifted approximately \$2 billion annually from the commodity title to the conservation title, boosting the conservation title to \$5.4 billion/year. The amendment was supported by numerous conservation organizations, including The Wildlife Society, and farmers in states and regions that receive few farm bill benefits under past policy.

Although advocates of the amendment believed that the Bush administration's support of increased conservation and environmental programs strengthened their position, the amendment was rejected by a 226-200 vote. "They pulled out all the stops," said Rep. Boehlert. Urban members were warned that food stamp funds would be cut to cover the amendment and Ag. Committee Chairman Combest (R-TX) even went so far as to threaten pulling the entire Farm Bill from the floor should the amendment pass.

As passed, the conservation title of **H.R. 2646** allocates approximately \$16 billion over 10 years to soil, water and wildlife programs. Though this does represent an increase in spending over the current Farm Bill, it does not compare to the increases sought by the Boehlert amendment. H.R. 2646 provides (in millions/year) \$1,200 for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, \$25 for the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, \$50 for the Farmland Protection Program and \$100 for technical assistance. It increases the Conservation

Reserve Program cap to 39.2 million acres and allows for an additional 150,000 acres/year to be enrolled in the Wetlands Reserve Program. It also authorizes a new 2 million-acre Grassland Reserve Program.

The debate now moves to the Senate where conservationists are determined to improve the bill. Democratic Senators are pushing to pass a bill before Congress adjourns for the year. However, the Bush Administration is seeking to delay any further action on the Farm Bill until next year. Stay tuned, there is much at stake for wildlife in this legislation. For more information: <http://www.usda.gov/>

CARA Update

The 11 September terrorist attacks preempted potential House action this year on the Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA, H.R. 701). More pressing legislation such as an anti-terrorism bill and an economic stimulus package have temporarily delayed consideration of CARA. Given the air of uncertainty surrounding all current congressional action, CARA supporters are continuing to solicit cosponsors of the bill.

The last CARA action took place in the House on 25 July 2001, when the House Resources Committee approved the legislation by a vote of 29-12 reporting it to the full House for consideration. The bill currently has 242 cosponsors, which is enough to pass it if brought to a floor vote. Advocates of the bill continue to solicit cosponsors, especially Republicans, to strengthen its appeal to the House Republican leadership to ensure a vote as soon as possible. Floor action on the House bill is expected early next year.

The Senate appears to be awaiting passage of CARA in the House before scheduling hearings. In the meantime, two Senate CARA bills have been introduced. Senator Frank Murkowski (R-AK) introduced S. 1318 and Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA) introduced S. 1328. In addition, Senator Bob Smith (R-VT) has introduced S. 990, which would authorize, but not guarantee, \$350 million annually for state wildlife programs.

However, Senate action may be expected on **S. 990** as soon as November 8. Sen. Jeffords (I-VT) as chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee recently agreed to cosponsor S. 990 (followed by VT's Senator Leahy (D-VT)). Senator Bob Smith (R-NH) is the original sponsor. Other cosponsors include Sen Graham (D-FL), Warner (R-VA), Bond (R-MO), Dewine (R-OH), Voinovich (R-OH), and Chafee (R-RI). The next step is for the EPW committee to "mark-up" (vote) the bill out of committee and then it can go to the floor. It is not clear if floor action will occur this year but it

certainly is in our best interest to get through this next step in case there is time for the floor. The greater the number of co-sponsors, the greater the chances of movement. Please encourage Senators Craig and Crapo to co-sponsor S. 990.

NEWS FLASH

S. 990, the American Wildlife Enhancement Act, got reported favorably out of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee this afternoon (November 8)- on a voice vote!! Most members of the EPW Committee were there. They expect to file the report over the next week or so. We will provide you more details when we have them.

THANKS to all that helped make this happen. More cosponsors would be good! But keep your coalition rested for now.

The American Wildlife Enhancement Act of 2001 (S. 990), introduced by Senator Bob Smith (R-NH) on 6 June 2001, provides an authorization for \$350 million to the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program as well as several other wildlife related conservation titles. Please remember, S. 990 is an authorization for appropriations. It does not have the "guarantee" that CARA provides. S. 990 will either be a bridge for state wildlife funding until CARA passes or else help in some way with CARA this year or next. There has been discussion of adding a public lands

title but there is not expected to be any other substantive changes to other parts of the bill. The IAFWA expects there will be some kind of coming together to assure it is a bipartisan effort. This is no controversy (property rights issues) associated with this bill as there was with the CARA legislation.

Summary of S.990

Title I authorizes an appropriation of \$350 million for vitally needed state fish and wildlife conservation and related recreation and education programs. The funds will be funneled through the Wildlife conservation and

Restoration Account, available to each state and territory through a sub-account of the Pittman-Robertson Act.

Title II establishes a competitive matching grant fund that allows private landowners to apply for financial assistance for conservation of endangered or threatened species on their property.

Title III also establishes a grants program that would allow states to protect areas of regional or national significance through easements or acquisition.

For a copy of the full bill text, go to <http://thomas.loc.gov> and search by bill number.

Endangered Species Listings Deal Approved

The US Fish and Wildlife Service has reached an agreement in principle with several environmental organizations that will allow the listing evaluations of some species to be completed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

The agreement was made under the threat of lawsuits filed by the Center for Biological Diversity, the Southern Appalachian Biodiversity Project, the California Native Plant Society and the Biodiversity Legal Foundation. Though a formal document must still be negotiated, reviewed and approved by the Departments of Interior and Justice, the agreement in principle immediately allows the Service to begin reallocating funds for some of the country's most imperiled species. As a result, final listing decisions will be issued for 14 species, along with proposed listings for 8 species.

In addition, the Service will address 4 citizen petitions to list species under the Act. Almost \$600,000 for these actions was made available when environmental groups agreed that the Service could postpone 8 critical habitat designations until the next fiscal year. Designation of critical habitats is required by the ESA once a species is added to the threatened or endangered species list. The funds that would have been spent on habitat designations are now free for the listings, proposed listings and citizen petitions covered by the agreement.

The process of listing new species under the ESA was suspended last year near the end of the Clinton Administration, due to lack of funding. Though the recent pact will get the process moving again, it will not come close to clearing the more than \$120 million endangered species program backlog.

For more information and a complete list of the species affected by the agreement:

<http://news.fws.gov/newsreleases.html>

New Funds for State Wildlife Agencies

The US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) recently announced that all 50 states, the District of Columbia and 5 territories are now eligible to receive grants for conservation through the newly established Wildlife Restoration and Conservation Program (WCRP). The program was established by Congress under Title IX of the FY2001 Commerce, Justice and State Appropriations Act as part of the "CARA compromise". It authorizes the allocation of \$50 million in grant money to wildlife conservation, education and recreation projects under a new sub-account of the Wildlife Restoration Act.

To be eligible for participation States and territories were required to submit a wildlife conservation plan to the FWS. Among other things, the plan had to include a commitment by the State or territory to implement a conservation strategy within 5 years based on their greatest wildlife conservation needs.

A committee of members from the FWS, the International Association of Fish and Wildlife

Agencies and state wildlife agencies reviewed the plans, which were submitted by all 50 states, the District of Columbia and 5 territories. The amount of money available for each participating State or territory is based on a formula that incorporates the population and land area of each, in relation to the other States and territories. Some states are already implementing projects with funds obtained from WCRP.

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game will receive \$571,000 of WCRP funds. This is a 1-year federal appropriation, but the funds can be expended over a 2 to 3 year period. The Department is in the process of hiring a Non-game Grants Coordinator and will be soliciting proposals (probably in December) for projects related to wildlife conservation, education, and wildlife-related recreation.

The FY02 Interior Appropriations Bill (see below) contains \$85 million in state grants for wildlife conservation. With the same funding formula in place (2/3 population and 1/3 land area), Idaho Fish and Game should receive about \$900,000. This is again a 1-year appropriation that can be spread over several years. It is a good sign that federal funds for state wildlife agencies focused on the wildlife priorities outlined in CARA and Teaming With Wildlife has been provided for 2 consecutive years, but it is no substitute for the long-term dedicated funds identified in the CARA legislation.

For additional information on state wildlife funding needs visit www.sso.org/iafwa or www.teaming.com or contact IAFWA at Tel: (202) 624-7890.

FY02 Interior Appropriations Bill

On 11 October the House and Senate appropriators finalized a conference report for fiscal year 2002 spending for the Department of Interior, a bill that has major implications for land and wildlife management agencies in Idaho. Most of the differences between the Senate and House versions (both numbered H.R. 2217) were resolved prior to the conference committee meeting on 10 October. Senators and representatives present stated a

bipartisan desire to get to more pressing, terrorism-related issues, and a willingness to avoid controversial issues kept riders off the bill.

The \$380 million disparity between the Senate's \$18.5 billion bill and the House's \$18.9 billion bill were resolved with an amount that exceeded both requests. The conference committee allocated \$19.1 billion to H.R. 2217, \$1 billion more than the president's request. This amount included \$400 million in emergency funding for wildfire fighting.

Several amendments were removed from the final bill in order to avoid controversy and expedite the process. The House version contained an amendment that banned oil drilling in the eastern Gulf of Mexico. This amendment was thrown out in the compromised bill, though an amendment prohibiting drilling for oil and gas on national monument lands remained. Another House amendment prevented the Bush administration from overturning Section 3809 regulations, which affect the hard-rock mining industry. This amendment was also dropped from the final bill.

Conference committee members also gave \$913 million to energy conservation programs, which was closer to the House's allocation of \$941 million than the Senate's \$871 million. The final amount given to conservation programs was \$157 million higher than the administration's initial request of \$756 million.

The committee provided \$1.32 billion for Title VIII conservation accounts, \$121 million more than last year and \$64 million more than President Bush asked for. It also allotted \$429 million for federal land acquisition, under the Land and Water Conservation Fund, more than either side requested and \$39 million more than Bush's request. Stateside grants under LWCF received only \$144 million, \$10 million less than the House's request, which was the lower of the two chambers.

Bush's desired allocation of \$60 million in landowner incentive and stewardship grants was not met, with \$50 million provided. The administration did not provide funding for state wildlife grants. Initially, both chambers allotted \$100 million for

wildlife grants, but the final bill contained only \$85 million.

A compromise was reached between the Senate's \$40 million allotment to the Wetlands Conservation Fund and the House's \$45 million, with \$43.5 million provided. Bush only allowed for \$15 million. A similar agreement was made with the Cooperative Endangered Species Fund, with the House and Senate requests (\$107 million and \$91 million, respectively) settled at \$94.2 million, still nearly double Bush's allowance of \$55 million. The president did not fund the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery program, but the conference committee met the House request of \$30 million, exceeding the Senate's request by \$10 million.

An exact compromise was reached with the payment in lieu of taxes program (PILT), as the committee settled on a total of \$210 million, between the Senate offer of \$220 million and the House's \$200 million. Bush's allocation of \$150 million was exceeded by \$60 million. PILT was allocated \$200 million in FY '01.

Finally, \$36 million in additional funding was provided for the restoration of the Florida Everglades, which was given \$120 million.

Other allocations in the conference report are: The National Park Service operations received \$1.5 billion, \$91 million more than last year. The Bureau of Land Management operations got \$776 million, \$25 million more than FY '01. The U.S. Geological Survey was allotted \$914 million, \$90 million more than Bush requested and \$31 million more than last year. National Forest System operations were allocated \$1.3 billion, \$21 million more than last year. National Wildlife Refuges and wildlife programs were given \$399 million, \$23 million more than last year. Backlog maintenance at the NPS, FWS, FS and BLM was given \$600 million.

Society Comments on Grizzly Recovery in Bitterroots

17 August 2001

The following is the Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society's comments on the Secretary of the Interior's plan to take no action to restore grizzly bears to the Bitterroot Ecosystem (letter was posted on the chapter website in July)

Dear Sir or Madam:

On behalf of the 200 members of the Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society (Chapter) I am writing to express our concerns regarding the 20 June 2001 proposal by Secretary of Interior Gale Norton to withdraw the existing Record of Decision (ROD) published by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) in November 2000 to reintroduce grizzly bears into the Bitterroot Ecosystem and replace it with a new ROD adopting the "No Action" alternative. The Chapter urges the Service to adopt and implement the November 2000 ROD to reintroduce grizzly bears into the BE of central Idaho and western Montana and to reject the "No Action" alternative.

The Wildlife Society is an international professional society established in 1937, with the Chapter being chartered in 1963. The principal objectives of The Wildlife Society are: (1) to develop and promote sound stewardship of wildlife resources and of the environments upon which wildlife and humans depend; (2) to undertake an active role in preventing human-induced environmental degradation; (3) to increase awareness and appreciation of wildlife values; and (4) to seek the highest standards in all activities of the wildlife profession. Chapter members include individuals employed by state and federal agencies, educational institutions, non-profit organizations, industry, and consultants, as well as retirees and graduate students.

In comments on the Final Environmental Impact statement for grizzly bear restoration in the Bitterroot Ecosystem, our Chapter supported grizzly bear restoration in the Bitterroot Ecosystem and the Service's preferred alternative to accomplish restoration. This preferred alternative was developed following more than 5 years of public meetings, a draft and final EIS, receipt and analysis of extensive comments from the public and professional organizations. The process leading to last year's ROD took 7 years, cost more than \$700,000,

was supported by the vast majority of public comments, and was supported by all of the scientific organizations who commented during this period. The fact that Secretary Norton's decision to withdraw the existing ROD without participation by the Service's Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator, the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee, or other scientists knowledgeable about grizzly bears and the grizzly bear recovery plan points to a politically motivated decision rather than one based upon scientific reevaluation of the decision and the best interests of grizzly bear recovery.

Legal Requirements

The Service has legal requirements under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to recover grizzly bears. The purposes of ESA are: "to provide a means whereby ecosystems upon which endangered species and threatened species depend may be conserved, to provide a program for the conservation of such endangered species and threatened species, and to take such steps as may be appropriate to achieve the purposes of the treaties and conventions set forth in subsection (a) of this section". Conserve, conserving, and conservation are defined within the ESA as to use and the use of all methods and procedures that are necessary to bring any endangered or threatened species to a point at which the measures pursuant to the Act are no longer necessary.

The Bitterroot Ecosystem is a designated recovery area in the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan because grizzly bears historically occurred there and the remote and vast area still provides excellent habitat and potential to recover a healthy population and significantly contribute to the recovery of the species. Since the time grizzly bears were listed for protection under the ESA in 1975, the Bitterroot Ecosystem was first identified as a potential recovery area and then designated as a recovery area in 1991 by the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee. This designation was supported by historical grizzly bear presence and a contiguous block of over 16,000,000 acres of federally managed lands, containing more than 4 million acres of designated Wilderness, with sufficient habitat to support a recovered grizzly bear population (Scaggs 1979, Butterfield and Almack 1985, and Davis and Butterfield 1991).

The Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan, Bitterroot Chapter of the Recovery Plan, Final Environmental Impact Statement, Record of Decision, and Final Rule all conclude that recovery of a grizzly bear population in the

Bitterroot Ecosystem will significantly increase long-term survival probabilities and conservation of grizzly bears, and is necessary to meet the objectives of the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan – to recover grizzly bear in the conterminous 48 States as legally required by the ESA. These documents also conclude that grizzly bear recovery will require reintroduction of bears from other areas because natural recovery is highly unlikely given scientific data collected from 575 radio-collared grizzly bears over the last 25 years.

The Service states in the proposed ROD for the Grizzly Bear Recovery in the Bitterroot Ecosystem Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that “establishment of an experimental population is a discretionary action”. We believe this assertion is inaccurate. The volume of scientific data, analysis, and conclusions presented in the above-mentioned documents indicate the recovery of grizzly bears in the Bitterroot Ecosystem is not discretionary, given the statutory requirements of the ESA, and the congressional mandate of the Service to recover and conserve listed species and the ecosystems upon which they depend. Further, the proposal to select the No Action Alternative is inadequate to meet the Service’s legal requirements under the ESA to recover grizzly bears in the lower 48 states. As stated above, all scientific conclusions reached by the Service thus far indicated recovery of grizzly bears in the Bitterroot Ecosystem is necessary, recovery will not occur naturally, and reintroduction will be required. The Service’s final EIS on the Bitterroot concluded that up to 25 bears should be introduced as an experimental nonessential population with oversight by a citizens management committee.

As the professional society of wildlife biologists in the state of Idaho, we concur with the Service’s conclusion and urge that the Secretary and the Service proceed with grizzly bear reintroduction and recovery as defined by the Bitterroot FEIS, ROD, and Final Rule. Further, we believe that the Service and the Department of Interior abrogated their responsibilities under the ESA by submitting to the state of Idaho’s demands for no grizzly re-introduction and recovery efforts in the Bitterroot Ecosystem. Further, without any significant new and additional information that contradicts the conclusions and decisions documented in the Recovery Plan, Bitterroot Chapter of the Recovery Plan, FEIS, ROD, and Final Rule, a decision to rescind the reintroduction effort is without scientific, social, or legal foundation.

There is also significant new scientific information that further supports the necessity and urgency of establishing a grizzly bear population in the Bitterroot Ecosystem. Genetic research conducted by Craig Miller and Dr. Lissette Waits of the University of Idaho indicates the Yellowstone grizzly bear population is genetically isolated and will likely suffer from inbreeding depression if there is no gene flow within the next 30 years (Miller et al., In Press).

One of the management recommendations of their research is to establish a recovering grizzly bear population in the Bitterroots to provide potential for bear dispersal and genetic interchange with the Yellowstone grizzly bear population. Because Service documents estimate grizzly bear recovery in the Bitterroots will likely take 50-110 years, it is necessary to aggressively begin recovery efforts through immediate reintroduction, such that population numbers will support dispersing bears within the time frame required by the Yellowstone population to avoid inbreeding depression.

Public Support

The majority of U.S. citizens surveyed (77%), and local Idaho and Montana citizens (62%), are supportive of grizzly bear reintroduction to the Bitterroot wilderness of Idaho (Duda and Young 1995). A subsequent survey in 1997 (Duda and Young 1998) produced similar results when respondents were asked if they would support reintroduction under Citizen Management: 62% of local Idaho and Montana residents supported reintroduction and 30% were opposed. Further, Service reports indicate approximately 75% of all public comments received throughout the NEPA process have been supportive of grizzly bear reintroduction in the Bitterroots. This strong public support certainly favors the Service moving forward with grizzly bear recovery and reintroduction in the Bitterroot Ecosystem.

Evidence of the flexibility of the ESA, Service managers, and grizzly bear recovery efforts has been provided throughout the 7-year process in developing the reintroduction plan. The reintroduced population would be designated as an experimental non-essential population. This would provide the necessary flexibility for wildlife and land managers to recover grizzly bears within a framework that allows for social and economic sensitivity during bear management. Further, a citizen management committee responsible for grizzly bear recovery and management would be authorized to implement and oversee grizzly bear recovery in the Bitterroots. The Secretary of the Interior, in consultation

Budget

with Idaho and Montana governors and the Nez Perce Tribe, would appoint this 15-member committee. This alternative, selected for implementation in the ROD, is one of the best demonstrations of the flexibility of ESA, federal wildlife managers, and an effort to incorporate social and economic needs with the scientific and biological needs of species recovery.

This approach truly represented an ecosystem recovery effort because it included consideration for the humans that would live and coexist with the grizzly bears in the Bitterroot Ecosystem. It is a shining example of the concept of “local control” that is a high priority of the Bush administration.

The Service also listened to and incorporated the Idaho Governor’s and Idaho Fish and Game Commission’s concerns into the FEIS and ROD. They addressed every concern short of stopping the reintroduction plan. The Draft EIS added alternatives, 2 additional habitat quality analyses were conducted (Hogg, Weaver, and Craighead 1999; Boyce and Waller 2000), and the recovery and analysis area boundaries were changed, as well as the special rule to address private citizen’s, the Attorney General’s, and the Governor’s concerns.

It is unfortunate that the Governor of Idaho has chosen to oppose a scientifically based recovery action that enjoys broad public support. The State of Idaho could have taken a leadership role and demonstrated the flexibility of the ESA and an ideal citizen-based model to be used here and elsewhere for large, wide-ranging carnivore conservation as well as other contentious species. The Governor has instead misrepresented the threat and human safety issues posed by grizzly bears and the reintroduction project, played upon people’s fears, and has done an injustice to truly understanding the grizzly bear and its place in Idaho’s wilderness ecosystems. The Chapter believes it is inappropriate for the Department of the Interior to abandon its responsibility to recover listed species because of opposition from local political officials. Had the preference of state governors and legislatures been followed, the highly successful gray wolf recovery efforts in central Idaho and Yellowstone National Park would not have taken place.

The Chapter supports involvement of local citizens and political officials in endangered species recovery planning and implementation, but they should not have ultimate veto power over recovery activities for federally listed species.

The proposed ROD suggests that, due to the budget shortages, it is inappropriate to proceed with the Bitterroot recovery effort. There is little question that the project would be relatively expensive (given the inadequate budget allocated for endangered species recovery) and that there are many other demands on the Service’s recovery efforts. However, an attempt to move the project forward using the citizens management committee and experimental nonessential status of the population may have provided alternative and less expensive ways for Bitterroot grizzly bear recovery to proceed. For example, Tribal and public management involvement and responsibility could have resulted in significant donations and financial support from private and non-government cooperators and foundations.

The Service has already invested significant amounts of time and money on the environmental analysis and studies leading to the FEIS and ROD. Unfortunately, it may now find itself spending more of its limited dollars in court to defend the effort to rescind the decision than what it might cost to implement grizzly bear recovery on the ground in Idaho.

Conclusion

The Idaho Chapter of the Wildlife Society recommends proceeding with efforts to reestablish the grizzly bear in the Bitterroot Ecosystem under the preferred alternative in the FEIS. We believe Secretary Norton’s proposal to withdraw this scientifically sound and comprehensive reintroduction plan and select the No Action alternative is both scientifically and legally flawed. Thank you for consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,
Charles E. Harris, Ph.D.
President

Committee Updates

The success of our Chapter, and TWS as a whole, is based upon the work of dedicated volunteers. Please consider volunteering for one of the committees below. Contact the committee chairperson or Chuck if you have an interest in chairing or working on any of the following committees.

Conservation Affairs Committee:

Gregg Servheen is chair and could use some members. gservee@idfg.state.id.us).

Nominations-Election Committee: (vacant)

Before the March 2002 annual meeting, members of the Chapter will elect a new President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. We are therefore seeking individuals interested in serving as officers of the Idaho Chapter. The success of the Idaho Chapter and The Wildlife Society depends upon the volunteer efforts of its members. Please consider taking this opportunity to contact Jim Unsworth, chair of the nominations committee, and let him know which position you are interested in (208-334-2920); junswort@idfg.state.id.us. If Jim does not hear from you, you will be hearing from him.

Awards Committee:

The Idaho Chapter TWS has 2 awards to recognize worthy individuals or groups for their contributions to wildlife in Idaho. The Professional Wildlifer Award is intended to honor any member of the Idaho Chapter TWS who has made long-term, outstanding contributions within the state of Idaho to: the general areas of wildlife conservation, management, science, or conservation education; the wildlife profession; or to a specific area of endeavor, species, community, ecosystem, or region. Any person who has made such noteworthy contributions is eligible for nomination for a Professional Wildlifer Award.

The Special Recognition Award is intended to honor any person or group who has made an outstanding contribution within the state of Idaho

to: the general areas of wildlife conservation, management, science, or conservation education; the wildlife profession; or to a specific area of endeavor, species, community, ecosystem, or region. Any person or group who has made such a noteworthy contribution within the last 3 years is eligible for nomination for a Special Recognition Award.

Any Chapter member may submit a nomination for a Professional Wildlifer Award or Special Recognition Award to the Awards Committee. Because the Committee confers 2 awards, nominators must specify for which award the nomination is intended. A single nominee cannot be submitted for both awards. Each nomination should include the following information: (1) full name, present position, current address and telephone number of the nominee; (2) name, address, and telephone number of the nominator; (3) a clear and concise statement justifying the nomination, including the specific details of the outstanding accomplishments (Professional Wildlifer Award) or the specific nature, time, and place or the outstanding accomplishments (Special Recognition Award); and (4) the signature of the nominator. Two or 3 letters in support of the nominee from other professionals will aid in committee decisions.

The Awards Committee must receive all nominations by 2 February 2002. The committee may also solicit information for its files. Nominees not selected to receive the award must be re-nominated for consideration in future years. Please take a moment to consider the accomplishments of your friends, colleagues, and wildlife conservation groups and submit a nomination –

Kerry Reese, Chairperson

Dr. Kerry Reese
Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources
University of Idaho
Moscow, ID 83844
208/885-6435 kreese@uidaho.edu).

Kerry could also use some assistance on this year's Awards Committee.

Education and Information: (vacant)

4H Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Program

Most of us agree that the key to ensuring the protection of our wildlife resources is through the education of the youth. Their informed votes will be critical in the decision making process as the difficult issues of land use and wildlife habitat become more and more important.

The Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society has been a sponsor of the Idaho 4H Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Program (WHEP) since its inception in 1992. Since that time, nearly 1,500 youth and their adult volunteer leaders have taken part in the program. In the past year, we have taken some significant steps in expanding the program. I thought that it might be a great time to update the Chapter membership on the program and at the same time see if anyone is interested in getting involved.

WHEP is a national program designed to teach youth about the relationship between wildlife and habitat. The students learn to manage wildlife species by managing the land while at the same time considering current land uses and landowner objectives. Although WHEP is a 4H program, all youths between the ages of 10 and 18 are invited.

The students are tested in six areas:

- 1) Wildlife Foods. Students are shown ten food items. They are asked to identify the items and choose which of the listed animals eats each of the items.
- 2) Aerial Photographs. Four aerial photos are shown to the students. They are asked to rank those photos based on the quality of the habitat for eight different animals.
- 3) Oral Reasons. For two of the animals listed in the aerial photo section, the students must give oral defenses for their rankings of the photos.
- 4) Habitat Mgmt. Practices. Students are taken into the field and shown some land. They are given a "Conditions Sheet" which gives the landowner's objectives and some information

on the land and the wildlife. Students are also given a list of habitat management practices and wildlife species. The students must select which of the management practices should be used on that piece of ground for each of the wildlife species while keeping in mind the stated conditions.

- 5) Rural Mgmt. Plan. This is a team event. The students are given a new condition sheet and different animals. With that information, they write a one page management plan for the land while considering several wildlife species.
- 6) Urban Mgmt. Plan. This is also a team event. The students are brought to an urban site and given a condition sheet and basic drawing of the site. They write a one page management plan for the area (for species like hummingbirds, butterflies and frogs) as well as draw the design for their plan.

All of the information for the contest is included in the WHEP national manual.

There are a couple of ways that TWS members can get involved. The first is to be available as a resource to an existing WHEP team in your county or town. You can contact your local county 4H agent and let them know of your willingness to help or you can contact me. Another option is to volunteer to coach a team of your own. This could happen in two ways. If you are lucky, the county has a list of 4Her's who are interested in the program and just need a coach. More likely, you will need to go out and recruit your team. In the past, coaches have gone into the local high schools and found motivated, interested students who were willing to make the time for the project. Regardless of the level of involvement, most of the wildlife professionals who have been involved in this program have enjoyed their participation and appreciated the impacts that this program will have on the future voters of Idaho. To date, several wildlifers from TWS have been involved either as coaches or judges: Robin Garwood (USFS) and Steve Bouffard (USFWS) have both coached teams

that went to Nationals. Geoff Hogander (BLM), Jena Hickey (BOR), Ron Gill (NRCS), Don Kemner (IDFG), Elaine Johnson (USFWS), and Michelle Commons (IDFG) have all contributed their time and energy as coaches and/or judges for the state contest.

The awards for the participants are a big part of this program. We provide three post-high school scholarships to the top three senior individuals (over 13 yrs. old) of \$500, \$300 and \$100. For the winning senior team AND their coach, we send them to the National contest (which is located in a different state each year). The next three national events will be held in Ohio, New Mexico and Virginia.

Funding for WHEP has been provided by: Idaho Chapter of TWS, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, 4H Endowment, Rocky Mtn. Elk Foundation, Pheasants Forever, Idaho Power Co., Safari Club, Int., The Lightfoot Foundation, and Bannock County. The funds from these donations have been used to purchase the national manuals, train coaches and 4H agents, run the state contest, provide scholarships, and send the winning Idaho team to the National contest each year.

My sincere thanks to the Idaho chapter, as well as these other organizations, for recognizing the value of this program and then following through with financial support so that the WHEP can continue to grow in Idaho. If anyone would like to get involved or if you just have some questions, please feel free to contact me, Dean Rose, at: drose@idfg.state.id.us or call me at 232-4703.

Living with Carnivores:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has produced a unique wildlife educational program to Idaho called *Living with Carnivores*. The goal of *Living with Carnivores* is to provide a better understanding of predator species and their habitats and to promote public safety and respect for wildlife in their natural environment. It is a neutral, non-advocacy, collaborative educational effort of state and federal wildlife and natural resource agencies, wildlife

conservation organizations, private industry leaders, businesses, and other interested groups.

The *Living with Carnivores* format is a series of free public workshops about some of our region's primary carnivores (coyote, cougar, bears (black and grizzly), gray wolf). Workshops consist of brief slide presentations, followed by question-and-answer periods to address local concerns or problems. Presentations are supplemented by pelts, skulls, track casts, and educational handouts.

If you would like more information on *Living with Carnivores*, please contact Meggan Laxalt, Information and Education Specialist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 208-378-5796 or email meggan_laxalt@fws.gov

Resolutions and Public Statements (vacant)

Audit: (vacant)

Upcoming Events



2002 Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society Annual Meeting

The 2002 Idaho Chapter TWS annual meeting is scheduled for March 14 and 15 at the West Coast Idaho Falls Hotel.

Thanks to Brad Compton for taking on the local arrangements responsibilities. If you have ideas for a workshop or symposium for the 2002 meeting contact Toni Holthuijzen <mailto:tholthuijzen@idahopower.com>

The meeting will include a special session on conservation genetics, general paper and poster sessions, the Chapter business meeting, and the social/fund raiser (auction and raffle).

Lodging

The 2002 meeting will be held at the West Coast Idaho Falls Hotel (formerly Cavanaugh's on the Falls), 475 River Parkway. A block of rooms has been reserved, and the following special rates are extended to members of the ICTWS: \$65.00 Tower View, single/double occupancy; \$55.00 Tower single/double occupancy; \$55.00 Poolside Cabanas, single/double occupancy. Contact Information: 208-523-8000; 1-800-325-4000; <http://www.westcoasthotels.com/>
Be sure to mention you are attending the Wildlife Society meeting when making reservations.

Registration

We recommend that members take advantage of the early registration discount (see below). On-site registration will be available (*without the discount*) at the conference headquarters. For registration information, contact Michelle Commons at 208-525-7290; FAX 208-523-7604; e-mail mcommons@idfg.state.id.us. The website <http://www.ictws.org> will be available by January 1, 2002 for registration.

Special Session

On Thursday morning (14 March), we are planning a session along the general theme of "Conservation Genetics in Wildlife Science". We envision this session to be one that breaks down the "fear of the unknown" for the many of us who have not had a genetics class in 20+ years and want to have some basic understanding of these new techniques, what they can and can not do for us, and how they might be applied to wildlife research, management, and conservation. The session will include an introduction to the terminology, types of molecular biology methods, genetic diversity, phylogenetics/ phylogeography, gene flow/connectivity, hybridization, and specific case studies as examples.

General Paper and Poster Session

The General Paper and Poster Session will start on Thursday afternoon, 14 March and will continue through Friday, 15 March.

Business Meeting

The Chapter's annual business meeting will be held Thursday afternoon following the general paper session.

Social, Auction and Raffle

The social and fund raiser will be held Thursday evening following the business meeting.

Call for papers

You are invited to submit abstracts for presentations to any session. Presentations will be 20 minutes in length, including an introduction of the presenter and time for questions. Students are encouraged to submit papers and/or posters.

Please submit the *Abstract Submittal Form* (see end of newsletter for full Call Letter and form).

Official Notice to Members:

As required by the Chapter's bylaws, you are hereby notified that the Executive Board of the Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society met at the Idaho Department of Fish and Game headquarters office in Boise on 29 September 2001 to plan the 2002 annual meeting of the Chapter.

Membership Renewal Reminder:

Membership of the Idaho Chapter TWS stands at 182, which is down from years past. The easiest way to renew your ICTWS membership is when you renew your Wildlife Society membership (you should have received your renewal forms by now if you are a member of TWS). Others renew only at the ICTWS annual meeting, if they attend. Please remember to renew your TWS and ICTWS memberships, and if you have colleagues who are not members of TWS or ICTWS, please encourage them to join us. Contact Chuck Harris or Michelle Commons if you need membership forms or go to the Chapter's web site (<http://www.ictws.org/>) or The Wildlife Society's web site (<http://www.wildlife.org/>).

Auction/Raffle Items Needed:

Funds for the Chapter's operations come from membership dues and money raised at our annual meetings during the auction and raffle. If you have items you would like to contribute to the acution/raffle, please contact Don Kemner (208-525-7290; dkemner@idfg.state.id.us).

Volunteers Needed

Anna Owsiak is seeking volunteers to work with her in evaluating the student and professional papers for the Ted Trueblood Communications Awards.

<mailto:andrusfg@ctcweb.net> or call her at 208-257-3237 or 208-257-3363.

Student Travel Grants

The NW Section has a goal of encouraging student attendance and participation at its annual meeting. In support of this, the Section will make up to \$2000 available each year to support student travel to the annual meeting of the Section. Students are encouraged to participate in the meeting by giving presentations, preparing posters, or volunteering services to the host chapter. Student support can be for paper or poster presentations, student chapter officers, student chapter members, or others with good justification.

Funds will be available to support transportation, lodging, or other identified expenses. Requests for support should specify who will be supported (individual or group, and numbers), why the support is needed, amount requested, what specifically will be paid for by the support, and additional support that is available or has been sought. The host Chapter will identify a lead person to handle these requests, where requests should be sent (address or email), and the deadline for requests. The host Chapter will then review the requests and make recommendations to the Secretary-Treasurer for the allocation of available dollars. Support of travel is especially encouraged for students from other states than the host state, but requests from the host state are acceptable.

Jonathan B. Haufler
Executive Director
Ecosystem Management Research Institute
208-841-1735 Cellular
877-388-7769 Phone

Scholarship News:

The Idaho Chapter supports academic scholarships at the University of Idaho (The Wildlife Society Norenberg/Meiners Scholarship), Boise State

University (Richard Olendorff/Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society Scholarship), and Idaho State University (Edson Fichter Wildlife Ecology Scholarship).

In September I received a very nice letter from Michael Lucid expressing his gratitude to the Chapter upon being chosen as the recipient of the Edson Fichter Scholarship for the fall 2001 graduate student at ISU conducting research on population genetics of deer mice in southeast Alaska. Michael is originally from Texas and received his BS in Wildlife Management from Texas Tech University. Since graduation from Texas Tech he has worked temporary wildlife jobs in Minnesota, Utah, New Mexico, Alaska, Arizona, and Idaho. Congratulations Michael!!

I also received notice that Lynda Leppert has been chosen again to receive the Richard Olendorff/Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society Scholarship at Boise State University. Lynda provided a description of her research in the January 2001 issue of the newsletter. Congratulations Lynda!!

Northwest Section TWS 2002 Meeting

The Northwest Section TWS will hold its 2002 annual meeting 16-19 April in conjunction with the Washington Chapter TWS meeting in Spokane, Washington, at the Doubletree Hotel (Spokane Valley).

Dr. Winifred B. Kessler is the newly appointed Northwest Section Representative to TWS Council.

Winie is Director of Wildlife, Fisheries, Ecology, and Watershed for the USDA Forest Service Alaska Region, Juneau. Many of you probably know Winie from her days when she was on the wildlife faculty at the University of Idaho (1976-84).

Regional Reports

Nothing Submitted

Research

Research Tools

ABSEARCH, Inc. provides eleven Natural Resource Databases Online and on CD-ROM. Our databases include thousands of abstracts from professional journals making research fast, easy, and flexible. We are Now Offering Full Text Articles from the Journal of Wildlife Management for our wildlife database. Our Wildlife Database has been very popular by many members within The Wildlife Society and we wanted your chapter to be aware of the addition of our Full Text Articles. An online subscription to the Wildlife Database would enable everyone in your section to access over 9,500 wildlife records from the following journals:

- * Journal of Wildlife Management
- * Wildlife Monographs
- * The Wildlife Society Bulletin

The Wildlife Database currently includes abstracts from every article from 1937! Additional Full Text articles are being added weekly until the Wildlife Database is entirely Full Text.

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Editor's Corner

Time's up! The newsletter needs a new editor! Call or e-mail me jbuttsick@fs.fed.us or chuck charris@idfg.state.id.us if anyone is interested. The task is principally a cut and paste and layout operation because most material is generally well written. Mailing hardcopies will soon be minimal as we continue to mail electronically to new members.

Other Meetings

The third international PIF conference, "Partners In Flight Conservation Plans: A Workshop on Implementation and Integration in the Americas," will take place at the Asilomar State Park Conference Center in Monterey, California, on 20-24 March 2002.

Conference sessions will cover Project Case Studies, Species and Habitat Monitoring, Outreach to New Partners, Education and Information, Birding Economics, Measuring Success, International Cooperative Projects, Research Progress and Applications, the Interface of Biology and Politics, and Strategic Planning for the Next Decade. Just over a decade after its inception, Partners in Flight has proven to be an incredibly effective initiative. See <http://www.prbo.org/PIF/NPIF2002.htm>.

The PIF steering committee is looking for \$100,000 in conference support. If your agency, organization, or company might be a source of support, please contact us now. If you are able to help with any aspect of the conference, including helping to organize sessions, please contact Terry Rich (terry_rich@fws.gov) or C. J. Ralph (cjr2@axe.humboldt.edu).

Mark your calendars now for the 9th annual Wildlife Society Conference, September 24-28, 2002TWSAnnual Conference - Bismarck, North Dakota. <http://www.wildlife.org/conference/index.htm>
CALL FOR CONTRIBUTED PAPERS AND POSTERS. Due February 15, 2002
<http://www.wildlife.org/conference/2002/papers.htm>

Web Sites

Grizzly Bear Site
<http://biology.usgs.gov/s+t/noframe/c032.htm>

Habitat Suitability Index Site
<http://www.nwrc.gov/wdb/pub/hsi/hsiindex.htm>

Call for Papers

2002 Annual Meeting Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society

Conservation Genetics: The Use of Molecular Biology in Wildlife Science

You are invited to submit abstracts for presentations to any sessions listed below. The Annual Meeting of the Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society will be held at the West Coast Idaho Falls Hotel, Idaho Falls, Idaho, 14-15 March 2002. Presentations will be 20 minutes in length, including an introduction of the presenter and time for questions. Students are especially encouraged to submit papers. Presentation of posters also is encouraged.

Please submit the *Abstract Submittal Form* (see below) with each abstract, which includes the following information:

- 1) Lead author name, affiliation, mailing address, phone numbers, and e-mail address
- 2) Names and affiliations of additional authors
- 3) Session for which the abstract is submitted (MUST be one of the following):

- Ecology and Management of Big Game
- Ecology and Management of Upland Game
- Ecology and Management of Waterfowl
- Wildlife Management
- Habitat Management
- Nongame Wildlife
- Conservation Biology
- Landscape Management
- Management of Non-Native and Introduced Species
- Policy
- Special Session: Conservation Genetics

- 4) ABSTRACT (You must use the following guidelines and example; please note that the abstract you submit will be the FINAL that is printed for the paper sessions).

Submit (snail mail or e-mail) original abstract, 1 copy, disk and short biographic sketch with the Abstract Submittal Form (see below) by **15 January 2002** to:

Anthonie M. A. Holthuijzen
Idaho Power Company
Environmental Affairs Department
P.O. Box 70
Boise, Idaho 83707
Tel.: 208-388-2352
tholthuijzen@idahopower.com

Authors will be notified about the selection of their presentation by 31 January, 2002.

Abstract Guidelines and Format Example

Guidelines (see sample abstract below):

- **E-mail Access:** Submit the abstract, other required information, and abstract submittal form by e-mail. Abstract submittal forms can be e-mailed to you upon request. Check the website for an abstract form (<http://www.ictws.org>). You will be notified of the receipt of your abstract within 1-2 days.
No E-mail Access: Submit a disk with the required information, a hard copy, and the abstract submittal form. Clearly label all submitted information with pertinent information (i.e., name of lead author, abstract title, session, and lead author contact phone number and e-mail address).
- Use Microsoft Word 2000 or later version (latter strongly preferred).
- Abstract has to fit in a 3.5" x 5.5" space.
- One-line space between title- and text block
- No hard returns within a paragraph

Format Example:

PLEASE NOTE: The abstract you submit will be the FINAL that is printed for the paper session—changes will not be accepted.

SAMPLE ABSTRACT (Measures 3.5" x 5.5")

THE EFFECTS OF INTELLECTUAL ISOLATION ON THE LIFE HISTORY OF SHORT, RED-HEADED, AND BIG WILDLIFE BIOLOGISTS. Woody Pine, Samantha Snag, and Billy Goat, Irrelevant Research Station, Good Grief, Idaho 12345.

Identification of the components of isolation that effect the intellectual regression of wildlife biologists in remote outposts in critical if natural resource agencies are to maintain control over employees and prevent idiosyncratic localism from dominating management decisions. We compared the life style requirements of 3 wildlife biologists (*Homo sapiens griefus*) with similar food habits, but very different life histories, to those of biologists in less remote outposts. The independent variables we analyzed were: horse and /or mule ownership, size of pick-up truck, contentment, biologist weight, number of firearms, fly rods, or dogs owned, operas and/or ballets attended, and espresso consumption. Intellectual regression was positively correlated t horse and/or mule ownership, contentment, biologist weight, and size of pick-up truck. Number of firearms owned and number of fly rods owned were not statistically significant predictors of intellectual regression. Dog ownership was marginally significant and positively correlated. Operas and/or ballets attended and espresso consumption were dropped from the analysis due to small sample size. Biologists stationed in remote locations are likely to be fat, dumb, and happy.

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 calendar year. Make checks payable to: "Idaho Wildlife Society" and mail to Idaho Wildlife Society, c/o Michelle Commons, Treasurer, 868 East Main Street, Jerome, ID 83338 (Telephone 208-324-4359)

Name

Address

E-Mail

Telephone

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

*Idaho Chapter the Wildlife Society
868 East Main
Jerome, Idaho 83338*

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