



The Alaskan Wildlifer

Newsletter of the Alaska Chapter of the Wildlife Society

July 2002

Message from the President

By: Doug Larsen

It is a pleasure to be able to serve as your president for the next couple of years, and I appreciate the vote of confidence you've given me. I'm excited about teaming with you in a cooperative effort to conserve and enhance the incredible wildlife resources we're blessed with here in Alaska, and I hope you will actively and enthusiastically enlist your time, talents, and knowledge to ensuring the long-term health and viability of these resources. Like any organization, the strength and influence of the Alaska Chapter of TWS will depend entirely on the commitment of its membership. I admonish you to become actively involved. I would also like to thank and congratulate our Executive Committee members: President-elect Eric Taylor, Secretary/Treasurer Jackie Kephart, Northern Representative Tom Paragi, Southcentral Representative Herman Griese, Southeast Representative Tom Schumacher, and Past-president Gino Del Frate. I would like to offer too my thanks to Kevin White for serving as our newsletter editor and to Gino Del Frate for the leadership and contributions he provided the Chapter during his recently-expired term as president.

I had the very good fortune of attending the joint TWS/SAF meeting in Fairbanks this past May. I was impressed by the personal and professional interactions among members of both groups. Based on comments I heard at the close of the meeting, it sounded like there is interest in holding joint meetings of this type every two to three years, and to also inviting members of the Fisheries Society Chapter to join us as well. Tom Paragi and Jackie Kephart deserve a debt of gratitude for the time and energy they put into making the joint TWS/SAF get-together a well-organized success. A heart-felt thanks to both of them!

Several issues were raised and discussed during the Chapter's May business meeting, including Chapter committees. I was pleased by the willingness of a few members to step forward to accept responsibility for some of our committees. John Schoen graciously volunteered to chair the Election & Nominating Committee, Tom Paragi kindly volunteered to chair both the Information & Education and Policy & Resolution committees, and Herman Griese generously volunteered to serve as our representative on the Northwest Section's Awards Committee. Three Alaska Chapter committees for which we still need chairs are the Conservation, Membership, and Audit Committees. Chairing these committees doesn't involve a great deal of time, but provides a big service to the Chapter. Please let me know if you are willing and able to chair or serve on any of these committees (doug_larsen@fishgame.state.ak.us).

During the last legislative session, bills were introduced in both the House and Senate that would have required ADF&G to commit a great deal of money and manpower into intensively managing predators. Regardless of your personal feelings about these particular bills, I see this as an example of how the Chapter can offer professional biological insights and perspectives on issues being considered and debated by our political leaders. To me, this could and should be an important function of our Chapter, through our Policy & Resolution and Conservation committees. Our voice is important and we need to ensure that it's offered, if not heard.

The Alaska Chapter has committed to hosting the 2006 national TWS convention in Anchorage and I hope you will all welcome this as a great opportunity to showcase our state and our magnificent wildlife. The American Fisheries Society is hosting their national convention in Anchorage in 2005 and Tom Paragi has offered to explore the possibility of our Chapter participating with Alaska Chapter AFS members in a joint session during their convention. Please feel free to offer Tom ideas about topics we might discuss in a joint session with AFS (tom_paragi@fishgame.state.ak.us).

“Conserving our Wildlife Conservation Heritage” (COWCH) is a national program of TWS aimed at capturing on video the faces, voices, and experiences of elder wildlife professionals who have contributed notably to wildlife conservation efforts over the years. To date, Sigurd Olson of Juneau and Dave Klein of Fairbanks have been interviewed and taped by Alaska Chapter members. COWCH offers us an opportunity to document and preserve in perpetuity the faces, voices, and experiences of those individuals who initiated and developed the earliest wildlife conservation efforts in our state and nation. Any and all members are welcome and encouraged to interview individuals fitting this mold. Ellen Campbell (ellencampbell@fs.fed.us) serves as the Northwest Section Representative for COWCH and would greatly welcome any assistance in this interesting and worthwhile endeavor that you’re willing and able to provide.

In a final note before closing, I was happy to see Tom Franklin’s recent message reporting that the two TWS members who had been involved with lynx research had been exonerated of charges of violating the Wildlife Society’s Code of Ethics. This incident, as you all know, created quite a stir in the natural resource and political arenas and drew into question the motives and techniques used to obtain resource management information. Perceptions are incredibly important and I hope you will all join me in learning from this incident and ensuring that we, as professionals, continue to seek the highest moral and ethical standards in our endeavors to conserve our state’s wildlife.

In closing, I would like to remind you, as Gino did before me, that the success of our organization and our conservation efforts depends on your active participation. Please join me in making the Alaska Chapter of TWS a respected and credible voice for Alaska’s wildlife conservation efforts.

News from the North

Submitted by Tom Paragi

During the wrap-up session of our first joint annual meeting with the Alaska Society of American Foresters (ASAF) in Fairbanks this past May, attendees discussed the possibility of further collaboration between our professional societies on future meetings and on position statements for issues of mutual interest. A couple people suggested that we consider 2-day joint meetings every other year, and the audience suggested these theme topics:

- fire management (particularly “hazardous fuel reduction”)
- roads (location, construction, effects on resources)
- ecosystem modeling
- best management practices.

Suggested topics to consider for joint position statements to work on starting this autumn were “introduction of exotic trees for reforestation” (Kenai and Southcentral) and “carbon sequestration in boreal forest” (Interior) as the feasibility of both topics is currently being considered by Alaska DNR. Chapter members interested in helping develop meeting themes or draft position statements with SAF should contact tom_paragi@fishgame.state.ak.us (459-7327) soon so a committee can be in place by autumn. Anyone wishing to read the notes from the wrap-up session of May 2002 joint meeting with ASAF should email Tom for a copy.

Personnel changes—**Randy Zarnke** retired from the ADF&G regional office in Fairbanks after serving as statewide disease specialist for the last 20 years. **Jeff Selinger** is leaving his position as ADF&G assistant area biologist in Fairbanks to become the area biologist in Soldotna.

News from Southeast

No news from southeast this time.

News from Southcentral

No news from southcentral this time.

The Wildlife Society-Alaska Chapter

Annual Meeting Minutes

President-elect, Doug Larsen called the 2002 annual meeting of The Wildlife Society–Alaska Chapter to order at 12:43pm, Thursday, May 2, 2002. President Gino Del Frate was not present as he was stranded in Kachemak Bay with a fourth grade class from Homer. Fifteen members were present.

I. Introductions of Executive Board

President–elect Doug Larsen introduced the Executive Board members of the Alaska Chapter. They are Gino Del Frate, President; Doug Larsen, President-elect; Roger Post, Past President; Jackie Kephart, Interim Secretary/Treasurer; Herman Griese, Southcentral Region Representative; Tom Paragi, Northern Region Representative; Tom Schumacher, Southeast Region Representative; Kevin White, Newsletter Editor; and Wini Kessler, Northwest Section Representative.

II. 2001 Annual Meeting Minutes

The 2001 annual meeting minutes included having a committee work on revising the chapter bylaws, developing a strategic plan, voting on dollars donated to various causes, and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) position statement.

The revised bylaws were submitted and accepted by The Wildlife Society, National Chapter. A question was raised about a copy of the bylaws being included in the newsletter. Members present were fairly sure a copy had been included in a 2001 newsletter, but it was decided to include them in an upcoming newsletter. A suggestion was also made to keep the current bylaws on the website and also put the newsletter and membership list on the website.

The strategic plan was circulated to all members via the April 2002 newsletter. It was discussed in further detail later in the 2002 meeting.

The ANWR position statement regarding oil exploration and development in the refuge included the Alaska Chapter position and a minority report. This position statement was also submitted and approved by The Wildlife Society, National Chapter.

III. Treasurer’s Report

The treasurer’s report for the Chapter’s checking and savings accounts showed a beginning balance of \$8390.93 in January 2001. Income for 2001 was \$537.81 and expenses incurred for the year were \$1911.62. The ending balance for 2001 was \$1287.89 for the checking account and \$5729.23 for the savings account, for combined funds of \$7017.12.

IV. Old Business

The recently revised bylaws are available to members and will be included in an upcoming newsletter. There was no other old business to review for the previous year. Reports were mentioned but not pursued.

V. New Business

Election Results

The new President–elect, effective immediately, will be Eric Taylor, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Northern Ecological Services, and the Secretary/Treasurer will be Jackie Kephart, Alaska Department of Fish & Game. Seven votes were cast for each candidate. Doug Larsen assumes the role of President effective immediately, and Gino Del Frate becomes Past–President of the Alaska Chapter.

2006 National Meeting

Alberta Canada was awarded sponsorship of the 2004 national TWS meeting. However, our chapter was assured that Anchorage is on the books for 2006. We need to make sure we have people willing and agency heads willing to “step up to the plate” and pull this off. The Anchorage Convention & Visitor’s Bureau will be an essential element of the meeting. We will need fifteen committees to organize and host the 2006 meeting. A member of the Alaska Society of American Foresters brought up that they had hosted a national meeting previously and are willing to volunteer their experience, advice, and expertise to help The Wildlife Society put on the 2006 meeting. Wini Kessler brought up that maybe the national meeting in Alberta would be a good place to start letting people know about the 2006 meeting in Anchorage.

Committees

President Larsen is not aware of any active committees, and he asked if the chapter should develop them. Roger Post brought up that the bylaws specify standing committees. Those committees include 1) Election & Nominating Committee; 2) Conservation Committee 3) Policy & Resolution Committee, 4) Membership Committee, 5) Information & Education Committee, 6) Audit Committee. The chapter has done everything 'ad hoc' the past 3-4 years.

The main problem is getting people to be on committees and do it according to the bylaws. President Larsen brought up the fact that the accounting audit was completed last fall on an 'ad hoc' basis. He and Jackie Kephart, interim secretary, got together and verified the checking and savings accounting for the last 5 years.

The question was asked whether we should work to create active committees, OR to create committees to take on tasks and issues on an 'as needed' basis. Tom Paragi suggested we designate committee chairs to organize full committees when issues arise. Dave Yokel noted that even getting committee chairs is difficult to do because the membership has not been willing in the past to maintain committees, and it would even be more difficult to find chairpersons. John Schoen reiterated that the chapter needs at least an Election & Nominating Committee and Conservation Committee. Paragi brought up the Intensive Management issue as an example of where there could have been problems if the issue had passed through the legislature without a stand being taken by the Wildlife Society.

When President Larsen asked for volunteers from the audience to chair a committee, only Tom Paragi and John Schoen offered to do so. Paragi volunteered himself to chair the Information & Education Committee and the Policy & Resolutions Committee. John Schoen volunteered to chair the Election Committee. Ellen Campbell mentioned that the next election is in 2 years and maybe we should hold off until then on staffing committees for the national meeting.

John Schoen also suggested putting a list of all the committees in the next newsletter and asking members if anyone is interested in serving on a committee as its chair. If so, they are to contact President Larsen.

Membership

It was brought up that there were not many members at the annual meeting. One of the reasons was it was being held the week before final exams at University of Alaska Fairbanks. One idea to entice more members to attend would be to have the local chapter provide a free lunch. The Northwest Section catered breakfast for their meeting, and the Washington Chapter provided lunch. Tom Paragi said the present meeting was free to students, and it was advertised on campus. John Schoen suggested having a free lunch for students, and also noted that the chapter has always had difficulty getting members to attend the annual meeting because of the geographic problem. Paragi mentioned it was a good idea to hold our meeting in conjunction with another conference or event.

Tom Paragi mentioned that we aren't recruiting college graduates into the local TWS chapter, and he asked how we might pursue getting more members. Tara Wertz mentioned that at the Oregon banquet the TWS chapter would ask members to be mentors to graduates right out of college. There was a box to check on the membership application if one was interested in being a student mentor.

ADF&G Strategic Planning

President Larsen briefly described ADF&G's Division of Wildlife Conservation's strategic planning progress. Division staff, working in teams, addressed issues brought to them, and the division sent letters to over 2000 members of the public in urban and rural Alaska and to organizations and agencies. The content of the letter was included in the April 2002 chapter newsletter. The division had received almost 100 responses as of May 1, and there have been no new issues submitted for planning purposes. The anticipated schedule is to have the plan drafted by June 2002. It will then go out for further public review, and the final plan will be completed by Fall 2002.

John Schoen mentioned attending a scoping session with nongame specialists. The group represented agencies and organizations across the state. The consensus was that whatever direction the department takes, we need to have people at the table to lead us in this strategic planning effort. For instance, ADFG is hiring a nongame biologist to find the best approach to manage nongame species without duplicating effort of other agencies and organizations.

Northwest Section-Awards Committee

The Wildlife Society-Alaska Chapter received an email from Lowell Suring, Northwest Section, requesting a volunteer from Alaska be on the Awards Committee for the Arthur S. Einarsen Award. This award was established in 1966 to recognize outstanding services to the wildlife profession by individuals residing in the area encompassed by the Northwest Section of The Wildlife Society. This volunteer will help review nominations and pick the top 1-2 candidates. Lowell would like a representative from each state. Herman Griesse volunteered to be Alaska's representative on the Awards Committee.

Terry Bowyer ran unopposed for the Vice President seat for the Northwest Section and was elected. Their meeting will be held in conjunction with the Eugene, Oregon chapter meeting in February. It can draw 200 people. It would be nice

to provide “seed money” to get graduate students from state chapters to the Northwest Section meeting. The Alaska Chapter is looking for ideas about the program and how to get to Eugene. Any ideas brought up can be put in the next newsletter.

Budget Review For the 2002 Annual Meeting

For this year’s \$40 registration fee, \$20 paid for the snacks and \$20 banquet fee paid for the banquet. The meeting room was free because Bob Wheeler is a University of Alaska Fairbanks faculty member. There is a signed agreement between the Society of American Foresters and The Wildlife Society to split whatever monies are left over based on the number of members attending the meeting.

Chapter Operational Plan

There was discussion about putting the membership list, bylaws, and the chapter historical files on The Wildlife Society-Alaska Chapter web site maintained by Eric Rexstad. Roger Post questioned putting the membership names on the web because of privacy issues, but he would like to see some of the older position statements put on the chapter web site. Jackie Kephart, Tom Paragi, and Roger Post will work on getting the historical documents scanned and on the web.

Tom Schumacher asked if the chapter had a list of members that could be sent out to the membership so everyone would know who belongs to the local chapter. Tom Paragi mentioned that the Society of American Foresters has a webmaster who screens requests for membership lists. When a request is received, the webmaster looks to see if the requestor’s name is on the list and, if it is, he sends the requestor a mailing list of members. It was also suggested using a “protected password” for each member to access the list. It would be a good idea to email members of the chapter asking their opinion about putting the newsletter and membership list on the web. Dave Yokel volunteered to get the membership list on the web once it was decided how we want to go about doing this. Executive Board members also need to be updated on the web.

Internet Scam

A European company sent a \$900-\$1000 bill to Tom Schumacher for an internet listing service it was supposedly providing to the chapter. Tom received this bill several times and forwarded copies to Past-President Gino Del Frate. Inadvertently, the State of Alaska ended up paying the outstanding bill because it had been sent to the Douglas Fish and Game office. Funds never came out of the TWS accounts. Gino Del Frate recently sent a certified letter to this internet company telling them to back off trying to collect the money from The Wildlife Society.

Conserving Our Wildlife Conservation Heritage (COWCH)

Ellen Campbell serves as the section representative for COWCH. Their big project is the video/audio taping of retired wildlife professionals. Her plan is to interview Sig Olson. She will write up the experience for the next TWS newsletter and will include the information on the website for anyone who is interested. Jim King interviewed David Klein. John Schoen asked if there was a standard of quality for the video, and the answer is no. It was also mentioned that Bill Schneider at the Rasmussen Library is interested in statewide oral histories.

Intensive Management Position Statement

Senate and House Bills were introduced that would have required ADFG to put all its resources into predator control. This issue may come up in the next legislative session. Should the Alaska Chapter be addressing this issue and should it be a committee assignment? The Executive Board will put out the call in the next TWS newsletter sometime in the next six months to address this issue.

Note: Past-President Gino Del Frate attended three teleconferences, and either the bills were not heard nor public testimony accepted. Del Frate did write up a 50-word public opinion message and emailed it to all committee members hearing the bill.

Council Report

Wini Kessler gave the report. The council consists of all section representatives, President, Past-President, President-Elect, and Vice President. It is desired that a representative from the Council be at all chapter annual meetings. They meet two times a year, once with the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference and one meeting with the National TWS annual meeting. A strategic plan was developed a while ago by Council that includes eight goals and objectives. Since then everything on the agenda has to relate to the eight goals and objectives. At its last meeting the Council approved the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) position statement and also voted to hold the 2004 national meeting in Calgary. Council struggled with where to hold the 2004 meeting before deciding on Alberta. Alaska has been assured that Anchorage is on the books for 2006.

“Lynx-gate”

National TWS has decided to weigh in on the “Lynx-gate” issue. It is very visible as there have been accusations and congressional hearings. There was nothing illegal done, but there may have been a breach of ethics. TWS maintains and decides what professional ethics are for their members. They will convene a Board of Inquiry and look into “Lynx-gate.” Out of the seven wildlife biologists involved, only three were Wildlife Society members with one being “certified.” The Wildlife Society has standards of professional ethics and will focus on the three members involved.

They cannot act on this issue unless a TWS member steps forward in writing and asks that action be taken for the violation of professional ethics. That is why it took so long for The Wildlife Society to become involved in the “Lynx-gate” issue. The bylaws contain the Code of Ethics and “certified” wildlife biologists sign off on an actual agreement to abide by the code. If a wildlife biologist is not “certified,” then they are not legally bound to abide by the Code of Ethics.

The 2002 TWS annual chapter meeting was adjourned at 2:16pm, May 2, 2002.

Alces Special Issue

The journal *Alces* (<http://www.lakeheadu.ca/~alceswww/alces.html>) is publishing a special issue (Vol. 37, No. 2, 2001) on papers presented at the winter 2000 symposium in honor of Dr. David R. Klein. Many Alaskan biologists are featured in this issue, so here is the table of contents:

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Job Announcements

(send future job announcements to Kevin White at kevin_white@fishgame.state.ak.us)

Wildlife Biologist GS-486-9/11. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is seeking a Wildlife Biologist to design and implement ecological monitoring programs for large mammals, especially caribou, moose, and Dall sheep. The Arctic Refuge comprises 19.6 million acres in northeastern Alaska, and spans a variety of habitats from boreal forest to tundra and coastal lagoons. The Refuge provides extraordinary opportunities for ecological research and monitoring because of its remote location, natural conditions, and diversity of wildlife species and habitats. The incumbent will conduct surveys and investigations on ungulate populations and their habitats. Other duties include: (1) develop cooperative research programs with state and federal agencies, universities, and other research groups; (2) coordinate international efforts to monitor the Porcupine caribou herd; (3) analyze data and prepare reports and publications; (4) prepare annual budgets and work plans for biological projects; and (5) advise the Refuge Manager on a variety of issues related to management of refuge resources. The successful candidate will have a strong background in mammalian ecology, will have the desire to work in spectacular, remote areas under challenging conditions, and will be a skilled communicator and team player. Specialized knowledge of the ecological and physical processes of arctic and subarctic habitats is preferred. This is a full time, permanent position based in Fairbanks, Alaska. For more information, please see the job announcement at www.usajobs.opm.gov or contact Refuge Manager Richard Voss (907-456-0253/1-800-362-4546).

Aquatic Ecologist, The Nature Conservancy of Alaska seeks an experienced aquatic ecologist to identify and implement priorities for the conservation of freshwater biodiversity in Alaska. As a key member of the Alaska program, s/he is responsible for developing and applying a classification of freshwater systems in Alaska and identifying the distribution of key aquatic species and habitats for conservation. In addition, s/he is responsible for designing and conducting bio-hydrological studies in the field to support conservation strategies. This is a unique opportunity to advance the conservation of freshwater biodiversity. The position requires an individual with strong technical skills, as well as exceptional interpersonal skills, as the success of the work will depend on developing relationships with a variety of partners. Candidates should have a master's degree in a natural science, at least three years of experience with freshwater ecosystems, and a commitment to conservation. Frequent travel. Competitive salary and benefits. To apply, please send your resume along with a cover letter to: TNC, 421 West First Ave. #200, Anchorage, AK 99501. Applications accepted until position filled. Equal Opportunity Employer. For a full job description for this position, visit our web site at www.nature.org/careers. For information about TNC's Freshwater Initiative, please visit www.freshwaters.org.

2002 Membership Renewal

Current membership status is noted on the address label for this newsletter. Members interested in renewing their membership to the Alaska Chapter of the Wildlife Society should send their membership dues to Jackie Kephart in Fairbanks. If you renew through headquarters with your national and sectional dues continue to do so. This is the easiest way for us to keep our membership files straight. Our membership list is usually updated before each newsletter is sent, so hurry to renew your membership and you will continue to receive the Alaskan Wildlifer in the future.

Alaska Chapter of the Wildlife Society 2002 Membership Form

If you are not a member of National chapter and want to maintain your membership please fill out the form below and return it to Jackie Kephart at the address on the front of this newsletter. If you are a member of National please continue to pay your state dues when you renew.

Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone Numbers-Work: _____ **Home:** _____ **Fax:** _____

E-mail: _____