



The Alaskan Wildlifer

Newsletter of the Alaska Chapter of the Wildlife Society

January 2001

Message from the President

By: Gino Del Frate

I decided long ago to avoid the cliché of a millennium message but it does seem appropriate to focus on what's to come—CHANGE. Our profession is currently in a state of flux. The way we do business now is not how we did it 20 years ago and will most likely not be the way we do things 20 years from now. We now have dual management, co-management, state management, and subsistence management. Who would think that in a state as large as Alaska would there be impacts to the resources? Impacts that would even cause endangered species concerns. Yet more and more of Alaska's news stories are focused on concerns over the health of this herd or that subpopulation.

So what do we do? How can we as an organization of only 212 members be the most effective? Good science is the key. Every member must maintain his or her own professional integrity and avoid the political winds to sway decisions. Collect the best data you can, analyze it and provide a thorough interpretation of your results. Most importantly, ensure that the resource will not suffer from the misuse of that information you collected.

Year in Review

The Alaska chapter held its annual meeting in Sitka on March 2, 2000. This year's meeting was held in conjunction with the Eighth Alaska Bird Conference and both were well attended. See the related article on minutes of the business meeting. Roger Post passed the gavel at this meeting and he deserves thanks for a job well done for his past 2 years of service.

Since then the transition has been anything but smooth. However we are on our way to recovery. We will be spending the next couple of months catching up on past due projects and pushing forward on new projects to improve our efficiency and become a stronger chapter. See the help wanted list below. Success of these projects depends directly on the involvement of chapter members.

The chapter was involved to some extent in this past November's election pertaining to the "Same day Airborne" referendum and the initiative to eliminate future wildlife related ballot initiatives. Our 1998 position statement on *Wildlife Management by Ballot Initiative* was used (and possibly misused) throughout the campaign. This was one of the

most emotionally charged and confusing campaigns I have witnessed in Alaska. Anyone unsure of our position should review the 1998 position (posted on our website).

We need to begin planning immediately for the 2001 annual meeting. This year's meeting should be held in South-central Alaska. Anyone with ideas for a location or dates (including related meetings of interest) should let me know as soon as possible.

Wanted: a few energetic and active members.

There are several upcoming opportunities for members to get involved. We are a small organization that can not function by relying on someone else to do the work. For all the positions below please contact President Gino Del Frate for more information or to get started working on a project. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in advance for your help.

With the start of the new year we will need to replace Ted Schenck who moved out of the state to a new position in Milwaukee. The remaining tenure for Secretary/Treasurer is approximately 1 year. Duties involve maintaining the books and making sure the membership roles are current and compiling submissions for the quarterly newsletter. The Secretary/Treasurer is also a voting member of the Executive Board.

We need to form a By Laws committee to review and update the Chapter's Bylaws. This project has been on the back burner for quite some time but nevertheless needs attention. A committee of 4 (or more) would be ideal.

TWS National initiated a project to record oral histories from some of the "pioneers of wildlife management". This project titled "Celebrate Our Wildlife Conservation Heritage" or COWCH is set up gather first hand information from as many of the first generation wildlife professionals while they are still alive. We need a coordinator and 2-3 regional interviewers that are willing to contact these past professionals and spend some time recording their recollections from the early days.

It was recently recommended that the Conservation Review Committee review and update the Alaska Chapter's position on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in light of new biological information and the current political situation. Anyone interested in serving on this committee and/or working on this specific project should contact Gino Del Frate ASAP.

Alaska Chapter of The Wildlife Society

Minutes of the annual meeting in Sitka Alaska

March 2, 2000

DRAFT

Submitted by Gino Del Frate.

The Alaska Chapter held its annual meeting March 2, 2000 in the Southeastern community of Sitka. This year's meeting was held in conjunction with the Eighth Alaska Bird Conference and was met with typical Southeastern Alaska weather (a little rain, a little snow, a little wind and an occasional ray of sunshine).

The meeting began with a workshop titled "Conservation of Biodiversity" by Keith Boggs of the University of Alaska's Environmental and Natural Resource Institute (ENRI). Keith first gave a synopsis of the purpose of ENRI and their Alaska Natural Heritage Program since many members were not familiar with this program. The presentation focused on causes of extinction and selection of conservation units to conserve Biodiversity. This was followed by a small group exercise in development of ecoregional plans. The exercise was well received and a lively discussion followed.

Roger Post called the business meeting to order at 12:40 PM with twenty-three members present. Roger Post read the minutes of the 1999 business meeting prepared by Anne Morkill. A motion was made for unanimous approval. Hearing no objections the minutes were accepted as read. The 2000 treasurer's report also prepared by Anne was read into the record. As of the end of 1999 the Alaska chapter had 212 members and a bank account of approximately \$7,000. There were no standing committee reports.

Roger Post reported on the activities of an ad hoc committee formed to review the status of the Cook Inlet population of beluga whales. In summary, this group put together a position paper entitled "Alaska Chapter of The Wildlife Society Detailed Review and Recommendation Supporting Listing of the Cook Inlet Population of Beluga Whales under the Alaska Endangered Species Act. Roger then sent a letter to Alaska Department of Fish and game with the position paper recommending ADF&G list this population of whales as endangered under the State's Endangered Species Act.

Roger Post reported on status of Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA). He had recently sent a letter to Congressman Don Young supporting Rep. Young's efforts. A suggestion that letters be sent to Senators Stevens and Murkowski to push for passage of CARA.

Roger Post reported that he had recently distributed copies of the Chapter's position statement on *The Effects of Spruce Bark Beetle Infestations and Subsequent Management Actions on Wildlife Habitats and Populations* regarding spruce bark beetles to Cook Inlet Regional Corporation, the U.S. Forest Service (Alaska), the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and the Alaska Congressional Delegation.

Roger Post reported that he sent copies of the Chapter's *Position Statement on Wildlife Management by Ballot Initiative* to Representatives Hudson and Masek, co-chairs of House Resources Committee, and

to Rep. Cowdry, chair of the House Rules Committee, with cc's to Reps. Morgan and Ogan, sponsors of ballot initiative legislation in the respective committees. Roger requested that the committee chairs provide copies of the position statement to all committee members.

The business meeting was suspended so that the paper session could run on schedule. Following the presentations the business meeting resumed.

Election Results: Congratulations to the incoming executive Board. Doug Larsen is the new President Elect, Gino Del Frate President, Ted Schenck Secretary Treasurer, Tom Schumacher Southeastern representative and Herman Griesse Southcentral representative. Dave Yokel was reelected to be Northern representative. Thanks to Roger Post for serving the last 2 years as President and also Ellen Campbell, our outgoing past president for dedicating 6 years to the Alaska Chapter.

Funding Requests. Proposals were brought forth, motions made, amended, and eventually passed to provide contributions to the following organizations. A donation of \$300.00 to National for the continued support of The Conservation and Reinvestment Act as well as one to National (\$200.00) in support of the 2001 Annual Conference. We agreed to arrange shipment of nearly complete sets of JWM, Bulletin and Monographs to the Kenyan Wildlife Agency. Shipping would be the only cost to the Chapter and members authorized up to \$400.00 to cover those costs. Ellen Campbell will be coordinating this effort. We agreed to purchase a reference book for the Boreal Partner's in Flight program. A list of desired books was available and \$100.00 was authorized to buy a book. Books donated to this program were destined for Costa Rica. We also agreed to send an Honorarium of

\$200 to the University of Alaska to support ENRI and the Natural Heritage Program.

As a cost savings measure members agreed that sending newsletters and other distributions by email to those with email addresses would be advantageous. President Gino Del Frate agreed to have Ted Schenck develop an email list for this purpose.

The business meeting adjourned at 1630 hrs.

News from the North

Last March, Lee Anne Ayres resigned from the ADF&G Unit 23 Assistant Area Biologist position to accept the biologist/pilot position with the Selawik Wildlife Refuge. The Kotzebue ADF&G office is going to explore greater involvement by local residents in fieldwork, rather than filling the assistant position.

Since last May, ADF&G has held several meetings to address issues stemming from increasing numbers of non-local hunters and commercial operators in Unit 23. Participants have included guides, transporters, local hunters, non-local hunters (represented by Fairbanks and Anchorage Advisory Committee representatives), local organizations (NANA Corp., Maniilaq, the NW Arctic Borough, etc.) and all state and federal management agencies. Two areas were identified as the highest priorities: the upper Kobuk River drainage and the Squirrel River drainage. Additional meetings will be held this fall and winter to begin considering possible solutions to specific problems.

In the Fairbanks ADF&G office, Pat Valkenburg was hired to replace Ken Whitten (retired) as Region 3 Research Coordinator. Also, Thomas McDonough

left Fairbanks to replace Mark Masteller as assistant area biologist in the Palmer ADF&G office.

R. Terry Bowyer, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, received the Arthur S. Einarsen award for outstanding service to the wildlife profession from the Northwest Section of TWS. Congratulations, Terry!

News from Southcentral

The Kenai Peninsula Brown Bear Strategy is now in final form. This is the result of a 15 month planning effort to provide long term guidance land managers to conserve brown bears. Anyone interested in a copy of this document should contact Cindi Loker at ADF&G in Anchorage (907) 267-2301.

News from Southeast

No report for this newsletter.

Annual Conference of Northwest Section/Alberta Chapter, TWS in 2001 Update

We have now selected the dates, location and venue of the next annual conference. **Dates** are March 2-4, 2001 (inclusive—beginning with registration on late morning Friday, and ending with a final plenary session on Sunday afternoon). The **location** is Banff town site in Banff National Park, Alberta. The **venue** is the Banff Park Lodge. We are planning plenary sessions on “Emerging Issues in Fisheries and Wildlife Management for the New Millennium”, including the effects of global climate change on fisheries and wildlife populations, and the use of thresholds in our discipline. We will also have contributed papers on the usual diversity of topics in wildlife research and management.

For further information, please contact the

conference co-ordinator (and president—elect for the Alberta Chapter, The Wildlife Society), **Mr. Arlen Todd**. Arlen’s e-mail address is arlen.todd@gov.ab.ca. We are looking forward to seeing you in Banff in early March. Both the location and the venue are highly attractive; skiing should be excellent at the time, too!

Northwest Section Awards

The Arthur S. Einarsen Award was established in 1966 to recognize outstanding service to the wildlife profession by individuals residing in the area encompassed by the Northwest Section of The Wildlife Society. The Wildlife Administrator Award was designed to recognize and reward excellence in the areas of wildlife program development and administration. The Awards Committee encourages nominations from the membership of the Section. Please contact Lowell Suring, Committee Chair, for more details if you have deserving candidates in mind. Lowell will be moving to Idaho in February and the address below will be good until then. **Lowell Suring, Chugach National Forest, 3301 C Street, Suite 300, Anchorage, Alaska 99503; telephone: 907-271-2836; FAX: 907-271-2460; e-mail: lsuring@fs.fed.us.**

Dr. Paul Dalke developed the original criteria for the Einarsen award in 1966. Presumably, the concept for the award also originated with him. The criteria were amended in 1974 (extracted from a letter to Caroleena E. Einarsen from Phillip W. Schneider, 19 December 1979). The Einarsen Award is presented at the annual meeting of the Northwest Section whenever a worthy recipient is identified by the Awards Committee (i.e., it is not an annual award). Members of the Awards Committee are distributed throughout the section.