



The Alaskan Wildlifer

Newsletter of the Alaska Chapter of the Wildlife Society

April 2004

President's Message – Doug Larsen

As we prepare to gather in Girdwood, I would like to once again encourage you all to take time to attend the upcoming conference, and to in turn encourage others you know to attend as well. I'm confident that the time spent together will be rewarding, both personally and professionally. Information about the conference and registration can be found at http://mercury.bio.uaf.edu/ak-tws/2004_annual_meeting.htm.

We have a host of talented individuals who will be presenting interesting and insightful information about wildlife work they've been involved in. There will be ample opportunity throughout the conference to engage with presenters as well as with other peers and new acquaintances in discussions about ongoing or anticipated wildlife conservation issues, and to share insights and perspectives on how we can become individually and collectively involved in influencing the outcomes of those issues. We will enjoy the added benefit of being joined by TWS members from other parts of the northwest, as we host the NW Section meeting in conjunction with our Chapter meeting. Let's together make the conference and associated meetings a positive growth experience for us all!

The Alaska Chapter has been active during the past year, offering input and positions on several issues and topics. A list of the Chapter's 2003 activities can be found at http://mercury.bio.uaf.edu/ak-tws/annual_activities_2003.htm. Not included on the list, but recently addressed by the Executive Committee, was a response to a proposed TWS position statement concerning support for a steady state economy as a way to better ensure wildlife conservation across the United States. Included in this newsletter is a copy of the letter I sent to National, on behalf of the Executive Committee, expressing our

concerns with the proposed position as it currently exists. I would like to include a few minutes during our annual meeting to discuss this topic (please note the Chapter lunch meeting from 12:00 – 1:00 on Sunday, May 2 and refer to the draft agenda included in this newsletter). Please reflect on any other issues you would like to have discussed during our business meeting and provide your ideas to Jackie Kephart as soon as possible (Jackie_kephart@fishgame.state.ak.us).

During the conference I will be handing the Chapter's presidential gavel to our President-elect, Eric Taylor. As I step down from the presidency, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all of you who have supported the Chapter's efforts these past two years. I am especially grateful to the members of the Executive Committee who I've had the distinct pleasure of serving with: Past-president Gino Del Frate, President-elect Eric Taylor, Secretary/Treasurer Jackie Kephart, and Regional Representatives Tom Schumacher, Herman Griese, and Tom Paragi. I would also like to acknowledge Kevin White for his contributions as our newsletter editor and Eric Rexstad who has served for several years as our web master. The efforts of all these individuals, as well as others of you who have stepped up to assist with position papers and letters, is very much appreciated. The Chapter owes each of you a debt of gratitude! I would like also to thank and acknowledge all of you who have agreed to run for and serve on the new, soon-to-be- formed, Executive Committee. And finally, I would like to thank all of you for allowing me the opportunity to serve as your president these past two years; it has been a privilege.

The Wildlife Society		Alaska Chapter TWS - Executive Committee	
Alaska Chapter		President	Regional Representatives:
		Doug Larsen	<i>Northern:</i>
Newsletter Editor		907-465-4266	Tom Paragi
Kevin White		doug_larsen@fishgame.state.ak.us	907-459-7327
			tom_paragi@fishgame.state.ak.us
Please send articles to:		President-Elect	
Kevin White		Eric Taylor	<i>South-Central:</i>
ADFG, Wildlife Cons.		907-786-3846	Herman Griese
PO Box 240020		eric_taylor@fws.gov	907-552-2436
Douglas, AK 99824			Herman.Griese@ELMENDORF.af.mil
kevin_white@fishgame.state.ak.us		Past-President	
907-465-4102		Gino Del Frate	<i>Southeast:</i>
		907-746-6327	Tom Schumacher
		gino_delfrate@fishgame.state.ak.us	907-465-4346
			tom_schumacher@fishgame.state.ak.us
Webmaster:		Secretary/Treasurer	
Eric Rexstad		Jackie Kephart	
ffear@uaf.edu		907-459-7205	
		jackie_kephart@fishgame.state.ak.us	

Statewide News:

By Tom Paragi, Northern Representative

Communication with TWS Alaska Chapter Members:

Several Department of Interior (DOI) agencies are cut off from the Internet for the foreseeable future, although electronic communication may exist within some of the agencies. Tom Liebscher has kindly allowed the Executive Committee to use his home email as a conduit for reaching members of the Alaska Chapter on the DOI intranet. However, it is unclear how long that intranet may persist. Federal employees who are on (or become elected to) the Executive Committee or who join working groups are encouraged to provide their home email to the Secretary - Treasurer so the membership contact list can be updated. Timely communication will be important as we begin to assemble planning committees for the TWS national meeting coming to Anchorage during 23-27 September 2006. The Alaska Chapter does not conduct broadcast emails to the membership, so "spam" will not occur.

News from the North:

By Tom Paragi: Northern Representative

No news from the North at this time.

News from Southeast:

By Tom Schumacher: Southeast Representative

Gustavus Moose Study:

Kevin White, Neil Barten and John Crouse of ADF&G initiated a field study of moose on the Gustavus Forelands, capturing 8 cows and fitting them with GPS collars. The goal of this study is to learn about how moose body condition and population productivity are affected by the high moose population density in this area. Moose naturally colonized the Gustavus area in the late 1950's from populations originating in the Haines area. By the late 1990's the population began increasing rapidly, raising concerns about the capacity of the winter range to support the population over the long term. More captures are planned for this spring.

Brown Bear Studies:

Rod Flynn, LaVern Beier, and Steve Lewis recovered 12 GPS collars deployed on brown bears on Chichagof Island during summer 2003. The data collected from these collars will be used to investigate habitat use by male and female bears using salmon streams in watersheds with differing timber management histories. The collars worked well and initial analyses revealed difference in how males and females used habitat and the salmon streams. More collars remain to be recovered.

In a concurrent study the above biologists developed and evaluated a single-capture technique for catching hair for DNA-based population estimates from brown bears using salmon streams. This technique was developed in response to concerns that commonly used barbed-wire fence or enclosure methods would not be appropriate for the situation and would result in a high proportion of mixed samples due to the high density of bears using the streams. Analysis of the samples revealed that a high proportion of snares encountered by bears successfully captured unmixed samples of hair with extractable DNA. A paper on this technique will be published soon, likely in the Wildlife Society Bulletin.

Marten Studies:

Rod Flynn and Tom Schumacher of ADF&G completed a third season of fall marten density surveys in areas of the Tongass National Forest with differing prey resources. This study is intended to evaluate the efficacy of the old growth reserve system in the Tongass Forest Plan (TLMP) for conserving populations of martens. Analyses remain preliminary, but in the 8 areas (5 islands, 3 mainland) visited over the last 3 years densities of martens appear to be much lower than those assumed in TLMP. Low numbers of martens appear related to low prey populations.

The Juneau Wolf:

A black wolf, likely a young male, has been regularly seen in the upper Mendenhall Valley near the Forest Service Glacier Visitor Center since Fall 2003. The wolf has been readily observable. Reportedly people have been feeding it dog food and other scraps, and until ADF&G Area Biologist, Neil Barten, shot at it with a beanbag, it often played with pet dogs.

Publications

Steve Lewis of ADF&G had a paper titled A Video Surveillance System for Monitoring Raptor Nests in a Temperate Rainforest Environment accepted for publication in Northwest Science 78:70-74.

Personnel Changes Fall 2003 - Winter 2004

Kim Titus, long-time Regional Supervisor of the ADF&G/Wildlife Region 1 office accepted a position as Deputy Director of the Wildlife Division and completed his move to HQ during the fall of 2003. **Doug Larsen**, left his position as Assistant Director of the ADF&G Wildlife Division to become the Supervisor of the Region 1 office, replacing Kim Titus. **Matt Kirchhoff**, long-time deer research biologist for ADF&G Region 1 accepted the newly created position of ADF&G regional non-game biologist. No news from Southeast at this time.

News from South-central:

By Herman Griese: South-central Representative
No news from South-central at this time.

Executive Committee Elections:

It's time once again to elect your TWS Alaska Chapter President-elect, Secretary/Treasurer, and Representatives. Enclosed in this newsletter you will find a voting ballot. This ballot can be sent to the Secretary/Treasurer (address listed on ballot), or hand delivered if you are attending the upcoming AK Chapter meeting in Girdwood this May 1-3. To help you make informed voting decisions, we have provided candidate biographies (see below).

President:

Tom Paragi: Tom Paragi is a wildlife biologist with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in Fairbanks, where he plans habitat enhancement in boreal forest and evaluates vegetative and wildlife responses. Previously, he studied furbearers and fire effects for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at several locations in Alaska. Tom has degrees in wildlife management from The University of Alaska-Fairbanks and the University of Maine. He has been a member of the Alaska Chapter of TWS since 1986, serving as Information and Education Chair in the mid-90s and recently as Northern Representative. Tom co-organized the first Alaska Society of American Foresters -TWS joint meeting in 2002.

Secretary/Treasurer:

Tara Wertz: Tara Wertz works in Fairbanks as a biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. She received her B.S. from Murray State University, Kentucky in 1982 and her M.S. from South Dakota State University in 1986. Tara has been a member of TWS since 1984. She served on the Oregon Chapter TWS Board during 1993-1994 and as Regional News Editor for the Oregon Chapter during 1992-1996.

Currently, Tara is the caribou, moose and Dall sheep biologist for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. She has been involved in big game research and management since 1986, including work on elk, mule deer, antelope, black bears, and mountain lions in Oregon; white-tailed deer in Iowa and Indiana; and bighorn sheep in South Dakota. She has also done extensive work on wild turkeys and several grouse species in the Midwest and Oregon.

Northern Representative Candidates:

Lisa Saperstein: Lisa received a B.S. in Forest Biology with a botany emphasis from the State College of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry in 1985. After attending graduate school for botany at the University of Montana for a year, she switched gears and received a second B.S. degree, this time in Wildlife Biology, in 1998. She received her M.S. degree from the university of Alaska Fairbanks in 1993 under Dr. David Klein. Her thesis was entitled, "Winter forage selection by barren-ground caribou:

effects of fire and snow." After completing school, she took a 4-year term position as a wildlife biologist for the Koyukuk/Nowitna Wildlife Refuge Complex in Galena, but half the time was spent working on reindeer grazing studies on the northern Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge. She spent a year in Anchorage working for the Fish and Wildlife Service and USGS until she moved back to Fairbanks as a wildlife biologist for Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge in 1998. Being stationed on a relatively small refuge allows her to work on a wide variety of projects, but her main area of interest continues to be in wildlife/habitat relationships.

Eric Rexstad: Eric moved to Alaska in 1991 after receiving a PhD. from Colorado State University. He is an associate professor in the Institute of Arctic Biology. In that position he is attempting to fill state needs by training undergraduate and graduate students (whom he hopes will vote for him), and conducting field research in such places as Denali National Park, Koyukuk-Nowitna National Wildlife Refuge, and the Bonanza Creek Experimental Forest. He also serves as website geek for the Alaska Chapter TWS website, and has formerly served as software editor for the Wildlife Society Bulletin, Associate Editor of The Journal of Wildlife Management, and faculty adviser to the Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society at UAF.

South-Central Representative Candidates:

Mark Masteller: Mark is currently director of the Alaska Center for Appropriate Technology, a non-profit corporation dedicated to ecologically sustainable economic development. He also does a bit of environmental consulting. During 1981-2000, he worked in Alaska as a wildlife research technician for USFWS and NPS (8 years), and as a management biologist for ADF&G in Palmer (10 years). His current expertise is the juxtaposition of ecological principles, economic development and community health, and is a member of the TWS Working Group for a Steady State Economy. He served as South-central representative once in the past, and holds B.S. and M.S. degrees in Wildlife biology from Colorado State University (1980 and 1987).

Anne Morkill: Anne is the Deputy Refuge Manager for the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge. She has lived in Homer since 2001. Anne previously worked in Fairbanks for the Arctic NWR and the BLM's Northern Field Office for 9 years, including experience in wildlife inventory and monitoring, subsistence management, environmental planning for hard rock mining and oil and gas leasing, and public outreach. Anne has a B.S. in Wildlife Biology from Colorado State University and a M.S. from the University of Wyoming. She has been a member of the Wildlife Society since the mid-1980s, and served previously as the Northern Representative and the Secretary/Treasurer for the Alaska Chapter.

Southeast Representative Candidates:

Steve Brockman: Steve works for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Juneau, where he leads a small band of fierce warriors whose mission is to negotiate modifications that will minimize the impacts of human developments on fish and wildlife habitat. Officially, he's Branch Chief of Project Planning. His work includes letter-writing crusades, endless conference calls, and increasingly rare opportunities for field work throughout Southeast Alaska to visit proposed project sites. He works with resource professionals in many agencies throughout Southeast AK, and elsewhere in the state. Prior to his 3 years in Juneau, he worked for the Fish and Wildlife Service as a fish and wildlife biologist in Ketchikan for 6 years. He worked for 7 years in various wildlife-related positions in Wyoming following his Master's degree work at the University of Montana and undergraduate education at the University of Wyoming.

Deborah Rudis: Deborah works for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Juneau, where she is the Environmental Contaminants Specialist for Southeast Alaska. She moved to Alaska in January 1989-a mere three months before the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill.

Deborah primarily works on spill response activities, hard rock mining and water quality issues, pesticide use issues, and contaminants effects on birds. She is a contributor to numerous spill contingency planning efforts in Southeast Alaska and related wildlife work groups. She was on the development team and is an instructor for the USFWS Spill Response course. She has been involved in the Wildlife Society since undergraduate school and has previously served as the SE Alaska representative for the Alaska Chapter.

She began working for USFWS in the Annapolis, Maryland Field Office in 1984. Deborah received her B.S. and M.S. wildlife degrees from the University of New Hampshire and the University of Massachusetts. She previously worked for the U.S. Forest Service Northeast Forest Experiment Station in songbird and herptofauna research in New Hampshire. (Look for her best-seller, *Amphibians and Reptiles of New England!*). An avid runner, Deborah is usually training for a marathon somewhere.

Kevin White: Kevin White is a research wildlife biologist for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, based in Douglas, Alaska. He received a B.S. in Wildlife Biology from Humboldt State University and an M.S. in Environmental and Natural Resource Sciences (Wildlife) from the University of Nevada-Reno. His current research interests include moose-habitat relationships, mountain goat habitat modeling, and the role of snow in influencing deer habitat carrying capacity. He has worked either directly or indirectly (via graduate studies) with ADFG since 1996. Before working for ADFG, he was employed by Humboldt State University, University of Nevada Reno, and the Forestry Sciences Laboratory in Juneau. He has been the Newsletter Editor for the Alaska Chapter of the Wildlife since 2001, and a member of the Wildlife Society since 1996. He also served on the organizational committee for the 2003 Alaska Chapter TWS meeting in Juneau.

Alaska Chapter Review of TWS Position Statement on Economic Growth and Wildlife Conservation:

Following is an E-mail message sent from Doug Larsen to Helen Hands, February 21, 2004, on behalf of the Alaska Chapter's Executive Committee.

Hello Helen,

Thanks for providing me with information and materials about the proposed position of TWS on economic growth and its implications for wildlife conservation. After receiving the materials from you I circulated them to the Alaska Chapter's 7-member Executive Committee for review and comment. Including me, 6 of our 7 members provided feedback. All 6 expressed concerns with the proposed position for a number of reasons, including a reluctance to see the Society potentially compromise its credibility by engaging so forcefully in a discipline (economics) that's outside our area of noted expertise. Concerns were also expressed about the tone and length of the technical review and position statement. While it may be appropriate to offer our sentiments on economic growth and their associated impacts on wildlife, there is a sense that this could be better accomplished using specific, science-based rationale and examples than with broad sweeping remarks about the woes of capitalism. Executive Committee members also expressed reluctance to endorse the proposed position because of a paucity of knowledge about the issue and discussions that have certainly occurred within the Society to date.

Perhaps with more information, along with a toned down and more science-based discussion that includes clear examples of economic/wildlife tradeoffs, the Alaska Chapter might reconsider its position. For now, though, based on the materials provided for our review, we cannot support the proposed position statement.

Doug Larsen
Alaska Chapter President

To learn more about this topic and the TWS Steady State Economy Working Group, visit the following websites:

TWS Working Groups Webpage: <http://www.wildlife.org/wg/index.cfm>

Steady State Webpage: <http://www.homestead.com/steadystate/Index.html>

International Society for Ecological Economics: <http://www.ecologicaleconomics.org/about/intro.htm>

2003 Alaska Chapter TWS Meeting Minutes:

These minutes will be considered for approval at our May 2 business meeting in Girdwood:

April 9, 2003

1. Call to Order:

Doug Larsen (President) called the business meeting to order at about 12:15 PM. The meeting was held in conjunction with the two-day Alaska Chapter-TWS meeting. Pizza and soda were provided to the approximately 30 members in attendance. A quorum was established and President Larsen introduced Executive Committee members and noted that President-Elect Eric Taylor will take over as president in a year.

2. Approval of Agenda:

Members in attendance approved the agenda after adding three additional items: TWS Endowment Program, the transfer of ADF&G Habitat Division functions to DNR, and a resolution concerning HB 163 and SB 122 (Wildlife Conservation Pass).

3. May 2, 2002 Minutes:

Attending members unanimously approved the Chapter's May 2, 2002 business meeting minutes.

4. Treasurer's Report:

President Larsen and SE Representative Tom Schumacher reported on current finances of the Chapter. As of December 31, 2002, the Chapter account balance was \$7469.68. The 2003 annual meeting is expected to make approximately \$2000 in profit; the associated Resource Selection Workshop (contracted through West, Inc., Laramie, WY) broke even with 30 members in attendance (max. capacity).

5. Old Business:

2006 TWS (National) Meeting in Anchorage: The Alaska Chapter has committed to hosting the September 2006 annual meeting in Anchorage. The Executive Committee will coordinate the creation of the roughly 15 committees needed to plan and host the national meeting. Members with an interest in participating should provide phone numbers and e-mail addresses, and begin discussions about future committee responsibilities and objectives.

COWCH Program Update: Ellen Campbell provided an update on the COWCH program (Conserving our Wildlife Conservation Heritage) and information about recent interview activities with pioneer Alaskan wildlife biologists. Ellen is interested in receiving feedback about ideas for future interviews and will prepare an article to be incorporated into the next chapter newsletter about recent program activity and future goals. Also, members discussed the idea of contracting professional videographers to assist with filming and editing future COWCH video efforts. The group felt comfortable spending a bit of money to do this, but also suggested looking into the possibility of using state and federal videographers to assist.

American Fisheries Society Meeting: Members of the AK Chapter have been officially invited to attend the Annual AFS meeting in Fairbanks on November 15, 2003.

TWS Endowment Program: Wayne Regelin provided an update on the TWS Endowment Program. The program is designed to support TWS involvement in influencing national policy issues. The goal of the program is to raise \$3 million and currently about half this amount has been donated. Regelin encouraged members to consider contributing to this endowment and offered some creative ways in which individuals might make donations, such as through personal wills or investment account dividends.

6. New Business:

Committees: Chapter members decided to create a new "Awards" committee. Members Layne Adams, Todd Rinaldi, Matt Kirchhoff, and Doug Larsen agreed to participate on this committee. These members will come up with suggested award categories and will develop specific award criteria.

TWS-NW Section Meeting: The Alaska chapter will be hosting the 2004 NW Section meeting in conjunction with next year's annual Chapter meeting, and will hold it in Anchorage. An announcement will be incorporated into an upcoming newsletter and members will be encouraged to contact (by phone) potential speakers and others with potential interest in participating in the meeting.

Transfer of ADF&G Habitat Division functions to DNR: Members unanimously supported a motion to draft letters to the Governor, Speakers of the House, and Senate President expressing the Chapter's respectful opposition to the transfer of Habitat Division permitting authority from the Department of Fish and Game to the Department of Natural Resources. Because of the short timeline and the remote chance of influencing this policy, with its political inertia, the objective of the letters is for the AK Chapter to "go on record" in opposition of Governor Murkowski's Executive Order #107. Members feel the transfer of permitting authority will compromise future wildlife and fish habitat conservation.

Wildlife Conservation Pass: Members unanimously supported a resolution provided by Wayne Regelin expressing support for HB 163 and SB 122. These bills would create a \$15 nonresident Wildlife Conservation Pass. The resolution asks that a major portion of the generated funds (\$3 to \$4 million of the estimated total \$7 million annual income) be used to match State Wildlife Grants funds for wildlife management, viewing, and education programs. President Larsen will send a copy of the resolution to all legislators.

7. Next Meeting:

Next year's annual Chapter meeting will be held in conjunction with the NW Section meeting in Anchorage. The exact date has not yet been set, but should probably set it for late April or early May, 2004.

**ALASKA CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY
ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING - DRAFT AGENDA
SUNDAY, MAY 2, 2004
ALYESKA PRINCE HOTEL - GIRDWOOD
12:00 - 1:00 PM**

- 1. Call to order**
 - Establish quorum
 - Introductions of participants and Executive Committee members
- 2. Approval of Agenda**
- 3. Approval of Minutes - April 9, 2003 Annual Meeting**
- 4. Treasurer's Report**
 - Chapter Account
 - Conference & Banquet Account
- 5. Old Business**
 - National meeting in Anchorage - 2006
 - COWCH update
 -
 -
 -
 -
- 6. Installation of new President**
- 7. New Business**
 - Committees
 - Steady state economy position
 - NPR-A position
 - TWS Council report
 -
 -
- 8. Next meeting**
- 9. Adjourn**

2004 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 chapter 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 future issues of the *Alaskan Wildlifer* in the future.

Alaska Chapter of the Wildlife Society 2004 Membership Form

If you are not a member of the 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 (note that Chapter dues are \$5.00 and can be paid with a personal check made out to TWS, Alaska Chapter). If you are a member of National please continue to pay your state dues when you renew, using the form and procedure provided by National.

Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

Mailing Address: _____

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

E-mail: _____

The Wildlife Society-Alaska Chapter
c/o Jackie Kephart
225 Aurora Drive,
Fairbanks, AK 99709-4160

BALLOT

Alaska Chapter of the Wildlife Society, 2004 Elections

President:

____ Tom Paragi
____ write-in candidate: _____

Secretary/Treasurer:

____ Tara Wertz
____ write-in candidate: _____

Southcentral Regional Representative:

____ Mark Masteller
____ Anne Morkill
____ write-in candidate: _____

Southeast Regional Representative:

____ Steve Brockman
____ Deborah Rudis
____ Kevin White
____ write-in candidate: _____

Northern Representative:

____ Eric Rexstad
____ Lisa Saperstein
____ write-in candidate: _____

Return to:

The Wildlife Society-Alaska Chapter
c/o Jackie Kephart
225 Aurora Drive
Fairbanks, AK 99709-4160