



AMERICAN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

Conservation, Research and Education since 1911

www.americanwildlifeconservationfoundation.org

Edited by Scott Shupe



Newsletter 21

Spring 2005

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Spring 2005 is a time filled with challenges for those who professionally or as an avocation are concerned with the stewardship of our natural resources. Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) has been confirmed in New York. The testing of captive and wild deer is continuing. Last September, the AWCF, Inc. offered a comprehensive workshop on CWD that fell on deaf ears. Sometimes being a leader means that you are ahead of the curve! Past President Dr. Robert Chambers deserves credit for his efforts in this area.

Goals for 2005 will feature focusing on what we can achieve with limited human and financial resources while relying on our organizations long and distinguished history of making a difference. There are two areas that require our immediate attention: Increasing membership and addressing critical conservation issues in the state. The new membership guidelines makes it easier for perspective members to join as associate members. Limited resources required the foundation to focus on pressing issues; CWD is now a front page story in many newspapers, invasive species is a growing concern among wildlife professionals. The spring membership meeting will focus on one of these topics.

The website has not met our expectations; therefore, changes are being made to keep the site current and a place members and non-members will want to visit. This edition of the newsletter will be on the site with past issues. Updates on topics of interest and discussion points from members of the board of directors and officers will be posted on the website. In an era when rapid communications are important the website is the quickest way to communicate important issues and concerns across our membership and beyond. A series of links will continue to provide contact with information centers and sources of high quality information.

Members are reminded to provide changes in their email addresses as they occur.

The newsletter is only as strong as the articles that Scott Shupe receives. Committee reports, member updates and continued information from the grants committee is only part of the picture. The diverse membership and interests found in the AWCF, Inc. means that there are many topics that should be shared on a larger stage. Provide our newsletter editor with the information and allow him to see if there is room in the next issue.

The strength of the AWCF, Inc. lies in the rich history and heritage of the organization, dating from the early 1900's to the present, members and the organization have worked to make a difference. The challenge to the current members and board is to continue to move forward as the issues may change, the challenges remain the same.

The committee structure and the newly enacted bylaws provide room for growth and new leadership – opportunities to provide leadership in the coming years. Ask to become a member of a committee or if you are not currently a member you're invited to join an organization with a rich heritage and a plan for the future.

William M. Schwerdt

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Treasurer Ronal Giegerich reports that we have bonds coming due with which to cover our immediate expenses and grants.

See you at the AWCF Spring meeting.

GRANT REPORTS

No reports have been received this quarter. Each grant recipient is required to submit a report at the conclusion of the project.



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GRANT COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair John Hasenjaeger reports that the committee met by phone, email, and letter and we are pleased to recommend the following three projects for this Spring's funding. The committee reviewed 26 applications this Spring and found several worthy of funding. It has been a hard choice; the committee, according to the guidelines set up a few years ago, feels that these are best. Also included for the Board's consideration are two alternates.

The requests we recommend are:

- 1 The Rodburn Park community environmental education center, under the supervision of Morehead State University of Morehead, Kentucky requests \$2000 for a wildlife observation hut. A three sided hut with one way glass with benches, and a covered path from the main trail to the hut, also included will be the installation of bird feeders. Work to be done by volunteers and only materials will be purchased.
- 2 The STAR foundation at Swezey Town Road, Middle Island, NY proposes observation and study of Sika deer population at South Haven Park and Brookhaven, Long Island. The objective of the study is to gain an historical and ecological perspective on the introduction of *Cervus Nippon* to Long Island. They want to know the current herd size, health, and dispersal patterns. They request \$2000.
- 3 Cooperative Wildlife Research Laboratory in Carbondale, IL under the leadership of Clayton K. Nielsen would like to test remote cameras for detecting Canada lynx in Maine. They are trying to develop an accurate, precise, and cost-effective technique for surveying lynx populations; requested \$2000.00 for the purchase of cameras would be matched

by the Sweetwater Foundation and other sources.

The first alternate is from the University of Maine: The Spatial and Temporal Patterns of amphibian disease in Acadia National Park wetlands: causal factors and potential management strategies, \$ 2000.

The second is from the University of Arkansas for study of the timber rattlesnake in fragmented habitat, \$1500.

The Board of Directors has approved the STAR Foundation and the Cooperative Wildlife Research Laboratory proposals for funding.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

We await a new volunteer to Chair.

We also are sad, extending condolences to President Emeritus Peter Roemer. His beloved wife Elsie passed away on Easter.

Another loss in our rank of friends is made by the passing of Hank Cosselman, former President of the NYS Conservation Council.

We regrettably note attrition in our ranks as former President Maurice Alexander has indicated that he can no longer play an active role in our Foundation. However, some of the lessons from Dr. Alexander's Ecology 101 (and a few lessons of other ESF emeriti) continue to be practically applied by this editor and some other members.

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS

No report this period.

FROM THE ARCHIEVES

No report this period, but remember that a truly happy person is one who can enjoy the scenery while on a detour.

SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE (DONOR-SPONSORED PROJECTS)

Chair TBD – is there anyone to volunteer?



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How about members each proposing at least one project and one seminar topic?

For instance, if 76 million 'baby boomers' will retire between 2008 and 2020, yet only 46 million people will replace them in the work force, who will pick up the conservation mantle we grew up with, and how will 'they' "do it"? What would an agenda be for a symposium on the evolving demographics of the environmental and conservation ethic of the Generation X? I drew chuckles not long ago at a managers' meeting when I noted that most of the 'hook and bullet biologists' were retiring. These young executives were not familiar with the term. By attrition of those elders having an institutional knowledge, the 'kids' now in college will become agency biologists of tomorrow. These replacements largely grew up with video games, not dirt on their boots or frost on their nose in a duck blind. Will they really know how PETA, the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, and the Fund for Animals challenge our traditional wildlife values?

For more about PETA and its Fish Empathy Project, visit www.fishinghurts.com.

A proposal is before the Board to ask members to support and facilitating a series of informational exchanges relating to emerging issues in wildlife and habitat management.

While still in outline form, the first would have, aside from members, as the intended audience representatives of the NYS Arborists, Society of American Foresters, utility vegetation managers, and suburban or rural land developers. The themes, with invited speakers, would be related to replacement in our landscapes the American elm and mast trees, notably the American chestnut, oaks, and hickories. Related speakers would outline the current knowledge of the endangered Indiana brown bat that could have bearing on persons removing diseased, cracked or otherwise hazardous old trees. Removal of elm, hickory, and diseased trees with exfoliating bark may

need to be evaluated, in light of the Endangered Species Act, to determine if bats are present.

Another potential conclave would target developers and land managers who need to learn of the latest initiatives of NYSDEC and USACE relative to wooded wetland and vernal pool mitigation. Related topics will be invasive species and proposed permit conditions to prevent the spread of or eliminate plants like Japanese knotweed, *Phragmites*, and purple loosestrife.

Members are asked to propose additional topics related to our mission statement that could be packaged into a four-hour mini-conference as part of a series.

CONSERVATION ISSUES

Most of us know that the growth and expansion of the human race has altered the wildlife populations and landscapes 'soon' after occupation by humans. Indeed, several science fiction novels and movies are based on our species being 'infestations'. There are theories that as primitive man moved around the world, he eliminated the large periglacial mammals, vegetation patterns changed. Hunting could have eliminated the European elk and cave bear, the American mastodon and mastadonts and thus changed our boreal forests – one animal could eat the equivalent biomass of a tree a day. More recently, the elimination of bison and elk from the Great Plains following the Lewis and Clark expedition helped alter its flora. The deep-rooted native grasses set seeds that were punched deep into the hoof prints - soil microtopography created by herds. Contemporary conditions disfavor the native plants and favor naturalized exotics. Now we have reports of large, set fires altering the landscape of the Australian continent and global climatic patterns.

<http://www.cnn.com/2005/TECH/science/01/27/australia.desert.reut/index.html>



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KUDOS

A STAR IS BORN--Tracy Graziano from Montana State University Dept. of Science and Natural History Film sent us the rough cut of her thesis film on the eastern coyote. John Hasenjaeger was asked to comment on make suggestion of the film. To his surprise when he previewed the film, our former president, Bob Chambers, has a prominent part in it. He does a great job and photographs very well. All in all Tracy has done a great job, and our name and logo appear in the credits. The completed copy will be placed in the archives. Tracy has already received an award at a film festival for her work.

Members Chambers, Geigerich, Shupe, VanDruff, and Will 'manned' a table at the poster session of the February 3-4 joint meeting of the Society of American Foresters, American

Fisheries Society, and Wildlife societies in Liverpool, NY

Not quite something to be congratulatory about, but members certainly can raise eyebrows in chagrin at the April announcement of CDW in Oneida County. Our September conference would have been right on the mark, if the intended audience of sportsmen, ranchers, and writers had registered in sufficient numbers to preclude cancellation of the event.

Let us hope that agency managers can isolate and eliminate the threat from the six index herds, and determine adequately with only a limited 'sampling' of the surrounding wild herd that further "depopulation" and forensic exercises are not needed.

"I have read the Constitution and By-Laws of the American Game Protection and Propagation Association. I need hardly say that I unqualifiedly believe in the purpose of this association, and it should have the backing of all good citizens. In particularly, I wish to express my real pleasure at the farsightedness which has induced the Arms and Ammunition men of the country to take the lead in organizing such an associations as this. All lovers of Nature should believe in the work of the association. All sportsmen of even a moderate capacity for forethought should back up such a movement." **Theodore Roosevelt, September 19, 1911**

Note: The American Game Protection and Propagation Association is the predecessor of the American Wildlife Conservation Foundation.

Please accept my membership to AWCF: (Print)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Line 2: _____

City: _____ Zip _____

Put a check (\$25 Non-Voting or \$50 Voting) in the mail along with a brief resume relaying your conservation inclinations, and send to our Secretary:

Peg Sauer
13 Beaver Dam Road
Voorheesville, NY 12186