



*South Dakota Chapter*

**The Wildlife Society**

July 2006

### **President's Message**

In the past several years that I have been a member of the South Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society, I have heard casual remarks here and there from fellow members regarding our committees. More specifically: regarding participation in committees and the level of activity of committees. Committee chairs have lamented that they would like to “do something” and contribute more to SDTWS, but the board does not contact them regarding specific needs or issues.

At our most recent board meeting in June, I thought I would pursue this issue a bit more. I admitted to my fellow board members that I wouldn't mind getting involved with one or two of SDTWS' committees. After all, I'm sure every one of us wildlife professionals would consider one or more of SDTWS' committees a special interest to them. I simply didn't feel comfortable jumping into a committee that was already “taken”. I didn't want to impose.

I have to admit, I was surprised and a bit relieved when another board member disclosed that they too were interested in getting more involved with committees, but found it difficult to “break in” to a committee of one. I couldn't help but wonder, if some of our most active members are uneasy about getting involved with a committee that interests them, then how many other members are wishing they could get more involved as well?

Admittedly, we have some very active committees. Our wind power committee is one of those stand-outs when it comes to active involvement. Alyssa Kiesow does an excellent job as the chair of this committee. But I think Alyssa would agree that the momentum of this committee comes from the synergy of its members. Currently this committee has 8 members. The members use a list serve to maintain communication and keep each other up-to-date on wind power developments. They have written-down, clearly defined goals and objectives, as well as a list of priority tasks. Finally, the committee meets in person or by conference call several times throughout the year to discuss its progress and decide what tasks need to be completed next.

Granted, I think there are a few aspects of how this committee got its start that have contributed to its success. For one, committee expectations were established from the beginning, which has provided the committee with a great deal of guidance. This process was facilitated by Alyssa meeting personally with the board to iron out specific expectations. Second, when this committee was formed, the board made a point of recruiting as many members knowledgeable in wind power as possible. This has allowed the committee to spread out the work load and ease the burden on any one member.

In my mind, this is a committee style that other committee chairs may be interested in emulating. Unfortunately, the model under which many of our committees are functioning does not seem to encourage this level of interaction and participation. I would propose that many of our committees are currently operating under a “consultant” model. In other words, committee chairs are contacted whenever the board needs expert advice on an issue. The chairs serve as consultants to the board, providing them with their professional opinion. Under the consultant model, some of the committees stay quite active. For instance, the Private and Public Lands Management committee is regularly contacted to provide expert opinions on land exchanges, transmission lines, and other issues impacting public lands. But many committees are not so active under this model. I know this is so, or else I wouldn’t hear committee chairs telling me that they wish they had more opportunities for active participation.

Therefore, this is an issue that you will continue to hear about throughout the year. If you are currently chairing or co-chairing a committee, we are keenly interested in your thoughts on this matter. Therefore, I will be contacting each of you by e-mail or phone within the next couple months. Here are some of the things we will be asking: How many members does your committee have? Does your committee need more members or would you like to see more member involvement? Does your committee work best alone or would it function better if combined with another committee? (A perfect example would be the recent addition of *Private Lands* to the Public Lands Management committee). What are the five most important topics that you feel your committee should be concerned with? What are your goals for your committee in the next year? Would your committee benefit from more board guidance or support?

For those of you who have cold feet about getting involved with a committee, now is a great time to jump in (cold feet first) and get involved. I, too, will be making a conscious decision to suppress my reservations and get involved with the committee I have wanted to join for several years now – the Fund Raising committee! (That is, if that’s okay with the co-chairs). In fact, I encourage all of you to just “pick one” and go for it. In the future, I’d like to see some of our committees function more like TWS’ working groups, where the more members the merrier and the members independently tackle issues of interest to the group.

Admittedly, some committees are better suited to a group framework than others. Some of the standing committees, such as the Audit, Program, and Nominations and Elections committees, have very specific duties that can be handled by the chair alone. Some of the special committees, however, have a much broader focus and may benefit from group involvement. Look for more updates on this issue as the year progresses. If you have ideas or comments on this topic, I’d love to hear them.

Bridgette Flanders-Wanner

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## Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Update

On May 25, 2006, by a vote of 225-201 the House of Representatives passed H.R. 5429, the American-Made Energy and Good Jobs Act. The bill, introduced by Richard Pombo (R-CA) the chair of the House Resources Committee, would open up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) to energy development. H.R. 5429 was a stand alone bill so representatives were voting solely on the merit of opening up ANWR to energy development.

Of interest to SDTWS members, Representative Stephanie Herseth of South Dakota, who previously supported energy development in ANWR, voted against the bill. SDTWS members are encouraged to contact Representative Herseth to thank her for her vote and to encourage her to continue support for the protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Representative Herseth’s e-mail address is Stephanie.Herseth@mail.house.gov.

H.R. 5429 has been sent to the United States Senate for consideration. The bill has been given virtually no chance of passage in the Senate as a stand alone bill.

# **Minutes of the January 4, 2006 Executive Board Meeting of the South Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society**

President Will Morlock recognized a quorum & called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM at Cedar Shore, Oacoma, South Dakota. Board members present were Bridgette Flanders-Wanner, Steve Griffin, Will Morlock, Laura Hubers, K.C. Jensen, & Art Smith.

Smith presented minutes of the November 2006 board meeting. A few corrections and misspellings were noted, Flanders-Wanner motioned to accept the minutes with corrections, Hubers second. Motion passed (5-0).

Smith then presented the Treasurers report. No discussion, Jensen motioned to accept the report, Flanders-Wanner Second. Motion passed (5-0).

## **Old Business**

### Correspondence Sent

- Morlock discussed sending letters to congressional delegates. Quickest method is through email (24 hours). Postal mail requires security screening – may take 1 month for delivery.
- No responses by Herseth and Thune on Arctic drilling emails. Morlock thanked Johnson via phone on his stand against the Arctic drilling.
- Duck Stamp Loan Act – Johnson replied he is aware of the issue. Nothing else received.

### Wind Turbines

Jensen indicated that the committee is getting ready for a face-to-face meeting. Local support (producers, landowners, etc.) of new lines was very evident at public meetings. Focus of committee is likely to be in developing sighting recommendations. Wind Power email discussion list made by committee members is up and running. Invitation for others to be involved and sign onto list serve will be put into the newsletter. Committee report will be given at the 2006 business meeting.

### By-Laws / Electronic Mailing of Newsletter

- Morlock reported that there is nothing in the by-laws addressing electronic mailing of the newsletter. One comment was received by members about electronic mailing; comment was regarding large file downloading with dial-up modems. Discussion went over lower resolution pictures, keeping overall file size in mind, and using pdf to reduce newsletter size. Flanders-Wanner volunteered to contact the Wyoming Chapter on how they handle file sizes and if they have had any downloading problems. Board suggested that the members need to be notified to contact the Board if they experience any problems downloading the pdf newsletter. Flanders-Wanner motioned to provide the newsletter in electronic format as standard mailing method after the 2006 meeting, Jensen second. Motion passed (5-0).
- Board also discussed the announcement list serve. Options discussed included a mediated list, un-moderated lists, using BCC's, and commercial options. Board decided to have the Secretary/Treasurer send announcements to the members using BCC's, with the authority to send given by approval of President or by assigned delegate of the President.

### Farm Bill

- Morlock talked with Kurt Foreman, Paul Coughlin, & Bill Smith about Farm Bill issues. From that discussion, recommendation was for Chapter to not do anything at this time, but they will stay on top of

issue and let Chapter know if there is something it can do.

#### Conservation Coalition

- Coalition has been quiet recently, went through some new leadership, and is being revived. Chapter President will be on any Coalition distribution/information lists.

#### **New Business**

##### Website Update

- List of things to make sure to have updated was made; list includes meeting information, minutes, and room reservation reminders.

##### Requests for Funding

- Jensen brought a request from the Student Chapter who are looking to send three students to Anchorage for 2006 TWS conference. Griffin made a motion to send \$500 to the “SDSU Student Chapter” to attend the conference, Flanders-Wanner second. Motion passed (5-0).

##### 2006 Meeting

- Awards nominations will be handled through BCC’s.
- Two candidates have been identified for each open position. Presentations are filling up; enough open presentations have been received already. Banquet speaker has not yet been identified, however. Life member certificates need to be addressed, Griffin volunteered. Registration for meals was set at \$9 for lunch and dinner at \$12 to match state rates. Last year’s meal choices were examined and choices were made for the 2006 conference. Choices were made to match expected needs for this year.

##### Newsletter Deadline

Deadline set for January 20, 2006, will allow newsletter to be ready for printing by January 24. Newsletter must be received by 1<sup>st</sup> week in February due to elections materials. Topics identified for newsletter were: meeting agenda with free 1<sup>st</sup> lunch notification, room reservation deadline, electronic newsletter information, and ballot info.

##### Board Duties

Board identified the need to define specific duties for each position. Board members will take draft duties made by Morlock home and provide specific inputs at next meeting.

##### Next Board Meeting

The next board meeting was set for March 5<sup>th</sup> (Sunday) at 6pm Central at Cedar Shore, Oacoma, SD. Jensen moved to adjourn, seconded by Hubers. Motion passed (5-0). Meeting adjourned at 2:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Art Smith  
Secretary/Treasurer, SDTWS

# **Minutes of the March 5, 2006 Executive Board Meeting of the South Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society**

President Will Morlock recognized a quorum & called the meeting to order at 6:15 PM at Cedar Shore, Oacoma, South Dakota. Board members present were Bridgette Flanders-Wanner, Steve Griffin, Will Morlock, Laura Hubers, K.C. Jensen, & Art Smith.

Smith presented minutes of the January 2006 board meeting. Two minor spelling corrections were noted. Jensen motioned to accept, Hubers seconded. Motion passed (5-0). Smith then presented the Treasurer's report. The performance of the CD and Life memberships were discussed. Griffin motioned to accept the report, Flanders-Wanner seconded. Motion passed (5-0).

## **Old Business**

### Correspondence Sent

•Arctic Drilling & Loan Act - Morlock reported that only Senator Johnson's office responded to a letter sent to all congressional delegates not to allow oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the Loan Act proposal. Morlock had discussed the lack of responses by Senator Thune's office and was told by a staffer that Senator Thune does not respond to these types of letters. All three delegates signed onto the Loan Act.

### By-laws and Electronic Mailing

Group discussed individuals who are still getting newsletters hardcopy. Suggestion was to send them a note asking them for their email – perhaps do this before June?

### Conservation Coalition

Morlock reported that University of South Dakota law professor John Davidson was keeping the Conservation Coalition active. More information on the group is being distributed, most of it informational although occasionally SDTWS is asked to sign-on a letter.

### Board Duties

Morlock received some input to Board member duties. This is a work in progress. When Past-president, Morlock will take this project to finalization, and will ask some select past officers to help.

## **New Business**

### Website Update

Morlock will make sure award and other information will get forwarded to Charlie.

### Requests for Funding

- Eagle Days, March 26, Sand Lake. \$75-160 for tabletop displays, \$300 to sponsor a speaker. Hubers motioned to give \$200 with no direction on how it is to be spent, Jensen seconded. Motion passed (5-0).
- Annual TWS Conference. Group thought that best support of conference is sponsoring student travel, which Board addressed at last meeting. Group agreed to send a letter to national indicating how we are supporting the conference.
- MAFWA – May 15-18, Aberdeen, seeking \$500 to sponsor a break/meal. Group discussed this is a

state agency supported endeavor, should not have SDTWS sponsorship. Hubers motioned \$0, seconded by Flanders-Wanner. Motion passed (5-0).

- Sage and Sharp-tailed Grouse biennial meeting, June, Spearfish, seeking \$900 - \$1,300. Hubers motioned \$0, seconded by Flanders-Wanner. Motion passed (5-0).

### 2006 Meeting

Several topics such as registration, paper presentations, ballots, sponsorships, recognition of sponsors, and the agenda were discussed.

### National Awards

- Student Chapter – group decided SDSU Student Chapter should be nominated as National TWS Student Chapter. Jensen will write-up and give to President to send.
- Section Professional and Citizen awards – President will submit both SDTWS award recipients to the Section.
- Fellows Award – group decided it was too late for this year’s award, but would be readied for 2007.
- McDonough Award – Jensen will find Certified Wildlife Biologists, group will look at the list on Wednesday.

### Additional Items

- Grouse survey - Pete Bauman had contacted the Chapter looking for help in surveying grouse. The South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks Department (SDGFP) is setting up routes. Group suggestion was to contact Andy Lindbloom and Tom Kirschenmann (both SDGFP).
  - Northern Great Plains Working Group – Group advises congress on farm bill issues. SDTWS is missing on their membership roster. Decision was to ask Paul Coughlin or Bill Smith (SDGFP Farm Bill rep) for council on how to get membership. Flanders-Wanner will take lead on this.
- Jensen moved to adjourn, seconded by Hubers. Motion passed (5-0). Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Board then met after the Annual Meeting, March 8, 2006. President Bridgette Flanders-Wanner recognized a quorum & called the meeting to order at 1:20 PM at Cedar Shore, Oacoma, South Dakota. Board members present were Will Morlock, Kurt Foreman, KC Jensen, Tony Kirschenmann, and Art Smith.

Jensen made a motion to buy-back the raffle gun for next year’s meeting, Morlock seconded. Motion passed (5-0).

Board then discussed locations for next year’s meeting. Morlock motioned Cedar Shore as the venue, seconded by Forman. Motion passed (5-0). Timing was proposed to be 5-7 March, 2007, depending on spring break for South Dakota State University and other state colleges.

### Next Board Meeting

The next board meeting was set for June 7<sup>th</sup> at an undetermined time and location in Huron. Morlock moved to adjourn, seconded by Kirschenmann. Motion passed (5-0). Meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Art Smith  
Secretary/Treasurer, SDTWS

**South Dakota Chapter of the Wildlife Society Annual Meeting**  
**March 7, 2006**  
**Cedar Shore Hotel & Convention Center, Oacoma South Dakota**

Chapter President Will Morlock called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m. at the Cedar Shore Convention Center in Oacoma, South Dakota. President Morlock recognized a quorum was present and recognized Ron Schauer as the meeting parliamentarian. Secretary Art Smith presented the minutes of the 2005 annual meeting. Mary Clawson moved the minutes be approved as presented; second by Steve Griffin. Motion passed. Smith presented the Chapter's 2005 annual financial report. John Kanta moved to approve the report as presented; second by Laura Hubers. Motion passed.

**Old Business**

Nominations and Elections – Bridgette Flanders-Wanner

Bridgette Flanders-Wanner presented the list of candidates for President-elect and Board Member. Candidates were:

President-elect: Cara Staab, Kurt Forman

Board Member: Chuck Dieter, Tom Kirschenmann

Morlock called for nominations from the floor. With no further nominations, Rick Halseth moved to cease nominations; second by Ron Fowler. Motion passed & the election was conducted. Dennie Mann moved to accept the candidates & destroy the ballots, second by Larry Barden. Election results were presented at the completion of Old Business.

President-elect: Kurt Forman

Board Member: Tom Kirschenmann

Audit – Steve Griffin

Griffin reported that the Chapter's 2005 financial books were in order. Paul Mammenga motioned to approve the report; second by Chuck Dieter. Motion passed.

Awards – Nora Kohlenburg

Three total nominations were received for the Professional and Citizen's awards. These awards recipients will be forwarded to the CMPS Section for their awards competition. Awards for 'Best Student Presentation' and 'Best Presentation' were again procured and will be presented in an effort to recognize outstanding presentations at the SDTWS meeting. The Master of Science student award nominations were received and will be presented.

Conservation Review – Paul Coughlin

This committee was not tasked with anything specific this past year from the Board or Chapter members. The Committee did follow federal conservation easements tax bill. This bill is still in the House, and has tax incentives this time around. The Committee is also keeping an eye on the proposed NEPA overhaul. This overhaul is desired by some on the House Committee and the Administration. The Committee is also looking at funding rural schools with federal lands sale proposals.

Education and Information – Laura Hubers

The development of an endangered species educational trunk for students by the USFWS was reported.

Membership – Chad Switzer

Switzer reported that 34 invitational letters were sent out to organizations and individuals prior to the meeting. Three new life members were gained in 2005.

Program – Bridgette Flanders-Wanner

Flanders-Wanner thanked all those who helped with program content. Flanders-Wanner thanked professors, students, & professional for presenting.

Resolutions – Dan Hubbard

No resolutions received. Resolutions need sponsorship from two members to be submitted for consideration by the chapter. Several ads were run in the newsletter with no response. Hubbard suggested Committee Chairs submit resolutions. Formatting will be taken care of by the Resolutions Committee.

Arrangements – Steve Griffin & Cliff Stone

Griffin reported that centrally located Cedar Shore venue is helping make a higher meeting attendance. This is an appropriate venue and returning is easier. Cliff Stone acquired the services of Jensen/Houska as auctioneer for the SDTWS annual auction & fundraiser.

Book Service – Bob Klaver

No report.

Certification – Pat Russel

Received one application for Certified Wildlife Biologist. For anyone interested, Committee has applications materials and criteria.

Chapter History – Cara Staab

Committee met one time during the year, went through archives. Committee is still unclear on how to get information on archives, need to meet with former Committee Chair, Ron Fowler.

Wildlife Disease – Teresa Zimmerman

This is a new Committee with Steve Griffin and Krysten Schuler the other members. Committee goals of: facilitate disease information; facilitate cooperation between agencies and non-governmental organizations on wildlife disease; enhance professional knowledge; increase public knowledge; and increase undergrad knowledge on wildlife disease have been identified.

Fee Hunting and Ownership of Wildlife – Andy Lindbloom

Last year's commercialization of wildlife idea was brought to the Committee. Current Chapter resolution was published in the newsletter, questioning if it is needed to be revised. One comment was received. Will address Chapter desires in New Business.

Fish and Wildlife Diversity Funding Initiative – Eileen Dowd-Stukel

State Wildlife Grants information was summarized. Committee is currently making a state wildlife resources coalition list. Goal of the list is to identify 100 groups with similar interests; list is 30 short of that goal.

Non-game and Endangered Species – Eileen Dowd-Stukel

800 people attended the Annual Bald Eagle Awareness Days. Work on the birding trails guides (two of four completed) was noted. State Threatened and Endangered list was updated this past year. Missouri River endangered species work with SDGFP continues, information on this can be found on the Wildlife Diversity web page. Species updates were given on bald eagles, Black Hills mountain snail, American dippers, black-footed ferrets, Wyoming wolf, freshwater mussels, and Dakota skipper.

Fund-raising – Tom Kirschenmann

Kirschenmann thanked Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, UAP Timberland, the Rocky Mountains Elk Foundation and members who donated items. He also thanked members who participated in the raffle & auction. The live auction brought \$2,300, which was down just a bit from last year.

Grassland Issues – Eddie Childers

No Report.

Missouri River Issues – Vacant

No Report.

Newsletter – Greg Pavelka

The February newsletter was sent out, 170 copies, 90 electronically (55%). We are always looking for contributions to the newsletter.

Public Land Management – Dennis Mann, Tom LeFaive, Mary Clawson

Mann reported on a partnership project with U.S. Forest Service in the Black Hills eco-region thinning trees and elk habitat projects funded through WHIP. Black Hills are in their sixth year of drought, water is extremely important.

LeFaive requested that the SDGFP develop a policy statement with other agencies input for uniformed focus on wildlife management for the state. Federal agencies often are bogged-down with paperwork and federal regulations.

Clawson reported on habitat enhancement with burning in the Prairie Coteau through the Nature Conservancy and other organizations and agencies and on the fire learning network. Work is being done on grant applications to work private lands.

Resource Activism – Chuck Dieter

This Committee did not do much past work, but last year the mountain lion lawsuit was very prominent. Other issues this past year were protests of the BNP foothold trapping; Gov. Rounds sent a letter to People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) addressing their contact about anti-rodeo, anti-research, anti-hunting on wildlife staff. Dieter reported that anti-fishing/hunting propaganda are being sent to schools across the nation, also that Sioux Falls was labeled as the most anti-vegan friendly.

Tribal Fish and Wildlife – Diane Mann-Klager

No report.

Wetlands – Kurt Forman

Wetlands Loan Act was introduced to the U.S. House of Representatives November 14, 2005. This Act will accelerate duck stamp habitat acquisitions, also will protect wetlands. Act has \$4 million loan with future increases on duck stamps. There were 76 sponsors in the House of Representatives, complete support from State Governor's Association, the International Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies, and many non-government organizations.

Wetlands and Waterbirds Recognition Honor Roll – John Koerner, Ken Higgins

No report.

South Dakota State University (SDSU) Student Chapter Report – Emily Lorenzen

Chapter activities were reported on. Activities included: Waubay 123, Earth Day at the Great Plains Zoo, proctored a natural resources test with South Dakota and Minnesota Future Farmers of America, wood duck nest monitoring, 57<sup>th</sup> annual Buffalo Banquet, 2<sup>nd</sup> annual fire training, starting a storm-spotting class at SDSU for the public, 20 student members (9 undergrads) attended the National Wildlife

Society meeting in Wisconsin, same number of undergrads looking to attend Anchorage. October 20<sup>th</sup> in Brookings will be the 58<sup>th</sup> Buffalo Banquet, Thompson center fire rifle being auctioned, drawing 5/1 to fund the Anchorage trip, Chapter wanting to participate in the student Quiz Bowl, SDSU clothing sales to fund student Chapter club.

President Morlock called for other old business.

Mike Williams (Ike's) spoke about meandering lakes/public waters issue. Public's use on these areas, especially next to private lands, spurs commercialization of wildlife.

### New Business

CMPS Section Representative Report – Bridgette Flanders-Wanner for Tom Ryder  
Changes in the TWS publications, their availability electronically were presented.

### Wind Power in South Dakota – Alyssa Kiesow

Kiesow reported the group met this past August and January. Group objectives were developed in August. Strategies and actions items were developed in January. 2006 workshop with Minnesota and North Dakota on wind power was being considered, would include agencies along with The Wildlife Society.

### Approval of New Members – Chad Switzer

Thirty new members (15 students) were read. Tom Turnow motioned to accept the new members, second by K.C. Jensen. Motion passed.

### 2007 Annual Meeting

Dennie Mann recommended Chamberlain again; John Kanta motioned to leave location to Executive Board, seconded by Mann. Motion passed.

### Additional New Business

- Commercialization of Wildlife – Lindbloom. Modifications of existing resolutions is a Board decision. Will gather member input over the next year.
- TWS Strategic Planning – Art Smith. Smith reported on the reason for and progress made by the Strategic Planning Committee. He also suggested to all present that when the time came for Chapter or general membership comments on the planning process.
- Punch Podoll spoke to the group about the sales of public lands. He suggested that maybe this is the right time to introduce the public land's market value to its users. Grazing fees are well below any market value, even below walk-in-access fees. If agencies/Chapter members approach legislative leaders on the concept, more money could easily be raised without selling public land. Morlock suggested the Board could write a letter to South Dakota Congressional leaders. Greg Pavelka indicated that Representative Hersheth sits on a House Committee that originated the public lands sale bill.

### Transfer of Gavel

Morlock transferred the gavel to president-elect Bridgette Flanders-Wanner. Flanders-Wanner presented Morlock with a plaque and thanked him for his service to the chapter over the past year. She then summarized the accomplishments over the past year (wildlife public policy, e-mail newsletter, and others).

Koleen Colbeck moved to adjourn, second by Corey Huxoll. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Art Smith, Secretary/Treasurer

# Committee Reports

## Chapter History Committee

2005 Activities Summary: The Chapter History Committee met on June 10, 2005. This was the first time the new committee members had met, so Art Smith briefed us on what the committee is responsible for. We sifted through several boxes of historical documents, getting familiar with the content, organizing the information, and throwing out papers that weren't required by the bylaws or didn't have historical significance. During early winter, we reviewed the file of position statements and resolutions to determine if the web site is current and all-inclusive. We determined that there are documents missing from the web page, and would like to know if there is a list of criteria for determining which documents should be posted on the internet.

Corey Huxoll and Cara Staab, Co-Chairs

## Conservation Review Committee

Over the past year the Conservation Review Committee was not specifically tasked by the Executive Board to review any legislative proposals, administrative regulations, Environmental Impact Statements, Environmental Assessments or other subjects relevant to the Committee's duties as outlined in the Chapter Bylaws. Further, Chapter members brought no specific issues to the attention of the Committee. However, the Committee continues to monitor several issues.

**Conservation Easements:** On November 17, 2005 a tax bill containing a new tax incentive for conservation easements, reasonable reform affecting appraisals of donated property, and new rules for easements on historic structures passed the U.S. Senate. As of February 14<sup>th</sup> the Tax relief Act of 2005 was still being considered by a House-Senate conference committee.

The tax bill included a significant expansion of the deductions available to landowners that donate a conservation easement to a land trust. This was much more relief than the earlier Joint Committee on Taxation proposal that would have eliminated tax deductions for conservation easements. The Senate bill also included some much-needed appraisal reforms, but fortunately does not contain unreasonable restrictions on conservation easements. Further, the Senate bill does not include any new limitations on the size or composition of conservation easements or any new requirements for entities accepting easements.

The bill provides for extending the carry-forward period for tax deductions from five to fifteen years and raising the cap on conservation deductions from 30 percent of a donor's income to 50 percent and to 100 percent for farmers and ranchers. The bill also includes a tightening of the rules on appraisers and appraisals of all donated property, including conservation lands and easements.

The story is far from over however, as the House counterpart of this bill does not include all the same conservation incentives, and getting the House to accept the Senate provision will not be easy. A final decision could be made in the near future.

**NEPA Overhaul:** The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) has been the subject of frequent debate over the last decade or so, giving rise to several attempts to change it legislatively through amendments on other bills and to restrict its scope and application, or streamline its procedures, through regulation. The chairman and ranking member of the House Committee on Resources, Representative Richard Pombo (R-California) and Representative Nick Rahall (D-West Virginia), appointed 20 members to a bipartisan Task Force on Improving the National Environmental Policy Act. The mandate of the task force is to ensure that the original intent of NEPA is being fulfilled. They spent several months holding hearing, and seeking public input directly from the interested and affected parties to understand the current impacts of NEPA.

In December the task force issued an Initial Findings and Draft Recommendations report. The report concluded that NEPA is a valid and functional law, but that there are elements of NEPA that are causing enough uncertainty to warrant modest improvements and modifications to both the statute and its regulations and that doing nothing would be a disservice to all stakeholders who participate in the NEPA process. This initial report represents the next step in developing a set of measures that will update the statute to ensure that NEPA is meeting its goal. The draft recommendations are aimed at beginning a conversation on specific elements of NEPA worthy of updating. Whether NEPA needs to be fixed or not is still a matter of debate.

**Secure Rural Schools Land Sales Initiative:** As much as 800,000 acres of Americans' public land would be sold into private ownership under a provision of President Bush's proposed 2007 budget. Bipartisan opposition in Congress defeated a similar scheme less than two months ago.

Though many details of President Bush's 2007 budget are still murky, some are clear. Among the cuts to public lands programs there is a proposal to begin selling off our public lands, as an amendment to the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000. It's not a new idea. Just two months ago, Rep. Richard Pombo included in a budget reconciliation bill a provision to sell off millions of acres of land to mining interests and developers. The measure passed the House, but unified opposition from conservationists, hunters, anglers, local elected officials, businesses, governors and Democratic and Republican Senators alike killed it. Similar coalitions have blocked other such extreme proposals, including one in which Representative Pombo actually identified units of the National Park System to sell.

In all, over 300,000 acres of National Forest could be sold in 35 states. The Administration has already identified the forest lands it will sell, and has given the Bureau of Land Management a sales quota, and it will identify sales tracts as it completes its land use plans. To meet the Administration's sales quota, BLM might need to sell as many as half a million additional acres.

The Administration has depicted these land sales as small, isolated, and of no particular public value or consequence. So why sell public lands? There's no good reason but there is a formal excuse: to raise money to help fund rural roads and schools. Nobody doubts the federal obligation to help local governments pay for such things, but the help should continue to come, as it currently does, from the general treasury.

Senator Tim Johnson, said "This Forest Service plan results in a one-time windfall of \$800 million but does not address the long-term and structural problems facing localities with large tracts of public lands. Our schools are in desperate need of funding, but this just seems like slapping a Band-Aid on the problem." [Associated Press, 2/21/06] Further, Senator John Thune said, "Funding our rural schools is very important, but it would be inappropriate to do so by selling parts of the Black Hills," [Associated Press 2/21/06] In South Dakota, 13,961 acres of Black Hills National Forest have been identified for sale.

Currently, the Forest Service is seeking comments from interested individuals and organizations on the list of National Forest System land parcels to be sold for the purpose of funding payments to Secure Rural Schools (SRS). The sale of these parcels is contingent upon amendment of the SRS as proposed by the President. Comments can be submitted up until March 30, 2006 to be assured of consideration.

Paul Coughlin, Chair

### **Fish and Wildlife Diversity Funding Initiative (Teaming with Wildlife) Committee**

South Dakota Teaming with Wildlife Coalition Doubles in Size: Teaming with Wildlife is a national coalition of more than 3,000 groups working to prevent wildlife from becoming endangered. The coalition supports increased funding for wildlife conservation and associated recreation and education in every

state. The Teaming with Wildlife Coalition includes biologists, state wildlife agencies, conservationists, hunters, anglers, trappers, birdwatchers, nature-based businesses, and many others who support the goal of restoring and conserving our nation's wildlife. This grass-roots campaign starts at the state level. South Dakota recently doubled its Teaming with Wildlife coalition and is on its way to meeting a goal of at least 100 South Dakota organizations or businesses by this fall. The South Dakota Chapter of TWS was one of the first groups to join the state's Teaming coalition.

Five years ago, at the urging of the Teaming with Wildlife Coalition, Congress and the President chose to invest in wildlife and natural areas by creating the State Wildlife Grants Program. This program provides federal funding to every state for conservation aimed at preventing wildlife from becoming endangered. Gale Norton, former Secretary of the Interior Department, recognized the State Wildlife Grants Program as "our nation's primary conservation program for keeping species healthy and off the list of threatened and endangered species." South Dakota has received \$3.6 million to date from this funding source. State accomplishments are highlighted in this article: <http://www.sdgifp.info/Wildlife/Diversity/wcrp.pdf>.

The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies recently completed a nationwide summary called "State Wildlife Grants Five-Year Accomplishment Report," which can be viewed at this site: [http://www.teaming.com/pdf/SWG\\_Report.pdf](http://www.teaming.com/pdf/SWG_Report.pdf). The U.S. Congress is currently debating funding for this year's State Wildlife Grants Program. At the time of this newsletter's printing, the U.S. Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee voted to provide level funding at \$67.5 million for the State Wildlife Grants Program in FY07. This is an increase from the \$50 million suggested last month by the U.S. House of Representatives, but still falls short of the \$74.7 million in the President's budget and the \$85 million supported by 226 members of Congress. A final figure will be determined in a House/Senate conference.

To make the best use of funds provided through the State Wildlife Grants Program, Congress charged each state and territory with developing a statewide wildlife action plan. These proactive plans will help conserve wildlife and vital natural areas before they become more rare and costly to protect. View the South Dakota Wildlife Action Plan at this site: [http://www.sdgifp.info/Wildlife/Diversity/Comp\\_Plan.htm](http://www.sdgifp.info/Wildlife/Diversity/Comp_Plan.htm).

The Teaming with Wildlife Coalition is now building momentum to ensure state wildlife agencies and their conservation partners have the funding they need to fully implement their state wildlife action plans. Visit South Dakota's Teaming with Wildlife website (<http://www.sdgifp.info/Wildlife/Diversity/teaming.htm>) to learn how your organization or business can join the coalition and keep South Dakota the kind of place where both people and wildlife find the clean water and air and healthy landscapes they need to thrive. For more information on South Dakota's Teaming with Wildlife Coalition, contact Eileen Dowd Stukel at [eileen.dowdstukel@state.sd.us](mailto:eileen.dowdstukel@state.sd.us) or 605-773-4229. We still need 41 members to meet our goal of 100 South Dakota Teaming members.

Eileen Dowd-Stukel, Chair

### **Membership Committee Report**

One new Lifetime Member (that I am aware of): Warren Jackson of Egan, South Dakota

Invitation letters for the annual meeting were mailed to the following: Badlands National Park, Bearlodge Ranger District, Regional Director of BIA, Wildlife Department of BIA, COE Big Bend Project, Black Hills National Forest, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, SD Ornithologists, Buffalo Gap National Grasslands, COE Gavins Point Project, Ft. Pierre National Grasslands, Hell Canyon Ranger District, Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, Mystic Ranger District, ND Wetlands Habitat Office, Northern Hills Ranger District, Northern Prairies Land Trust, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, COE Oahe Project, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, SD

Izaak Walton League, SD Conservation Officers Association, SD Coop Fish & Wildlife Research Unit, SD Department of Environment and Natural Resources, SD Game, Fish & Parks, Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, The Nature Conservancy, Fall River Ranger District, Wind Cave National Park, SD Department of Agriculture.

Submitted by: Chad Switzer, Chairperson

### **Public Lands Committee**

2005 Summary: Partnership projects with U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) on improving elk habitat on both public and private lands in the Black Hills Eco-Region. Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) grant was written for elk habitat in the Black Hills on private lands. Nine contracts were approved for pine thinning operations, water and spring development, meadow enhancement, and fencing. Twenty three applications were received totaling more than \$350,000 in request for funding through NRCS. Application has been made for 2006 WHIP funding at the same level as 2005. Southern Hills Elk Partnership with private landowners, the Rocky Mountains Elk Foundation, and the USFS.

Dennie Mann & Tom LaFaive, Co-Chairs

### **Wildlife Diseases Committee**

South Dakota Game Fish and Parks (SDGFP) has found ten cases of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) (eight deer, two elk) and Wind Cave National Park has found four cases of CWD (four elk) in free ranging animals in the testing period of July 1, 2005 to present. To date, South Dakota has found 47 cases of CWD (32 deer and 15 elk) in free ranging deer and elk since testing began in 1997-1998. Wind Cave National Park accounts for sixteen of these animals (eight elk, eight deer). There have been no confirmed cases of CWD in Shannon County.

Continued ground monitoring by SDGFP, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and OSPRA have not indicated movement of plague out of the west central Shannon, eastern Fall River, and southeastern Custer counties. Windshield monitoring routes over prairie dog colonies surrounding the outbreak sites continues to be run weekly. Opportunistic sampling of carnivores/predators will continue for the foreseeable future. The Badlands National Park area continues to be free of sylvatic plague in coyotes sampled by Badlands National Park Personnel. Additional sampling of carnivores/predators by Bad River Ranches has not turned-up any additional plague-exposed animals. The study on the efficacy of last September/August's application of insecticide in the Conata Basin has started with an expected completion date of October 1, 2006. Efforts to acquire additional funds for a second dusting effort for the Conata Basin have been initiated; however it is too early to know if the funds will be received. Furthermore, there is continued evidence of tularemia and canine distemper in the Badlands National Park area from the spring sampling carnivore sampling indicating that these two diseases are, and may continue to be, prevalent in the Badlands area.

Officials from the SDGFP and USDA-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service-Wildlife Services are gearing up to start sampling for avian influenza in the next few weeks. The goal of the two agencies is to each sample 1,000 birds by the end of 2006. South Dakota is a Level 1 state in the Central Flyway Surveillance Plan because of the large number of birds coming through the state. The Plan was drafted at the Central Flyway meeting in March and is modeled after the Pacific Flyway Plan. According to Spencer Vaa, state Waterfowl Biologist, 880 waterfowl and 120 shorebirds will be targeted by SDGFP personnel for testing.

Submitted by Teresa J. Zimmerman, chairperson

## The Wildlife Society—Leadership Institute

The Wildlife Society has established a Leadership Institute to address the coming shortage of leaders in the wildlife profession; over 75% of the leaders in the wildlife profession will retire in the next decade.

The mission of the Leadership Institute is to cultivate the next generation of promising individuals to lead TWS and the wildlife profession into the future. The pilot program is funded by a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and matching funds from TWS' endowment fund.

"Three out of four of today's state and federal agency leaders will retire within the next decade," says Dr. Michael Hutchins, TWS Executive Director/CEO. "We need young, savvy professionals ready to step into the big shoes that current leaders will leave behind. The institute is designed to enhance leadership knowledge and skills - and groom leaders to help resolve the many conservation and management challenges that lie ahead. As the wildlife profession's leading membership association, The Wildlife Society has a responsibility to prepare its members to meet this urgent need."

Ten early-career professionals been selected to participate in The Wildlife Society's groundbreaking Leadership Institute. The institute is geared toward young professionals who are two to three years out of school, currently working in wildlife management or conservation, and active members of The Wildlife Society. The eight women and two men selected to participate in the 2006 Leadership Institute are:

- **Bridgette Flanders-Wanner, Wildlife Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, South Dakota**
- **Silka Kempema, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, South Dakota**
- Jordana Kirby, Wildlife Specialist, USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services, Kentucky
- Michael Larson, Wildlife Research Scientist, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- Katie Moriarty, Biological Science Technician, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California
- Emily Munter, Fish and Wildlife District Manager, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
- Sheldon Owen, Wildlife Disease Biologist, USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services, South Carolina
- Erin Patrick, Wildlife Biologist/GIS Specialist, Oklahoma National Guard
- Raquel Wertsbaugh, Private Land Wildlife Biologist, Colorado Watershed Network
- Lori Williams, Wildlife Biologist, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission

These individuals will participate in a variety of distance learning and hands-on projects, which will culminate in intensive mentoring activities and leadership workshops at the 2006 TWS Annual Conference in Anchorage, Alaska. TWS chose the participants based on their commitment to and involvement in TWS, excellent academic record, leadership potential as indicated by professional and personal activities, and commitment to the wildlife and natural resources field. Participants will be tracked in coming years in order to assess the program's success.

The institute's instructional team consists of co-chair Dr. Michael Morrison, Caesar Kleberg Chair in Wildlife Ecology, Texas A&M University; co-chair Cherrie Nolden, student, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Tom Decker, Biologist, Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department; Gary Potts, Dis-

trict Wildlife Biologist, Illinois Department of Natural Resources; Dr. Paul Krausman, Associate Director, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, University of Arizona; Tony Mong, Research Specialist, Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences Department, University of Missouri; Tarla Peterson, Boone and Crockett Wildlife and Conservation Policy Chair, Texas A&M; Dr. John Organ, Chief, Division of Federal Aid, USFWS Region 5, Massachusetts, and Laura Bies, Associate Director of Government Affairs, The Wildlife Society.

Look for ongoing news about the WIN Leadership Institute on the TWS website and in “The Wildlifer”. For more information on the WIN Leadership Institute, contact Laura Bies, Associate Director of Government Affairs, at 301-897-9770 (ext. 202) or [laura@wildlife.org](mailto:laura@wildlife.org).

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## Awards



South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks Department Secretary John Cooper (center) was the recipient of the 2006 SDTWS Professional Award. Presenting the award to Mr. Cooper were Eileen Dowd-Stuckel (left) and Paul Coughlin (right).



Charles Rokusek (right) was the recipient of the 2006 SDTWS Citizen Award. Presenting the award to Mr. Rokusek was Ron Schauer (left).



Mark Norton (left) was the recipient of the 2006 SDTWS Master of Science Student Award Presenting the award to Mark was Will Morlock (right).



Cara Staab (left) and Andy Gabbert (right) recently became lifetime members of the South Chapter of the Wildlife Society. If you are interested in becoming a lifetime member, please see below.

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## South Dakota Chapter of the Wildlife Society Lifetime Membership Dues

Tired of writing a check every year to renew your membership in the South Dakota Chapter of the Wildlife Society? Then consider becoming a life member! Dues are prorated by age and can be seen in the column to the right.

Join the other Life Members in the SDTWS and help the Chapter maintain a long term funding source. If you are interested in becoming a Life Member, visit the web site at [www.sdwildlife.org](http://www.sdwildlife.org) and look under the membership section for information or contact Chad Switzer at 605-353-6699.

Age 20 to 35: 25 x annual dues  
\$10 x 25 = \$250

Age 36 to 45: 20 x annual dues  
\$10 x 20 = \$200

Age 46 to 65: 17.5 x annual dues  
\$10 x 17.5 = \$175

Age 66 to 75: 12.5 x annual dues  
\$10 x 12.5 = \$125

Age 76 and over: Free

## **South Dakota Chapter TWS - Executive Board**

### **President**

Bridgette Flanders-Wanner  
Huron WMD  
200 Fourth Street SW  
Huron SD 57350  
phone 605-352-5894 ext 14

### **Past-President**

Will Morlock  
SD Game, Fish & Parks  
400 West Kemp Ave.  
Watertown SD 57201  
phone: 605-882-5200

### **President-Elect**

Kurt Forman  
419 Hunters Ridge  
Brookings SD 57006  
Phone: 605-692-8359

### **Secretary-Treasurer**

Arthur Smith  
SD Game, Fish & Parks  
523 East Capitol  
Pierre SD 57501  
phone: 605-773-7595

### **Board Member**

Tom Kirschenmann  
SD Game, Fish & Parks  
895 Third Street SW  
Huron SD 57350  
phone 605-353-8477

### **Board Member**

K.C. Jensen  
Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries  
Sciences NPB 138D  
PO Box 2140B  
South Dakota State University  
Brookings SD 57007  
phone: 605-688-4781

## **South Dakota Chapter TWS - Standing Committees**

**Audit** - Steve Griffin, Chairperson, 394-2391

**Awards** - Nora Kohlenberg, Chairperson, 773-4675

**Conservation Review** - Paul Coughlin, Chairperson, 773-4194

**Education and Information** - Laura Hubers, Chairperson, 947-4521

**Membership** - Chad Switzer, Chairperson, 605-353-6699

**Program** - Bridgette Flanders-Wanner, Chairperson, 352-5894

**Nominations and Elections** - Bridgette Flanders-Wanner, Chairperson, 352-5894

**Resolutions and Public Statements** - Dan Hubbard, Chairperson, 688-4780

## **South Dakota Chapter TWS - Special Committees**

**Arrangements** - Cliff Stone 734-4530 & Steve Griffin 394-2391, Co-Chairs

**Book Service** - Bob Klaver, Chairperson, 594-6067

**Certification** - Pat Russel, Chairperson, 226-7587

**Chapter History** - Cara Staab 673-9347 & Corey Huxoll 773-41953, Co-Chairs

**Fee Hunting and Ownership of Wildlife** - Andy Lindbloom, Chairperson

**Fish & Wildlife Diversity Funding Initiative** - Eileen Dowd Stukel, Chairperson, 773-4229

**Fund Raising** - Tom Kirshenmann, Chairperson - 352-1874

**Grassland Issues** - Eddie Childers, 433-5263 & Boyd Shulz, 697-6041, Co-Chairs

**Missouri River Issues** - Vacant

**Newsletter** - Greg Pavelka, Editor, 402-667-2581

**Nongame/Endangered Species** - Eileen Dowd Stukel, Chairperson, 773-4229

**Private & Public Land Management** - Dennis Mann 394-2391 & Tom LeFaive 223-2316, Co-Chairs

**Resource Activism** - Chuck Dieter, Chairperson, 688-4555

**Tribal Fish & Wildlife** - Diane Mann-Klager, Chairperson, 226-7621

**Wetlands** - Kurt Forman, Chairperson, 692-8359

**Wetlands and Waterbirds Recognition Honor Roll** - John Koerner & Ken Higgins, 688-6121

**Wildlife Diseases** - Teresa Zimmerman 433-5378 & Steve Griffin 394-2391.

**Wind Turbines** - Alyssa Kiesow, Chairperson, 605-773-2742

If you have an announcement, information item, or committee activity report that should be included in the next edition of *A Prairie Voice*, or if your address has changed, send the information to: Greg Pavelka at the Gavins Point Project, PO Box 710 Yankton SD 57078, or call 402-667-2581, or fax the information in at 402-667-2588.

**SOUTH DAKOTA CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY**  
Application for Membership/Renewal

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (Indicate Home or Work) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, please include my e-mail address in the SDTWS List Serve (a one-way, non-conversational list serve used on an infrequent basis solely to inform members about important conservation issues and legislation.

Yes, please use my e-mail address to send me the SDTWS newsletter electronically in place of mailing me my newsletter.

Please Check One:  New Member       2006 Dues Renewal

Employer \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sponsor's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Send the completed application/renewal form and a check for \$10.00 (regular), \$6.00 (student) to: Art Smith, South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks, 523 East Capitol, Pierre SD 57501

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Art Smith  
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523 East Capitol  
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