

THE ARIZONA WILDLIFER

2016 Issue 2

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Spring Edition

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EXECUTIVE BOARD

President: Scott Sprague
(623) 236-7252 ssprague@azgfd.gov

President-Elect: Kay Nicholson
(480) 967-1343 knicholson@logansimpson.com

Treasurer: Dana Warnecke
(480) 324-3547 dwarnecke@azgfd.gov

Recording Secretary: Mike Sorum
(480) 299-7526 Hosssdoc007@yahoo.com

Corresponding Secretary: Ryan Revells
(623) 547-9882 rarevells@gmail.com

Board Member: Tiffany Sprague
(623) 670-0750 tasprague@gmail.com

Board Member: Holly Hicks
(623) 236-7499 hhicks@azgfd.gov

Newsletter Editor: Kay Nicholson

The President's Message

Greetings and salutations.

Before I start rambling about the exciting things on the horizon for our chapter, I'd like to take a moment to recognize the extraordinary contributions of some of our outgoing and current board members. Melanie Culver did an outstanding job at the helm over the last year. The 49th Joint Annual Meeting (JAM) ended up exceeding all attendance expectations and despite several challenges along the way, everything fell into place and came off as a grand success. That is no small feat, particularly when you consider that this was Melanie's first exposure to JAM planning, and her president-elect (me) was somewhat distracted by coordinating a deer capture for that same week. She had assistance from a host of dedicated and talented committee chairs and volunteers, but without her leadership none of it would have come together. And so thankfully she has agreed to continue in an active role as past-president and I look forward to her participation and guidance with chapter business.



Our chapter treasurer Dana Warnecke also played a critical role in the planning and successful execution of the JAM and chapter business for the year. Thankfully Dana is only halfway through her term as treasurer, so we remain in good fiscal hands for at least another year. As the Recording Secretary and Newsletter Editor, Kay Nicholson has done an amazing job of keeping us on task, so I'm excited that she is now our president-elect.

I could easily take up this entire message singing the praises of the board members, committee chairs, and volunteers that I've gotten to work with over the past year. However since our chapter is approaching some rather significant milestones, I did want to at

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Presidents Message cont...

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least touch on a few other things before I run out of space.

One thing that I would like to start getting folks excited about is our next JAM. The AZ/NM AFS chapter is slated to host the 50th Joint Annual Meeting in 2017. Chapter officers are already discussing how to make it a special event. One idea that's come up is to provide a platform for past presidents and longtime members to reflect on the history and current state of wildlife science and management. So if you feel like sharing your perspective on where we've been or where we're headed, or if you have some thoughts on how to make the 50th JAM standout, please don't hesitate to email me (ssprague@azgfd.gov).

In the fall of 2017, our JAM partners and Southwest Section colleagues NMTWS will host the National TWS meeting in Albuquerque, NM. With a national meeting being held so close, AZTWS is hoping to have a strong representation. I encourage everyone to attend, especially if you haven't been able to make it to a national meeting before.

And the celebrations won't end with 2017. In 2018 our chapter will be celebrating its 50th anniversary. Yup, you read that right, our chapter doesn't turn 50 until the year after the 50th Joint annual Meeting. I spent a little time researching the history and doing the math and it all made perfect sense to me for about 20 minutes. Really it just comes down to the fact that the first JAM was held in year zero (1968 if you're following the Gregorian calendar) when the AZTWS and NMTWS chapters were formed, and so 49 years later we'll be having our 50th meeting. Anyhow, whether I've succeeded in adding clarity or further obfuscation, the important thing is that we're soliciting ideas on how to celebrate our gold anniversary.

Shifting gears from long-term to short-term, our always popular and sometimes meteorologically-challenged Wildlife Techniques Workshop just took place the weekend of April 22nd – 24th. As always, it was a blast, and the

Regional News:

Highlights from SW Section Representative

By: Fidel Hernandez



Hello Fellow Chapter and SW Section Members of TWS,

February and March found me quite busy traveling throughout the US. Over these past few months, I had the opportunity to attend the Annual Conferences of the various TWS State Chapters within the Southwest Section. I must say what a positive experience.

Being from Texas, I have attended annually the annual conference in my home state, but I had never attended the Joint Annual Conference of the Arizona-New Mexico Chapters of TWS. I was quite impressed, to say the least. Attendance was excellent and the plenary, Who Will Manage the Future of Our Public Lands, was outstanding. In addition to learning of wildlife issues in other parts of the Southwest, I was able to connect with colleagues that I hadn't seen in quite some time as well as meet new people. I sincerely enjoyed these conferences and look forward to next year's annual meetings.

I also recently returned from our TWS Council meetings (13–14 March 2016) being held during the 81st North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. This was my first full-session of Council meetings as the Southwest Section representative. I cherish this valuable experience of learning more and more of the interworking of TWS and representing Southwest Section issues to our parent society.

So, it has been a busy but an enjoyable time. Following is a concise overview of the latest happenings with our parent society as well as some of its upcoming events.

2016 TWS Council Candidates

Each year, positions on TWS Council become vacant as people complete their terms. The Nominating Committee has announced its candidates for upcoming

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Presidents Message cont...

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weather actually held up beautifully this year. Before I wrap this up so you can get on to the more interesting newsletter articles, I feel like I need to make a pledge-drive-like plug (cue the Sarah McLachlan music). Our membership number is down substantially from years past. We need your \$6 (yes it did go up) to ensure that we can continue to do things like promote the science of wildlife management and provide student scholarships. That's right, for less than the cost of just one Chestnut Praline Latte, you can help us continue the fight for science. That's just 1.65 cents/day; unfortunately we are not able to take payment in installments. Joining is easy to do online though: <https://aztws.com/membership/>. Also, tell your friends (and colleagues). We need their support too.

Enjoy the articles in this issue of the newsletter and if you're interested in reading past issues, or in learning more about the Arizona Chapter, check out the ever improving website at <http://aztws.com>. Also, please consider submitting an article to the newsletter. If you have suggestions regarding improving any aspect of the Arizona Chapter of the Wildlife Society, I welcome your comments. Please email me at ssprague@azgfd.gov.

Scott Sprague
AZTWS Chapter President

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/AZTWS>

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“There is nothing more practical than the preservation of beauty”

~ Theodore Roosevelt

Regional News cont...

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ing vacancies on TWS Council. Here are the candidates:

Vice President Nominees

- Gordon R. Batcheller (Northeast Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies)
- Darren A. Miller (Weyerhaeuser Company – Southern Timber Technologies)

Western Section Representative Nominees

- Cynthia Graves Perrine (Self-employed)
- Kent Smith (State of California and Sierra Nevada Conservancy)

Northwest Section Representative Nominees

- Harriet Allen (Retired, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife)
- Dana Sanchez (Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Oregon State University)

North Central Section Representative Nominees

- Patrick E. Lederle (Michigan Department of Natural Resources)
- John J. Moriarty (Three Rivers Park District)

A complete view of the candidates' statements can be found at the TWS website (<http://wildlife.org/2016-tws-council-candidates-announced/>). Electronic ballots will be sent on May 6 to all members with an email address (or mailed if you happen to use a mailing address instead). Voting will close June 5 so be sure to vote!

New TWS Staff

When the TWS financial downturn occurred a few years ago, several staff positions were eliminated and left unfilled. The Society has worked diligently over the past 5 years to greatly improve its financial condition, which it has done. So, TWS recently has begun to slowly fill staff positions in key areas. One of those key areas is the Directorate of Government Affairs and Partnership (GAP). Two recent hires joining GAP are Mr. Cameron Kovach as Assistant Director of Government Affairs and Partnerships and Ms. Caroline Murphy as a Government Affairs Associ-

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Regional News cont...

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ate. In addition, TWS has revised their GAP internship requirements based on member input, and these intern positions now focus on hiring wildlife biologists with policy interests (rather than policy folks with wildlife interest). Toward that end, TWS GAP hired 2 wildlife biologists, Lauren McDonald and Dani Dagan, to fill this year's internships.

Another important change at TWS is that the wildlife-biologist certification program now resides within the GAP Directorate. **I take the opportunity to let you know that if you are not a certified wildlife biologist but have an interest in becoming certified, one of the benefits of being a member of the Southwest Section is that the Section can help review your application prior to submission as well as help with application costs.**

Upcoming Annual Conference

Just a reminder that the 23rd Annual Conference will be held in Raleigh, North Carolina during October 15–19, 2016. If you are interested in submitting an abstract for a poster or presentation, the deadline for submission is **8 April 2016** at 11:59 pm CST. Abstracts that miss this deadline will not be considered. Please note that TWS allows only one contributed paper or poster per primary author. You may find more information about the submission process at <http://www.twsconference.org/call-for-contributed-papers-posters/>.

New SW Section Website

In closing, I'd like to mention that the Southwest Section has a new website! Many thanks to Mark Wallace, out-going President of the Southwest Section, for building this new website. Please visit our website (<http://swsectiontws.org>) for the latest information on the Southwest Section. We are always looking for events, news, and other happenings to include on our website so contact Mark (mwallace@ttacs.ttu.edu) if you have relevant information that you would like posted.

Well, that is it for now. Enjoy Spring and be sure to take some time this summer to relax.

Until next time,

Fidel Hernández

Fidel Hernández, Southwest Section Representative of TWS

Standing Invitation!

Submit your valued co-workers and partners for one of our Chapter Awards (see criteria at <http://aztws.com>, then click on "Awards"). Let's recognize our finest! Submit your nominations to our President-Elect, Kay Nicholson (knicholson@logansimpson.com).

Also: Please consider becoming active with the Chapter as an officer or board member. Again, contact Kay Nicholson (knicholson@logansimpson.com) to register your interest. We'd love to have you on our board!



We need articles, stories and pictures
for upcoming newsletters.

The Arizona Wildlifer Deadlines

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
Summer 2016	June 11, 2016
Fall 2016	Sept 16, 2016

Our Neck of The Woods...

The Public Lands Issue and What You Can Do To Be Involved

By Jon Hanna, Chairperson, Conservation Affairs Committee

In case you missed it in February, we had a great turnout at our 49th joint annual meeting with the Arizona, New Mexico Wildlife Society Chapters and the Arizona and New Mexico Chapters of the American Fisheries Society. Over 425 members were in attendance.

A recorded livestream, filmed by Susan Torres, Communications Director, New Mexico Wildlife Federation, can be viewed at this url - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eVPtvHwmRvI>

You can also read a summary of the plenary compiled by Dana Kobilinsky, on The Wildlife Society's web page, here <http://wildlife.org/plenary-at-tws-chapter-meeting-spotlights-public-lands-issue/> or contact her at dkobilinsky@wildlife.org with any questions or comments.

The meeting got off to a great start with an informative plenary session titled: *Who Will Manage the Future of Our Public Lands?* We had an impressive lineup of plenary speakers which included: Representative Brenda Barton (R-Payson), a member of the Arizona House of Representatives representing Arizona's 6th Legislative District; Lisa Atkins, Commissioner of the Arizona State Land Department, which manages over 9 million acres of Trust lands; County Supervisor Mandy Metzger, District 4 Supervisor of Coconino County and President of the Arizona County Supervisors Association; Steve Hattenbach, Regional Director of the USDA Forest Service, Southwestern Region which spans Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas, and manages over 20 million acres of National Forest System lands; Cyndi Tuell, Attorney at Law out of Tucson and a Southwest Conservation advocate; Todd Leahy, Director of Conservation for the New Mexico Wildlife Federation; and Senator Jennifer Fielder, Montana State Senator for District 7, and CEO of the American Lands Council.

Each speaker spent 20 minutes giving their perspective on the public lands issue. Representative Brenda Barton is the committee chair of House Bill 2658 that established the Transfer of Federal Lands Study Committee. The bill sponsors are Rep. Brenda Barton, Sen. Linda Gray, Rep. Bob Thorpe, Rep. Kelly Townsend, Russell Bowers, Rep. Thomas Shope, and Rep. Jeff Weninger.

Provisions of the bill require that the Committee:

- examine processes to transfer, manage and dispose of federal lands within Arizona
- conduct hearings to collect, evaluate and analyze information relating to federal lands in Arizona
- identify significant concerns and risks with solutions and goals.
- identify measures that will ensure that public lands in this state are managed responsibly and prudently

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Public Lands cont...

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- develop processes for Arizona to receive title to public lands from the federal government
- transfer title received from the federal government to the state
- investigate lawful mechanisms, including actions implemented in other states that may aid in achieving these goals
- submit a report regarding the Committee's activities, findings and recommendations to the Governor, the Legislature and the Secretary of the State prior to January 1, 2020

Commissioner Atkins, gave a thorough overview of the State Land Department. State Trust Land is distinguished from the public land such as parks or national forests because all uses of the land must benefit the Trust beneficiaries. State Trust lands use and management must be consistent with the "highest and best use doctrine" and demonstrate a cash value added.

County Supervisor Mandy Metzger gave a concise and informative presentation on the 2010 15,000-acre Schultz Fire near Flagstaff and how local user groups through collaboration were able to accomplish objectives on a large scale with local, state and federal governments' to resolve resource issues.

Forest Service Regional Director Steve Hattenbach summarized the history of Federal ownership and jurisdiction over USFS lands in the Southwest. Steve dispelled common misconceptions regarding Federal ownership and jurisdiction over National Forests. Practical issues and alternative mechanisms were provided to address common concerns behind a desire for more local control. Several examples of mechanisms for increased participation in land management were presented for consideration. Such as: collaborative forest restoration projects; Cooperating Agency under NEPA which maximizes coordination among federal, state, local and tribal government agencies; and coordination in the Forest Plan Revision and Project Level NEPA.

Attorney at Law Cyndi Tuell gave an overview of the constitutional authority to acquire, own, and manage federal lands; historical acquisitions of lands in the southwest; and summarized various theories that have been used to challenge Federal reservation and jurisdiction over public land and assert State right or ownership.

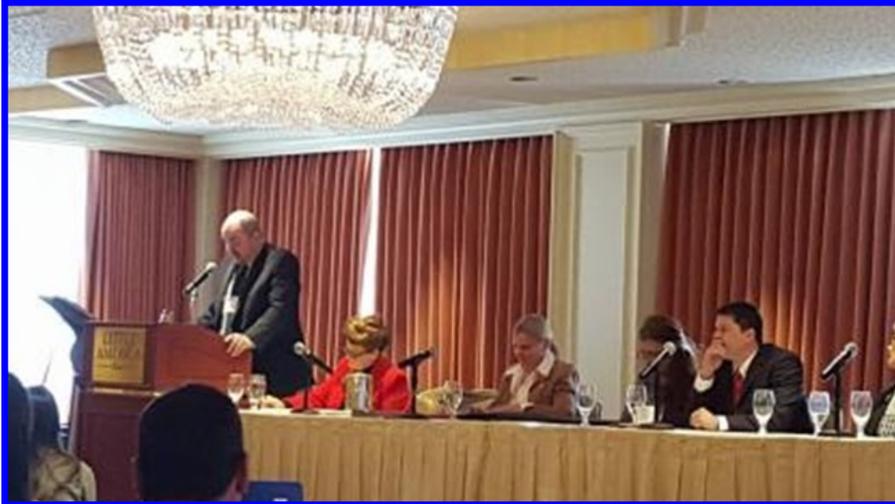
New Mexico Wildlife Federation, Director of Conservation, Todd Leahy spoke out for the conservation community and not only gave an overview of the legal aspects of federal land ownership, and state's right, but also the economics of recreational users on public lands. The outdoor recreation economy generates over \$646 billion annually, with 90 million people participate in hunting, fishing, or wildlife-watching — generating over \$144 billion in expenditures.

Senator Jennifer Fielder gave an overview of the American Lands Council (ALC). The ALC is advocating all over the Western United States for the transfer of public lands to state ownership. ALC has sponsored resolutions which have been passed for the transfer of public lands and has access to leaders from each state that will be able to help you with any further information and/or advocacy you'd like to help with to advance the transfer of public lands. The ALC urges the timely and orderly transfer of federal public land to willing states for local control that will provide better public access, better environmental health, and better economic productivity. The ALC supports equipping federal, state, and local

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Public Lands cont...

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Todd Leahy of the New Mexico Wildlife Federation was one of our featured speakers. Photo Credit: New Mexico Wildlife Federation (see more at: <http://www.ourpubliclands.org/#sthash.iWgmqAqu.dpuf>)

agencies with the resources necessary to plan for a successful transition to state-based ownership and management of the transferred public lands.

After the final presentation we went right into a QNA panel discussion with the speakers. Most of the questions were for Representative Barton over concerns for loss of public lands and access. Representative Barton reiterated that with state ownership, local control at the county level would be the best management strategy for timber, mining and grazing resources. This is also the theme of the ALC.

Although not all the details have been worked out, the take home message is that public lands converted to state ownership would be managed with a priority for the highest economic use, not multiple use. This would also include the selling of those lands as needed for the best economic return.

So what does this mean for wildlife professionals, or students and members of the Arizona or student chapter of The Wildlife Society? It means that if you want your professional career to continue, you need to become involved in some degree of activism to keep federal lands under public domain.

To look at the seriousness of this issue let's review some of the recent significant activities of the entities determined to 'take back' control of these public lands and transfer them to state ownership or sell outright.

- Utah has been leading the charge when it comes to state attempts to reclaim public lands. Rep. Ken Ivory sponsored the Transfer of Public Lands Act and Related Study, a bill that passed both the state House and Senate and was signed into law by Gov. Gary Herbert (R) in March 2012.
- March 2015 - U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski's (R-AK) amendment on a controversial proposal to sell off America's national forests and other public land passed by a vote of 51 to 49, and is now part of the Senate's nonbinding budget resolution. The proposal would support and fund state efforts — which many argue are unconstitutional — to seize and sell America's public lands. These include all national forests, wildlife refuges, wilderness areas, historic sites, and national monuments.
- July 2015 - U.S. Reps. Bob Bishop (R-Utah) and Chris Stewart (R-Utah) are giving the effort congressional support with the launch of the Federal Land Action Group, a new initiative aimed at developing a legislative framework for transferring public lands to local governments.

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Public Lands cont...

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- Legislatures in seven western states—Utah, Arizona, Wyoming, New Mexico, Colorado, Nevada, and Idaho—have passed, introduced, or explored legislation demanding that the federal government turn over millions of acres of federal public lands to the states.
- And most recently a legal consulting team hired by the state of Utah presented a recommendation to a Republican-dominated commission of Utah legislators to urge the governor and attorney general to sue the federal government to get state control over public land, even while warning it could cost up to **\$14 million**, take years to play out in the courts and saying it would be far from a sure victory.

Arizona professionals should focus on the advancement of House Bill 2658. Since its approval by the governor I have personally attended three meetings at the Senate on this bill. Most of the discussions during the meetings have been on the 'legality' of transferring public lands to state ownership, control of decisions at the county level, and increased logging.



There have been vague references to implementing state ownership of lands through a newly organized department such as an Arizona Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife, Parks, and Forestry. Also it was briefly discussed that the outcome of the committee would be to draft a referendum for the voters of Arizona to vote on transferring federal lands to the state. With the committee in place and with their agenda laid out for moving forward on this issue, you may ask, well what can I do about it?

The first step is to always know who your representatives to contact are. You can go to the Common Cause web site www.commoncause.org/take-action/find-elected-officials.

Just enter your address and you can you can find your elected officials, how to contact them, bills they've introduced, committees they serve on, and political contributions they've received.

“Click” and get involved. The National Wildlife Federation has a link with a message you can personalize to send to your members of Congress in support of fish, wildlife and our public lands, by simply entering your contact information. Here are some words you are welcome to use:

I write you today to join the voices of sportsmen and women across the country who value our public lands. I strongly oppose proposals aiming to transfer our public lands to the states or private interests.

The potential transfer of our public lands threatens vital habitat for wildlife and the ability to access these lands for hikers, hunters, anglers and outdoor enthusiasts.

Transferring public lands to states is costly and unpopular. Most importantly, it poses a threat to millions of acres of land that belong to all Americans.

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Public Lands cont...

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The states are not equipped to properly manage our public lands.

Please oppose any efforts seeking to transfer public lands. It's a gamble with our wildlife heritage and the long history of public lands that Americans enjoy.

Get on a list serve for public lands issues. My two favorites are through Our Public Lands <http://www.ourpubliclands.org/about> and the Center of Western Priorities <http://westernpriorities.org/>. Greg Zimmerman is the new contact for the public lands issues through the Center of Western Priorities; his contact information is greg@westernpriorities.org.



As Chairperson of the Arizona Chapter Conservation Affairs Committee, the public lands issue will be my focus in 2016, especially regarding House Bill 2658. So if you want to become involved in this committee, you can email me (Jon Hanna: moremuledeer@gmail.com) and I will add you to the list of chapter members that want to stay involved on this issue.

Meet the 2016 Arizona TWS Board Members!!

Scott Sprague, President

Scott Sprague is a Research Biologist/Road Ecologist for the Wildlife Contracts Branch of Arizona Game and Fish Department. Scott has been working for AGFD since 2002 when he was hired as a technician on the southwestern willow flycatcher project. He worked on various AGFD research projects before joining the Department's Highways and Wildlife Connectivity group in 2006. Since then he has been a part of numerous projects across the state that focus on the relationships between roads and elk, deer, bighorn sheep, and pronghorn. In 2010, Scott got his master's degree from NAU, where he studied the effects of roads on the genetic population structure of northern Arizona pronghorn.



2016 AZTWS Board Members cont...



Kay Nicholson, President-Elect

Kay received a BS in Animal Science from Oregon State University in 1996 and a MS in Environmental Resources from Arizona State University in 2003. For her MS thesis project, Kay studied small mammal abundance, distribution, and habitat selection at an urban-rural interface in northern Phoenix. She has been consulting since 2002 and is currently a senior wildlife biologist for Logan Simpson in their Tempe, Arizona office. She specializes in Endangered Species Act and National Environmental Policy Act compliance, is a qualified biologist for conducting airport wildlife hazard assessments, and works with a wide variety of species and project types. She enjoys working in the field and has volunteered with the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and the Arizona Bat Working Group on various special projects with species such as the desert tortoise, Mexican

gray wolf, black-footed ferret, southwestern willow flycatcher, and an array of bat species. In 2015, Kay began teaching a college-level introductory biology class to high school students at the Arizona Cultural Academy through the dual-enrollment program with South Mountain Community College. Kay has been a member of TWS since 2002. She previously served on the 2012 JAM planning committee, as AZTWS Recording Secretary, and as AZTWS Board Member-at-Large. She currently serves as AZTWS Recording Secretary, the 2016 JAM Program Layout committee chair, and AZTWS Newsletter Editor (since 2012).

Ryan Revells, Corresponding Secretary

Ryan Revells is a Physical Science Intern for the Bureau of Reclamation and a student in the Masters of Advanced Studies in Geographic Information Systems program at Arizona State University. He obtained his B.S. in Environmental and Resource Management at Arizona State University where his involvement with The Wildlife Society began through engagement with the Wildlife and Restoration Student Association. His experience in wildlife ecology and geographic information systems encourage his interest and activity in natural resource management.



2016 AZTWS Board Members cont...

Dana Warnecke, Treasurer

Dana has been with the Arizona Game and Fish Department 18 years, working for 3 years in the Fisheries Branch and 15 years with the Region VI Habitat Program. She is responsible for coordinating the review and evaluation of land and water development projects and represents the Department in negotiating and resolving habitat related conflicts and other resource issues; coordinating with various federal, state and local agencies; developing and implementing specific management strategies for wildlife habitat protection/compensation/mitigation; and conducting field investigations and research. Dana is the project manager for several ongoing conservation/restoration type projects within the Region including: the



Canyon Creek Riparian Restoration Project; two juniper thinning projects (6,000 acres- Sycamore Mesa Juniper Thinning Project & Agua Fria Antelope Habitat Improvement Project) in collaboration with the Bureau of Land Management and Prescott National Forest; and the Horseshoe Ranch Adaptive Restoration and Community Stewardship Project. Dana has been a member of the AZ-NM Chapter of the American Fisheries Society (AFS) and/or the AZ Chapter of the Wildlife Society throughout her career, last serving as Newsletter Editor for AFS. Dana enjoys fishing, camping, kayaking, and traveling in her off time. Also spending time teaching her grandsons an appreciation of the outdoors and wildlife conservation.



Michael Sorum, Recording Secretary

Mike earned a Bachelor of Science in Animal Science from Cal Poly State University and graduated as a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from Kansas State University. He also earned a Master of Veterinary Science in Conservation Medicine from the University of Edinburgh. He is a Diplomate with the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners in equine medicine and is Vice-President of the Arizona Veterinary Medical Association. Although he has worked with horses for over 30 years in private veterinary practice, he has been interested in wildlife conservation all his life. He currently volunteers at the Liberty Wildlife Rehabilitation Foundation in their Medical Division. Last year, he served as the Chairman of the Continuing Education Committee for The Wildlife Society, Arizona Chapter.

2016 AZTWS Board Members cont...

Tiffany Sprague, Board Member 2015—2016

Tiffany's goal in life is simple: she wants to save the world. She discovered early on that such an ideological feat cannot be accomplished on her own, which is why she has devoted her life to not only protecting our natural world but also to educating and inspiring others to do the same. It is also why she has sought to be engaged with groups such as the Arizona Chapter of The Wildlife Society (AZTWS).

Tiffany's background is in wildlife biology. She spent a number of years in the field, working with the National Park Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Arizona Army National Guard, and Northern Arizona University on a variety of wildlife and habitat restoration projects. Her primary field projects have focused on the Sonoran desert tortoise, endangered black-footed ferret, and various bat species. Since 2006, she has worked with the Grand Canyon (Arizona) Chapter of the Sierra Club, focusing on education and outreach regarding Arizona's environment. She continues her field work as a volunteer with a variety of organizations and species. She has also recently started pursuing her Master's degree, for which she will be assessing microhabitat use of northern Mexican gartersnakes.

She has been honored to serve as a board member for AZTWS for the past three years. She thoroughly enjoys reaching out to fellow professionals and students about the diversity of opportunities available to engage in wildlife-related work. More than that, though, she enjoys learning and growing from everyone involved with this organization. She very much looks forward to her continued involvement.



Holly Hicks, Board Member 2016—2017

Holly Hicks is the Small Mammals Biologist for the Arizona Game and Fish Department. She earned her Conservation Biology degree in 2008 at Arizona State University. Holly's work entails management of Gunnison's prairie dogs, black-footed ferrets, and New Mexico meadow jumping mice, and re-establishment of black-tailed prairie dogs. She has dedicated the last 8 years to volunteering at Liberty Wildlife helping rehabilitate injured wildlife. In her free time, she enjoys the outdoors, running, and traveling. Holly has served on the board of The Wildlife Society in various roles since 2010. She is also the Chair for the annual Wildlife Techniques Workshop that is offered to students and young professionals. She looks forward to serving another term and continuing the great work that is accomplished by such an incredible organization.

Student Voice

2016 JAM Summaries

Yuma Student Chapter

By George Onwiler, Chapter President

In May 2015, the TWS Yuma Student Chapter was formed in a community that faces many socioeconomic challenges. As a result, wildlife and environmental issues historically have not been a priority to our students. We believe that's why our membership was initially low. But those original members have a passion for learning about wildlife and the environment so they took a leadership role, tirelessly working to maintain the chapter despite school, work, and family obligations. With the help of our advisors, Paula Rivadeneira of the University of Arizona and Cecilia Vigil of Arizona Western College, the chapter is rolling toward its one year anniversary!

During our first year we were able to send our president, George Onwiler, to the TWS Joint Annual Meeting (JAM) in Flagstaff, Arizona in February 2016. The importance of this cannot be overstated as he was able to make connections that have already led to a speaker for our most recent member meeting. Christopher Carrillo, District Supervisor for USDA/APHIS/WS, was able to provide our members with information about employment opportunities with his organization. George also learned new ways to help with fundraising, as well as ways to increase our exposure on campus.

The continuation of our chapter is incredibly important for college students in Yuma County. Our Yuma campus serves a highly disadvantaged population in an economically depressed region. Our students are geographically isolated and generally underrepresented: 75% of our students are minorities and 68% are Hispanic. More than half of our students are considered low income, and 66% of our students are the first generation in their families to attend college. Our community is severely economically distressed, with Yuma consistently having the highest unemployment rate (28%) in the nation (US: 6%; AZ: 8%). As a result, our students struggle to obtain positions in wildlife fields. As we begin our second year, increasing membership numbers to ensure continuation of the TWS Yuma Student Chapter is of the utmost importance. We want to give Yuma students who are interested in wildlife as many resources as possible to make their professional dreams come true. As our numbers grow, we plan to gain the resources necessary to send more of our members to JAM next year so they can experience the excitement, support, and opportunities that TWS offers its members.

Northern Arizona University Student Chapter

By Daniel Kimball, NAU Student

This was my first year attending the Joint Annual Meeting of the Wildlife Society and in my opinion it did not disappoint. It was such an amazing experience getting to meet professionals and non-professionals with the same interests and similar career goals. I thought it was exciting to talk with people about the projects they were/are working on and their hopes for future projects was very inspiring because I could hear the excitement in their voices. The passion that biologists have for their work

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Student Voice, cont...

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is unrivalled in other fields of study. Being someone who is interested in fish, it was a treat to learn that the meeting was also associated with the American Fisheries Society.

Attending a university in Arizona we typically focus on internships or jobs within our own state, but the Joint Annual Meeting has really opened my eyes to opportunities with other agencies. Hearing the opportunities for technician positions opening up later this year has made me very excited for graduation and aftermath. If I took nothing else away from the meeting, knowing that there are other agencies besides the Game & Fish Department that work with wildlife makes me optimistic about a career within the wildlife management field.

I enjoyed the fact that there was so much to do at the meeting, whether it was going to seminars, talking with professionals, interacting with other universities, the photo contest, listening to research presentations and reading their posters, or watching the quizbowl. I was thoroughly impressed with the amount of people that attended the event and the vast subjects that the seminars covered. The Joint Annual Meeting was my first professional conference I have been to, but it has made me excited to attend others in the future, especially when the national meeting comes to New Mexico.

Arizona State University Student Chapter

By Sky Arnett-Romero, ASU Student

This year's JAM highlighted the important and controversial public lands debate in the "Who Will Manage the Future of Our Public Lands?" plenary session. This session was packed with wildlife students, scientists, and managers, listening to an issue that has fueled many conflicts. The discussion touched on revenue generation, management, and the legal foundations of the argument. State Rep. Brenda Barton, chair of the Legislature's transfer of federal lands study committee started the discussion with her argument for the transfer. The session then continued with Katherine Davis, public lands campaigner for the Center for Biological Diversity, Coconino County Supervisor Mandy Metzger, Montana State Sen. Jennifer Fielder and U.S. Forest Service regional director Steve Hattenbach. It was highly informative and illuminating to have the full argument laid out by those who are supporting the transfer.

The conference continued with academic presentations of fisheries and wildlife centered on research, techniques, technology, and the growing impacts of climate change. Presentations from professionals and students both inspired and informed attendees on a range of topics. The poster session became quite cramped, with perhaps too much wildlife intrigue and information for one hallway to bear.

ASU also had great luck this year, taking the quiz bowl and some great raffle winnings. The quiz bowl competition last year was fierce, this year it came down to ASU against New Mexico State again in the final round. Sitting on the hot seat, holding the buzzer, that last round seemed like it lasted for hours. It was an honor to compete, and I couldn't be more proud that we brought home the traveling trophy.

Now after the JAM, our student chapter is looking ahead, the discussion of public lands sparked a fire

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Student Voice, cont...

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for more student involvement in that and other wildlife related conflicts. The quiz bowl fostered stronger connections between WRSA and other student chapters. We hope to continue these connections to increase student involvement and attendance for events in AZ and NM! This was the first JAM for a few WRSA members, these poor students are now hooked and excited for the upcoming 2017 JAM and 24th Annual TWS Conference.



Third Annual JAM Quiz Bowl Winners
ASU Polytechnic!



Sarah Hale and John Koprowski

Student Paper and Poster Winners

The JAM includes a student competition for Best Student Poster and for Best Student Paper, both of which are evaluated by a panel of distinguished judges. Undergraduate and graduate students are eligible from both states and their presentations are judged under six major categories; organization, audience involvement, delivery, knowledge of subject, use of visuals, and content. Students from Arizona and New Mexico chapters of TWS compete together. Prizes were awarded to the first place (\$250) and second place (\$150) winners of the Best Student Paper competition and to first place (\$100) for the Best Student Poster competition. This year's winners were:

Best Paper Competition, First Place: Sarah Hale, University of Arizona

Best Paper Competition, Second Place: Sean Mahoney, Northern Arizona University

Best Poster Competition, First Place: Karla Vargas, University of Arizona

2015 AZTWS Chapter Awards

Doug Morrison Award

The Doug Morrison Award is given in memory of Doug Morrison to an Arizona Biologist in a non-supervisory position who has made significant contributions to the management and conservation of wildlife in Arizona. This Award exemplifies the dedicated work ethic of the Chapter's former President and U.S. Forest Service Biologist, Doug Morrison. Contributions are in areas of wildlife research, education and training, management, or law enforcement.

This year, the Doug Morrison Award was presented to Abigail King of the Arizona Game and Fish Department's Amphibians and Reptiles Program. Her primary focus over the years has been Chiricahua leopard frog (CLF) recovery. She was responsible for establishing the first CLF metapopulations in the Chiricahuas since frogs were extirpated there some 30 years ago, orchestrating several habitat restoration projects to achieve that goal; and organizing functioning CLF metapopulations in the Dragoons and Galiuros. After years of attempts, Abi finally succeeded in establishing a breeding population of CLF in the White Mountains. She has also worked hard to reestablish Tarahumara frogs in the Santa Ritas. Most recently, Abi organized the return of Tarahumara frogs to Sycamore Canyon, where they had not been seen since 1974.



Abigail King

Professional Service Award

The Professional Service Award is given to an Arizona biologist for outstanding contributions to management and conservation of wildlife. This individual is also recognized for their professional work standards and conduct. Contributions are in the areas of wildlife research, education and training, management, conservation, or law enforcement.



David Brown

This year, the Professional Service Award was presented to David Brown. David is currently on the faculty at Arizona State University in the School of Life Sciences, but previously he worked for the Arizona Game and Fish Department as a Wildlife Manager in the Tucson Region, and as the Statewide Small Game Supervisor in Phoenix. David is one of the foremost naturalists and experts on wildlife and their habitats in the American Southwest and Mexico, and beyond. David was given this award because of his more than 60 years of professional contributions to our better understanding and appreciation of the biological world and our biological "sliding scale syndrome". David always looks at the present by first starting with the past. He has become an expert on countless species of mammal and birds in Arizona and the habitats they once depended on. Few people have the depth of knowledge of the species as well as the plants and habitat types that they occupy and depend on, as David does. He has authored and co-authored many scientific publications, but the more important con-

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tributions to Southwest wildlife have been his documentation of declining trends in wildlife distribution and numbers.

Conservation Award

The Conservation Award is given to a person, or persons, not employed directly as a wildlife biologist, or an organization not directly involved in wildlife management who contribute significantly to the conservation of wildlife and/or their habitat in Arizona. Conservation can include, but is not limited to research, education, legislation, and protection or enhancement of wildlife and their habitat.

This year's Conservation Award was presented to Christina McVie. Christina has been a lifelong conservationist in Tucson, Pima County, and southeastern Arizona. She has been involved in local and regional land use planning and conservation efforts in southeast Arizona since 1996. Christina co-founded the non-profit organization Desert Watch. She mapped and helped to establish the Pima County Silverbell Mountain Park, which later became the Ironwood Forest National Monument. She co-founded the Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection, a leading conservation organization comprised of national, regional, local and neighborhood organizations, and has been the Chair of the CSDP Advisory Committee since 2005. She was a steering committee member and science contributor to the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan. Christina was on the Pima County Multi-Species Conservation Plan Implementation Committee. She supported the formation of the Arizona Wildlife Linkages Working Group and participated in county-level Wildlife Linkage Workshops in Pima and Pinal counties. Christina was a Pima County Conservation Bond Advisory Committee Member. She has been the Conservation Chair for the Tucson Audubon Society since 2005. She has participated in the Pima Association of Government's Regional Transportation Authority Wildlife Linkages Working Group since 2006. Christina is a Desert Landscape Conservation Cooperative Landscape Conservation Plan Design Working Group Member and co-author of the San Pedro Watershed DLCC LCD Pilot Proposal. In addition, she makes quite the contribution in keeping local/regional conservation planning initiatives current with the evolving 'best available science' as she frequently attends, at her own expense, regional and national professional science-based conferences always with the awareness of how that information can be shared and applied back home.



Christina McVie and Scott Sprague

Scrapping Bear Award

The recipient of the Scrapping Bear Award has gone beyond the normal call of duty in support of wildlife issues and has made exceptional contributions toward the management and protection of wildlife and habitat resources AND the recipient has stood up for what they thought was right, even if it was controversial or perceived as contrary to their agency's official position, supervisor's positions, or had the potential to put the recipients job on the line.

This year's Scrapping Bear Award was presented to Ray Schweinsburg, a Contracts Supervisor with the Arizona Game and Fish Department. Among the many projects that he supervised over the years,

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Ray Schweinsburg being presented with the Scrapping Bear Award by Scott Sprague

Ray took a particular interest in habitat connectivity. Ray collaborated with a team of biologists focused on efforts of wildlife connectivity and wildlife-vehicle collision reduction. Some of the projects Ray was involved with included the world renowned State Route 260 wildlife crossings and US Highway 93 bighorn sheep overpasses. Ray also played a major role in collaborating on the Arizona Wildlife Linkages project, a document that has embedded itself in planning across Arizona and provided an opportunity to bring folks to the table to talk connectivity. Ray always fights hard for the best possible solution for wildlife, which in many cases has been met with resistance or even ridicule. Undaunted, Ray pushes forward with wildlife concerns at the forefront and on many occasions succeeds. Many states and countries look to Arizona as a model of successful collaboration in wildlife connectivity. Ray definitely earned some enemies and non-supporters along the way but without his efforts wildlife connectivity in Arizona would not have reached the level that it is today and for that he has gained respect.

Roger Hungerford Award

The Roger Hungerford Award is given to a student who, while attending an Arizona college or university, made significant contributions to the management and conservation of Arizona's wildlife and/or habitat. Contributions are in the areas of wildlife research, education and training, management, conservation, or law enforcement. The Award is given in memory of one of Arizona's finest research biologists, Roger Hungerford.

Jonathan Derbridge was the recipient of this year's Roger Hungerford Award. Jonathan has established himself as a talented, hardworking, and motivated doctoral student who has worked extraordinarily hard to engage with agencies in his research, has been active in the national TWS, and has been productive with his research. He truly possesses a passion for learning and a strong desire to 'really' understand the topic at hand. His motivation is always a genuine enthusiasm for a topic and such enthusiasm is so very refreshing. This true interest in knowledge for the sake of knowledge typifies Jonathan's approach to most anything that he attempts. Jonathan possesses well-developed written and oral communication skills, has strong quantitative and analytical abilities, and has mature critical thinking skills. He has continued to hone these skills and put them on display through about 10 presentations at AZTWS, National TWS and the International Wildlife Management Congress. Jonathan's most important quality is his tenacious work ethic, which served him well as he undertook a challenging yet important research project.



John Koprowski with Jonathan Derbridge

Volunteer Opportunities With Liberty Wildlife

Liberty Wildlife has some volunteer opportunities for students during the summer. They are a full service rehabilitation center that deals with a variety of wildlife species yearly, although the vast majority of their census is avian. Liberty Wildlife deals with this very large volume of animals by dividing their volunteer work force into departments – Daily Care, Orphan Care, Medical Services, Research and Conservation, Education, and Administrative work.

The volunteers in the Orphan Care area help thousands of small passerines that have been orphaned due to loss of their parent, nest destruction, falling out of the nest, or attacks by cats/dogs or other issues. These volunteers care for the babies from 7 am to 6 pm, using 4 hour shifts, including 7–11am, 11am–3pm and 3–7pm. They have a great group of people from all walks of life on their team. Babies from as small as hummingbirds that may be fed every 15 minutes, to others, such as doves, sparrows, finches, towhees, curve-billed thrashers, cactus wrens, starlings, grackles, verdins and any other species that needs help. Liberty Wildlife uses various foods for the babies, from soaked softened cat food to insects, fruit and tube food for the doves. Seeing them reach the final step in the process - released back to the wild gives a feeling of accomplishment!

Daily Care volunteers are in charge of cleaning enclosures, feeding and watering patients, and making sure the facility is in working order. Many of the patients are resting and recuperating from injury or illness. Birds in the flight cages are building muscle and endurance for their eventual release. In the spring and summer, foster parents tend to large broods of orphans. Daily Care volunteers work in all areas of the facility during the morning and the evening. The evening team specifically cares for the rehab owls. Volunteers must be able to bend, lift at least 20 pounds, and stand/or work on their feet for 4 hours. All volunteers must be a minimum of 18 years old and all tetanus vaccines must be up to date. Training is completed on the job.

Soon Liberty will be moving to a new facility. With that there will be a few odd jobs of helping with some final touches, including repair and construction type projects. Volunteers for these odd jobs will not need to commit to a specific shift, but rather will depend on whether you are available at the time it is scheduled to be done. This will mostly happen on a weekend day.



Liberty Wildlife

Rehabilitation | Education | Conservation