



The Alaskan Wildlifer

Newsletter of the Alaska Chapter of
The Wildlife Society

February 2010



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- *Meet your New Executive Board members*

Message from outgoing President Howard Golden

Annual Meeting

We had a great Annual Meeting this year in Anchorage. I was extremely impressed with the quality of the oral and poster papers that were presented. Many participants in the conference expressed similar opinions and appreciation. Thanks to all presenters for your time and efforts to present your work so well! There was a very good showing by students with 20 attending and several presenting papers or posters.

I particularly want to thank the organizing committee of Kevin White, Kris Hundertmark, Liz Solomon, Tom Lohuis, Thomas McDonough, Nancy Fresco, and Todd Rinaldi. They rose to the occasion, despite the shorter time-line to prepare because of the schedule change from April to February. I hope this change in timing worked for our membership. I realize there were at least a couple of competing conferences going on, and we'll strive to minimize those conflicts in the future.

We tried out a new website to help us manage registration and abstract submission, and I hope you found it to be reasonably easy to use and convenient. Liz Solomon worked very hard to get it up and running smoothly and to address any issues that arose quickly. Please let Liz or me know if you have any comments on your experience with the website and any ideas you may have for improvement.

Executive Board Election Results

TWS helped us a lot this year by setting up our ballot and voting process for new Executive Board members. Please let me know if you had any difficulties casting your vote.

The following new Executive Board for 2010-2012 was chosen:

President-Elect: **Jerry Hupp**
Secretary-Treasurer: **Todd Rinaldi**
Southeast Representative: **Deb Rudis**
Southcentral Representative: **Chris Kaplan**
Northern Representative: **Steve Arthur**

Many thanks to all the candidates for running and congratulations to the new members of the 2010-2012 Executive Board!

Farewell and Thanks!

My term as your president has officially come to an end. The last two years certainly went by faster than I expected. Kris Hundertmark now takes over as President, Jerry Hupp assumes the role of President-Elect, and we have a new slate of Executive Board members (please see the contact list later in this newsletter). Kris will be in Poland on business through July. In the meantime, Jerry and I will work together to make the transition as smooth as possible.

I want to sincerely thank all the members of the Alaska Chapter for allowing me to represent you and for making my tenure as President an extremely rewarding, interesting, and humbling experience. My pride in being associated with this organization of outstanding wildlifera has grown tremendously. It's been a lot of fun to get to know more of you and to learn about the great work you're doing to benefit Alaska's wildlife and habitat.

I also want to thank all the Executive Board members for your devotion and service to the Chapter and for readily giving up your time to tackle important issues with excellent ideas and advice. I especially want to



thank Tom Paragi for his stalwart mentorship and advice, Jim Herriges for his terrific editorial skills and patience with late entries, and Liz Solomon for bringing the Chapter into the 21st century with our revised website and new web-based systems.

Thanks to you all – it's been a blast!

News from Southcentral:

By Todd Rinaldi, outgoing Southcentral Representative

The results of a survey entitled, “**Anchorage Residents’ Opinions on Bear and Moose Population Levels and Management Strategies,**” is now complete and available for review. The 267-page report sponsored by the Alaska Department of Fish & Game and compiled by Responsible Management Inc. of Virginia was designed to gauge how Anchorage residents view human-wildlife interactions in the urban interface. The survey was prompted by the number of bear incidents and maulings during 2008 and the ensuing management debate. The 1258 respondents were asked 70 questions regarding their opinions, attitudes, and experiences with potentially dangerous wildlife across 3 zones in the Municipality: west of Lake Otis; east of Lake Otis (including the Hillside); and the remaining outlying areas such as Chugiak, Eagle River, Bird Creek, and Girdwood. Responses to the survey questions reflected the demographic differences across the Municipality with respondents living in areas with regular wildlife encounters showing more tolerance towards bears and moose. Seventy percent of the respondents said they “strongly agree” that people who live in Anchorage should learn to live with some conflicts and problems with wildlife. The final report can be found at: www.wildlife.alaska.gov/aawildlife/bears/abc/moose_bear_report_2009.pdf

The **2010 Alaska Marine Science Symposium** took place in Anchorage on 18-22 January. The symposium, sponsored by over 19 agencies and institutions, showcased ocean research in the Arctic Ocean, Bering Sea, and the Gulf of Alaska. Senator Mark Begich provided opening remarks and keynote speakers across the 3 days included Carl Schooch, Kate Moran, Michael Beck, Rodger Harvey, and Mike Sigler. Materials from the symposium including abstracts are located at: <http://www.alaskamarinescience.org/past/2010.html>

The **2010 Alaska Forum on the Environment** was held in Anchorage on 8-12 February. Through 80 technical breakout sessions and four keynote events, the Forum focused on climate change, energy, environmental regulations, cleanup and remediation, fish and

wildlife, solid waste, and special programs for Alaskan youth.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is seeking comment on a **Bristol Bay Critical Habitat Areas Draft Management Plan** for five estuarine critical habitat areas (CHAs) located on the Alaska Peninsula (Egegik, Pilot Point, Cinder River, Port Heiden, and Port Moller). They were designated to protect natural habitat and game populations, especially waterfowl and shorebirds. The plan presents management goals for the CHAs and identifies policies to be used in determining which activities are compatible with the protection of fish and wildlife, their habitats, and public use of the CHAs. The proposed policies address issues such as access and use of resources. The draft plan is available for public review and comment through April 1 and is available at http://www.wildlife.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=refuge.bristol_bay_plan. Written comments may be submitted via e-mail at dfg.hab.specialarea@alaska.gov.

News from the North:

By Kyle Joly, outgoing Northern Representative

People

Tina Moran is the new Deputy Wildlife Refuge Manager at the Selawik NWR replacing **Patrick Snow**, who has moved on to the Yukon Delta NWR as Wildlife Refuge Specialist. In the next few months, the Selawik refuge will be advertising for a new GS 9/11 Wildlife Biologist through USAJOBS.

News

This March the ADFG, BLM, and USFWS biologists from Innoko NWR will be collaring about 50 moose between Holy Cross, Grayling, and Shageluk for a 3-4 year study to estimate movements and resource selection, improve estimates of twinning rate, and estimate visibility during population surveys in Game Management Unit 21E. USFWS hopes to be hiring additional biologists to the staff.

A study of short-eared owl migration was initiated in May by **Travis Booms (ADFG)** and **Jim Johnson and Steve Matsuoka (USFWS)** when fourteen owls were captured near Nome and fitted with satellite transmitters. Short-eared owls in North America are a species of conservation concern, as they have declined by an estimated 71% in the last 40 years and have been extirpated from several eastern states. Radio-marked owls are wintering in areas scattered from



Alberta to Mexico. Updated maps of locations are available for viewing at this website:
http://www.seaturtle.org/tracking/?project_id=419

No news submitted by Southeast Representative

Announcements

75th North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference, 22-27 March 2010, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
www.wildlifemanagementinstitute.org

Species Introductions and Re-introductions Symposium, 8-9 April, 2010, Starkville, Mississippi.
<http://www.cfr.msstate.edu/wildlife/symposium/index.html>

The International Polar Year Oslo Science Conference, 8-12 June 2010 in Oslo, Norway, includes a session on Polar Ecosystems and Biodiversity.
<http://www.apecs.is/events/oslo2010>

24th International Congress for Conservation Biology: Conservation for a Changing Planet, Edmonton, Alberta, 3-7 July 2010. <http://www.conbio.org>

The Wildlife Society's 17th Annual Conference, to be held in Snowbird, Utah, October 2-6, 2010. The deadline for submitting contributed papers and posters is March 19, 2010. <http://www.wildlifesociety.org/>

You can contribute!

Please make note of upcoming events, projects, personnel changes, issues, or anything of interest to other AK-TWS members, and pass them on to your regional representative by the 25th of October, January, April, or July.

And don't forget, our Newsletter and Chapter Website now have an [opinion page](#) specifically dedicated for the discussion of topics pertinent to AK-TWS.

Chapter considers input to HB 267-- Snowmachine access in Dalton Highway corridor

By AK Chapter Executive Board

Since the early 1970s there has been a five mile corridor closed to motorized vehicles (with exceptions for mining claims) on each side of the 414 mile Dalton Highway, which runs from Livengood to Prudhoe Bay. The 358 mile segment north of the Yukon River was also closed to hunting within the corridor and beyond for snowmachine travel that originated from the highway, with an exception for rural residents living within the corridor to use snowmachines for subsistence hunting on federal lands. House Bill 267 would remove restrictions to snowmachine travel from the highway between 1 October and 30 April. Hunting by use of snowmachine travel originating from the highway would require a separate action by the Alaska Board of Game to nullify the current prohibition.

If HB 267 is passed there is likely to be a substantial increase of snowmachine use in open terrain far beyond the corridor for hunting (primarily the Central Arctic caribou herd, which has grown substantially in recent years) and recreational travel in a unique area, particularly as spring snow conditions deteriorate further south along the road system. Our primary concern is the disturbance or displacement of Dall's sheep, moose, and muskox in treeless areas where suitable winter range is limited, particularly during periods of high energy deficit in late winter. Snowmachine traffic in mid to late April also has potential to inadvertently separate newly born muskox calves from their mothers.

Last month the previous Executive Board began reviewing drafts of a comment letter that outlines our concerns. So far there has been little action on the bill (which has 3 sponsors and will die this session if not passed), so the Executive Board of the Alaska Chapter TWS has held off finalizing the letter for distribution to members of the House of Representatives and the heads of land and wildlife management agencies. In 2006 the Alaska Chapter sent a letter in opposition to SB 85, which proposed to open the corridor to motorized vehicle use year round.



Take Action to Influence Wildlife Policy!

By Mary Kazantseva and Angela Whitney, TWS Government Affairs Staff

Comprehensive science-based legislation is critical to safeguarding our nation's wildlife and habitats. TWS' Government Affairs Program works on behalf of its members to give a voice to the views of wildlife professionals in the legislative and policy processes. But we can't do it without you!

To ensure a bright future for wildlife, it is key that management and conservation policy and legislation is based on science generated by wildlife professionals, such as members of The Wildlife Society! We have three great tools to help you get involved in wildlife policy, either at the federal or local level:

- 1) Check out the [Government Affairs Toolkit](#) available on TWS' website. It will give you an overview of the Government Affairs program, how you can write a letter to Congress, and other useful policy information.
- 2) See the more recent edition of [The Wildlifer](#), TWS' monthly e-newsletter, to 'Take Action' on issues ranging from climate legislation to migratory bird conservation.
- 3) Check your inbox for [Wildlife Policy News](#), which comes out every other month, to stay up-to-date on the latest policy initiatives.

We appreciate all of your efforts. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact Laura Bies, Director of Government Affairs, at laura@wildlife.org.

Message from NW Section Representative Ellen Campbell

I spent two long days in July with all other Council members reviewing and revising our Society strategic plan. When evaluating TWS activities, nearly all were deemed highly important: increasing our role in government contacts and partnerships; continuing to improve our publications; developing and actively promoting technical reviews and position statements; improving our web-based communications. The tasks are daunting but we have an outstanding staff at HQ. In light of the emphasis on government affairs and partnerships, Council approved a second staff position in this program area.

Even in these difficult financial times, TWS membership and conference attendance increased this past year, due mostly to the marketing skills of Darryl Walter. Because of our increased number of attendees, the 2010 conference at Snowbird UT will probably overwhelm the facility and be the last conference at a "resort-type" location. As you already know, Council approved Portland for the 2012 conference, which will be great for our Section. Many Council members remembered the outstanding support provided by the Oregon chapter when the conference was held there in 1995. Council selected Milwaukee for the 2013 conference. The Canadian chapter is eager to host a conference, and Council would very much like to support and encourage this newest chapter. However, we know that cross-border travel has become difficult for many government employees.

Council continues to discuss important issues such as unified membership, the requirement for CWBs and AWBs to be TWS members (as recently voted in a bylaws change), and the ability of current publications to meet member needs (in other words, should we resurrect the Wildlife Society Bulletin). Your thoughts are welcome.

Finally, I do not plan to run for a second term on Council. I have enjoyed participating in Council very much, and have learned a lot about the many facets of TWS, and how many people (including yourself) work very hard in order for TWS to function and be successful. My replacement will take office in fall 2010 but elections will be held in early summer. I have spoken to several Section members regarding their interest in running for office and have passed their names on to Section president Boywer. I urge you to consider serving TWS as a Section officer or Section Rep in future years.

Conference Student Presentation Award Winners

Best oral presentation (co-winners):
David Gustine
Aaron Shafer

Best poster presentation: **Karen Mager**

Thanks to the judging committee: Perry Barboza, Layne Adams, Jim Lawler, and Steve Arthur.



2010 AK Chapter Business Meeting Minutes

By Todd Rinaldi

The business meeting convened on 10 February at 12:30 pm. with past president Howard Golden presiding and approximately 50 members in attendance.

Old Business:

Major accomplishments since April 2009 - Howard Golden

- **ANWR Position Statement:** Adopted by TWS after modification to shorten it from six pages to two pages.
- **Annual Meeting Schedule Vote:** After a second vote, members approved changing the Annual Chapter Meeting from April to February. Mid-February, and specifically the second week, was identified as the week that members were most available, followed by mid-April and the latter half of October.

Discussion: Howard Golden solicited additional input regarding the new date, noting that they should work better for students. Perry Barboza commented that this meeting week was at the beginning of the semester so it worked well for students. Kevin White asked that there be more lead-time between the announcement of the meeting and the meeting date. Kyle Joly noted that the announcement went out before the holidays and may have been missed during that busy time of the year. Howard responded by noting that the short time frame was primarily due to the short turn around between the second vote on meeting dates and the new meeting date.

- **Conserving Our Wildlife Conservation Heritage (COWCH):** The contract with the UAF Oral History Program is now completed after 3 new interviews over the past year of John Morrison, Jim Reardon and Will Troyer.

- **National Wildlife Foundation Natural Resources Letter:** The Chapter was a co-signer on this letter, along with many professional societies and NGOs, to the Obama administration lauding President Obama's campaign commitment to safeguard wildlife and natural resources from the impacts of global warming.
- **New online website for conference registration:** The new system implemented for the first time for this conference is a test for the National Conferences. The system allows abstract submittal, notifications, registration, and utilizes PayPal. New user accounts had to be set up to use this new system. These were additional to existing TWS and PayPal accounts.

Discussion: Members noted problems with setting up new PayPal account when they had an existing account, frustration at needing an additional account, and confusion about conference registration username and password being different than those of their TWS memberships. Conference organizers appreciated the ease of managing abstracts among other benefits.

(The following item was an important chapter activity in the year, but inadvertently omitted from business meeting presentation.)

- **TWS Action on Member Privacy and Contact Lists:** The Alaska Chapter and Northwest Section drafted a joint letter to TWS President Tom Franklin expressing our concerns about the privacy and use of member contact information. TWS quickly responded and indicated that they had made progress in the following areas:
 - 1) Full access to member databases will be restricted to chapter and section officers and will include use and privacy considerations;
 - 2) Although TWS does sell its membership mailing list to interested vendors, they retain the right to refuse any vendors that are not relevant to the wildlife profession or which are antithetical to our core mission and values;



- 3) New programming is being written to allow individuals to opt out if they do not want, under any circumstances, to have their contact information distributed to any vendors.

- The committee requests any info from members on areas where domestic sheep, goats, or llamas are utilized (as pack animals or otherwise) in Dall's sheep or mountain goat ranges.

Treasurer's Report - Karyn Rode

• **Starting balances:**

- Checking \$7,780.86
- Savings \$6,163.79
- **TOTAL \$13,944.65**

• **Income: \$14,686.61**

• **Expenses: \$14,763.18**

• **Ending balances:**

- Checking \$7,704.29
- Savings \$6,163.79
- **TOTAL \$13,868.08**
- Net Change: -\$76.57

Donations

- **University of Tennessee TWS - \$100**, to distribute copies of North American Model of Wildlife Conservation DVDs
- **Tongass Science Workshop - \$500**
- **TWS National Conference in Monterey - \$300**

Student Chapter Report - Rachel Shively

- **20 active members**
- **Projects Accomplished**
 - Owl Surveys
 - Snow Track Survey
- **Upcoming Projects**
 - Bear Safety/Shotgun class
 - Moose Browse Surveys with Tom Seaton
 - Annual Game Dinner and Brew-off at the end of April.

Committee Reports

- **Pack Goat/Disease Risk Position Statement - Jim Herriges**
 - Jim Herriges stated that it is close to being done and that this is a good heads up to raise awareness of the potential risks in Alaska.

• **Ballot Initiatives Position Statement**

- Designed to revise existing ballot initiative statement by making it current and identifying how it has worked to date.
- Very close to being finished

• **Intensive Management Position Statement - Kyle Joly**

- Close to completion (6-8 weeks remaining).
- 1st draft finished

• **Legislative Affairs - Dave Yokel**

- Invasive Species
- Several to Alter Boundaries of Refuges and Game Areas
- Management of Lands for Wildlife (DNR)
- Game Management of Bison
- Bristol Bay Fisheries and Mining
- Public Safety for Game Management in Cities
- Elimination of Tags and Fees for Muskox
- Dalton Highway Corridor open to snowmobile use.

• **TWS National Review of Predator Control:**

- Draft document done

New Business

Election Results

President-Elect:

- **Jerry Hupp 42**

Secretary-Treasurer:

- **Todd Rinaldi 43**

Southeast Representative:

- **Deb Rudis 9**
- **Carl Koch 5**

Southcentral Representative:



- **Chris Kaplan** 14
- **David Battle** 5

Northern Representative:

- **Steve Arthur** 18
- **Kaiti Ott** 5

Jerry Hupp and Howard Golden will work together with President Kris Hundertmark to help with the transition until July when Kris returns from Poland.

Newsletter Editor

- Jim Herriges has resigned after 6 years and was presented with a gift card from the Executive Board to Beaver Sports for his invaluable contributions and hard work to make the newsletter what it has become.
- Cindi Jacobson of ADFG has enthusiastically agreed to be the new editor.

Comment Letter Regarding HB267

- Opening Dalton Highway Corridor to use by snowmobiles in winter.
- Tom Paragi, with assistance of EB, drafted a letter that addressed concerns.
- Members interested in commenting should contact Howard Golden or Tom Paragi.

Polar Bear Commentary

- Formed to counter misinformation in media by providing extensive scientific input on effects of climate change on polar bears.
- After Rick Steiner letter decided to wait on the Compass piece.

Committees to Revive

- **Nominations and Elections**
 - Without a committee, there is a large burden on the Executive Committee to find prospective candidates for Chapter President and Board seats.
 - Looking for members interested in reforming the committee.
- **Membership Committee**
 - Looking for members interested in helping with the current committee.

Presentation to Outgoing President - Todd Rinaldi

- For his tireless efforts and valuable contributions to the Chapter over the past 2 years the Executive Board presented Howard Golden with a commemorative plaque and a river otter tile mosaic from Nancy Hausle Johnson's studio in Fairbanks.

"My greatest challenge is to help bring conservationists, hunters, anglers, landowners, state and federal agencies, and business people together to help us conserve and enhance what makes America great – our treasured wildlife resources."

Sam Hamilton, Director of US Fish and Wildlife Service, who passed away in February 2010.

Meet your new Executive Board members.

Jerry Hupp is serving as President Elect. Jerry has a PhD from Colorado State University and is a Research Wildlife Biologist for the Alaska Science Center, USGS, in Anchorage. He's been in this position for the past 21 years, focusing on waterfowl ecology studies across the state. Jerry was Southcentral Representative in 1995 and served on committees to develop the 2003 Arctic Refuge position statement and make arrangements for the Anchorage TWS meeting in 2006.

Deborah Rudis is the new Southeast Representative. She has a M.S. from the University of Massachusetts and is an Environmental Contaminants Specialist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Juneau. Deb moved to Alaska three months before the Exxon Valdez oil spill and now works primarily on contaminant issues in the Aleutian Islands for the Alaska Maritime NWR. She previously served as Southeast Representative, helped in planning the 2006 Anchorage TWS meeting, and is the treasurer for the TWS Wildlife Toxicology Working Group.

Chris Kaplan is the new Southcentral Representative and has an M.S. from Colorado State University. Chris is currently employed by LGL Alaska Research where he is the lead project biologist for a photo-



identification study of Cook Inlet beluga whales. Chris grew up in Alaska and previously worked for ADFG, most recently for the Marine Mammal Section.

Steve Arthur is the new Northern Representative. He has a PhD. From the University of Maine and is currently a Wildlife Biologist with ADFG in Fairbanks, conducting research on Dall sheep, muskoxen, and caribou in northeastern Alaska. He has worked as a furbearer biologist in Maine, and has studied polar

bears for the USGS Alaska Science Center and brown bears for ADFG before taking his current position in 1998.

Two new non-voting members of the Executive Board include **Cindi Jacobson**, the new newsletter editor and **Rachel Shively**, the new UAF Student Chapter Representative. Cindi is an Assistant Director with ADFG in Anchorage and Rachel is a senior wildlife student at UAF with an interest in Alaska bats.

Alaska Chapter Leadership

Your **New** 2010-2012 Executive Board

President-elect: **Jerry Hupp**, USGS-Alaska Science Center, 4210 University Drive, Anchorage, AK 99508, jerry_hupp@usgs.gov, phone (907) 474-7159, fax (907) 474-6967.

President: **Kris Hundertmark**, Department of Biology and Wildlife, 412 Irving 1, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, AK 99775, kris.hundertmark@alaska.edu, phone (907) 474-7159, fax (907) 474-6967

Past-President: **Howard Golden**, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, 333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage, AK 99518-1599, howard.golden@alaska.gov, phone (907) 267-2177, fax (907) 267-2433

Secretary-Treasurer: **Todd Rinaldi**, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, 333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage, AK 99518-1599, todd.rinaldi@alaska.gov, phone (907) 267-2267, fax (907) 267-2433

Northern Representative: **Steve Arthur**, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, 1300 College Road, Fairbanks, AK 99701, phone 459-7213, fax (907) 452-6410 , steve.arthur@alaska.gov

Southcentral Representative: **Chris Kaplan**, LGL Alaska Research Associates, 1101 E. 76th Avenue, Suite B, Anchorage, AK 99518, ckaplan@lgl.com, phone (907) 562-3339, fax (907) 562-7223,

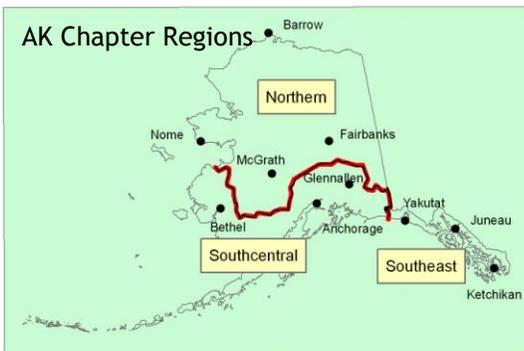
Southeast Representative: **Deb Rudis**, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 3000 Vintage Blvd., Suite 201, Juneau, AK 99801, deborah_rudis@fws.gov, phone (907) 780-1183 (ph)

Newsletter Editor (non-voting): **Cindi Jacobson**, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, 333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage, AK 99518, cindi.jacobson@alaska.gov

UAF Student Chapter TWS Representative (non-voting): **Rachel Shively**, UAF Student Chapter of TWS, c/o Christine Hunter, Department of Biology and Wildlife, 412 Irving 1, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, AK 99775, rdshively@alaska.edu

Webmaster

Elizabeth Solomon, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, 43961 Kalifornsky Beach Rd, Ste. B Soldotna, AK 99669-8367, elizabeth.solomon@alaska.gov, phone (907)260-2927



TWS membership is now required for AWB® and CWB® certifications to remain valid, so be sure to join or renew at wildlife.org