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**See PowerPoint Presentation: “Hansen – Welcome”
(Page 109a in Hard Copy Proceedings)**

or

On MAFWA website as Attachment to Proceedings

www.mafwa.iafwa.org

See Full Ohio State of the State Report
(6 page report - Pages 111a – 111f in Hard Copy Proceedings)

On MAFWA website

www.mafwa.iafwa.org

**See Full Wisconsin State of the State Report
(26 page report - Pages 113a – 113z in Hard Copy Proceedings)**

On MAFWA website

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**See Full South Dakota State of the State Report
(7 page report - Pages 115a – 115g in Hard Copy Proceedings)**

On MAFWA website

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**See Full Minnesota State of the State Report
(6 page report - Pages 117a – 117f in Hard Copy Proceedings)**

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See Full Indiana State of the State Report
(2 page report - Pages 119a – 119b in Hard Copy Proceedings)

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See Full Iowa State of the State Report
(9 page report - Pages 121a – 121i in Hard Copy Proceedings)

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**See Full North Dakota State of the State Report
(9 page report - Pages 123a – 123i in Hard Copy Proceedings)**

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**See Full Nebraska State of the State Report
(4 page report - Pages 125a – 125d in Hard Copy Proceedings)**

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**See Full Kansas State of the State Report
(3 page report - Pages 127a – 127c in Hard Copy Proceedings)**

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(6 page report - Pages 129a – 129f in Hard Copy Proceedings)**

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**See Full Missouri State of the State Report
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ASSOCIATION *of*
FISH & WILDLIFE
AGENCIES

STAFF REPORT

Midwest Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies July 9-12, 2006 Spearfish, South Dakota

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Angela Rivas Nelson, Executive Assistant
Andrea Ostroff, USGS NFHI Liaison
Amber Pairis, Science and Research Liaison
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Sean Robertson, TWW Coalition and Communications Assistant
Eric Schwaab, Resource Director
Liz Skipper, Administrative Assistant
Gary J. Taylor, Legislative Director
Len Ugarenko, NAWMP Coordinator
Bryant White, Trap Test Coordinator (MO)

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INTRODUCTION

JOHN BAUGHMAN, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

The Search Committee (John Cooper, Ed Parker, Corky Pugh, Curtis Taylor, Rex Amack and John Frampton) met in Washington, DC June 26 and 27 to interview candidates for the Association's new Executive Vice President. With approval of the entire Executive Committee, Matt Hogan was chosen from a very talented and capable slate of applicants. Matt will finish up his current duties as Acting Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish, Wildlife and Parks by the end of July. He is scheduled to begin working alongside John Baughman around the end of August, then assume his role as the new Executive Vice President when John leaves on September 27.

Changes in Member Agencies

There have been relatively few changes in agency leadership since the North American Conference in March. Terry Crawford retired July 15 as Administrator of the Nevada Department of Wildlife; Doug Hunt is the Acting Administrator. On July 6, 2006 Virgil Moore, chief of fisheries for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, was offered the position of director of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Moore, of Boise, has been the since 1998.

The directorships of Rhode Island, New Jersey, Illinois, Virginia, Oregon and the District of Columbia have not been officially filled, but until then, they are being capably handled by Mike Lapisky (RI), Dave Chanda (NJ), Sam Flood (IL), Gerald Massengill (VA), and John Siemien (DC).

Among our federal members, Governor Dirk Kempthorne of Idaho officially became Secretary of the Interior on June 7.

Association Staff

Long-time International Affairs Director Don MacLauchlan will be scaling back to half-time with the Association beginning this August. Jordan Jackson, a recent graduate of Thomas M. Cooley Law School in Lansing, Michigan has been on a two-month internship with staff counsel Carol Bambery. Kate Haley with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has been on a two-month assignment in Washington helping with logistics on the One Year After follow-up meeting on the Comprehensive State Wildlife Plans. Monica Day, an administrative assistant at the Management Assistance Team will leave her position on July 31, 2006.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee has had two teleconference meetings since the North American. On their May 22 call, the Executive Committee approved \$15,000 for 2006 Education Grants, authorized purchase of a new file server, approved Contributing membership of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, and had a discussion concerning the Association's position on the use of immunosterilants to regulate wildlife populations.

During their June 28 call, the Executive Committee approved the recommendation of the Executive Vice President Search Committee and authorized related budget adjustments, authorized submission of two multistate grant applications on behalf of the Association, approved APHIS-Veterinary Services as a new Governmental member, and heard a legal report on the recent Supreme Court wetlands decision and legal implications of hunting competitions using tranquilizer darts.

Executive Vice President

It has been a busy 3½ months tying together loose ends and preparing for the transition to a new Executive Vice President on September 27. A few highlights since the North American are as follows:

- Attended several nice functions honoring former Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton.
- Attended a White House ceremony to swear in new Interior Secretary Kempthorne.
- Participated with Secretary Kempthorne in a luncheon meeting with energy industry and wildlife conservation representatives, and a video news conference with the Outdoor Writers Association of America.
- Attended Southeastern Association's Directors' Meeting in St. Petersburg, Florida.
- Reached tentative agreement on State/Forest Service/BLM Guidance for wildlife management in designated wilderness areas.
- Met with Paul Lenzini to receive his recently organized files on the most important legal cases during his stellar 38-year career.
- RBFF and TRCP Board meetings.
- Turkey hunting in Alabama; trout fishing in Wyoming and Pennsylvania!
- Drove 38 hours straight to deliver my wife Demity and a U-Haul full of furniture to our new home in Cody, Wyoming, then flew back to do fun office stuff.

The next 2½ months will focus on completion of the Association's draft business plan, completion of fundraising for the National Conservation Leadership Institute, continuing to work on energy/wildlife policy issues, and assisting Matt Hogan, staff and the entire Association with the smooth transition to a new and improved Executive Vice President.

ASSOCIATION SCIENCE PARTNERSHIP WITH USGS AND USFWS

In March Amber Pairis filled the position of Science and Research Liaison vacated by Russ Mason in December 2005. This position works to coordinate the science and research needs of state fish and wildlife agencies with key federal resource agencies. Dr. Pairis has used the past few months to learn more about Federal partners and is working closely with USGS Biological Resources Discipline (USGS-BRD), USFWS, NPS, and other federal agencies including USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services. She has been making a variety of site visits to science centers and federal facilities around the country. Dr. Pairis continues to place emphasis on the following priorities.

Monitoring Priorities and Coordination -- Dr. Pairis is working with Teaming with Wildlife to cooperatively fund a short-term position to evaluate State Wildlife Action Plans and synthesize science, research, and monitoring needs, while working to identify opportunities for cooperation and collaboration between State and Federal Agencies. She is also organizing a forum for discussion during the Science and Research Committee meeting at the Association's annual meeting in Colorado that is dedicated to identifying State science and research needs. She has requested a representative from each regional association be

present to speak at the committee and has canvassed all Association committees to submit science and research needs relevant to their committees.

Wildlife Resource Policy Committee -- Amber Pairis is working with the Human Wildlife Conflict Group of the Wildlife Resource Policy Committee on the issue of emerging technology from USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services on deer contraception. A forum is currently being planned for the Association's Annual meeting in Snowmass to provide information and an opportunity for State Agencies to have a voice and be represented on product labeling and future use.

Invasive Species – Dr. Pairis provides staff support for the new Invasive Species Committee and participates in the meetings of several federal interagency working groups. One of these is the Invasive Terrestrial Animal and Pathogens (ITAP) committee. Another is the Federal Interagency Committee for the Management of Nuisance and Exotic Weeds (FICMENW). She is also working with representatives from USGS, NBII, and DOD on early detection rapid response issues for invasive species that could be beneficial to State Agencies' management efforts. Dr. Pairis is also involved with WI DNR and USFS on the creation of informational videos/DVDs on controlling invasive species spread. This project is being created for the hunting and angling community and focused on activities that might halt the spread of invasive species.

Aquatic Nuisance Species Communications Workshop -- In 2003, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies received a Multistate Conservation Grant to support a comprehensive, three-year project. The project addressed a national conservation need to increase effectiveness of state agency efforts to manage aquatic nuisance species (ANS). The Association partnered with all four regional associations, four state agencies, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and numerous private partners to pilot test communication strategies. Dr. Pairis is part of a steering committee that is planning a day-long workshop to share the results of this project with other State Agencies and partners at the 72nd annual North American Conference in March 2007 in Portland OR. The primary focus of the workshop is the communication aspects of the project and to the extent possible some presentations/case studies on communications around emerging technologies (methods) in aquatic species control.

Wind Energy and Wildlife – Materials from the Wind Power and Wildlife Symposium held in conjunction with the 2006 North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference is now available online on http://fishwildlife.org/agency_science.html. Resources include a letter from the current Association President John Cooper, a summary of the symposium, list of presenters, PowerPoint presentations available for download, and links to other wind power related resources. In conjunction with the Association's Migratory Bird Coordinator Deb Hahn, the Science Liaison is working with USFWS and other partners in support of a collaborative (FACA) led effort to create wind power facility siting guidelines.

Energy and Wildlife Policy Committee -- Dr. Pairis serves as the staff support on two new subcommittees in the Energy and Wildlife Policy Committee. Wind Power and Global Climate Change will have their first subcommittee meetings at the Association's annual meeting in Colorado.

The Natural Resources Monitoring Partnership – Dr. Pairis is working with USGS-BRD Status and Trends Program and NBII on Natural Resource Monitoring Partnership (NRMP) protocol and locator library. The Natural Resources Monitoring Partnership is currently developing two Internet-based tools that will provide information on current monitoring activities at a variety of spatial scales and serve as a reference and clearinghouse for monitoring protocols and resource assessment methodologies. NRMP held its Protocols and Projects Online Library Technical Development Workshop from May 25-26 at the USGS Headquarters in Reston, VA. The workshop objectives were to discuss and finalize the NRMP (a) locator and library data query tool and (b) identify the essential and desired features of the locator and library data retrieval tool and resultant information delivery. Workshop outcomes and minutes will be posted to the NRMP website as soon as they are available at http://biology.usgs.gov/status_trends/nrmp/MonitoringPartnership.htm. Dr. Pairis serves on the NRMP steering committee along with other representatives from the States, USGS, USFS, NPS, and other partners. She also organizes the Outreach Committee.

National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII) -- Current NBII coordination is managed on a project-by-project basis. Areas of interest include collaboration with the USGS Status and Trends program, NBII,

and key individuals in a host of other agencies to develop a searchable, geospatially explicit reference library of monitoring efforts and protocols under the Natural Resource Monitoring Partnership. Additionally, Andrea Ostroff and Eric Schwaab are engaged in several activities of the Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Node (FAR), including development and support for the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture and the National Fish Habitat Initiative. Other FAR projects include efforts to expand technical support for the Multistate Aquatic Resources Information System (MARIS), a state cooperative project to make fish population data available on-line. MARIS recently received a multi-state conservation grant to expand participation by other states and is working with FAR to improve the capabilities of the site and to provide information technology support to states to improve participation and cooperation.

Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (PARC) -- Dr. Pairis is a member of the PARC strategic planning committee which will meet in August 2006. She is also part of a steering committee for the planning of an "Agricultural Effects Workshop" in 2007. Her efforts are focused on encouraging State participation and identifying resources useful to State management activities.

Fish and Wildlife Health Committee -- The Science Liaison stays up to date on Avian Influenza activities and focused on making sure that State Agencies are informed of current and future activities and decisions made by Federal Agencies.

Dr. Pairis is also a member of the Fish and Wildlife Service Directorate Science Advisory Committee and attended recent meetings in Minnesota.

AGENCY INFORMATION DATABASE

Annually, the Association receives requests for information on our member agencies' "vital" statistics (i.e. Annual Budgets, Revenues, Land Area Managed, Harvest Level of Game Species, etc.) and in many cases we cannot fulfill these requests very accurately, or to do so involves contacting agencies and collecting the information on demand. Lacking this information, we are unable to proactively promote the breadth and depth of responsibilities and activities undertaken by our members.

To position us to aggressively promote the accomplishments of our members and to update our business practices and to improve the quality and accuracy of services to our members, we are creating an interactive, web-based database that will make readily available the vital statistics of our member agencies on our web server – AFWA's Agency Information Database (afwaAID). Once complete, the data will be accessible from the AFWA web site and available for use.

A database structure is currently in place and is undergoing initial testing through agency data input. This process will be coordinated by the new Automated Wildlife Data Systems program coordinator, Jeff Johnston.

AUTOMATED WILDLIFE DATA SYSTEMS (AWDS)

With the hiring of Jeff Johnston in January, the AWDS effort is getting back on track. Jeff Johnston brings a rare combination of technical expertise in wildlife management, computer systems and wildlife-related information management. Jeff is working with the Technologies and Data Utilization Committee on a number of exciting projects.

The Automated Wildlife Data Systems (AWDS) program has as its mission: To be the technology and data use center for the Association and its members. AWDS still emphasizes the value of obtaining **Total Licensing Systems** within the states. Total licensing systems give license buyers purchasing flexibility and agencies greater control in enforcing business rules, collection of data, and greater capabilities for resources management. AWDS works with agencies to enhance their total licensing systems by added additional functionality such as electronic harvest reporting, biological data collection in the field, and ability to easily share data between any subset of agencies and the central databases at the Association.

In addition to the expansion of the AWDS program, its governing body has also grown. In September 2004, the AWDS Task Force was dissolved and a new full, standing committee was formed to take its

place -- the Technologies and Data Utilization Committee. This Committee is enhancing AWDS' role as the center for agency technology initiatives and data-sharing efforts. As its primary focus, the Association's TDU Committee will also work to assist agencies to utilize cutting-edge technologies to streamline agency processes and enhance interactions with their constituents and realize the full benefits possible from enhanced databases. The Technologies and Data Utilization Committee is led by Paul Peditto, Maryland Department of Natural Resources (Chair) and Stephen Barton, Idaho Fish and Game (Vice-Chair).

AWDS' Annual Subscription Fees

As of January 1, 2005, AWDS is funded entirely by subscription fees paid by fish and wildlife agencies and other interested parties. A subscription to AWDS allows an organization to receive all the services they received from AWDS before 2005 for free, and they will be able to shape the direction of special projects of this expanded program. An organization may also contribute more than the subscription fee and ear-mark the extra funds for a special project or area of AWDS. Access to the main resources of the AWDS web site will only be made available to subscribers.

- Agency Subscription (State, Provincial, Federal): \$1,500
- Non-Governmental Organization \$1,500
- Corporate/Industry Subscriptions:
 - Gold Level: \$5,000 +
 - Silver Level: \$2,500 - \$4,999
 - Bronze Level: \$1,500 - \$2,499

Currently, AWDS subscribers include 35 US and Australian state, Canadian provincial fish and wildlife agencies, 2 non-governmental agencies, and more than 10 corporations.

After a delay due to the position vacancy, subscriptions for 2006 are now being processed.

AWDS Products for 2005

- Release of the report on the enhancement of the Wildlife Violator Compact. *(July/August)*
- Release of the report on the feasibility and technological considerations of a web-based, multi-agency Hunter Education and Safety Course Graduate database. *(July/August)*
- Unveil an online database containing the historic sales and economic impacts of hunting and fishing licenses. *(July)*
- Report preliminary results from pilot states participating in the fishing license holder data-mining and demographics study being conducted with the American Sportfishing Association. *(September)*
- Work with the National Shooting Sports Foundation to develop a quarterly hunting license index, similar to the fishing index.

In order to continue to accomplish all of these and more projects, AWDS needs your support. A subscription gives you access to AWDS and all of its data and technology projects, plus consulting services from its very experienced and insightful coordinator. Subscribe to AWDS today at www.AFWA-awds.com/subscribe.htm. To learn more about the AWDS program's services offered to fish and wildlife agencies, visit its web site at www.AFWA-awds.com.

FARM BILL

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Farm Bill) provides an 80 percent increase in funding for conservation programs, which means that approximately \$3 billion annually will be going to the nation's farmers, ranchers and forest land owners under a variety of programs, all of which can benefit fish and wildlife resources on private lands. To help make the promise of the 2002 Farm Bill a reality, the Association, its State fish and wildlife agency members and partner conservation organizations are now focused on the development of program rules and policy that will ensure fish and wildlife resources have co-equal status with soil and water resources in program implementation. The following is a summary of the current status of conservation program implementation and arising issues.

Association 2007 Farm Bill Working Group—The Association’s Agriculture Conservation Committee, chaired by Jeff Vonk (IA), formed a 2007 Farm Bill Working Group (Working Group) which met during the 2005 Annual Meeting to begin drafting the Association’s framework for the 2007 Farm Bill reauthorization process. The Working Group consists of 2 representatives from each Regional Association who were chosen for their technical and/or advocacy expertise on farm bill programs. Regional Fisheries Advisors selected by the Fisheries and Water Resources Policy Committee are providing valuable contributions to the Working Group and policy development processes as we collectively work to integrate both fish and wildlife conservation needs into conservation programs of the 2007 Farm Bill. Additionally, three non-governmental organizations (NGO) who are members of the Association’s Agriculture Conservation Committee have been asked to participate in the Working Group, and they are Pheasants Forever, BASS, and Ducks Unlimited. Collectively, the regional and NGO representatives will work with Ms. Jen Mock, the Association’s Farm Bill Coordinator, and the Chair to accomplish the tasks described in the draft charge. Through this Work Group, we look forward to better integrating state fish and wildlife conservation needs into the next farm bill. If you have any questions, please contact Jeff Vonk at jeff.vonk@dnr.state.ia.us or 515-281-5385 or Jen Mock at 202-624-3688 or jenmock@fishwildlife.org.

Progress Report for 2007 Farm Bill Working Group

Meetings held:

- September 2005 Association Annual Meeting in Nashville, TN;
- November 2005 at Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation, Dundee, IL;
- March 2006 North American Wildlife & Natural Resources Conference, Columbus, OH; and
- June 2006 at Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation, Dundee, IL.

Progress to date:

- Surveyed state fish and wildlife agencies and Agriculture Conservation Committee members for their 2007 Farm Bill policy priorities. Reviewed and integrated responses into technical analyses and policy considerations/recommendations identified in programmatic white papers.
- Finalized and prioritized the Association’s 2007 Farm Bill Guiding Principles.
- Distributed a draft Executive Summary with programmatic white papers after the 2006 North American Conference and requested comments from Agriculture Conservation Committee members and State fish and wildlife agencies (Farm Bill Coordinators).
- Drafted 2007 Farm Bill Policy Priorities on behalf of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. This document is being distributed for review and comment; presentation for adoption by the Agriculture Conservation Committee and the State Directors is slated for the Association’s Annual Meeting in September 2006 in Snowmass, CO.
 - A preliminary briefing for House and Senate Ag staff is being planned for August 2006, during which representatives from the 2007 Farm Bill Working Group will brief congressional staffers on our policy development processes, present the policy priorities for their information, and consider any suggestions they may have before finalizing the policy for presentation in September 2006.
 - The 2007 Farm Bill Working Group will continue to fine tune the white papers, policy options and alternatives, and final recommendations during the Annual Meeting in September 2006 and subsequent meetings as required. Regional representatives’ continued involvement is paramount to the success of this process.

Immediate Next Steps:

- Hold a preliminary congressional briefing in August 2006.
- Distribute white papers and policy priorities for review and comment (new online process for States and Association members only).
- Revise and finalize white papers, policy positions, and policy options on current programs.
- Refine policy position on carbon sequestration, fuel conservation, renewable fuels, and other energy initiatives slated for the Energy Title in the 2007 Farm Bill.

After Adoption of Association’s 2007 Farm Bill Policy Priorities:

- From the Association’s 2007 Farm Bill Policy Priorities, develop a campaign/communications plan, create a Congressional Briefing document, and develop a political strategy for the 2007 Farm Bill conservation programs.

- Develop state-by-state conservation program fact sheets for use at the state and national levels during reauthorization of the Farm Bill to educate Congress.
- Work with conservation community to develop a consensus position for 2007 Farm Bill.
- Work with USDA and provide our policy perspectives during the development of the Administration's 2007 conservation title.
- Draft legislative language for Association policy priorities and positions as well as provide language for the Manager's Report, a document which provides direction and guidance to the administering federal agencies.
- Support grassroots efforts underway by some state fish and wildlife agencies for Farm Bill reauthorization.
- Coordinate a "fly-in" day for fish and wildlife conservation efforts and the 2007 Farm Bill.

Other 2007 Farm Bill Preparations Underway at the Association

Coming this fall...Plans for the development of 2007 Farm Bill State Coalition Web Page & Resources

- Creation of a web page benefiting the state fish and wildlife agencies as an information resource for 2007 Farm Bill initiatives.
- Planned contents of web page:
 - Posting of 2002 Farm Bill lessons learned by state fish and wildlife agencies
 - Posting of 2007 Farm Bill grassroots coalition efforts
 - State processes, methods, considerations in building a state coalition for the 2007 Farm Bill (posted info provided by the state fish and wildlife agencies)
 - Sharing knowledge and experience between state fish and wildlife agencies to reduce learning curves without "re-inventing the wheel"
 - Status of State Farm Bill Coalition efforts (dates of meetings, copies of letters, status of consensus position development, etc.)
- State fish and wildlife agency 2007 Farm Bill policy discussion list-serve planned; currently, access for state fish and wildlife agencies only to more efficiently discuss policies, issues, and concerns. If you have information to share, please forward it to Jen Mock at jenmock@fishwildlife.org.

Reauthorization of the Farm Bill: Will it happen in 2007, will 2002 be extended, or both?

- Words from the Senate side: could provide a short-term extension of the 2002 bill, but a 2007 Farm Bill will be written. Hearings should start this fall or early next year with negotiations heating up next spring.
- Words from the House side: the 2002 Farm Bill probably couldn't pass the floor as written due to budget concerns, but a 2007 Farm Bill will be written; maybe it could be extended if the majority changes in the upcoming mid-term elections. The House Ag Committee is now taking Farm Bill comments online at <http://agriculture.house.gov/>.
- Priorities and potential program changes will depend on what happens in the mid-term elections this November, who's the majority, and subsequent committee assignments.
- USDA has summarized comments from the Farm Bill Forums held last year which can be found at <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=2006/03/0106.xml>.
- USDA has released 2 of its planned Theme Papers, "Risk Management" which can be found at <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/ s.7 0 A/7 0 1UH?contentidonly=true&contentid=2006/05/0153.xml>, and "Conservation and the Environment" released June 2006 which can be found at http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/ s.7 0 A/7 0 1UH?navid=FARM_BILL_ANALYSIS.
- The Senate Agriculture Committee is hosting Farm Bill field hearings across the country. Those scheduled include the following:
 - June 23 - Albany, Georgia
 - July 17 - Monday @ 9 a.m. CENTRAL - Cape Girardeau, Missouri
 - July 21 - Friday @ 1 p.m. EASTERN - Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
 - July 24 - Monday @ 9 a.m. CENTRAL - Ankeny, Iowa
 - Upcoming: western region locations (undisclosed as of July 7, 2006)
 - Association staff is working with Senate staff to provide a witness and testimony from a regional and national perspective at one of the upcoming field hearings.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) –

FSA Policy on Re-enrollment and Extension (REX) of CRP Contracts Expiring in 2007: We continue to work with FSA to address concerns raised by the states regarding REX. Current issues being discussed with FSA include the 2007 expiring acre re-enrollment and extension processes; FSA's treatment of waivers that permit counties to exceed the 25% county acreage cap restrictions and potential effects on state/federal at risk, threatened, endangered, or candidate species known to inhabit CRP fields in counties surpassing the 25% county acreage cap; treatment of wetlands under REX; and effects of new policy clarifications on the Upland Habitat for Upland Birds buffer initiative (Bobwhite Buffers or CP33). Currently, rough estimates indicate about 72% of contract holders have paid the conservation compliance fee associated with REX, but the anticipated acceptance rate is less due to compliance violations or unwillingness to come into compliance. Some speculate that out of the 2.5 million acres authorized during the general sign-up, only 1.4 million acres were offered.

Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) –

NRCS is now using the "yellow book" appraisal process which seems to be throwing most states into a tailspin for several reasons:

1. The process is new, takes longer, and the dollars offered per acre appear to be less (in some cases half) of the old offers. From what I understand, the new process is similar to what the FWS has been using for years.
2. There aren't enough qualified appraisers to do the new appraisals.
3. Landowners are backing out because of time-lags and reduced financial offers compared to previous years' contracts.
4. Some states are concerned they may return a large sum of their state's allocation because of the aforementioned problems. All information on this subject is greatly appreciated to help the Farm Bill Coordinator work with the Administration to resolve these issues. Thanks.

Initial State Farm Bill Conservation Program Allocations--Fiscal year 2006 allocations include nearly \$1.3 billion in technical assistance (TA) and about \$1.4 billion in financial assistance (FA) for NRCS voluntary conservation programs and other activities. A total of more than \$2.3 billion will be distributed to the 50 states, Puerto Rico and the Pacific Basin. Key voluntary conservation programs and initial FY2006 allocations include the following.

<u>STATE Initial FA & TA for FY06:</u>			
ALABAMA	\$34,715,372	NEVADA	\$17,659,401
ALASKA	\$21,633,194	NEW HAMPSHIRE	\$14,855,985
ARIZONA	\$43,035,444	NEW JERSEY	\$17,469,495
ARKANSAS	\$64,179,236	NEW MEXICO	\$43,374,596
CALIFORNIA	\$107,278,383	NEW YORK	\$39,699,315
COLORADO	\$66,804,087	NORTH CAROLINA	\$43,546,112
CONNECTICUT	\$15,531,693	NORTH DAKOTA	\$47,410,911
DELAWARE	\$15,308,330	OHIO	\$48,477,796
FLORIDA	\$54,822,511	OKLAHOMA	\$60,233,023
GEORGIA	\$47,764,204	OREGON	\$62,284,693
HAWAII	\$26,147,980	PENNSYLVANIA	\$36,629,262
IDAHO	\$38,777,029	RHODE ISLAND	\$13,609,606
ILLINOIS	\$58,465,205	SOUTH CAROLINA	\$29,214,537
INDIANA	\$43,903,681	SOUTH DAKOTA	\$39,492,726
IOWA	\$87,033,902	TENNESSEE	\$30,184,501
KANSAS	\$64,429,356	TEXAS	\$160,159,186
KENTUCKY	\$40,014,581	UTAH	\$49,249,087
LOUISIANA	\$47,161,030	VERMONT	\$15,855,434
MAINE	\$18,192,514	VIRGINIA	\$33,188,956
MARYLAND	\$23,935,497	WASHINGTON	\$46,879,736
MASSACHUSETTS	\$16,206,805	WEST VIRGINIA	\$26,718,797
MICHIGAN	\$49,879,326	WISCONSIN	\$53,625,437
MINNESOTA	\$68,840,166	WYOMING	\$32,020,194
MISSISSIPPI	\$71,107,235	PACIFIC BASIN	\$4,952,328
MISSOURI	\$81,788,648	PUERTO RICO	\$12,195,142
MONTANA	\$63,629,664	STATE TOTAL	\$2,319,412,318
NEBRASKA	\$69,840,985		

Conservation Security Program (CSP) –

- GAO report on CSP: Despite cost controls, improved USDA management is needed to ensure proper payments and reduce duplication with other programs.
 - CSP has raised concerns among some stakeholders because CSP cost estimates generally have increased since the 2002 Farm Bill's enactment. The CBO's estimate increased from \$2 billion in 2002 to \$8.9 billion in 2004.
 - USDA control of program spending may be enhanced by addressing (1) weaknesses in internal controls used to ensure the accuracy of program payments and (2) inconsistencies in the wildlife resource criteria used by NRCS state offices to determine producer eligibility for Tier III.
 - GAO recommends, in part, that NRCS review its state offices' wildlife habitat assessment criteria and develop a process to preclude and identify duplicate payments. NRCS generally agreed with GAO's findings and recommendations.
- Association Presents Comments to CSP Program Staff in DC -- Bill White, MO DOC and CSP Working Group Chair of the Agriculture Conservation Committee, and Pat Graham, NRCS-Missouri, assisted Jen Mock in presenting the Association's CSP comments to Washington CSP staff on November 30, 2005.
 - Discussions focused on program problems resulting from insufficient involvement of state fish and wildlife agencies and incorporation of states' recommendations into the program's design.
 - To demonstrate a successful state CSP program based on teamwork and partnership between NRCS and a state fish and wildlife agency that we would like to emulate across the country with all conservation programs, White and Graham presented their approach to program design, methods, processes, and other information from MO.
 - Excited by the information presented, Washington NRCS staff highlighted this teamwork approach for a successful CSP to all NCRS CSP employees via teleconference on December 13, 2005, with a special presentation by White and Graham.

Memorandum of Understanding among Association-FWS-NRCS Near Final

We are in the process of finalizing an MOU between the Association, FWS, and NRCS to promote cooperative conservation between the federal agencies and the state fish and wildlife agencies and the inclusion of voluntary conservation agreements in Farm Bill conservation programs.

Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP): Assessing the Fish and Wildlife Benefits of Farm Bill Programs--

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), in partnership with others, is making a concerted effort to quantify the environmental benefits of conservation program practices. CEAP is scheduled to proceed through 2007; however, USDA is expected to continue to monitor the effectiveness of conservation programs beyond that date.

- The objective of the Wildlife Component of CEAP is to quantify the benefits that Farm Bill conservation programs and practices provide to fish and wildlife resources. Outcomes will enable more effective implementation of the existing programs and inform the Congress and the public in the upcoming Farm Bill reauthorization process.
- Association-NRCS Partnership: State fish and wildlife agencies recognize the immense importance of Farm Bill programs to fish and wildlife conservation and in an effort to them, NRCS has entered into a cooperative agreement with the Association to support the CEAP Wildlife Component. Under this agreement, NRCS and the Association are working with four regional association work groups to identify issues and develop approaches to quantifying fish and wildlife benefits.
- The Association continues to provide leadership in assembling regional groups and regional work plans. Once drafted, regional plans will be assembled by NRCS into a national CEAP Wildlife Component Work Plan, and opportunities for funding, monitoring and research needs identified in work plans will be sought through the CEAP funding process and other means.
- Your expertise is needed!: We invite any state fish and wildlife agency staff with experience in Farm Bill conservation programs to participate in the regional work groups. Jen Mock

(Association Farm Bill Coordinator) and Ray Evans are leading the effort for the Association and working closely with regional work group members to facilitate development of regional work plans. Work groups are assembled through regional meetings and conferences. Please contact Ray Evans if you are willing to participate in this important effort (rayevans24@earthlink.net, 573-896-4836). Thanks!

- CEAP-Wildlife Workshops Planned for 2006:
 - Midwest Private Lands Working Group in South Dakota in May 2006.

New Endangered Species Act Introduced in Senate has Implications for Farm Bill

Conservation Programs—The Collaboration for the Recovery of Endangered Species Act (CRESA; S.2110) was introduced by Senators Crapo and Lincoln on December 15, 2005. A provision of the bill under Title III provides protection to landowners from incidental take who enroll in Farm Bill conservation programs and contribute to the recovery of a listed species. This could benefit many states and conservation initiatives across the country, and we will continue to monitor this bill and its progress in 2006.

Voluntary Public Access and Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program Act of 2005—S548 and complementary bill HR1351 were introduced in the 109th Congress, and are reintroductions of the “Open Fields” legislation. The bills are to encourage owners and operatives of privately-held farm, ranch, and forest land to voluntarily make that land available for access by the public for outdoor recreation under programs administered by the States and tribal governments, and to address the growing public demand for outdoor recreational opportunities which is limited by public access on private lands. Proposed funding is \$20 million annually for FY2005 through FY2009.

FY 2007 Appropriations—The President’s FY2007 budget request is outlined in the table below.

**Mandatory Farm Bill Conservation Program
FY 2007 Appropriations
(in Millions)**

Program	FY 2006 Authorized	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007 Authorized	FY 2007 President's Budget	FY 2007 House	FY 2007 Senate
CRP	39.2 m ac	2,021 (39.2 m ac)	2,021 (39.2 m ac)	\$2,095	?	
EQIP	\$1,200	Cut \$183m to \$1,017m	\$1,300	\$1,000	\$1127	\$1031
GSWC	\$60	Cut \$9m to \$51m	\$60	\$51	\$51	\$
WRP	250,000 acres	Cap at 150,000 acres	250,000 acres	250,000 acres	144,776 acres	No Cap
WHIP	\$85	Cut \$42m to \$43m	\$85	\$55	\$55	\$63
FRPP	\$100	Cut \$26.5m to \$73.5m	\$97	\$50	\$50	\$58
GRP (1)	\$254 total for FY 02-11	0	0	0	0	0
CSP	\$331	Cut \$74.6 m to \$256.4 m	343.2	\$343.2	\$280.173	No Cap
HFR (2)	Uncapped	\$2.5	Uncapped	\$2.5	\$0 (no funding)	\$5

(1) GRP reached its authorized level in FY2005.
(2) HFR – Healthy Forest Reserve Program

FEDERAL AID EXCISE TAX WORKING GROUP INITIATIVES -- STATUS

The Federal Aid Excise Tax Working Group includes key representatives from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB), and U.S. Customs responsible for collecting, processing and transferring approximately \$700 million annually in excise taxes and import duties to Federal Aid and State Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Programs. Working with the Fish and Wildlife Service and the AFWA Fish and Wildlife Trust Funds Committee, the Working Group seeks to maintain fair, effective and efficient collection, management and disbursement of Federal Aid funds.

Beginning in the fall of 2004, under the leadership of Mitch King, FWS Assistant Director for Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration, and Bill Conlon, Director of Specialty Programs for the IRS, and with strong support from Fish and Wildlife Trust Funds Committee Chair Glen Salmon, a reinvigorated Working Group has been meeting regularly with industry and other agency leaders.

The IRS is implementing a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to address non-compliance and ensure a level playing field for all industry tax payers through policy clarification, improved excise tax agent training and industry education and outreach. A training course was conducted for a select group of IRS agents to improve awareness and understanding of compliance issues, and new staff has been assigned by IRS to address outstanding tax compliance concerns voiced by industry, FWS and the states.

Concurrent to the compliance efforts is a renewed effort by the FWS, states and industry leaders to highlight the role of hunters, anglers, outdoor enthusiasts, the outdoor sporting industry and various federal collection agencies in creating and maintaining the cycle of conservation and recreation successes that support much of the important work of state fish and wildlife agencies. Building and maintaining support for these programs among all partners is essential to long-term protection of important fund sources to the states. Key to this effort is a summit meeting being considered that will bring together industry leaders from sportfishing, archery and hunting and shooting sports industries with the AFWA Executive Committee for strategic discussions aimed at solidifying these important relationships. For more information, contact staff lead Eric Schwaab at eschwaab@fishwildlife.org, or at 202-624-7890.

FEDERAL-STATE AQUACULTURE DRUG APPROVAL PROJECT

After over 12 years of work, this project is moving rapidly toward conclusion. The Federal-State Aquaculture Drug Approval Partnership Project (known as the AFWA Project) and the continuing efforts on the part of its participants have made great progress and are close to having limited approvals from the Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) for seven of the nine AFWA Project drugs. With the extensive base of existing data, it is anticipated that some additional effectiveness data will be required to develop the broad "all freshwater-reared fish" approvals envisioned in the original AFWA Project proposal. These broad approvals will allow the widespread, legal use of these drugs for fish management and aquaculture.

To date the project has helped gain expansions and extensions of the New Animal Drug Applications (NADAs) for two label claims for formalin and one supplemental label claim for immersion marking with oxytetracycline. Two pharmaceutical sponsors for formalin and three for oxytetracycline have stepped forward to add the new label claims to the labeling of their products.

It is anticipated that NADAs will be submitted in 2006 for three broad label claims for hydrogen peroxide. In addition, final data packages are projected to be submitted in late 2006 or 2007 to CVM for the following drugs with the number of label claims in parenthesis: chloramine-T (2),

copper sulfate (1), florfenicol (4), formalin (1), hydrogen peroxide (1), oral oxytetracycline (2), and immersion oxytetracycline (1). From 2008 to 2009, final data packages are projected to be submitted for AQUI-S® (2, contingent upon planned funding), copper sulfate (1), and potassium permanganate (1).

The submission of these NADAs should lead to approvals for nine drugs and 20 label claims. All of this progress will have been made as a result of the efforts that were funded in large part by 38 state natural resources agencies, three federal agencies, and 10 company sponsors over a 15-year period. The total public sector contribution as of 2005 is more than \$25 million; drug sponsors have also contributed a significant but unknown amount for confidentiality reasons. To put this effort in perspective, pharmaceutical companies usually expect to spend \$12 million over a ten-year period on one drug, one label claim and one species.

To help realize these potential outcomes and to finish the AFWA commitment to this project a new National Conservation Need was selected for the 2006 MSCG cycle to solicit proposals specific to approval requirement for AQUI-S, a zero withdrawal anesthetic drug. In cooperation with the national coordinator and other project partners, the AFWA Fisheries and Water Resources Policy Committee submitted a successful proposal under that NCN to conduct critical studies and related activities necessary to complete national coordination of this project and obtain approval for AQUI-S use. It is expected that the direct AFWA role in this effort will conclude by the end of 2008 and will have yielded significant new approvals for commonly used aquaculture drugs.

FURBEARER RESOURCES AND BMP OUTREACH PROJECTS

Furbearer Research Program – While all 50 states support the development of Best Management Practices for Trapping in the United States (BMPs), to date, 35 states have participated in and assisted with trap testing projects to evaluate traps and trapping methods. All regions of the US have directly participated including states in the Southeast, Northeast, Midwest, West, and Alaska. More than 70 different restraining and body-gripping trap types have been evaluated. Data have been collected on 15 of the 23 species of furbearers prioritized for testing.

Thirteen states (WI, SD, PA, NC, MO, AR, GA, KS, CA, NH, MD, MN, IA) participated in field projects this year to evaluate the performance of 21 trapping devices including coil-spring traps, longspring traps, body-gripping traps, cage traps, and non-powered cable devices. Trapping devices were evaluated on the basis of animal welfare, efficiency, selectivity, safety, and practicality. Trap testing projects focused on several species including mink, muskrat, fisher, river otter, beaver, gray fox, red fox, coyote, and bobcat. All trapping efforts are conducted during regulated trapping seasons. Research projects were conducted in four regions of the United States including the Midwest, West, Northeast, and Southeast. Results of these efforts will provide information to include in Best Management Practices for Trapping in the United States (BMPs).

BMP Development – Best Management Practices for Trapping eastern coyote, western coyote, raccoon and red fox, along with a General Introduction were released in March of 2006. A press release on these new BMPs, which included information on how to access them through the www.fishwildlife.org/furbearer_resources.html website was distributed to state agency members. CDs containing these new BMPs were distributed to state agency directors, I&E chiefs, state furbearer biologists, federal fish and wildlife agencies, and trapper associations. BMPs for gray fox, bobcat, and opossum will be released in August of 2006, and will be available on the same website and distributed as above. Other BMPs currently being written include those for beaver, muskrat, mink, river otter, nutria, and marten. Completion of these BMPs is anticipated in 2007.

The purpose of the Best Management Practices (BMP) process is to scientifically evaluate the traps and trapping systems used for capturing furbearers in the United States. Trapping BMPs

are based on scientific research and professional experience regarding currently available traps and trapping technology. Trapping BMPs identify both techniques and traps that address the welfare of trapped animals and allow for the efficient, selective, safe, and practical capture of furbearers. These guides are intended to be a practical tool for trappers, wildlife biologists, wildlife agencies, and anyone interested in improved traps and trapping systems. BMPs include technical recommendations from expert trappers and biologists, and a list of specifications of traps that meet or exceed BMP criteria. The results of this research serve as a reference guide to wildlife management agencies, conservation organizations, tribal nations, researchers, trapper organizations, individual trappers, and others interested in the continued improvement of traps and trapping systems. Trapping is an element of many wildlife management programs. State fish and wildlife agencies must continue to take a lead role by establishing a practical and effective plan for the improvement of trapping systems in order to maintain trapping as a valuable wildlife management practice.

National Trapper Education Curriculum -- In 1979, the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies passed a resolution recommending and supporting the development of trapper education course materials. These materials were recently distributed to state agencies following an 18-month development period that included extensive evaluation. Designed for trappers of all experience levels, developed using trapping best management practices and using the standardized approach that has made hunter education so successful, the program is very flexible and can be adapted to the needs of each state. The curriculum provides content standards, learning objectives, student manuals, student workbooks, a student exam, and an instructors guide and evaluation forms. Educators, furbearer biologists, expert trappers, and representatives from the International Hunter Education Association were consulted in the development of this program. Because each state implements hunter/trapper education differently, we have sent this CD to the following state agency personnel: Director, Public Affairs/I&E chief, Hunter/trapper coordinator, Furbearer program contact, and Law enforcement chief. Additionally, the CD was shared with the Canadian provinces/territories and the state offices for USDA-Wildlife Services. The education curriculum is available also at www.fishwildlife.org/furbearer_resources.html.

These materials are especially timely, as many state agencies have recently begun the process of revising trapper education materials. It is our hope that by adopting and customizing these materials, states will be able to save valuable time and expense. The curriculum will not only inform trappers about Best Management Practices, but it will also provide consistent information to trappers in every state. As a result, the program will provide for the potential for licensing reciprocity through content standards. *If states choose to customize the materials, please note that the content standards should be maintained to promote consistency among the states. At the March 2005 Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies business meeting, a recommendation was passed by the agency Directors that state agencies voluntarily adopt the content standards developed for this program.*

New!! Train the Trainers Workshops

Based on requests by state agency personnel, the Association has received a grant to present "Train the Trainers" workshops to support state agency hunter/trapper education coordinators and instructors in the use of these newly developed trapper education materials. The workshop has three main components – use and customization of the student manual and workbook; presenting a skills/field program; and use of the authentic assessment method for student performance evaluation. The Association will cover expenses for workshop materials and trainer fees to deliver this workshop in your state. **If you are interested in hosting one of these workshops, please contact Susan Langlois at TE.Workshops@state.ma.us.** Please include your name, contact information, and a list of three potential dates for hosting this workshop. *We require a minimum of 30 participants per workshop (not to exceed 60 per session).* Priority will be given to those states that hold combined workshops with other states and those that request this workshop during the 2006 calendar year. The grant may be extended into 2007 if a significant number of states are interested in hosting the workshop but are unable to schedule it during

2006. Grant extension is subject to approval by the Association's National Grants Committee and the USFWS and cannot be guaranteed at this time.

National Furbearer Harvest Database -- This new database will be administered by the U.S. Trap Testing Technical Work Group and supported by Association staff. It will provide an outlet for all states to collect furbearer harvest information in one concise location. Information such as the number of licenses sold, amount of revenue collected from license sales, average pelt value, harvest estimates, and harvest status of species will be collected. This database is presently available for pilot testing by selected agencies and expected to be on-line for state use this summer.

Ownership and Use of Trap by Trappers in the United States Survey -- A survey of trappers in the United States was conducted in 2004 to provide a better understanding of trappers, their equipment and techniques used for capturing furbearers, and to provide information to those in furbearer management which will allow them to make informed decisions on trapping matters. More than 4000 trappers from 46 states were surveyed. Release of the first report on this survey is expected this summer and will be provided to all state fish and wildlife agencies in electronic format. The report will also be available at www.fishwildlife.org/furbearer_resources.html.

Professional Training Workshops and Video Development -- The "Trapping Matters" workshops were offered to state fish and wildlife agencies on a limited basis until recently. The last planned workshop was held in Kansas City, Missouri in March 2006, and was hosted by the Missouri Department of Conservation. This workshop was attended by about 100 fish and wildlife professionals in the Kansas City Region.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS PROJECT

The work of this project continues to be split between domestic and international projects. There has been a lot of activity on the Trap Testing project in the last two months.

Also during the last few months, a sizeable percentage of project time has continued to be focused on CITES work -- preparing for and participating in the meetings of the Convention's Plants, Animals and Standing Committee planned for July and September/October of this year. The entire CITES Team -- Bruce Taubert (AZ G&F), Dale Towell (ID F&G), Carolyn Caldwell (Ohio DNR), Cal DuBrock (PA GC) and Buddy Baker (SC DNR) -- will be taking part in the Lima, Peru meetings this summer. The Project Leader has been asked to join the US Delegation to the CITES Standing Committee in Geneva in October. The group recently held its triennial strategic planning meetings in Phoenix. Meetings there were hosted by AZ Game and Fish.

The other major commitment of project time is on the Trap Research and BMP development Projects, reported elsewhere in this staff report.

Briefing documents and message bullets have been prepared for US diplomats serving in European capitals. This is a very active file right now and the outcomes are largely unpredictable at this time. Our contacts believe that the EU will honour the understanding with respect to maintaining trade as long as we maintain an active testing program and carry out our own commitments. The next meeting to be held in Brussels may be delayed until early 2007 and may be associated with a technical workshop for MEPs and member state representatives.

The Association acknowledges the important continuing, dedicated, and long-standing efforts made by the members of the Trap Testing Technical Work Group, chaired by Gordon Batcheller to keep this active program highly successful, on-track, and on schedule.

As an aside, regarding the speed with which the BMP program is conducted, be assured that the federal view is that the US needs an ongoing testing and research program, as we long ago

committed on behalf of the competent authorities, and that the states are doing a spectacular job carrying out US commitments. When the Program was designed it was decided that a task-oriented approach that would focus only on producing intermediate documents, hoping the EU and AR pressure will go away, was naive and would not likely serve the long-term US interests.

Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Significance -- especially for Birds -- the Association continued to be a part of the U.S. work on the Ramsar Convention. Ramsar, as a Convention, does not receive adequate funding, so its staff is forced to do what work they accomplish with meager resources. The Association has in the past contributed significantly to supporting this effort. Don MacLauchlan of the Washington office staff represented the States on the US National Committee which has recently met at Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

Wildlife without Borders -- The Project has continued to promote this important project on behalf of its southwestern States -- all four Mexican Border States are members of WAFWA. The purpose of this project is to make joint US/Mexican projects work more efficiently and effectively and act wherever possible as a facilitator for projects. This Association again funded participation at this year's US/Canadian/Mexican Trilateral in San Diego for representatives of three of the US Mexican Border States. Many, including newer members are quick to dismiss this as a four-state meeting. The truth is that many states share hundreds of species with Mexico so the implications here are far broader than four states.

Domestic Activities -- This year this project is coordinating and documenting the states' recruitment and retention efforts for their many constituents.

LEGAL REPORT

S.D. Warren Co. v Maine Board of Environmental Protection

The U. S. Supreme Court reached a decision on May 15, 2006 in an important Clean Water Act case. The Court ruled that state approval is needed to ensure that state water protection laws will not be violated. Warren asked the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to renew its federal licenses for five of the hydroelectric dams it operates on a Maine river to generate power for its paper mills. Each dam impounded water, which then ran through turbines and returned to the riverbed, passing around a section of the river. Warren protested the necessity of obtaining water quality certification from the Maine state agency under section 401 of the Clean Water Act claiming that his dams did not result in any "discharge into" the river thus triggering application of section 401. Section 401 requires state approval of "any activity" which may result in any discharge into the Nation's navigable waters.

In a decision delivered by Justice Souter, the Supreme Court held, "The issues in this case is whether operating a dam to produce hydroelectricity 'may result in any discharge into the navigable waters' of the United States. If so, a federal license under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act requires state certification that water protection laws will not be violated. We hold that a dam does raise a potential for a discharge, and state approval is needed."

Both the Association and Michigan joined 33 other states in an amicus brief supporting the need for state certification. The Supreme Court ruling is good news for natural resource managers.

Rapanos v United States; Carabell v Army Corps of Engineers.

At issue before the Supreme Court were two separate rulings from the Sixth Circuit. In those cases involving the Michigan developers' property, the Sixth Circuit upheld the Corps' authority to require permits from those who would fill or discharge pollutants into wetlands either separate by man-made barriers from tributaries or located next to smaller tributaries, such as drainage ditches, that flow into larger water bodies, which are used for navigation purposes. The Supreme Court remanded the cases back to the Michigan trial courts to determine whether or not the wetlands possess a "significant nexus" to waters that are federally protected

under Clean Water Act (CWA). Important points in the opinions include:

- The Court acknowledged the sovereignty of the States in the development and use of land and water resources within their boundaries.
- The plurality (there is no majority opinion) ruled that only permanent bodies of waters, such as major lakes and rivers, and directly abutting wetlands are federally protected.
- Waters that do not fall within the “significant nexus” test are not federally protected from dredge and fill activities. “Significant nexus” to a major waterway is to be determined on a case-by-case basis. Justice Kennedy articulated this test in a separate opinion.
- Waters such as channels, ditches, conduits, and drains are still point sources under the CWA as they need only to convey the pollutant to ‘navigable waters’.
- The Corps may look at regulations to fill some of the ambiguity that the Court decision raises. For example, since 1977 the Corps has regulated wetlands adjacent to non-navigable tributaries under CWA, yet there is no definition of adjacency or tributary. This is an area where regulations would provide guidance to the people in the field and consistency in application.
- Each state needs to assess the merits and strengths of their state laws. Many states simply do not have adequate wetland protection laws. Two states, Michigan and New Jersey, have accepted the authority for dredge and fill programs under the CWA.
- The Association will participate in discussions requesting Congressional relief to assist the States in wetland protection and will explore the merits of a National Wetlands Protection Act.

Gerke Excavating Inc. v U. S.

The U. S. Supreme Court on June 26, 2006 vacated and remanded a decision by a federal appeals court that held a Wisconsin developer must have a permit under the Clean Water Act to discharge fill material into non-navigable wetlands that do not abut a navigable river. In this case, the Seventh Circuit had held that Gerke Excavating, a Wisconsin company, must have a permit under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act to discharge fill material into the ditch. In light of its ruling in the *Rapanos* and *Carabell* cases, the U. S. Supreme Court said it was sending the case back to the Seventh Circuit for further proceedings to determine whether the 5.8 acre tract has a “significant nexus” to a major waterway.

Massachusetts v EPA

The Supreme Court has agreed to review whether the Environmental Protection Agency has existing authority under the Clean Air Act to regulate “greenhouse” gases, especially carbon dioxide from cars. The court said it would decide whether the Environmental Protection Agency is required under the federal clean air law to treat carbon dioxide from automobiles as a pollutant harmless to health. The decision could influence how the nation addresses global warming. Briefs filed in the court by a dozen states, led by Massachusetts, argue that carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping chemicals from automobile tailpipes should be treated as unhealthy pollutants. The states filed a lawsuit in an effort to force the EPA to curtail such emissions just as it does lead and other chemicals that produce smog and acid rain.

The Association has a new subcommittee on Global Climate Change under its Energy and Wildlife Policy Committee, which will help us monitor these issues.

LEGISLATION

In the first session of the 109th Congress, a year frankly fraught with partisanship and acrimony, Congress did pass and the President signed into law two legislative initiatives of high priority for the Association. The first was the “Reaffirmation of State Regulation of Resident and Non-Resident Hunting and Fishing Act”, necessary due to a recent federal court decision that

characterized resident preferences for big game hunting in Arizona as “constitutionally suspect” under the Commerce Clause of the U.S. Constitution. Congress reaffirmed that it is in the public interest for the states to continue to regulate access to hunting and fishing through the establishment of seasons and bag limits that include differences between resident and non-resident opportunities. Congress also explicitly renounced any interest in Commerce Clause application to the regulation of recreational hunting and fishing by a state or Indian tribe.

Congress also passed the massive Transportation reauthorization bill, including reauthorization of the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund (Wallop-Breaux). Most significantly, this includes full recovery of the gas tax attributable to outboard motors and small engines into the ARTF, which means an additional \$110 million per year in permanent funds to the state fish and wildlife agencies for sportfish restoration, boating safety and access and other programs under Wallop-Breaux.

Here’s what we see on the agenda for the second session of the 109th Congress, a year of mid-term Congressional elections, which influence will govern much of what Congress will (or not) conclude.

Endangered Species Act (ESA): In a move that surprised many of us, the House last year passed Chairman Pombo’s bill (HR3824) in late September only 10 days after it was introduced. The bill text and process was tightly managed by the Committee and the Association testified, assessing the bill’s merits against our Association reauthorization principles. An alternative bill (which narrowly failed) offered by moderate Republicans and Democrats was similar in many respects with the exception of the requirement in HR3824 to compensate landowners for foregone use of their property if the Secretary determines that such use would constitute a take under the ESA. The similarities in the other respects between HR3824 and the alternative suggest bipartisan support for ESA improvement.

The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee held several oversight hearings last year but work on a draft Committee bill has stalled. An effort they asked the Keystone Center to conduct on critical habitat and other provisions of ESA relating to habitat failed to reach consensus on recommendations for improvement.

Just before Congress recessed last year, Senator Crapo (ID) introduced an Endangered Species Act reauthorization bill, S2110, with which the Association finds much favor. It contains some provisions for enhancing state role in ESA implementation through Section 6 amendments. It also directs the US Fish and Wildlife Service to prioritize listing decisions and provides guidance for doing that. It further details standards and process for recovery programs and directs the Fish and Wildlife Service to prioritize species recovery programs. Finally, it incentivizes private landowner species and habitat conservation through a market incentive by creating a conservation banking system under guidelines established by the Secretary; and further, gives landowners a tax deduction for entering into conservation agreements equal to the cost of carrying those out and fair market value of activities they forego in order to meet conservation objectives. Because it is heavily weighted to tax credits and incentives, the bill was referred to the Senate Finance Committee on which sits Senator Crapo and two cosponsors of S2110 – Senator Lincoln (AR) and Senator Thomas (WY). No hearings have yet been scheduled. Senator Crapo and Senator Lincoln continue to be interested in working with other Senate members on a consensus ESA bill that reflects the Senate’s reauthorization interests and not just theirs.

While the Association continues to work with Senator Crapo, Senator Lincoln, Senator Chafee, Senator Clinton and others on the Environment and Public Works Committee to help draft a bill that could receive bipartisan Senate support, the legislative calendar for this Congress is quickly running out.

Conservation Easement Tax Status: Working in cooperation with the land conservation community and with other hunting and fishing conservation organizations last year, the

Association generated significant bipartisan support from members of the Senate Finance Committee and from Governors across the Nation for retaining the federal tax status for private landowners who enter their property into a conservation easement. This support provided a backstop against some radical reforms being proposed by some on the Hill that would have essentially eliminated the attraction of conservation easements to landowners and minimized their utility as a conservation tool. The community supports reasonable reforms that address specific problems (such as over-valued appraisals) but is opposed to reforms that over-reach and in doing so would destroy the conservation easement program. We will continue to work to retain and strengthen, through additional incentives, the utility of conservation easements as a tool for engaging private landowners in fish and wildlife conservation.

In a recently passed Tax Reconciliation bill, the Senate took a step forward by providing one of the incentives we advocated by extending and increasing deductions for donations of easements for farmers and ranchers. They also passed reasonable reforms for appraisals for donated property similar to what the conservation community has proposed. The inclusion of these incentives and the absence of draconian reforms is major and significant progress. The House passed Tax Reconciliation bill has none of these provisions, but we are working with members to try to retain the Senate conservation provisions in the bill that will come out of the House-Senate conference. The leadership of the Land Trust Alliance on this for the larger community has been instrumental in our successes.

Farm Bill: Congress has begun holding hearings and will continue this summer and fall leading up to reauthorization of the Farm Bill in 2007. The Association is significantly engaged in comprehensive discussions with the state fish and wildlife agencies and the fish and wildlife conservation community to arrive at recommendations for reauthorization. See the extensive treatment on farm bill elsewhere in this report.

Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act (MSA): Through its Oceans Policy Committee, the Association has worked closely with the coastal state fish and wildlife agencies and the marine fisheries conservation community to shepherd reauthorization of the MSA. The Committee recommended a set of principles for reauthorization and has been using those as guidelines for assessing the merits of legislative proposals on MSA. Just before Congress recessed last year, the Senate Commerce Committee reported out S2012, a bill to reauthorize the MSA. An amended version of that bill has now been passed by the full Senate.

The Commerce Committee bill contains some good language on a few of our identified priorities, including resolving procedural discrepancies between MSA and NEPA processes, setting standards for implementing dedicated access privilege systems and strengthening the Council member training process, while retaining the current appointments process.

On recreational angler registration, we obtained improved language on a federal registration system that focuses more effectively on improved data collection and provides better opportunity for state licensing systems to be accepted in lieu of a federal registration. In Committee we had succeeded in eliminating a "no fee" provision for federal registration, which could undermine our ability to offer state licensing as a competitive alternative and likely taken needed federal resources away from the current federal data collection process and directed it to implementation of a large new registry process. Unfortunately that provision was amended back in during final bill passage. There also remains a problematic provision related to federal registration of anglers targeting anadromous species even in state waters. This process will continue to be a focal point for our work as the process moves forward.

Recently, the House Resources Committee passed its version of the bill, which awaits floor action. Final House action is expected later this summer, with a possible conference committee in the fall of 2006.

FY2007 Budget Recommendations: These recommendations have been provided to all State Fish and Wildlife Directors, and the Association staff will use these priorities in working with the Hill during the Appropriations process.

Electronic Duck Stamp: Just before the Senate recessed last year, the Senate passed S.1496 which authorizes the USFWS to implement in cooperation with the state fish and wildlife agencies, a pilot program in 15 states that would make the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp available electronically through the state fish and wildlife agencies. The purchaser could hunt with the e-authorization and would subsequently be provided the paper stamp within a fixed time post-purchase. S.1496 is consistent with Association recommendations and addresses concerns we and the USFWS had with the House companion bill. The House Resources Committee marked-up and reported S.1496 to the House floor for expedited consideration on the Suspension Calendar. Barring unforeseen delays Congress could conclusively act before August recess on this initiative we have been advocating for the last six years or so.

MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAM

The Management Assistance Team (MAT) provides state fish and wildlife agencies expertise in the form of consulting, employee training, agency and program evaluations, and other related services in the area of organization and human resources development, management systems, change management and agency effectiveness.

State Leadership Development Program

Per directions from the Association's Executive Committee and Leadership and Professional Development Committee, MAT has focused its efforts in 2005 and 2006 primarily on research and design of a leadership development program for state fish and wildlife agencies. MAT conducted a telephone survey of all 50 state directors regarding leadership needs as part of the development effort. A "toolbox" of teaching modules, experiential work, and other "tools" of leadership development is being assembled by MAT and a preview of these "tools" was presented at the September Association meeting in Nashville in 2005.

MAT has contracted with eCollege to provide the platform to offer select MAT workshops in an instructor-led, asynchronous learning environment. ECollege uses research supported (www.sloan-c.org) best practices to deliver learning to geographically dispersed professionals, economically and in a way that can in many cases *improve* learning. MAT has developed six courses for online delivery and beta-tested three of the classes (*The Adaptive Leader*, *Creative and Critical Thinking*, and *The Visionary Leader*) during May and June with 45 volunteer participants from 7 state fish and wildlife agencies. MAT will beta-test the other three classes (*Power*, *Organizations as Ecosystems*, and *Going from Good to Great*) similarly with 45 participants from state fish and wildlife agencies. These six courses will be available to states beginning this fall.

National Conservation Leadership Institute (NCLI)

MAT has worked with the Association, US Fish and Wildlife Service, The Conservation Fund, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Wildlife Management Institute, Boone and Crockett Club, Izaak Walton League of America, and others to design a National Conservation Leadership Institute and is in the process of working with these same partners to plan implementation. The initial National Conservation Leadership Institute (NCLI) will commence in late summer 2006. Recruitment materials will be available by the 2006 North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference. MAT created the NCLI website and is responsible for curriculum coordination and program management for the NCLI. Applications were accepted for the inaugural class at www.conservationleadership.org from March 1 – June 15, 2006.

MAT Website

MAT has launched a website at the request of the Leadership and Professional Development Committee that will serve as an information hub for MAT services. Additionally the website is designed to enable creation of an online library useful to leadership program participants (www.conservationleadership.org).

Consulting and Training

MAT continued its consulting and training work in other areas with state fish and wildlife agencies and during 2005 conducted work for 23 individual states and WAFWA, a sample of which includes the following.

- Planned and presented a Commission workshop with the Commissioner's group at the WAFWA annual meeting.
- Met and consulted with the Colorado Division of Wildlife and Colorado State University on joint efforts between CDOW and CSU for development of a leadership program in the CSU College of Natural Resources.
- Conducted 3 two-day Effective Supervision workshops for 90 Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission employees.
- Conducted a Landowner Advisory Council training session on citizen participation with Missouri Dept. of Conservation staff.
- Conducted a one-day comprehensive management system workshop on-site for 25 Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency employees.
- Conducted a half-day *Commissions and Boards* workshop for Colorado Division of Wildlife staff and commissioners.
- Conducted a two-day *Commissions and Boards* Workshop for South Dakota staff and Commissioners.
- Conducted a two-day *Commissions and Boards* Workshop for Iowa staff and Commissioners.
- Conducted a two-day *Teambuilding* workshop for New Hampshire Management Team staff.
- Conducted a half-day *Commissions and Boards* Workshop for New Hampshire.
- Conducted a two-day *Commissions and Boards* Workshop for Montana staff and Commissioners.
- Conducted Seven Habits of Highly Effective People Workshop for Alaska Department of Fish and Game.
- Conducted a two-day Franklin Covey 4 Roles of Leadership course for Georgia Department of Natural Resources, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, Pennsylvania Game Commission, and another workshop for Alaska Department of Fish and Game.
- Worked with PA Fish and Boat on planning their leadership development programs.

For more information on MAT and their services offered to state fish and wildlife agencies, please visit www.matteam.org or contact Dr. Sally Guynn at 304-876-7395, Dr. Dwight Guynn at 304-876-7387, or Jake Faibisch at 304-876-7915, sallyg@matteam.org, dwrightg@matteam.org or jacobf@matteam.org.

MIGRATORY BIRD CONSERVATION

North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) – Between the U.S. NABCI Committee's winter meeting and its summer meeting (August 2006), the Subcommittees have advanced the work plan.

The Communications Subcommittee developed a presentation on integrated bird conservation and NABCI that Bruce McCloskey presented to the SEAFWA and NEAFWA Directors and will be presenting to the WAFWA and MAFWA Directors in July 2006. The intent of the presentation was to inform State Agency Directors about what NABCI is working on and what each state can do to engage in and implement integrated bird conservation. The Communications Subcommittee continues to publish the All Bird Bulletin and promote integrated bird conservation.

The Conservation Design Subcommittee has identified presenters for the Association's 2006 Annual Meeting Plenary Session. The Subcommittee is working with presenters to develop presentations and identify the major messages of the session. Although much of the conservation design data and information is bird-based, the products of conservation design can be used to implement proactive conservation actions for all species. The Plenary Session will provide a basic introduction to conservation design, examples from around the country and how it could help implement the State Wildlife Action Plans for all species and habitats.

The Trinational NABCI Committee is advancing international conservation efforts on various fronts with a focus on promoting regional alliances (joint ventures like partnerships) in Mexico and securing new and innovative funding sources for bird conservation by promoting and soliciting funding for continentally important projects. The continentally important projects are being developed from five priority sites in Mexico (Janos, Yucatan, Marismas Nacionales, Laguna Madre, and El Triunfo) and linked to sites and Joint Ventures in the US and Canada through common priority species. Currently they are in the early stages of developing proposals for the US and Canadian sites. It is anticipated that the proposals will be completed in fall 2006.

The newly formed Private Lands Subcommittee is looking at how NABCI can improve the conservation of birds on private lands across the country. Recommendations that will be presented to the US NABCI Committee in August for discussion include developing an updated guide to the farm bill for conservationists, developing a workshop for the NRCS biologist across the country on bird conservation on private lands, engaging in the Farm Bill reauthorization process through the Association's Agricultural Conservation Committee, and engaging in the Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP) assessment.

See below for information on NABCI Monitoring Subcommittee.

Farm Bill – As the Association's Farm Bill Coordinator addresses the reauthorization of the 2007 Farm Bill, the Migratory Bird Coordinator will assist where necessary on bird related issues in the Farm Bill. Both Coordinators will work as a liaison between the Bird Conservation Committee and the Agricultural Conservation Committee.

Bird Monitoring – The Coordinator continues to help facilitate the development of products on coordinated monitoring through the US NABCI Monitoring Subcommittee. The Subcommittee held its latest meetings in March and May 2006. The meetings focused on the completion of the draft report that is due out for NABCI Committee review in August 2006. A draft list of issues from the report was distributed at the North American Conference in March 2006. The objective of the framework is to provide information that will be useful in the implementation of the State Wildlife Action Plans and the plans of other management agencies.

The Migratory Bird Coordinator and the Association's Science and Research Liaison are working with the USGS and the NPS on the Natural Resource Monitoring Partnership (NRMP) to develop a Monitoring Protocol Library and a Monitoring "Locator." They will include an Internet accessible, searchable database that provides information on monitoring protocols and ongoing and past monitoring programs. The most recent workshop of the NRMP helped finalize the databases. The second version should be up and running on the website (<http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/brd/MonitoringPartnership.htm>) in late summer 2006.

Bald Eagle Grant Advisory Team – The Migratory Bird Coordinator is a member of the Bald Eagle Grant Advisory Team developed under the provisions of the proposed *American Bald Eagle Recovery and National Emblem Commemorative Coin Act* (H.R. 4116). The Team has started preparing drafts of proposed application forms, guidelines, project rating forms, etc. The Team has also drafted a list of major points or topics to be included in the guidelines.

Nongame Migratory Bird Consultation between the States and the USFWS – The Migratory Bird Coordinator and Brian Millsap of the USFWS were asked to support a working group under the Bird Conservation Committee at the September 2004 Association meeting. Working Group members include Marvin Moriarty (USFWS, R5 director), Dave Sharp (USFWS, Central Flyway representative), Brad Andres (USFWS, Shorebird Plan Coordinator), Larry Niles (NJ), David Cobb (NC), Randy Kreil (ND), Tom Hauge (WI), Terry Johnson (AZ), Dean Harrigal (SC, Atlantic Flyway Rep.), Mike Rabe (AZ, Pacific Flyway Rep.), Rocky Beach (WA), Brian Smith (KY), Lee Pfannmuller (MN), Martin Damus and Steve Wendt (Canada), and Ariel Rojo (SEMARNAT) and Humberto Berlanga (CONABIO) (Mexico). The purpose of the working group was to address the need for a structured system for the USFWS and the States to consult on nongame migratory bird regulatory issues.

The working group presented a report to the Bird Conservation Committee at the North American in March 2005 and presented a follow-up proposal on the Expanded Flyway System at the September 2005 Association meeting. The idea of an Expanded Flyway System was endorsed by the Bird Conservation Committee and the Association.

The Expanded Flyway Report was also presented in July at the Flyway Council and technical section meetings, the State regional association meetings, and the State Wildlife Diversity Program Managers meeting. The four Flyways and the Regional Association supported the proposal with some concerns. The concerns focused on workload, cost, the Service's ability to implement the proposal, and State travel restrictions. Both reports and background on the Flyway System are located on the Association's website at (http://www.fishwildlife.org/bird_conservation/bird_conservation.htm).

Implementation of an Expanded Flyway System has begun with the nomination of state fish and wildlife agency personnel to the nongame migratory bird technical sections of each flyway. The sections have also developed bylaws and the Central, Pacific, and Atlantic Flyway nongame technical sections met in February and March 2006. Each Flyway Council has updated their bylaws and MOUs to reflect the changes. The Central, Pacific and Atlantic Flyway nongame technical sections provided comments to their respective councils on Bald Eagle management and delisting in May 2006. All the nongame technical sections will be meeting in July and will be discussing a Peregrine Falcon EA that was released in June, a Peregrine Falcon EA on the harvest of migrants that will be released in fall 2006, the sustainable harvest of songbirds in Mexico, and other pending issues.

State Wildlife Action Plans – As the States completed the development of the State Wildlife Action Plans, the Coordinator has shifted her support from development to implementation. Currently the Coordinator is working on support for the implementation of monitoring and on the implementation of regional projects developed as a result of the Duke Foundation grant. Extracting the regional and national priorities from the Strategies will be critical for identifying the priority issues. A first stage of this is the development of a workshop for the states within the

Atlantic Flyway to identify priorities and develop a means of pulling bird conservation information out of the plans and putting it in a useful format. This project is being done in conjunction with the USFWS and is funded by NBII.

NBII – Bird Conservation Node – The Bird Conservation Node’s Strategic Plan is complete but the Coordinator continues to work with the Node to make sure state interests are represented on the Node Guidance Team that is being created.

Shorebird Conservation Planning – The Association’s Migratory Bird Coordinator continues to be an active member of the WSHRN-US committee and the Shorebird Initiative. The Coordinator is keeping up to date on State issues surrounding the Red Knots and horseshoe crabs in the Mid-Atlantic.

Bird Conservation Committee – The Committee has developed a guidance document to better focus what the Committee and its working groups address. The guidance document was finalized after the 2005 Association meeting. The Committee’s North American meeting included discussions on avian influenza, NABCI’s Trinational coordinated projects, the webless game bird program, the North American Monitoring Partnership, and other topics.

Wind Power Development – Along with the Association’s Science and Research Liaison, Steve Ugoretz (Wisconsin DNR), and Russ Mason (NV DOW), we developed a symposium on wind energy at the 2006 North American Conference. The goal of the symposium was to spark discussions among state fish and wildlife agencies, state utility commissions and siting authorities, and the wind energy development industry on the impacts of wind energy development on wildlife populations and their management. Follow up information can be found on the Association’s website.

As a team, we are also representing the Association and the States on the National Wind Coordinating Committee (NWCC) and working with the USFWS to update the USFWS Interim Guidelines for wind development through the FACA process.

Through the newly created Association Energy and Wildlife Policy Committee, the Coordinator will engage with the wind subcommittee. Potential issues include USFWS FACA Committee, interactions with the public utility commissions, development of regional guidance for states, and increased communication with federal agencies in the US, Canada and Mexico on wind energy guidance development.

Avian Influenza – The USDA and USGS were recently given mandates to develop a management plan for avian influenza that includes a continental survey. The Migratory Bird Coordinator in coordination with other Association staff participated in the development of the plan to make sure States’ needs and concerns were addressed. Numerous discussions were held at the Association’s annual meeting in September 2005 and at the North American meeting. The next step is the completion of Flyway-level implementation plans, from which states can tier off their individual action plans. The Flyway Councils with the help from Association staff will have the lead on this issue for the states.

MULTISTATE CONSERVATION GRANT PROGRAM

At the Association’s Annual Meeting in September 2005, the state directors approved 23 “priority projects” for the 2006 Multistate Conservation Grant Program (MSCGP). The Association’s priority list was submitted to the USFWS for their consideration. In December, the USFWS approved all the recommended projects and issued grant agreements to grantees. For a complete list of the newly funded projects, please visit http://www.fishwildlife.org/multistate_grants.htm and view the “AFWA’s 2006 Priority List of Multistate Projects.”

The Association kicked off the 2007 grant cycle in November 2005 with the annual solicitation of proposed National Conservation Needs (NCNs) – each Association committee and Regional Association was allowed to propose one NCN by the February 17th deadline. An informational meeting was held in early January 2006 with non-governmental organizations who were encouraged to actively participate in the MSCGP process including submitting NCNs to Committees for consideration. We received 17 proposed NCNs for the 2007 MSCGP. The National Grants Committee reviewed and recommended four NCNs that were approved during the Business Meeting at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference.

Beginning in April, proposals were solicited to address those NCNs. Twenty-two proposals have been received and assigned to various committees for evaluation and ranking. Final action on these proposals is anticipated at the Business Meeting in September 2006.

The Association's current Multistate projects, including those approved for the 2006 MSCGP cycle

The Association is currently working on several Multistate grants:

- State Wildlife Grant Plan Development: National Coordinated Assistance for all 50 States
- Summary of the Best Current Practices for Recruiting Participants in Hunting, Angling, Boating and Shooting Sports
- Representation of the Western, Southeastern, Northeastern and Midwest Associations of F&W Agencies in International Conventions & Protocols
- Coordination of the National Fish Habitat Initiative
- Management Assistance Team
- Multistate Conservation Grant Program Coordination
- The Conservation Communication Team
- A Communications Plan for the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies to Benefit State Fish and Wildlife Agencies
- Unwanted Aquatic Species: A 3-Year Project to Address State/Regional Issues
- Complete the Approval Requirements for AQUI-S®, Zero Withdrawal Anesthetic
- Data-Driven Strategies to Recruit and Retain Anglers
- Development and coordination, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies North American Conservation Education Strategy
- Clarifying Population Objectives for Waterfowl Habitat and Harvest Management
- Training Opportunities for New Trapper Education Program Materials
- Review of Conservation Practices Used on Conservation Reserve Program Land
- Evaluating the Integration of Fish & Wildlife Conservation as a Primary Resource Concern in the Conservation Security Program.

For details on projects being conducted by the Association using Multistate Conservation Grant funds, please refer to other sections in this report, such as National Fish Habitat Initiative, Furbearer Resources and BMP Outreach Activities, Public Affairs, and Management Assistance Team. For information on other current and past Multistate Projects, please visit <http://faims.fws.gov>.

Please visit http://www.fishwildlife.org/multistate_grants.htm for more information about the MSCGP. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Kelly Miller Reed at kreed@fishwildlife.org, or at 202-624-7890.

NATIONAL CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

The Association joined with a number of like-minded conservation organizations to develop a National Conservation Leadership Institute (NCLI) to train future leaders in fish and wildlife conservation. This initiative has been integrated into the Association's leadership initiative under the guidance of the Management Assistance Team and the Leadership and Professional Development Committee. Beginning in 2006 the NCLI will provide an annual opportunity for state, federal and private fish and wildlife professionals to attend a top-rate leadership development program. Developed to help conservation organizations meet the challenge of continued leadership as current leaders retire from the workforce, the Institute will combine leadership and management development training with exposure to the history and current challenges of fish and wildlife conservation in North America.

The initial class will convene in the fall of 2006. Over 60 applications were received for the inaugural class, and final selections are currently underway.

A board of directors for the Institute is working under the leadership of John Baughman, and the Board is coordinating necessary work to move from concept to reality including development and execution of a fundraising strategy. The Association's Management Assistance Team is coordinating curriculum development. While significant funds have been raised to initiate the program in 2006, fundraising efforts for 2006 and for future years continue.

Additional information is available via the NCLI website (www.conservationleadership.org).

NATIONAL FISH HABITAT INITIATIVE

The National Fish Habitat Action Plan was endorsed at the Association's Business Meeting in March 2006. Additionally, the Action Plan was endorsed by the Secretary of the US Department of Commerce, Carlos Gutierrez and the Acting Secretary of the Department of the Interior, Lynn Scarlett at a large public ceremony at the 2006 Congressional Casting Call event in Washington, DC on 24 April 2006. With formal adoption, the effort now moves from a focus on plan development to plan implementation.

President Cooper and Executive Vice President Baughman have been working with other members of the Executive Leadership Team, Core Work Group Chair Doug Austen and Fisheries and Water Resources Policy Committee Chair Doug Hansen to select members to the inaugural National Fish Habitat Board. Plans are underway to name the Board by mid-July and hold the initial Board meeting in September 2006.

The Science and Data Teams have collectively prepared a draft of the Science and Data Report outlining the strategy for its assessment that will be underway over the next several months. The Association-USGS NFHI Liaison has worked cooperatively with the Science and Data Teams to provide information gathered from the States through the Aquatic Habitat Restoration Information Survey and Database. Arrangements with USGS Biological Resources Discipline to continue funding of the Liaison position are underway. The work plan for the second year includes a continuation of State restoration project collection and database structure enhancement to ensure synthesis with the future online clearinghouse for the National Fish Habitat Action Plan. The Liaison has also assumed responsibility for initial development of the web-based tool that will be used as a NFHI data delivery system. A Multistate Conservation Grant has been awarded to the American Fisheries Society Computer Users Section to hold a National Freshwater Fisheries Database Summit II, under the auspices of the National Fish Habitat Initiative. The Association-USGS Liaison will contribute information and experience gained from the database project while providing representation on the Planning Steering Committee.

The NFHI continues to operate at the Association under a Multistate Conservation Grant through 2007, with a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant for coordination services and through the ongoing notable support of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. In addition, the Bush Administration requested \$3 million for the National Fish Habitat Action Plan in the President's proposed Fiscal Year 2007 budget, compared to \$1 million that was made available for FY2006. The funding, which appears in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) Fisheries Program budget, supports fish habitat projects identified by partnerships established under the action plan.

For more information, contact Eric Schwaab at eschwaab@fishwildlife.org or Andrea Ostroff at aostroff@fishwildlife.org, or call (202) 624-7890.

NORTH AMERICAN WATERFOWL MANAGEMENT PLAN (NAWMP) COORDINATOR'S REPORT

It is a pleasure to report to you on my activities as the Association's NAWMP Coordinator. I would like to thank all of you for your assistance and support. I would also like to thank the Canadian provinces, Canadian Wildlife Service and the NAWMP partners in Canada for continuing to support the coordinator position at the Association. A number of NAWMP and NAWCA (North American Wetlands Conservation Act) activities have taken place in the United States, Canada and Mexico since my last report. This report will cover some of the major items.

North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA)

NAWCA provides funding for cooperative public-private wetland conservation projects throughout North America which support the goals of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. NAWCA allocates to Canada and Mexico between 30 to 60 percent of available funds and currently Canada receives 45%.

All states have benefited from NAWCA standard and small grants programs. Thousands of projects have been put on the ground in North America, including a total of more than 23 million acres of wetlands and associated uplands in the U.S. and Canada. Partners in more than 1,300 projects have received more than \$720 million in grants. There has been at least one NAWCA funded project in every state, including Alaska and Hawaii.

This July, the Canadian Intermountain Joint Venture will be hosting the US NAWCC. Both the US and Canadian councils will be meeting in July. As one of the most recent Joint Ventures in Canada, the CIJV has published a prospectus entitled "Something Ventured Something Gained." For more information please go to www.cijv.ca. The first meeting of the Neotropical Advisory Group will also take place at that time in Cranbrook, B.C.

Appropriations – The Association went beyond the President's FY 2007 budget request of \$41.6 million for NAWCA and recommended funding at \$50 million. The Act is authorized to \$75 million for FY 2007.

We are working with a number of partners to have HR 5539 passed to reauthorize NAWCA at \$75 million for another five years. We also asked Congress to increase the President's request of \$11.8 million to \$15.1 million in FY 2007 for Joint Ventures.

The Association requested \$5 million for the Neotropical Migratory Bird Act. While the Act expired in 2005, reauthorization legislation has been introduced in the House and Senate. Congress is considering expanding the Act to increase the authorized funding levels, broadening the geographic scope to include Canada and reducing the matching funds requirement.

Canadian NAWMP/NAWCA Initiatives

The NABCI/NAWCC Canada Secretariat has been integrated into the Canadian Wildlife Service and now is located at the Environment Canada headquarters. Richard Pratt is the Executive Secretary. Michele Brenning has been appointed as the new Director General of the Canadian Wildlife Service.

The Canadian program is so successful that it has expanded to include waterbird, shorebird and landbird interests through the Canadian NABCI Council. Canada has achieved over 63% of its NAWMP goals since 1986. During that period, Canada has spent over \$427 million on NAWMP and wetland and wetland-associated habitats.

The Western Boreal Forest Initiative covers over 2 million square kilometers containing a mosaic of wetland complexes, flood plains and river deltas from the Yukon Territory to Manitoba. The region supports a significant component of the continental population for some waterfowl species of concern such as scaup and scoters. Furthermore, waterfowl produced in this region use all four Flyways. As work continues, the full importance of the Boreal Forest to other bird species is just beginning to be understood. The overall objective of this program is to conserve wetland and upland habitat based on priority areas to sustain western boreal water bird populations. Agreements have been signed with Aboriginal people, industry and Ducks Unlimited. Progress continues on expanding the program into eastern Canada while aligning it within existing joint ventures.

While the Boreal Forest is the second most significant breeding ground in Canada, it should be noted that the focus of NAWMP activity will remain on the Prairie Provinces. The priorities of the PHJV are integrated landscape management, biological foundation, policy leadership, governance of the PHJV, marketing, communications and education, and developing a viable resource base/PHJV capacity.

The PHJV has recently produced a set of five "fact sheets" on policy, conservation partnerships, science, achievements and the PHJV as a strategic investment. Contact the PHJV at phjv@ec.gc.ca for copies of the fact sheets or for more information.

An action plan for the recovery of pintail has been completed and distributed. The Northern Pintail Action Group has established as its highest priority the reduction of cultivated land and spring tillage in key pintail breeding areas. The Alberta NAWMP partners are using both direct habitat securement and policy initiatives to meet this priority.

The Eastern Habitat Joint Venture continues to move ahead with finalizing an implementation agreement as well as a corporate program.

The Canadian NAWMP Committee membership now includes M. Anderson and I. Barnett (DUC), R. Milton (NS), A. Tremblay, Wm Gummer and S. Wendt (CWS). David Brackett, former Director General of the CWS is now the President of Wildlife Habitat Canada.

You may wish to explore the website of the NAWMP in Canada for more information, including the annual Canadian NAWMP report entitled "Habitat Matters" at www.nawmp.ca.

Association President's Task Force

I would like to thank all of the states and organizations who generously provide NAWCA "match" money to support Canadian NAWMP projects. We need to continue our work on the prairies and elsewhere in Canada to provide good quality habitat for waterfowl populations. While most duck species have recovered to well above their normal levels, some species (for example, sea ducks, pintails, and scaup) either continue to decline or they are recovering very slowly.

Since there has been a substantial increase in NAWCA funding over the past few years, we will need additional support in raising the non-federal U.S. "match" money for Canadian NAWCA

grants. Without your assistance we will not be able to achieve the goals set by the NAWMP. We must not lose sight of the fact that the goals of the NAWMP have not all been accomplished. There is a significant amount of work that needs to be done in Canada to ensure the fulfillment of the NAWMP.

An Association Task Force was formed under the Bird Conservation Committee to develop strategies to increase state contributions to Canada as non-federal U.S. match for NAWCA/NAWMP projects.

The Task Force was chaired by Scott Yaich, who is also chair of the Waterfowl Working Group. Membership included representatives from each of the four Regional Associations, the four Flyways, WMI, DUI and the Association. The Report of the Association Task Force on State Contributions to Canada is available on the Association web site www.fishwildlife.org. The Report contains six recommendations related to maintaining the \$10 million Association funding goal: apportionment among the States; use of State/NAWCA relationship as consideration in evaluating state contributions; establishing a minimum partnership level; developing five year plans; and a review process for the draft recommendations. We have met with each of the Regional Associations; all endorsed the Report and its recommendations. A resolution was passed in support of the Report and its recommendations at the Association's Business meeting in September 2005. We will be contacting you in the near future to offer assistance in developing your five-year plan.

NAWMP 20th Anniversary

There will be a number of activities in Canada and the United States to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the NAWMP. Congratulations to all who have been a part of the greatest conservation success story in North America.

Continental Assessment

The first comprehensive continental assessment of progress in achieving the biological goals of NAWMP is now underway. The assessment will identify desired biological outcomes and habitat needs, strengthen the scientific foundation of NAWMP, re-evaluate the resources needed to attain the full vision of NAWMP and improve the effectiveness of institutional structures and relationships. A draft of the NAWMP Continental Assessment Report has been completed and reviewed by the Plan Committee. It is anticipated that draft recommendations will be addressed during the Association's annual meeting in September 2006.

North American Bird Conservation Initiative

The North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) continues to move forward in Canada, the United States and Mexico. All three countries have signed a Memorandum of Understanding. Next steps are to develop an action plan to meet the 12 objectives in the MOU.

Canada is also involved in the Arctic to Argentina Initiative, a science and conservation strategy for species and habitat in the Western Hemisphere. It focuses on action for science, habitat partnership and leadership.

Other Matters

- a. Canada has passed legislation to more effectively protect migratory birds and the marine environment from the negative effects caused by the discharge of harmful substances, such as oil, into marine waters. The Birds Oiled at Sea Bill directs any fines to Environment Canada.
- b. The MBCA has been changed in Canada to provide for a regulatory framework that could address the incidental take of migratory birds.
- c. NAWCA technical assessment question 3 for the U.S. Standard Grants Program continues to be revised in order to improve the quality of geographic/species priority information and to establish equity among all bird groups in the NAWCA application and proposal review

process. Proposals are evaluated based upon 1) overall quality; 2) the extent of overlap among the four bird plans, and 3) the quality of the scientific basis.

- d. A “Coordinated Bird Monitoring Technical Working Group” was established under the Association’s Science and Research Committee. Canada is renovating its migratory bird program and also developing a coordinated bird monitoring program which will be complementary to the U.S. program.
- e. Canada has developed a number of environmental stewardship programs such as Environmental Farm Planning and the National Farm Stewardship Program under its Agriculture Policy Framework which is modeled after the Farm Bill in the United States.
- f. We are beginning preparations for “Canada Night” at the 2006 Association Annual Meeting. It is a reception and award ceremony to recognize all of the states and other partners that have provided non-federal matching funds to support Canadian NAWCA/NAWMP grants.
- g. The Association will be administering an NCN entitled “Clarifying Population Objectives for Waterfowl Habitat and Harvest Management.”

The proposal objectives are stated as:

- i. Clarifying the biological meaning of North American Waterfowl Management Plan population objectives and the implication for monitoring and assessment.
- ii. Develop options for incorporating those objectives in Adaptive Harvest Management and describe the implications of those options for both harvest and habitat management.
- iii. Engage all relevant stakeholders in consultations to identify a preferred option for adoption and implementation.

I look forward to working with you over the coming year.

PROCEEDINGS

The Association staff continues its efforts to eliminate the backlog of proceedings publication. The 1997 *Proceedings of the Association’s Annual Convention* were recently mailed to all members. The 2001 Proceedings were published and distributed in November, 2004. As we prepare for publication of the 2003 Proceedings, we are assessing electronic publication options in addition to hard copy preparation.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Strategic Communications—The Association changed its name back in March, with the public launch of “Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies” occurring on May 1. With the help of updated print and electronic (Website) materials, the communications director is working to re-vamp the Association’s image and brand. The transition has been relatively smooth. In the last two months since the launch, there have been more phone calls from the media than we had in 2005 alone. The website continues to experience upgrades and updates. It will be a work in progress throughout the next several months. Rachel Brittin, the Association’s Public Affairs Director, will focus on viral marketing, list-serve communications, and building on the new Agency Information Database. The new database will be a wonderful new way to expand our media relations efforts, but isn’t expected to be complete for several more months.

Working on Behalf of the State Agencies—The Association’s Public Affairs Director, Rachel Brittin continues to oversee Association publications, field media calls, and coordinate fish and wildlife community outreach and background collateral. Brittin will continue to work with agency leaders and information and education contacts to build a plan for responding effectively and rapidly to national conservation issues. Currently, she is working on putting together a national communications plan and workshop (Annual Meeting in September) for wildlife conflict issues.

The Association's 2006 Annual Meeting—Preparations for the 2006 Annual Meeting in Aspen, Colorado are in full swing. The Association's 2006 Annual Meeting has been orchestrated to run a little differently this year. The Directors' Retreat will be held all day Sunday at an off-site location in the Aspen area, while the General Session and Opening Reception move to Monday. Tuesday night, the Association will hold "Canada Night," which happens once every four years and is sponsored by our Canadian members. The Awards Banquet will remain on Wednesday night, and we are discussing the idea of providing entertainment during the evening. The Colorado Division of Wildlife is insisting that there be "no ties" or formal business attire of any sort.

Website Changes—Following the goal of the Association becoming the "go-to" information source for all the agencies, as well as for media and the general public, the Association continues to update the website as regularly as possible. The "Members Only" section is still not quite ready, but this is due to a need for updating some current contact lists and adding some list serves. This function should be available by mid-July.

Electronic Newsletter—As part of the re-branding effort, the Association has launched a revamped newsletter look in coordination with the new website. As the Association's name has changed, "Inside IAFWA" no longer works for the name. The next newsletter is now under a new name, "Fish & Wildlife in Focus."

Looking Forward

The Association will continue to follow its strategic communications plan, updating and incorporating new components as needed. This year, additions to the plan include:

- Design a memo: Identify and further investigate top I&E challenges and provide support from a national perspective.
- Continuation of the media campaigns, including Teaming with Wildlife; National Fish Habitat Initiative and others.
- Work to help administer the Conservation Education Coordinator Multistate Grant.

TEAMING WITH WILDLIFE

State Wildlife Funding Advocacy:

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 by the U.S. House of Representatives, but falls short of the \$74.7 million in the President's budget and the \$85 million supported by 226 members of Congress. Strong support for \$85 million came through in the Dear Colleague Letter, which gained more signatures than ever before and was strongly backed by the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus.

The Teaming with Wildlife Fly-In Day on March 1st was an enormous success again this year. Attended by 150 people from 42 states, an estimated 300 meetings with Congressional staff took place to discuss the importance of the State Wildlife Grants program and the new state wildlife action plans. The Teaming with Wildlife Steering Committee also hosted two key events. One was a packed Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus breakfast, where co-chairs Congressmen Putnam (R-FL) and Boswell (D-IA) opened the briefing with a statement of strong support for State Wildlife Grants. Four Representatives, Congressman Thompson (D-CA), Saxton (R-NJ), Kind (D-WI) and Hayes (R-NC), were awarded for being champions for wildlife. At an evening reception in the Senate, awards were also given to Senators Crapo (R-ID) and Nelson (D-NE). Senator Warner was presented with an award from the Virginia Teaming with Wildlife Coalition at his office, where he reaffirmed his strong support for this program and commitment to help achieve even greater funding. All spoke very eloquently of the need to prevent wildlife from becoming endangered.

Teaming with Wildlife Public Outreach Initiative

The Association continues its Public Outreach Initiative funded by the Doris Duke Foundation. Two polls have been completed, one of the general public and one of wildlife advocates, to gauge awareness of and opinions on wildlife conservation, funding, and the state wildlife action plans. Polling results and message training have been provided through in-person and interactive Webex to approximately 600 state agency staff from every state as well as conservation partners. Over 1,000 *State Wildlife Action Plan Message Kits* containing tools and resources to help inform, inspire, and motivate the public to support increased funding for implementation of their state's wildlife action plan have been distributed. A half-day workshop at the Association for Conservation Information conference in July 2006 will provide hands-on training to state agency I&E staff on the Teaming with Wildlife Outreach Initiative.

The communications campaign has thus far been highly successful in that coverage of the state wildlife action plans has been positive and on message. A November 2005 press event with then-Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton resulted in good media coverage on the submission of all 56 state and territorial wildlife action plans. The Secretary also called the State Wildlife Grants Program "our nation's primary program for keeping species healthy and off the list of threatened and endangered species." At least 16 states issued press releases and gained media coverage upon approval of their wildlife action plan.

Teaming with Wildlife hosted a press event in June 2006 at the Outdoor Writers Association of America conference to provide an overview of the state wildlife action plans and need for new and greater funding. Over 70 reporters from around the nation attended. Further outreach to reporters is planned.

The Teaming with Wildlife program of the Association released two major publications this year. The *State Wildlife Grants Five-Year Accomplishment Report* was published in May and hand delivered to every member of Congress during the appropriations deliberations. The report was also distributed to every state agency and national partners. A summary report on the wildlife action plans will be released in August with similar distribution. That publication includes a four-page summary of every state's action plan. Additional synthesis and publications are in the works.

Teaming with Wildlife Coalition

The Association has been working with Teaming with Wildlife coalition leaders in the states to energize the 3,500-member organizations to support the state wildlife action plans and call for funding. A coalition workshop to kick-off the new initiative was held in November of 2005 and served as a starting point for many new state coalition leaders. A "Coalition Toolkit" was released in January with many tools to help coalition leaders build and strengthen Teaming with Wildlife in their state. A second coalition workshop took place in conjunction with communications trainings prior to the Fly-In on February 27th and 28th. Many states expect to meet the goal of growing each state coalition to 100 groups by the fall of 2006, bringing the national coalition to over 5,000 organizations and businesses, providing a powerful voice for wildlife funding initiatives on the state and federal levels.

State Wildlife Action Plan Implementation

Even as the wildlife action plans continue to move through the final stages of the approval process, the Association is moving ahead with support for states in implementation.

The Association is providing support directly to agencies in building strong programs by sharing information and effective practices across agencies. The Association and the Fish and Wildlife Service are jointly organizing a "One-Year Later" Meeting to be held from July 30-August 2 at the National Conservation Training Center in West Virginia. This conference will provide an opportunity to learn how other states are approaching implementation and help to forge new partnerships to move our wildlife action plans forward.

In addition, the Association is continuing to work with federal agency partners, other state agencies, and non-governmental organizations to boost awareness of the wildlife action plans and secure commitments of support for their implementation. A review and synthesis of the plans by the Association will identify crosscutting issues and high leverage opportunities to help other agencies and conservation organizations incorporate the action plans into their own activities. The Association and several other agency partners are continuing to move ahead on developing some collaborative resources to improve the coordination of natural resource monitoring, a monitoring protocols library and a monitoring "locator" tool. Regional workshops to identify regional projects based on the wildlife action plans are already taking place, with funding support from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

For more information on the state wildlife action plans see the "State Wildlife Strategies" section of the Teaming with Wildlife web page at <http://www.teaming.com>. This site also links to each of the states that have websites on their own wildlife action plan related efforts.

For more information on the Teaming with Wildlife initiative, contact Naomi Edelson at (202) 624-7890 or nedelson@fishwildlife.org.



**See U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Reports
(2 pages of reports - Pages 171a – 171b in Hard Copy Proceedings)**

On USFWS website

<http://www.fws.gov/offices/H.DaleHall.htm>

See U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Reports
(26 pages of reports - Pages 173a – 173jj in Hard Copy Proceedings)

On USFWS website (under Regions 3 and 6)

<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/news/publications.html>

Kenneth Russell
Spirit of the Shack Award
District Fisheries Biologist
Illinois Department of Conservation

After attending college in Missouri, Ken joined the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (then Dept. of Conservation) on November 1, 1962 as a District Fisheries Biologist. Ken quickly achieved a reputation as a superior fish management biologist, particularly in the areas of small impoundments and strip mine lakes. He participated in the original AFS multi-state small pond management study, and has written and taught small impoundment techniques throughout his career. He has led graduate students on small impoundment research projects and species specific management research. Ken has worked tirelessly on numerous ecological issues both within and outside of the fisheries realm. His recent efforts include massasauga rattlesnake protection and habitat restoration, and watershed protection.

After almost 44 years on the job, Ken Russell is still the most hard working and productive individual I have ever had the privilege to work with. In a modern era of unions, compensatory time off, and regimented work schedules, Ken routinely works 50 or 60 hour work weeks, takes calls at all hours, works weekends, and refuses to accept any compensatory time or other means to document the many hours he donates to the people of Illinois and the resources he manages.

Specific projects, work or accomplishments relevant to the award:

This award is dedicated to the spirit of Aldo Leopold, who late in life became increasingly focused on educating the public regarding conservation issues. With 44 years experience as a manager and educational mentor, Ken Russell is equally focused upon educating the public on educational issues. Ken speaks to thousands of kids annually at Envirothons, Conservation Days, fishing expos, fishing derbies, scouting events, school assemblies, and individual classes. Just during the month of April, 2006, Ken gave 12 presentations to over 400 school children. During the same month he provided management assistance to 51 private and organizational waters and completed his spring surveys of public lakes. He has talks scheduled for over 500 children during the month of May. What is striking about this is the intensity Ken brings to his educational work. Many biologists participate in this type of activity with an air of entertainment as much as education. I have watched Ken drop to his knees to get at “kid level” and TEACH. After 44 years on the job, the ecological fire in his gut still burns very brightly, and he is determined to make the most over every educational opportunity. It is for this reason that I believe Ken Russell would be a very worthy recipient of the “Spirit of the Shack” honor.

Wayne Herndon
Fisheries Biologist of the Year
Fisheries Biologist
Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Wayne Herndon has been a Fisheries Biologist for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources since 1971. He was born and raised adjacent to the Illinois River, and has spent his professional career managing fish populations and habitat restoration projects in counties near the Illinois River. Throughout his career, Wayne has kept himself at the forefront of fisheries management and ecosystem restoration. He is probably best known for his work in flood plain marsh restoration, and muskie management. He has worked extensively on vegetative shifts and Eurasian milfoil control using habitat manipulation and innovative herbicide use. He has also focused on fisheries management issues on thermally loaded power plant lakes. Wayne is the “go to” guy for the latest and best techniques for any difficult management issue.

Specific projects, work or accomplishments relevant to the award:

Wayne Herndon’s first large scale marsh restoration effort occurred in 1980 on Spring Lake marsh. Due to his careful planning and efforts, this 1187 acre shallow marsh was converted from a muddy carp infested hole with no aquatic vegetation into a highly diverse aquatic habitat with excellent fish populations and excellent resting, feeding, and nesting habitat for resident and migratory birds. Wayne introduced muskellunge into Spring Lake, and subsequently worked to establish one of the finest muskie fisheries available anywhere. His studies of the muskie population ultimately led to the best data set on muskie age and growth available in the country and attended the 2005 Esocidae Symposium in Indianapolis. Wayne followed up on his marsh restoration knowledge by restoring marsh habitat to Hennepin/Hopper Levee and Drainage District in 2002. This effort has resulted in a blossoming 1500 acre marsh and is on the Science Advisory Team for The Nature Conservancy’s 4500 Emiquon Marsh restoration. As Eurasian milfoil has become a problem in these marshes Wayne has sought grants and developed techniques for control of this invasive species that are now beginning to be used by other states. These high quality marsh restorations would not have occurred without Wayne’s knowledge and expertise which have collectively resulted in very significant habitat restoration for the entire Midwest and recreational opportunity with Illinois.

Wayne Herndon has also been very active in management and research on thermally loaded lakes. He has proposed and conducted research projects and been innovative in management efforts to increase recreational opportunities on the thermal lakes. He first introduced blue catfish into these lakes in 1999 and this has lead to a significant and very popular sport fishery for this species. He has just documented the first natural reproduction of blue catfish on one of the thermal lakes this spring. He is also working on white bass population dynamics in thermally loaded lakes.

I believe Wayne Herndon’s innovative techniques, his leadership, and his knowledge of the science make him an excellent candidate for the prestigious MAFWA Fisheries Biologist of the Year Award.

Ray Norrgard
Biologist of the Year Award
Natural Resources Program Consultant
MN DNR Division of Fish & Wildlife

A life-long passion for waterfowl, degree in wildlife management, 30 years of private and public sector waterfowl management experience and long-term effective partnering have launched Ray Norrgard into the heart of Minnesota's present landmark waterfowl issues and activities. This year's centerpiece is Minnesota's Long Range Duck Recovery Plan (attached), completed in April and the result of a complicated and challenging collaborative agency and stakeholder effort effectively led by Ray, the plan's primary author and chief spokesman. In brief, this most ambitious duck plan in Minnesota history calls for an average duck breeding population of 1,000,000 birds, management and enhancement of 2,000,000 acres of wetlands and grasslands, and funding of \$3,000,000,000. Approved by MN's DNR Commissioner and Governor, it was launched with conservation community support and little significant landowner opposition.

Central in essential companion activities, Ray accelerated Minnesota's wetland/grassland management and enhancement efforts through an innovative approach, the Working Lands Initiative (WLI), a "mini" North American Waterfowl Plan. This effort supported by the Governor and fueled by agencies, NGO's and agricultural groups, promises to be the Plan's delivery system through the use of broad-based local focus groups. The WLI uses the latest geographic information system technology to help focus wetland/grassland management and enhancement efforts along with willing landowners to most efficiently optimize multiple conservation benefits. Ray is also the DNR liaison to the citizen Duck Rally Committee, which has put 8,000 wetland supporters on the capitol steps in 2005-06 supporting dedicated (% of sales tax) funding and WMA bonding.

The Plan is a logical culmination of Ray's many other waterfowl conservation initiatives. He was a key in the 2000 DNR Duck Fall Use Plan ("Restoring MN Wetland and Waterfowl Hunting Heritage"), which identified MN migrating waterfowl management problems and solutions. Ray's initiatives and experience in waterfowl management planning, shallow lakes, waterfowl refuges, adult hunter education and waterfowl regulations are what make him so credible with stakeholders and extremely effective in merging conservation science, stakeholder expectations and political viewpoints into a comprehensive waterfowl management plan for Minnesota. MN Fish & Wildlife Director Dave Schad says Ray's impressive success is a credit to his non-threatening but straight-forward "educator's" manner of providing potentially unsettling information to skeptical audiences. Ray's recent accomplishments truly meets your phrase "unparalleled initiative towards the better understanding of wildlife and their conservation".

Ray Norrgard Wildlife Biologist of the Year Award Nomination

Specific Projects and Work Accomplishments Relevant to the Award:

Ray Norrgard is the consummate professional, who leaves huge conservation footprints but is very quiet and humble about his own roles and impacts.

- * Primary author of MN Long-range Duck Recovery Plan (see attached)
- * Key staff person in launching MN's Working Lands Initiative
- * Tirelessly makes presentations on the Duck Recovery Plan/Working Lands Initiative
- * Liaison to the private citizen Wetlands, Wildlife and Clean Water rally group, which has gotten the attention (8,000 supporters appeared on the capitol steps during the last two years) of elected officials, who are close to passing a constitutional amendment for dedicating a yet to be determined percent of the sales tax for conservation, which could generate in excess of \$100 million annually
- * Present Board Member - Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Joint Venture *Past chair of Mississippi Flyway Council Habitat Committee
- * Key in planning/participating in a decade of annual professional/citizen waterfowl symposia
- * Wrote "Wetland Complexity," a duck population recovery article in the 2005 Sept./Oct. Issue of the MN Conservation Volunteer, DNR magazine, for which he has won a 2006 award from the MN Association of Government Communicators.
- * Lead role in the present "Wildlife Corridors Program," a multi-partner, multi-million dollar effort for restoring and enhancing shallow lakes and upland nesting cover.
- * Worked on development of the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) program, a multi-million dollar program funded by charitable gambling for accomplishing significant habitat work now while building a billion dollar environmental trust fund for perpetual funding
- * Key statewide coordinator for early implementation of the RIM Program
- * Key in developing MN's first adult hunter education program materials
- * Regular participant in youth waterfowl education programs and camps
- * Key in development of MN Wild Rice Lake program
- * Kept MN Shallow Lake Program alive during mid-1990 severe budget cuts and grew the program to include five field staff

Work History

June, 1976	Started work for DNR Info and Education, Student/Para Professional
Sept. 1978	DNR Planning and Research Specialist
April 1979	DNR Planning Specialist
1980-1985	Left DNR to be Executive Director, MN Waterfowl Association
1985	Back at DNR, Wildlife Specialist – development of MN RIM Program
June, 1986	DNR Senior Planner for Ecological Services – Fish and Wildlife Strategic Plan development team member
Oct. 1987	DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife – RIM implementation coordinator
Jan. 1989	DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife – Shallow Lakes Program coordinator
Oct. 2000	DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife – Waterfowl Program Consultant

Kyle Drake
Law Enforcement Officer of the Year
Law Enforcement Officer
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Kyle Drake has developed a law enforcement program within his administrative area in Waukesha County that is well balanced including a blend of direct enforcement activities and information and educational programs designed to improve the public's understanding of the overall mission of the Department of Natural Resources. Kyle brings a strong resources and wildlife background into his work as a conservation warden. Kyle is comfortable and efficient in enforcing a wide variety of natural resources laws, and typically writes citations covering many enforcement areas. Kyle is always available to assist other wardens with field enforcement work, and is seen as a "field general" by his neighboring wardens. SER LE managers have recognized Kyle's work over the years.

He has received the following awards and recognition:

Twice SER Outstanding Safety/Education Program

Twice Outstanding Overall Conservation LE program, including 2005

Three Outstanding Environmental Enforcement Program, including 2005,

Outstanding public relations program award

The Valor Award at the 2004 Warden Conference.

Specific projects, work or accomplishments relevant to the award:

Kyle conducted 6 TV and 5 newspaper interviews and has appeared on the local cable channel "Police Beat" program. He is continuously contacted by the media during the seasons. He attends law enforcement night out, sports club meetings, and many public hearings on a variety of issues from effects of development on the Butlers' Garter Snake (an endangered species) to Chronic Wasting Disease public hearings. In addition to this effort, Kyle gave law presentations to 38 hunter education, boating education, ATV education, and snowmobile education last year.

Kyle was very involved in the planning and implementing of the recruit academy class boat enforcement training last year. The training was a week long, and included operations training of several different types of boats, law training, boat maintenance, and on the water firearms. He also attended instructor development class to become a Law Enforcement Standards Board certified academy instructor.

Kyle worked in several aspects of Urban Market, an undercover investigation involving the sale of panfish, including surveillance during the undercover portion of the investigation, takedown day, and follow up interviews. The case resulted in six individuals being charged with 10 crimes, total almost \$100,000 including natural resource assessments. Over 2000 illegal fish were seized during the investigation.

Kyle was a key contributor during the acquisition of property by the DNR to create a public access on North Lake. This was a controversial issue that received great attention from politicians and the media. Without Kyle's work and personal contacts this acquisition might not have been made.

Kyle is extremely strong in the area of environmental enforcement. He was involved in three enforcement conferences and the referral of Coldwater Creek Development for violations of NR 216 and Ch 30 resulting in a referral to Department Of Justice and a judgment in the amount of \$75,000.

He was involved in the investigation into contaminated groundwater in Pewaukee where Quad Graphics was the main suspect. Quad graphics has been purchasing bottled water for many area residents in the past several months. Kyle assisted EE staff with an inspection warrant at Pewaukee Tool and Dye and an inspection of Quad graphics in an attempt to determine the cause. The case is still pending.

Kyle assisted with enforcement conferences, investigation, and referral for Nuemann Enterprises. There were several NR 216 violations that allowed 6-8 inches of soil and mud to run off into a wetland, nearby cemetery, and Fowler Lake. Several defendants in the case spent over \$469,000 conducting cleanup and restoration activities, and were fined \$120,000.

Kyle conducts many investigations every year of complaints of NR 216, Ch 30, weed cutting, and other water law violations including 2 flights to monitor illegal fill placed into wetland and lakes by riparian landowners.

Kyle has been active in the area of disease control. He has been a point person for CWD issues and captive wildlife. He has been involved in the shooting effort, audits of deer farms and other facilities, and deer population surveys. Kyle also prioritizes baiting and deer feeding enforcement as part of this activity.

MAFWA EXCOM: (Presented to Doug Hansen, South Dakota)

I received your assignment to develop an award that the MAFWA would be able to present to our members that, for one reason or another, are no longer with us. I understand that the award was to serve as a way to thank an individual Director for service to the MAFWA. In an earlier draft we borrowed from other states award programs and developed some draft criteria that applied mostly to the Director-level members. At the risk of ignoring the duty I was given, I'd like to alter the assignment and take a different tact. Directors are important to the agencies that have responsibility to manage the fish and wildlife resources of the Midwest States. I won't argue that. In many States, the Director attends the MAFWA meetings and does great work for the team. However, in so many cases, it's not the Director that attends and represents the State, or actually tows the barge for this organization. I would like to consider changing the service award to include any upper level staff that has done yeoman's work for the MAFWA. I know that's different than the original assignment.

Here in Indiana, the highest honor the Governor could bestows on a Hoosier was to name them as a Sagamore of the Wabash. The term Sagamore is defined as follows:

A sagamore is the head of northeastern native american tribe. The word is generally synonymous with sachem, although sometimes a sachem is considered a chief of the first rank, and a sagamore one of the second rank. Sagamore can also refer to great man among the tribe to whom the chief would look for wisdom and advice.

Sagamore seems to cover a variety of people that play a leadership role in the MAFWA. The award I propose would be something like this:

For dedicated service to the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, on this _____ day of _____, 200__ the President names

John Smith

*Sagamore of the forest,
fields and streams*



Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies



REGIONAL COORDINATOR'S ANNUAL REPORT JULY, 2006

My report this year will begin with a review of highlights and conclude with a comparison of the use of my time between FY05 and FY06.

We enjoyed several highlights in the Association during the year beginning with getting the Farm Bill Coordinator position funded in Washington, D.C. (Jen Mock's position). Thanks to everyone for your help on this. John Baughman and I traveled to Kentucky to meet new Director Jon Gassett and his top staff, and I traveled to St. Paul to meet new Director Dave Schad and visit with Deputy Commissioner Mark Holsten and Deputy Director Larry Nelson. I view these trips as a very productive use of my time. I was not able to get to Illinois to greet new Director Sam Flood or to North Dakota to meet Terry Steinwand because, as they say in the Credence Clearwater Revival song, "I ran out of traveling money".

Executing the NFWF/Doris Duke grant to implement cross state border conservation opportunities in the Midwest State Wildlife Action Plans was another high point. We held a successful workshop of 40 some Midwest state agency and USFWS personnel in St. Louis last January. Getting our Conservation Enhancement Fund brochure out the door and almost printed was another highlight. We need to thank Rex Amack and his staff for doing the lay-out work on it. Now we just need to raise some money to build the Fund. Speaking of the Fund, our Association enjoyed the excellent cooperation and expertise of Carol Bambery of the Michigan DNR who is on loan to AFWA. Carol executed the incorporation of both the Fund and the Association and obtained 501©3 Federal Tax status for the Fund. Thanks, Carol!

Assisting with the planning of our annual convention is always a busy and fun thing. The South Dakota staff here, under the leadership of George Vandel and Larry Gigliotti, worked very hard and did a great job. Thanks to everyone. We landed 4 new affiliate members, built stronger interaction with our various committees, enjoyed excellent networking with AFWA and the other 3 regional associations, and improved our web site. Attending the AFWA Annual Meeting and the North American Conference and working closely with President Doug and the Executive Committee were other high points.

I thought it would be useful to do a comparison of the use of my time as your coordinator between the last two fiscal years to help understand how the Midwest Association is

evolving and growing. The most obvious thing the attached table shows is a growth in my hours spent on the job. I logged 129 more hours in FY06 than in FY05, or a 14 percent increase. The 1024 hours logged in FY06 exceeds my contract with the Association by 24 hours. I really did not realize I was over the limit until I ran the numbers. A close look at the table shows that categories in which I spend most of my work hours are travel, administration, and President/Executive Committee work assignments—in other words, helping run the Association. Work categories in which I spend the least amount of time are Federal agency and NGO networking. This is consistent in both years.

Areas that grew in use of my time in FY06 were hours spent assisting Directors (plus 21%) and carrying out assignments from the Executive Committee (plus 26%), grant execution (plus a whopping 77%), interaction with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and other regional associations (plus a whopping 75%), and planning the annual convention (plus 53%). Areas where decreases were notable between years were in report writing (-31%) and web site management (-15%). Other areas of time use were relatively unchanged between years.

The growth in time spent assisting Directors and working with the Executive Committee reflect an increasingly active Association. Our NFWF grant consumed nearly 100 hours of my time and although the Association was reimbursed \$3,000 to pay for my time, grants take a lot of time to administer and it is something we need to keep in mind in the future. The increase in time spent networking with AFWA and the other regional associations is a very helpful thing. Last, in terms of items that went up in hours, planning the annual meeting jumped quite a bit and I need to explain why. Since we meet in Wisconsin next summer and this is where I live, my good friend and colleague, Tom Niebauer, has made liberal use of me to assist in the hotel selection process. And this is okay, since the Wisconsin DNR heavily supports my position by providing me with office space, computer, phone, fax, copy machine, etc. It is a nice way to do a little pay-back.

The areas of decline in my hours were in report writing (minus 31%), and web site management (minus 15%). Report writing time declined due to the time I invested in FY05 writing the NFWF grant and the Fund brochure. The web site took more time in FY05 because we were developing it then.

Any questions about this table?

As with most organizations, the heavy lifting in the Midwest Association gets done via committee work. Your Executive Committee was very active this past year, meeting 6 times. You will hear the various working committee reports tomorrow. I have already noted the strong support we receive from Scott and Laurie and the Wisconsin DNR. Missouri continues to provide Office Manager services for me, so I very much appreciate the good help of Kathie Hubbard.

Finally, this Association owes a debt of gratitude to Joe Kramer, Sheila Kemmis, and the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks for all the work and support they provide on behalf of this Association.

**COORDINATOR
TIME ANALYSIS COMPARISON
FY 2005 VS FY 2006**

Activity Code	FY05	FY06	Diff.	%
ADM	160	162	+2	+ 1.3
AFF	21	17	-4	- 19.0
COM	69	65	-4	- 5.8
DIR	65	79	+14	+21.5
EXC	104	131	+27	+26.0
FED	7	4	-3	- 42.6
GRA	39	99	+30	+76.9
INT	32	56	+24	+75.0
PLA	66	101	+35	+53.0
REP	64	44	-20	- 31.3
TRA	180	187	+7	+ 3.9
WEB	<u>88</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>-13</u>	<u>- 14.8</u>
TOTAL	895	1024	+129	+14.4

ADM Administration (e-mail mgmt., maintaining mailing lists, files, tracking assign./reports, etc.)

AFF Affiliate recruitment/networking

COM Committee networking

DIR Director and voting representative networking

EXC President/EXCOM work assignments

FED Federal partner networking

GRA Grant development/execution

INT AFWA & regional association coordination

PLA Annual meeting planning

REP Report, letter, brochure, speech writing

TRA Travel and conference attendance

WEB Website management

**See Handouts: “Teaming with Wildlife Coalitions”
David Waller, GA Wildlife Federation
(20 pages of reports - Pages 189a – 189r in Hard Copy Proceedings)**

On MAFWA website as an Attachment to Proceedings

www.mafwa.iafwa.org

**See Handouts: “U.S. Sportsmen’s Alliance Foundation –
Trailblazer Information and Youth Hunting Report”
Mike Budzik, USSA
(16 pages of reports - Pages 191a – 191p in Hard Copy Proceedings)**

On USSA website

**www.ussportsmen.org
under “Issues Affecting Sportsmen”**

See Handouts: “D.C. Booth Historic National Fish Hatchery”
Steve Brimm, Hatchery Manager
(10 pages of reports - Pages 193a – 193j in Hard Copy Proceedings)

On D.C. Booth website
<http://dcbooth.fws.gov/>

