

National Association of University Fisheries and Wildlife Programs

Monday, September 25, 2017, 12:00 – 2:00 PM MST
The Wildlife Society Annual Conference, Albuquerque, NM

MINUTES

Call to order 12:02 pm MST

John Owens (NAUFW President)

Agenda juggled to accommodate schedules of participants

Introductions

All

In-Person Attendees: Ken Wilson (NAUFWP Sec-Treas), Colorado St U.; Bob Wagner, Purdue; Keith Owens (NAUFWP Pres), Oklahoma St U.; Mark Wallace, TX Tech; Charlie Nilon, U. Missouri; William Stone, Alabama A&M U.; Chad Bishop (NAUFWP Pres. Elect), U. Montana; Lisette Waits, U. of Idaho; Kathy Stoner, New Mexico St U.; Jennifer Frey, NM ST; Nancy Mathews, U. Vermont; David Jachowski, Clemson U.; Lara Pacifici, N. Carolina St U.; John Hayes, Colorado St U.; Dan Edge, Oregon St U.; Nova Silvy, Texas A&M U; Mike Mengak U of Georgia; Bruce Dugger, Oregon St U; John Organ, USGS Cooperative Research Units; Keith Norris, The Wildlife Society; Scott Winterstein, Michigan St U

Phone Attendees [**Apologies to those on the phone, our connection was obviously lost but I (Ken) didn't notice it!**]: Selina Heppel, Oregon St U; Patrick Sullivan, Cornell U; Terrell (Red) Baker, U of Florida; Eric Hallerman (NAUFWP Past Pres), Virginia Tech U

Coordination among NAUFWP and TWS

Keith Norris represented TWS due to meeting conflict for Ed Thompson, TWS Exec Director

Norris Update:

University Affiliates Program (UAP) is on pause button due to feedback from NAUFWP and others within TWS. TWS is still very interested in working with NAUFWP on something like this so stay tuned. Also, on last Saturday, TWS Council directed TWS Certification Review Board to accept online degrees and courses, if approved within accredited universities/colleges, as discussed below by Dan Edge.

Staff Changes: Prof Development Coordinator, Jamila Blake will head up Diversity, Leadership, Certification, and other initiatives.

Finances/Membership: Considerable growth in TWS of 6% is quite good. Just under 10,000 members. Reminder of Give-Back Program – members can gift 6-mo membership with renewal (so now at 10,300 members). Will open this program to student members next year.

Question from the audience: Botany credits, what will count? e.g., do range courses count? Key is that CRB will accept course that identifies plants in the description.

Comment (Hayes, NAUFWP past president): Concern with UAP is that there had been almost no TWS interaction/communication on this with university programs or NAUFWP over the past several years, thus a concern that we are still having to deal with this. Everywhere you look at the TWS conference there is a huge commitment from NAUFWP programs and so it is sort of slap in the face to universities to hear that there were even discussions of a \$30,000/yr UAP program by TWS (to be discounted to ~\$7000); this is an incredible amount for our programs. So, it is would be nice to see TWS step up and

recognize commitment of universities versus showcasing other entities only on TWS webpages and elsewhere.

Response [Norris]: that was the reason the PAUSE button was put on UAP by TWS. TWS is working to make recognition of universities better. TWS want to know, how we can formalize some sort of program or recognition for a NAUFWP – TWS relationship. UAP was proposed as an idea (not finalized) at \$7500. And entities visible on the TWS website varies in terms of the monetary contribution to TWS; some have been as high as \$30,000j/yr but not all.

Comment [Silva] – Lack of a Student Mentoring Reception has been disappointing at this TWS conference, and it is not clear why TWS Conference Program Committee left it out. The Ribbons on ID badges, identifying professional status, e.g., agency, NGO, education may have been trying to accommodate this but not sure it is working as the reception did. Response [Norris]: Up to program committee, but he will look into why the Mentoring Reception was not included.

Question from audience: What are the minimum expectations required for a Wildlife program? This begs the question of certification of programs like Society of American Foresters. This question also leads into concerns that have been voiced about online courses and programs, i.e., what are the standards of online programs. [NOTE: See discussion below about Online Courses/Programs below by Dan Edge. As well as update above from TWS Certification Review Board.] Lots of discussion on accreditation, courses, etc. followed, but no clear resolution.

Owens suggested that NAUFWP should form a committee to articulate key points and concerns and further that NAUFWP appreciates Norris mentioning that TWS is looking to formalize partnership with universities and NAUFWP.

AFS Update

Doug Austen

Chad Bishop provided an update. He met with Doug Austen, Pres. AFS on the weekend because Doug could not attend our meeting.

AFS is having an officer's retreat in the near future and will discuss AFS perception of NAUFWP. AFS has what is termed a sustaining membership that is somewhat like the proposed TWS UAP, but at lower level, i.e., not \$7500. AFS interested in how they can partner/formalize continuing education of professionals (e.g., FWS National Conservation Training Center courses and other Online courses). AFS invited NAUFWP to meet at the AFS. We have done so in the recent past at the AFS meeting in Arkansas when Eric Hallerman was president. Comment from the audience: There tends to be more chairs attending TWS than AFS. Comment [Owens] NAUFWP needs work on more formally engaging with AFS and the joint meeting of AFS-TWS in Fall 2019 would be a great time to discuss how we might plan for more regular meetings at AFS.

NOTE: After the meeting Wilson visited AFS Website and a Sustaining Membership is \$450/yr, see https://secure.fisheries.org/MemberResponsive/Dynamic-Pages/Sustaining_Members.aspx, and about 5 of the 58 memberships are associated with university entities. Other AFS institutional memberships include: Associate Members (individuals, corporations, foundations) giving \$2000 or more per year [Only one institute is listed] and Official Memberships (NR Agencies) giving \$1600/yr.

Cooperative Research Units [CRU]

John Organ

John Organ, Chief of USGS CRU provided an update.

There are a record number of vacancies and forecasting 35 CRU positions vacant at end of 2017. CRU will like be able to only fill 3 positions in the coming FY. FY18 Budget initially proposed a 20% cut, House has CRU budget flat and there is hope that the Senate will propose an increase with some indicating that the Senate may request \$4.5M increase to fill all vacancies units. AFWA, TWS, NAUFWP, and many others have sent a letter to certain Senators (see next section on CRU support letter) requesting increase for CRU. Now is the time to ramp up efforts for FY19 budget for CRU. CRU is not able to put forward increases internally within Ecosystem Program of USGS where it resides, so outside efforts will continue to be important. At a minimum, the request will likely be for another 2M in FY19. Univ. AK Fairbanks indicated that Senator Murkowski is pushing for CRU program and that is very important.

Other Items: USGS Science Ctrs are in dire straits and will perhaps shift some base budget funding to help fill vacancies with their programs.

Question from the audience: What is the plan for new units at Purdue, NV, Mich, Kentucky. Response [Organ]: Strategy is to not fill new units until existing vacancies in current units can be filled.

CRU support letter and funding

Owens

Copy of letter sent is below at the end of this document – This letter was also sent to CRU universities requesting they get support from their universities.

Online course and degree offerings

Dan Edge

Dan Edge, Assoc. Dean & past-president NAUFWP, Oregon St U provided update.

At Saturday's meeting, TWS Council suspended review of certification for online degrees/classes . There had been concern about courses, but the issue has been resolved and online courses/degrees that are approved thru regular university curriculum review processes by accredited institutions are now being accepted, i.e., no different than regular courses that are taught in a classroom setting on campus.

Good Discussion followed.

Question from the audience: Are online courses perhaps reaching an underrepresented group that is not typically coming to campus. Response [Edge]: Typical online student is 10 yrs older and more are females; 20% already work in the NR but not necessarily have a wildlife degree, and 40% already had at least one degree. He was not sure of the racial makeup. Response [Waits]: at Univ. of Idaho they are finding that more Native Am are willing to enroll in online courses because there is a strong desire to remain on the reservation vs coming to campus.

Question from audience: Are for-profit institutions accredited the same as nonprofit institutions.

Response from several: Yes, accreditations are thru similar regionally recognized accrediting organizations. Comment: All online programs may not be equal and so something to continue to dialogue about.

Comment about American Public University [also American Military University]: A challenge is finding out who is the contact for their environmental programs and who the faculty are. Question: Is APU and AMU accredited? Yes, a quick search of their website states the following: "American Public University System (APUS) is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). APUS is comprised of American

Military University (AMU) and American Public University (APU). The HLC accredits degree-granting institutions located in a 19-state region, and is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (ED), and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).”

Secretary-Treasurer report

Ken Wilson

Ken Wilson, NAUFWP Secretary-Treasurer provided an update on finances and membership.

See attached report after the minutes. A change to our bylaws will be forthcoming to change due date for annual membership to Aug. 1 of each year instead of Dec. 30 of each FY. Rationale: the current timing makes it challenging to know who the current members are by the time we have our first meeting of our fiscal year, which begins July 1.

Question [Hayes]: Since NAUFWP has been an associate member of AFWA (Assoc. of F&W Agencies) for several years, we had a conversation when he was NAUFWP president about NAUFWP potentially being an Ex-Officio member on their board. Have we heard anything more? Chad Bishop will look into this; Chad remember Ron Reagan with AFWA talking about this. Nuckolls also suggested that we have an AFWA rep come meet with us; this should be quite easy at our spring meeting which is typically at the N. Am Wildlife and NR Conference where AFWA meets.

Washington update

Randy Nuckolls

Randy Nuckolls, Washington Representation for NAUFWP, Dentons, LLC provided an update

Nuckolls: Will not walk us thru all that has happened in Washington, but obviously we are all engaged for lots of reasons. It is a strange year in trying to get back to regular order. One Senate accomplishment is the new Supreme Court Judge. Court system is very active due to numerous challenges of federal actions and this is likely to continue as it did under Obama admin.

President Trump released what is called a skinny budget with little detail (not uncommon with new Pres and party). In June the Pres submitted his full budget but so far, it has been pretty much ignored by Congress. The Ag Appropriations budget has been released by Congress, and still waiting to see the Coop Unit budget thru DOI from Congress. Of course, the Senate is wrestling with the final and 3rd attempt to change ADA (Obamacare) before the majority vote ONLY needed resolution ends. A key issue is that the House would not have time to consider changes and so would have to agree to the Senate version, if passed.

Congress seems unaware of Trillions of deficit. They punted (continuing resolution) on debt ceiling deal that Pres made with Democrats until Dec. 8. McIntire-Stennis & Hatch & CRU funding is flat. Trump has proposed cuts but Congress has been restoring to current levels and some increases, e.g., NIH. CRU flat will not be able to increase hires. Perdue, Ag Sec., and Zinke, Interior Sec., are moving ahead with regional listening sessions and conversations on issues affecting NAUFWP/NAUFRP, e.g., looking at recent NPS lands, NIFA research priorities, and Nuckolls will continue to track these. New Farm Bill will be an important issue to engage on and if we have ideas that are new, we need to engage soon, e.g., through APLU, because the Bill will be developed in 2018. Question from the audience: Is it worth being at each regional session? Randy suggested having a “statement” on needs that is delivered at each meeting. Randy passed along info on meetings: NIFA Stakeholder Meetings (NIFA Director Sonny Ramaswamy). Dates for all sessions below, which run from 8:30 am – 5 pm and more info, see <https://nifa.usda.gov/nifalistsens>: Thurs, Oct. 19 Kansas City Missouri; Thurs, Oct. 26, Atlanta , GA; Thurs., Nov. 2, Sacramento; Wed., Nov. 8 Hyattsville, MD

Major issue related to FS Research: Can we solve the Forest Fire Issue for USFS because they have reached their budget limit each of last several years and it has required Disaster Funding, so needs to be addressed by Congress. Solving this would benefit colleges/depts because FS research has had budgets used for fire overruns, which detracts from ongoing research and new projects.

Question from the audience: Are there opportunities for him to engage Congress this year? Respms [Nuckolls]. Because of the delayed budget everything was late so he continues to engage them. There is no lack of ability/interest by everyone to talk to Congress, but there just may not be any money.

APLU BNR Forest Health Initiative

John Hayes

John Hayes, Dean Warner College of NR, Colo. State U, APLU Rep to BNR

BNR is trying to find ways to advance NR initiatives. We know that visibility/importance of NR programs can be enhanced by using APLU. BNR has 5 sections and NAUFWP represents F&W (Keith Owens) and Hayes represents NAUFRP on the board.

BNR Forest Health Initiative (year and a half of discussions so far): exact name is being worked out. Focus of initiative on insects and disease, susceptibility to fire, and impacts on 5 areas (F&W and habitat, commodity, water quality and quantity, urban environments, tourism). Hope is for APLU endorsement then will move forward to universities for their help to move these Forest Health issues forward to U.S. administration/Congress. This would have a national scope. Charge is to create a White Paper that articulates the problem and proposed solutions/funding. Ultimately, a Steering Committee will be created with other reps such as Extension, AG, BNR, etc. What the draft outline of the White Paper will look like has been discussed and next, BNR will propose a writing and action committee with pertinent disciplines included; they will be looking for F&W reps on this committee. If anyone has concern about the structure, you are encouraged to contact Hayes or Owens. Also, keep in mind people (faculty/staff from our universities) to nominate to serve on upcoming committees. Owens will forward the draft outline for NAUFWP circulation in the future. Wendy Fink with APLU has and continues to be instrumental in helping to move this process forward.

Officer nominations

Owens

NAUFWP Election for President-elect and Secretary-Treasurer (2-year terms) will occur this fall to replace Keith Owens and Ken Wilson, respectively; their terms end Dec. 31, 2017. Please consider becoming a nominee for either position. Contact either Keith or Ken or Chad Bishop (President beginning Jan 2018) about service for NAUFWP. We have one nomination for president-elect, so far.

The proposed change in bylaws for due date of membership payment (see above) will be on the ballot.

Business from the floor - None

Adjourn 2 pm

Respectfully Submitted, Kenneth Wilson, Secretary-Treasurer, NAUFWP

**National Association of Fisheries & Wildlife Programs
-Treasurer's Report-
25 Sept 2017**

Balance at last report (3/3/2017)	\$67,173.78
<u>Since last report</u>	
Expenses	\$12,862.23
Income (membership dues, interest, donation)	\$18,869.27
Current Balance (9/25/2017)	\$73,180.82

2016-2017 Budget Summary – (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017)

Category	Projected	Actual to Date	Difference
EXPENSES			
Travel - NAUFWP Officers to Business Meetings	\$6,000.00	\$0	\$6,000.00
Government Affairs Contract (fees & travel)	\$26,000.00	\$24,413	\$1,587.00
Salaries (survey compilation, etc.)	\$1,000.00	\$0	\$1,000.00
Web domain & Server fees	\$200.00	\$144	\$56.36
Bond Insurance	\$200.00	\$171	\$29.00
Dues Expenses (credit card fees, mailings)	\$500.00	\$432	\$68.00
Miscellaneous expenses (e.g., meetings)	\$450.00	\$64	\$386.41
Membership Dues (e.g., AFWA)	\$250.00	\$250	\$0.00
Total Expenses	\$34,600.00	\$25,473.23	\$9,126.77

REVENUE

Dues Income ¹ (Goal is 50 members)			
Full Members (44 members @ \$600/yr dues)	\$30,000.00	\$26,400.00	(\$3,600)
New-To-NAUFWP Members ² (1 @ \$200/yr dues for 2 years maximum)	\$0	\$200	\$200
Total Revenue		\$26,600.00	(\$3,400)

FY Budget Balance (Total Revenue-Expenses)

\$ 1,126.77

¹Dues Income is from Annual Membership (July 1 thru June 30 of the membership year. Payment is due by first of calendar year. There were 44 university members, 2 universities have separate fish and wildlife programs that pay one dues.

²One new-to-NAUFWP university was in year 1 of 2 in paying reduced dues.

2017-2018 Budget Summary – (July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018)

Category	Projected	Actual to Date	Difference
EXPENSES			
Travel - NAUFWP Officers to Business Meetings	\$6,000.00	\$0	\$6,000.00
Government Affairs Contract (fees & travel)	\$26,000.00	\$0	\$26,000.00
Salaries (survey compilation, etc.)	\$1,000.00	\$0	\$1,000.00
Web domain & Server fees	\$200.00	\$0	\$200.00
Bond Insurance	\$200.00	\$0	\$200.00
Dues Expenses (credit card fees, mailings)	\$500.00	\$310.50	\$189.50
Miscellaneous expenses (e.g., meetings)	\$450.00	\$160.00	\$290.00
Membership Dues (e.g., AFWA)	\$250.00	\$0	\$250.00
Total Expenses	\$34,600.00	\$470.50	\$34,129.50

REVENUE

Dues Income ¹ (Goal is 50 members)			
Full Members (31 members @ \$600/yr dues)	\$30,000.00	\$18,600.00	(\$11,400)
Total Revenue		\$18,600.00	(\$11,400)

FY Budget Balance (Revenue-Expenses)

\$18,129.50

¹Dues Income is from Annual Membership (July 1 thru June 30 of the membership year. Payment is due by January 1 of each fiscal year. Paid dues to date = 31 universities, 2 universities have separate fish and wildlife programs that pay one dues. 13 Universities have yet to pay dues.

Membership Report 2017-2018 (bold indicates last year member with current FY not yet paid – due by Dec. 31)

First	Last	Title	University	Program
William	Stone	Assoc. Prof. & Coordinator FEWB	Alabama A&M University	Forestry, Ecology and Wildlife Program
John	Jackson	Director	Arkansas Tech University	Fisheries and Wildlife Program
Greg	Yarrow	Professor & Chair	Clemson University	Forestry and Environmental Conservation
Kenneth	Wilson	Professor & Head	Colorado State University	Fish, Wildlife, & Conservation Biology
Patrick	Sullivan	Professor & Chair	Cornell University	Department of Natural Resources
Sue	Blodgett	Chair	Iowa State University	Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management
Allen	Rutherford	Director	Louisiana State University	School of Renewable Natural Resources
Andy	Kouba	Professor & Head	Mississippi State University	Department of Wildlife, Fisheries & Aquaculture
Alicia	Mathis	Dept Head	Missouri State University	Department of Biology
Kathryn	Stoner	Dept Head & Professor	New Mexico State Univ.	Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Ecology
Christopher	Moorman	Coordinator	North Carolina State University	Fisheries, Wildlife and Conservation Biology
Jim	Allen	Prof. & Exec. Dir.	Northern Arizona University	School of Forestry
Jim	Ansley	Head	Oklahoma State University	Dept. Natural Resource Ecology and Management
Selina	Heppell	Interim Head & Professor	Oregon State University	Department of Fisheries and Wildlife
Michael G.	Messina	Professor & Head	Pennsylvania State University	Department of Ecosystem Science and Management
Robert	Dunning, Jr.	Professor and Head	Purdue University	Department of Forestry and Natural Resources
Michele	Dudash	Professor and Head	South Dakota State University	Natural Resource Management Program
James	Garvey	Professor & Director	Southern Illinois University	Center Fisheries, Aquaculture, & Aquatic Sciences
Matt	Whiles	Professor & Interim Director	Southern Illinois University	Cooperative Wildlife Research Laboratory
Donald J.	Leopold	Professor & Chair	State University of New York (SUNY)	Dept. of Environmental and Forest Biology
Steven	Bullard	Dean	Stephen F. Austin State University	Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture
T. Wayne	Schwertner	Head & Asst. Professor	Tarleton State University	Wildlife, Sustainability, and Ecosystem Sciences
Robert E.	Kissell, Jr.	Professor & Chair	Tennessee Tech University	Department of Biology
Michael	Masser	Professor & Head	Texas A& M Univ.	Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences
Mark D.	Wallace	Chair	Texas Tech University	Department of Natural Resources Management
Stuart	Marsh	Director	University of Arizona	School of Natural Resources and the Environment
Philip A.	Tappe	Dean	University of Arkansas at Monticello	School of Forest Resources
John	Eadie	Chair	University of California, Davis	Wildlife, Fish and Conservation Biology

Jason	Vokoun	Assoc. Professor & Interim Head	University of Connecticut	Natural Resources and the Environment
Jacob L.	Bowman	Chair & Professor	University of Delaware	Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology
Eric	Hellgren	Professor & Chair	University of Florida	Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation
Bill	Lindberg	Associate Professor	University of Florida	Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences
Dale	Greene	Dean	University of Georgia	Warnell School of Forest and Natural Resources
Lisette	Waits	Professor & Head	University of Idaho	Department of Fish and Wildlife Sciences
Jeffrey	Stringer	Interim Chair	University of Kentucky	Department of Forestry and Natural Resources
Susan	Galatowitsch	Professor & Head	University of Minnesota	Department of Fisheries, Wildlife and Conservation Biology
Charles	Nilon	Professor & Degree Coordinator	University of Missouri	School of Natural Resources/Natural Resource Science & Management
Chad	Bishop	Director	University of Montana	Wildlife Biology Program
John	Carroll	Director	University of Nebraska	School of Natural Resources
Peter	Pekins	Chair & Professor	University of New Hampshire	Department of Natural Resources and Environment-Wildlife & Conservation Biology Major
Keith	Belli	Head	University of Tennessee	Department of Forestry, Wildlife, and Fisheries
James	Murdoch	Assoc. Professor & Director	University of Vermont	Wildlife & Fisheries Biology Program-The Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources
Mark	Rickenbach	Chair & Professor	University of WI-Madison	Department of Forest & Wildlife Ecology
Christine	Thomas	Dean	University of Wisconsin-Stevens Pt.	College of Natural Resources
Joel	Snoddgrass	Professor & Head	Virginia Tech University	Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation
Keith	Blatner	Chair	Washington State University	Department of Natural Resources Sciences
John	Edwards	Program Coordinator	West Virginia University	Wildlife and Fisheries Resources, Division of Forestry & Natural Resources

Respectfully Submitted,
Kenneth Wilson, Secretary-Treasurer, NAUFWP

Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairwoman, Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment & Related Agencies
U.S. Senate

Honorable Tom Udall
Ranking Member, Appropriations Subcommittee
on Interior, Environment & Related Agencies
U.S. Senate

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Ranking Member Udall:

We write to ask for your support for **an additional \$4.5 million to the existing \$17.3 million for the U.S.G.S. Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit** program in the USGS Ecosystems mission area in the Fiscal Year 2018 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. This increase in funding is necessary to fill critical and chronic vacancies of scientists in the program, and to meet the actionable science needs of the states and other cooperators.

The 40 Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Units (CRUs) across 38 states are embedded in major research universities and bridge the gap between science and natural resource decisions. CRUs have a 3-fold mission: produce actionable science to meet the needs of cooperators; provide cooperators technical assistance in applying and integrating new science; and develop the next generation of natural resource professionals through graduate education.

This mission is implemented by fostering partnerships between state and federal natural resource agencies, academic institutions, and non-governmental organizations, as directed by the Cooperative Units Act of 1960 (P.L. 86-686).

CRUs are highly productive, cost-effective, and reputable sources of scientific information. **CRU scientists produce credible, applied science that meets the direct needs of cooperators and empower the front lines of fish and wildlife conservation.** Federal and state fish and wildlife agencies receive science to support sustainable hunting, fishing, and trapping seasons; evaluate and address challenges to endangered species listing and recovery; prevent and control invasive species and wildlife disease outbreaks; and actionable science to address many other natural resource management challenges.

For example, the New Mexico Unit has led investigations into the effects of energy development on lesser prairie-chickens, helping to inform conservation efforts and strategic energy siting options. Researchers at the Mississippi Unit are studying movements and habitats of shovelnose and pallid sturgeon to inform conservation efforts of those threatened and endangered fish, while the Vermont Unit has developed a statistical program that enables wildlife managers to make better harvest management decisions. The Alaska Unit has recently looked into how potential habitat changes could affect the distribution of moose and caribou, two species important to the hunting-based economy in the state.

Despite these benefits, CRUs are at a critical point. Scientist vacancies plague the program – 34 Unit scientist positions (30%) remain vacant as of FY17. State and university cooperators continue to fulfill their obligations of support, while federal funding for staffing remains stagnant, limiting the ability of the program to meet the growing needs of its collaborators.

To achieve the scientific needs and meet partner expectations, CRU base funding must be increased by \$4.5 million in FY18. Such funding will allow critical vacancies to be filled, address the erosion of CRUs cooperative capacity, and expand program offerings to new states.

Sincerely,

American Fisheries Society
Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies

Boone & Crockett Club
National Association of University Fish & Wildlife Programs
The Wildlife Society
Wildlife Management Institute

Enclosures: Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies Resolution #2015-01

Cc: Honorable Thad Cochran; Honorable Patrick Leahy; Members of Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies



Resolution #2015-01

An Endorsement of Full Staffing of the USGS Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program

This resolution urges Congress to fully fund the USGS Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program, in order to address critical staffing vacancies in this program, which delivers high-quality, actionable scientific research and training to the state fish and wildlife agencies.

WHEREAS, the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit program was established in 1935 to enhance graduate education in fisheries and wildlife sciences and to facilitate applied research between natural resource agencies and universities to address current and emerging management-oriented science needs; and

WHEREAS, today, there are 40 Cooperative Research Units in 38 states; and

WHEREAS, the Cooperative Research Units provide much-needed applied scientific research to the state fish and wildlife agencies, delivering on average over 300 scientific papers and over 700 scientific presentations per year; and

WHEREAS, the Cooperative Research Units provide much-needed scientific training for the next generation of fish and wildlife biologists, graduating on average over 100 students per year; and

WHEREAS, the Cooperative Units Act as amended (P.L. 86-686, 1960) establishes the Cooperative Research Units as a cooperative effort among states, universities and the federal government with each party responsible for their share of the support; and

WHEREAS, the States and Universities have met and are providing their share of the support; and

WHEREAS, Congress has not provided adequate funding to fully staff the USGS Cooperative Research Units; and

WHEREAS, Cooperator needs, particularly those of the States and universities, cannot be met without full federal participation;

WHEREAS, current vacancies across the Cooperative Research Unit Program amount to 25% of the scientist workforce;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (Association) urges Congress to provide adequate funding to fully staff the USGS Cooperative Research Unit Program to accomplish applied research that is fundamental to the mission of the Association and its member agencies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies encourages the United States Department of the Interior's US Geological Survey to administer funding provided to the USGS

Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program in support of research programs with direct application to the needs of the federal and state land and wildlife resource management agencies.

Adopted September 16, 2015
Tucson, Arizona

