

2008 Business Meeting Minutes
Alaska Chapter, The Wildlife Society

The Chapter's 2008 annual business meeting was held in conjunction with the Chapter's Annual Meeting in Anchorage. The meeting was convened at 12:00 pm, 24 April 2008 in the Lake Spenard Room of the Millennium Alaskan Hotel with Chapter Past President, Tom Paragi and President, Howard Golden presiding. Approximately 55 members were in attendance.

Old Business – Tom Paragi

1. Summary of major Chapter activities during the previous year

Activities included preparation of comments on the Tongass Land Management Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement for National TWS; completion of an interview with John Burns for the "Conserving Our Wildlife Conservation Heritage" program; Chapter of the Year recognition for our Chapter; formation of a committee and initiation of work to develop a position statement on disease risk of using pack goats in alpine areas of Alaska; completion of a financial review and development of policy for funding the Chapter's student programs; preparation of comments on the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the NPR-A lease sale in the Teshekpuk Lake area; establishment of a committee and initiation of work to update the Chapter's position statement on oil and gas development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (the committee has prepared a draft that is currently out for review by the membership with comments due back by 16 May); preparation of a letter of support for the University of Alaska, Fairbanks Wildlife Program (the program has since been officially recognized as a separate program within the Department, thus securing its future); and preparation of comments on the proposed Izembek National Wildlife Refuge land exchange for national TWS. More details on all of these and other activities are available in the Chapter newsletters.

2. National TWS review of predator control in Alaska

At the request of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the scope of this review was expanded by TWS Council to include black bear control in Newfoundland and coyote control in Maine. The Technical Review Committee has been selected and includes one Alaska Chapter Member, Bruce Dale.

3. Treasurer's report – Mark Udevitz

Income	2007	2008*	Total
Interest	76	18	93
National Conference	3800	0	3800
2007 Chapter Conference	11404	0	11404
2008 Chapter Conference	0	7362	7362
Dues	1025	535	1560
T-shirt sales	73	0	73
Total	16378	7914	24292

Expenses	2007	2008*	Total
Legislative reception	394	0	394
Donations	1700	0	1700
2007 Chapter conference	11927	0	11927
2008 Chapter conference	0	0	0
Student travel awards	1200	0	1200
COWCH project	250	0	250
Other	174	34	208
Total	15646	34	15679

Account balances	1-Jan-07	31-Dec-07	15-Apr-08
Checking	4229	4885	12748
Savings	5986	6062	6079
Total	10215	10947	18828

* 2008 income and expenses through 15 April.

4. UAF Student Chapter Report – Micah Miller

Current Student Chapter membership includes about 60 undergraduate and 10 graduate students. Income for 2007 was about \$1200 and expenses were about \$800. The Chapter held regular meetings with speakers; held movie nights that were not that successful and may be discontinued; raised funds by conducting receptions for a University seminar series; conducted a job fair; provided additional announcements of relevant employment opportunities as they became available; helped with the Ruffed Grouse Society dinner, Fairbanks Fall Festival, Spring Migration Festival, and the Farthest North film Festival; and conducted the Annual Wild Game Dinner. The chapter has also entered into contractual arrangements to provide assistance at the Yukon Flats NWR Arctic Science Camp.

5. State legislative update

State legislative issues this year included restoration of the ADF&G Habitat Division; Board of Game rejection of the proposal to create a Tangle Lakes State Game Refuge, SB 67 to create Jay Hammond State Game Refuge (no action); HB346 to expand Stan Price State Game Refuge (no action); SB 176 and HB256 to amend statutes for Intensive Management and same day airborne taking of predators (did not pass); “05 hunt” ballot initiative to prohibit aerial shooting of wolves and bears except by government agents during biological emergencies (to be voted on by public in next election); and SB306 (passed and sent to Governor) and HB348 (still being considered) to codify the Alaska Supreme Court ruling designating game as a state asset not subject to allocation or appropriation by citizen initiative.

6. Federal legislative update

Federal legislative issues this year included HR 3663 to ban aerial shooting except by government agents to counter irreversible predator caused declines in prey (being considered); MMS sale of oil and gas leases in the Chukchi Sea; Stevens/Murkowski bill to develop oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (being considered); USFWS delay in making a listing decision for polar bears under the Endangered Species Act; status reviews of ribbon bearded, spotted, and ringed seals initiated by NOAA with respect to possible listings under the Endangered Species Act; HR 2801 to exchange land in the Izembek NWR (being considered); and a potential Yukon Flats NWR land exchange (public comment period has been extended for 30 days).

It was also noted that NOAA announced it will delay an ESA listing decision for Cook Inlet Belugas for 6 months.

It was suggested that maybe the Chapter should respond in some way to the polar bear listing issue. Matt Kirchhoff and Erich Follmann agreed to begin investigating this possibility with an organization that has expertise in marine mammals.

7. The 2006-08 board was thanked for their service to the Chapter

New Business – Howard Golden

1. In recognition of his outstanding service as Chapter president, the other members of the outgoing board presented Tom Paragi with a commemorative plaque and a piece of tile artwork by artist Nancy Johnson. It was noted that his tenure was characterized by extensive efforts to encourage student participation and develop outreach projects such as the Legislative reception. Highlights of this period included the Chapter’s hosting of the National TWS Conference in 2006, record membership and attainment of largest chapter status in 2006, preparation of the position statement on old growth forests that was adopted by National TWS in 2007, and the Chapter of the Year award received in 2007.

2. The organizing committee and Hotel staff were thanked for their efforts that resulted in the success of the 2008 Annual Chapter Meeting.

3. As new Chapter President, Howard Golden noted that his primary objectives will be to continue to make the Chapter relevant to members, increase membership, encourage participation, and promote Chapter involvement in important issues.

4. Based on votes of the 31 participating members (29 online ballots, 2 mail-in ballots), the new 2008-2010 Executive board has been elected. New officers are Kris Hundertmark (President-Elect), Karyn Rode (Secretary-Treasurer), Dave Person (Southeast Representative), Todd Rinaldi (Southcentral Representative) and Kyle Joly (Northern Representative). Howard Golden moves from the office of President-Elect to President

5. Student incentives for participation in the annual meeting

There was a discussion of ideas to increase student participation in the annual meeting. Ideas included: schedule to avoid the week before finals, offset travel costs, offset registration costs, subsidize membership upgrades from student to regular, provide an annual scholarship to offset costs of attending the National meeting, provide workshops with hands-on experience, include a student forum in the quarterly newsletter, and provide prizes for the best student paper and poster at the meeting. Many of these ideas have already been implemented with less than hoped for results. Kalin Kellie suggested the Chapter consider modifying the meeting location schedule to Fairbanks every other year (inexpensive venue at UAF, location of most wildlife students) and Anchorage and Juneau every third year (more costly venues, fewer students). Other ideas are solicited.

Currently the chapter budgets \$1320 annually in support of student programs. This includes \$1000 for travel to the Chapter meeting and 10 member category upgrades at \$32 each. With annual dues bringing in about \$1150 per year (230 members at \$5 each), this level of funding will result in a slow net loss from the treasury. A raffle was used at the 2006 National meeting to raise additional funds for the Chapter, but raffles carry a high regulatory burden, require lots of work by lots of volunteers, and returns on future raffles are likely to be relatively small (compared to proceeds from the National meeting raffle). Student programs also compete with other Chapter programs and projects for our funds. It was suggested that a solution might be to raise dues to meet the funding requirements.

Todd Rinaldi suggested he might meet with UAA and APU faculty to get more student involvement from those schools, but Tom Paragi noted that he already tried this and was unsuccessful, largely because there are just too few interested students at those schools to provide the required "critical mass".

Erich Follmann moved to increase Chapter dues to \$20. This was seconded by Perry Barboza.

Points raised in the following discussion included the suggestion that funds raised by increased dues could be used to offset meeting costs; we need to remember we are competing with other organizations and need to establish our niche; we do not have a clearly articulated business model that indicates we need to increase our dues; \$20 may be too much but \$10 might be enough; we might want to specify that the increase should go student programs; we could decrease meeting costs for students (and maybe to everyone) by holding the meeting in Fairbanks more often; another option for raising funds would be to request donations or conduct other fund raising activities; factors likely affecting participation, including cost, were given full consideration during the organization of the current meeting;

Tom Paragi offered an amendment to raise the dues to \$10 rather than \$20 and to specify that the increase would go to student programs. This was seconded by Gino Del Frate.

The vote to include the amendment passed unanimously. The vote on the original motion, thus amended, also passed unanimously.

6. Jim Lawler is in the process of establishing a database on experimental exclosures throughout the state. He will be announcing the project in the newsletter and will be working through the Chapter to get it going.

7. The 2009 annual meeting will be in Fairbanks and the new President-Elect will have the lead for its organization.

8. The question was raised of whether it would be possible to work with universities to get students credit for attending Chapter meetings. It was suggested that this was possible, but only if attendance was part of a larger program designed by the student's graduate committee, for example.

9. Kim Titus asked if the Chapter had considered providing any support for the National TWS predator control review. He noted that National never provides any funding for these reviews and this causes substantial delays in their completion. Kim was requested to submit this as a proposal to the new Executive Board for their review and he agreed.

10. Door prizes were distributed based on a random drawing and nearly everyone was a winner!

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 pm.