



# NEWS

## Message from the President



Greetings fellow MT TWS Chapter members! I hope everyone's summer is going well – albeit fast – with lots of field time, minimal desk time, and all the play time you're wanting. It'll be fall hunting season before you know it, the holidays right behind that, and then your absolutely favorite time of all – the MT TWS Annual Conference! It seems like we just wrapped up the 2017 conference and here we are already laying plans for next year's. More on that later...

The Executive Board met for two days in June to line ourselves out with Chapter projects for the year ahead. In addition to the annual conference we're working on some position statements, reworking the Chapter website and Facebook page, developing a membership outreach program, and several other things. We also spent several hours cleaning out the Chapter storage unit. We found some great gems in there which we'll be bringing to the conference to share with you all.

Before closing I'd like to thank the executive board, committee chairs and the many dedicated members of the MT TWS Chapter for all the work you do for the Chapter and Montana's wildlife.

Best,  
Vanna

## News From National TWS

New Mexico will be hosting The Wildlife Society's 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference at the Albuquerque Convention Center September 23-27th, 2017. Early indications are that this year's conference could break the all-time attendance record of over 2,000 wildlife professionals and students. The conference will include 4 plenary and keynote sessions, 40+ Networking events, 3 field trips and all new student events. Registration for the conference is currently open. Registration and full conference details can be found at [www.twsconference.org](http://www.twsconference.org).



## **MT TWS Board Members**

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### **Dan Bachen**

#### **Secretary**

I am the Senior Zoologist for the Montana Natural Heritage Program based in Helena. In this position I collect and manage data on the state's wildlife, focusing primarily on nongame species. I have recently assumed the secretary position for MTTWS,

and am looking forward to serving the chapter in this capacity. In this position I am primarily responsible for recording the minutes from meetings, but also am tasked with managing the chapter's website. As some of you may remember we migrated our chapter's web page to the National TWS

platform in 2015. Since then members of the Board have worked with the webmaster at National to continue to improve the design of the website to not only provide information about the chapter, but also serve as a clearing house for information relevant to wildlife within the state. My primary focus for the remainder of 2017 will be continuing this process of updating and refining content and streamlining organization of the chapter's web site. In particular, I am seeking to better organize content so that information and resources easily be found, update old and broken links, and add new and relevant information. Currently we are exploring online payments for membership, increasing integration with social media, and increasing the number of links to relevant organizations and resources.

We would like to make this resource as relevant to you, our members, and your feedback makes this process much easier. If you have any suggestions for improving organization of the website or content that you think would benefit our membership please contact me at [Mttws.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:Mttws.secretary@gmail.com).



### **Megan O'Reilly**

#### **Treasurer**

Our 2017 MTTWS conference accounting is finally complete! Once again, the conference was a big success. We had 295 registrants (151 regular members, 9 regular non-members, 19 retired, 32 one-day and a

whopping 84 students). The proceeds of our silent auction and raffle totaled \$2119.50 and a check was written to the University of Montana Foundation for this amount to be put towards the Wynn Freeman Endowment. Contributions to this endowment help to ensure we will continue to have funds to

award one outstanding student from the University of Montana and one outstanding student from Montana State University with the Wynn Freeman Award each year at the conference. It is never too early to start thinking about what great contributions you may have to donate to the silent auction. Shortly before the last conference MTTWS invested in a dedicated Chapter laptop along with the newest versions of Microsoft Office and QuickBooks. This is an exciting development and will allow for a more efficient transition when

## **Treasurer** *Continued...*

new officers are elected. This is an appropriate time to mention that my term will be up at the end of the 2018 conference in March. If you are considering running for a board position and would like to learn more about the responsibilities of the Treasurer or have other questions please email me (Megan O'Reilly) at [mttws.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:mttws.treasurer@gmail.com).



## **Kelvin Johnson** **President-Elect**

Greetings from Eastern Montana, where the record breaking drought of 2017 continues. In my current position as a wildlife habitat biologist for Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, I get the privilege to work directly with ag producers, particularly ranchers.

One theme that has become common especially as this summer has progressed in this part of the state is their concern for the lack of grass. For the ranchers who rotationally graze their livestock, they have expressed a level of gratefulness that they still have grass available for their livestock, but they express concerns about livestock conditioning as they go into winter, and potential effects for pregnancy rates next year. Especially in this year's drought, I can't help but see a commonality here between our agriculture and wildlife communities where in both cases, summer habitat conditions are directly related to what condition animals go into winter, which can affect survivability and reproduction the following year. While they think in terms such as "grass," we tend to think of terms like "habitat condition." While the animals they manage are domestic, the ones we research and manage are wild.

As president elect, my primary focus this year is putting together our annual TWS conference for 2018. While there are many details yet to work out, here are a few details I'd like to share with you. Our conference will be held during the week of February 19 - 23 in Butte America. We've reserved the **entire** Copper King Hotel that just re-opened this summer after receiving an extensive remodel and additional upgrades, so pretty much anyone we come across at the hotel will likely be attending the meeting! Our theme is going to revolve around "Telling Our Story – Lesson's Learned." There are many success stories that have come to fruition large in part due to wildlife professionals effectively communicating our management experience and research knowledge with others. Conversely there are situations where our wildlife messages have been lost due to one reason or another. And in almost all cases, if we were to do it over,

### **SAVE THE DATE**

#### **Montana Chapter of the Wildlife Society**

#### **Annual Conference**

February 19 –23, 2018

*"Telling Our Story—Lessons Learned"*

Copper King Hotel

Butte, America

**President-Elect** *Continued...* we'd choose to communicate something differently. Given the issues surrounding wildlife and wildlife conservation, it is becoming more important that we, collectively, are effective at communicating our wildlife knowledge and experiences with others. Whether we are bringing our information from the field to our managers or administrators, from agency to agency and other partners, to stakeholder groups, members of our public, or to our policy and law makers, we need to effectively tell our story.

As our conference draws closer, look forward to additional information regarding presentations, events, workgroup meetings, and other details. In the meantime, if you would like to contact me regarding any of this with your ideas, are interested in getting involved through volunteering, or would like to get a placeholder for your workgroup meeting, please feel free to contact me (Kelvin Johnson) at [mttws.preselect@gmail.com](mailto:mttws.preselect@gmail.com).



**Mark Ruby**

**Past President**

Hello for Northwest Montana. I work out of Bigfork, MT as a wildlife biologist for the US Forest Service on the Flathead National Forest. Part of my role for the 2017/2018 year is to put together the silent auction for the 2018 conference. Take a

look around house, if there is anything you want to contribute to the auction be sure to set it aside to donate at the conference. In addition to the auction, I'll also be working with the rest board for conference sponsorships. Within the Montana Chapter, the past-president also is the liaison to the Northwest Section. Finally, I'm fortunate to work with the rest of the executive board to execute the chapter's strategic plan. The plan runs through 2018 and both the executive board and the Chapter membership have worked hard to accomplish the objectives of the plan over the past two years. Two of our objectives over the next year will be to outline a plan for an administrative position and to create a financial plan that identifies and maximizes sources of revenue for the chapter. The best part of being on the executive board is meeting all the chapter members from across the state. If you have questions, ideas or are interested in becoming more involved please feel free to contact me at [mttws.pastpres@gmail.com](mailto:mttws.pastpres@gmail.com).

## **MT Chapter TWS Board Nominations**

Have you been sitting on the fence about running for a position on the MT TWS Executive Board? Well, now's your time to shine and take your turn at the helm. We are currently seeking nominees for President-Elect and Treasurer. The President-Elect position is a 3-year term and the Treasurer position is a 2-year term. Serving on the MT TWS executive board is a very worthy and gratifying experience and a great way to give back to your peers – ask any past or current board member. Interested persons or potential nominees should contact the current nominations committee chair Vanna Boccadori for further information ([vboccadori@mt.gov](mailto:vboccadori@mt.gov) or [406-490-0150](tel:406-490-0150)). Elections will be held at the 2018 annual conference in Butte, America.



## **Northwest Section Updates**

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### ***Northwest Section Strategic Planning***

Since reorganization, the Northwest Section has been striving to create a new mode of operations that is professionally impactful and financially sustainable. Clearly, the section must undertake a strategic planning effort that draws from its state chapters and delineates both the timeless vision, mission, and values of the section, as well as time-bound strategies, goals, and activities that will be the vehicles for progress. The Northwest Section proposes beginning the first stages of strategic planning remotely through email and other online applications as soon as funding is procured.

The information gathered through these exercises will form the foundation of an in-person weekend retreat that would occur in early October 2017. The components of a strategic plan will be complete by the end of this retreat, and the final editing steps will be conducted remotely. The target date for a final draft of the plan will be December 31, 2017.



### ***Canadian Meeting Section Update***

The Canadian Section meeting was joint with the Canadian Society for Ecology and Evolution, and was held May 7-11 in Victoria BC. The purpose of this meeting was to re-establish connection with Alberta and British Columbia, former member provinces in the Northwest Section, to discuss how to work together on cross-boundary wildlife issues. The Northwest Section still has members from the Canadian Section, and there are many issues we share in common. Northwest Section Past-President, Kurt Alt spent time with members from British Columbia and Alberta to discuss how to collaborate on resource issues through parent society. Kurt met with members from British Columbia interested in re-forming the B.C. Chapter. However, B.C. will have a unique set of challenges in addition to TWS's parent society certification requirements. Provincial government has its own process to consider that will be necessary for all B.C. wildlife biologists who work with the provincial government.

### ***Small Grants Committee by Clair Gower***

In 2017 we had 10 very competitive applications for the TWS Small Grants Award, all addressing very interesting and exciting research or conservation projects. It was a hard decision but the 4 members of the small grants committee decided that one project ranked first, and two projects ranked equally second.

Ranked First – *UM Student Chapter of the Wildlife Society for their 5<sup>th</sup> annual Wildlife Extravaganza (\$870)*

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## **MT Chapter Committee Reports**

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### **Small Grants *Continued*...**

Ranked equal second - Goes to Shannon Hilty, MSU (\$315)

*Characterizing bat maternity roost sites and evaluating the effects of large-scale forest disturbance – with a focus on mountain pine beetle*

Ranked equal second - Goes to Torrey Ritter, MSU (\$315)

*Estimating the Age of Beavers (*Castor canadensis*) by Weight in Southwest Montana*

Part of the guidelines are that the prior year's recipient sends a written progress report. Jake Ritzdorf, a 7<sup>th</sup> grader at Kalispell middle school submitted an extremely thorough report outlining his work “*Using eDNA to Assist Biologists with Tracking the Expansion and Control of the Invasive Common Snapping Turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*) in Northwest Montana*”. Jake also presented a poster at last year's TWS meeting and presented his work at several other events in the Flathead valley. Thanks Jake!

The small grants committee funds projects consistent with consistent with the Chapter's mission and goals. Funds vary based on income generated through conference registration, auctions and workshop proceeds. Grants typically range from \$100 to \$1000. Information for small grants can be found at <http://wildlife.org/montana-chapter/>. Applications for small grants are due by December 15, 2017 to [Cgower@mt.gov](mailto:Cgower@mt.gov)

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### **Education Committee Report *by Terry Lonner***

#### ***MEA/MFT Conference for 2017***

Information was sent last spring to chapter members, who presented at previous MEA/MFT conventions for them to apply for presenting at the upcoming Missoula convention in October, 2017. None of these members sent in their application to present for one reason or another. Chapter members that have not presented at this convention should be solicited for the 2018 convention. We must remember our presence at this convention is an effective and efficient means of providing important, accurate and up to date wildlife information to educator's of Montana's youth.

#### ***Wildlife Extravaganza***

The 5<sup>th</sup> annual Wildlife Extravaganza sponsored and organized by the University of Montana's Wildlife Students was held in Missoula on April 29, 2017. This a free, family friendly event that inspires wildlife stewardship in the Missoula community. This Wildlife Extravaganza gathers local nonprofit organizations and government agencies whose missions are to serve and promote appreciation of wildlife and natural resources and to educate the community through exhibits, presentations and interactive activities and games. It is open to all ages, but targets elementary and middle school students. Brent Lonner attended this event and set up an exhibit representing MCTWS. Over 250 people attended.

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## **MT Chapter Committee Reports**

### **Montana Education Committee *Continued...***



**Left:** University of Montana Students at the Wildlife Extravaganza. The event hosted over 250 people. **Below:** Brent Lonner setting up an exhibit. Brent represented the Montana Chapter at the Wildlife Extravaganza event.



### ***Chapter Brochure and Chapter Website***

Discussion at the Education Committee meeting last March also included the need to update the Chapter's Brochure and make the Chapter's website more identifiable with the Montana Chapter rather than a subset of the Wildlife's Society's National Website. It was agreed that the Chapter's Executive Committee will take on this responsibility of these two projects.

### ***Intermountain Journal of Sciences***

It was recommended and approved at the Education Committee meeting during the 2017 annual meeting in Helena that the Intermountain Journal of Sciences become a part of the Education Committee's responsibility. The three organizations of the Intermountain Journal of Sciences (IJS) that agreed to co-sponsor the initiation of publishing IJS in 1994-95 were The Montana Academy of Sciences (MAS), The Montana Chapters of the American Fisheries and Wildlife Societies (AFS and TWS). Twenty-two volumes of IJS have been published every year since then. One of the main intentions to start publishing IJS was to print the abstracts of presentations or poster sessions made at the annual meetings of the co-sponsoring organizations so a **PERMANENT and ACCESSIBLE RECORD** of their annual meeting proceedings would be available to individual subscribers, educators and libraries in a professional and consistent format. Abstracts from the annual meetings of these co-sponsoring organizations appear in the last issue of each printed volume if submitted by the sponsoring

## **MT Chapter Committee Reports**

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### **Intermountain Journal of Sciences *Continued...***

organization(s) for any given year. Since the first volume of IJS was published in 1995 the three sponsoring organizations provided abstracts from presentations or posters at their annual meetings or symposiums in the following years: MAS – 1995-2001, 2003-2004, 2015-2016; AFS – 1995, 1997, 2002-2010; TWS – 1995-2016. Note: MCTWS is the only sponsoring organization that have submitted all of their annual meeting abstracts in IJS since it was first published in 1995.

Correspondence was sent to Leslie Nyce, President of the Montana Chapter of the American Fisheries Society for her to present a review of their support for IJS at their 2017 business meeting last May. One hundred copies of a flyer were also sent to Leslie for her to pass out at this meeting summarizing the history and status of IJS (see below). They haven't submitted their annual meeting abstracts for inclusion in IJS since 2010. At their most recent annual meeting the MCAFS membership voted to continue support for the annual archival and maintenance fee of IJS with the MSU Library in the amount of \$250.00. However, they voted against including meeting abstracts in IJS even though IJS is now becoming an eJournal.

The third charter sponsor of IJS is the Montana Academy of Sciences. Although they have been erratic in their submission of annual meeting abstracts, they have recently renewed their submission of abstracts to IJS and are working on getting the back log of their annual meeting abstracts included in IJS with a special issue dedicated for this.

Volume 16 (2010) through 22 (2016) with abstracts from the annual meetings of the co-sponsoring organizations have been imported into Montana State University's Open Journal System and are now online. These volumes and issues can be accessed through the IJS website [www.intermountainjournal.org](http://www.intermountainjournal.org) by selecting the SEARCH JOURNAL TAB and then selecting the Open Journal Systems hyperlink. We are now working on getting Volumes 1 (1995) through 15 (2009) unarchived and incorporated into the Open Journal Systems. It is anticipated that this process will be done by spring 2018. The IJS website will continue to be maintained to work complementarily with the MSU Library and its Open Journal Systems that will give the journal a presence on the Internet. It will also provide a standard and on line means for authors to submit articles for possible publication in IJS. Guidelines for authors submitting presentation or poster abstracts for annual meetings and guidelines for authors submitting articles for publication in IJS are available as a downloadable Pdf on the journal's website under the PUBLISH tab.

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**Intermountain  
Journal of Sciences**

**Now Available on the Internet**

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MT Chapter of the Wildlife Society  
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### **What is IJS?**

- The Intermountain Journal of Sciences (IJS) offers a regional peer-reviewed journal for scientists, educators and students to submit original research, management applications, or viewpoints concerning the sciences.
- IJS has been published since 1995 to enhance the educational outreach goals of the sponsoring organizations.

### **What is Published in IJS?**

- Any regional submissions of manuscripts dealing with the sciences are welcome.
- Abstracts from presentations at annual meetings of the co-sponsoring organizations appear in the last issue of each volume if submitted by the sponsoring organization(s).

### **What is Available Online?**

- IJS has a world-wide presence through its website, Montana State University's Open Journal Systems (archival home of IJS) & Search Engines.
- All published manuscripts or written presentations and poster abstracts from the sponsoring organizations can be found individually as conversion for internet access progresses.

**As of 2017 - Volume 16, 2010 - Volume 22, 2016 are on-line!**

- All contents are "OPEN ACCESS", ensuring maximum availability without costs and press ready PDFs can be downloaded, saved or printed immediately.

**Additional Information and Contacts:  
[www.intermountainjournal.org](http://www.intermountainjournal.org)**