



**Science & Research Committee Report
Addendum: Regional Reports
Tuesday September 9, 2008**

MAFWA Update:

David Scott (OH) provided the report on behalf of the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

- Hot topics for the region as identified from the Director's Meeting include: climate change; hunter recruitment, retention, and marketing; invasive species; fish and wildlife disease; energy development; and feral hogs.
- The identification of state's science and research needs has been difficult. Ohio will be hosting the next Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference meeting and Dave Scott is hoping to assemble research supervisors to identify needs during the course of that meeting.
- The Natural Resources Monitoring Partnership (NRMP) information (<http://nrmp.nbii.gov/portal/server.pt>) was sent out to MAFWA members and they were encouraged to participate.

NEAFWA Update:

John Major (NY) provided the report on behalf of the Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

- Wildlife disease has been an important topic for the region. A symposium was held in June in Albany on white-nose syndrome in bats and monitoring for outbreaks continues. New York is trying to hire a wildlife vet.
- The region is reviewing proposals to meet the Regional Conservation Needs to expend pooled State Wildlife Grant (SWG) funding on issues that involve multiple states.
- Feral hog eradication continues.
- The Deer Management Options publication has been revised by the Deer Technical Group and the Bear Technical Group is also considering writing something similar, but need to find funding.
- Wind energy and its impact on bats and birds continue to be a hot topic.

SEAFWA Update:

Karen Alexy (KY) and Ron Dent (MO) provided the report on behalf of the Southeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. Karen provided the terrestrial side and Ron provided the aquatic side.

On the terrestrial side:

- Hot topics are: Hunter recruitment and retention, invasive species, public support for ecological restoration actions, survey monitoring techniques, and the Northern Bobwhite Conservation Initiative.
- The Northern Bobwhite Conservation Initiative will now be primarily overseen by the University of Tennessee.
- West Virginia had approx. 15 positive CWD cases this year.
- The SE took 2300 samples for AI this year.
- Monitoring continues for white-nose syndrome in bats to determine if it is spreading to additional hibernacula.
- Kentucky is trying to hire a wildlife vet.
- The State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) Committee has been created to address the regular framework and addition of climate change activities into the SWAPs.
- SEAFWA is working towards targeting key MSCG plans.
- Kentucky finished a draft terrestrial nuisance species plan.
- NRMP information was sent out to the region and comments were received for possible improvements.

On the aquatic side:

- Hot topics are: need for techniques to assess fish habitat and watershed quality; aging of reservoirs and dealing with nutrient loading; and angler recruitment and retention (currently working closely with the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation).
- Missouri completed a freshwater mussel plan that addresses management and research needs and are currently working on a black bear plan.
- Research is being conducted to determine whether small mouth bass population decline is being caused by increased predation by otters. The study is still ongoing, but initial results seem to suggest that drought impacts, not increased predation by otters, are causing the decline.
- White-nose syndrome has been found in bats in northern Missouri.
- Agencies are having problems finding good candidates to fill specialized positions (e.g., forest pathologist).

WAFWA Update:

Walt Donaldson (UT) provided the report on behalf of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies .

- There are currently 2 big issues that the states are dealing with: aquatic and terrestrial invasive species.
 - Research is needed on aquatic invasive species, particularly zebra and quagga mussels.
 - CA, WA, UT, and CO have all begun significant monitoring and interdiction programs.
 - UT and CO held workshops to discuss sharing of data; currently focusing on what triggers contamination and standardized use of PCR and microscopy for identification.

- Most states have completed aquatic invasive species plans. Cheatgrass and other terrestrial vegetation invasive species are changing the scale at which western states have to consider restoration, particularly as fires alter thousands of acres of habitat in a single event in a drainage location. Establishing these restoration programs is costly. Salmon recovery issues continue to be a focus in the northwest. Plans and agreements are being made to share data between agencies (state and federal) in order to better manage systems that cross state lines (e.g., Grand Canyon/Colorado River). This represents a big step towards landscape management as discussed in the plenary session and assists in meeting SWAP needs.
- UT, AZ, and CO have been collaborating on removing red shiner from the Virgen River.
- Climate change is an area where further research is needed. S & R Committee could assist in identifying specific research needs.
- Water rights and use continue to be large issues in the West, especially as they relate to gas/oil withdrawal and groundwater injection.