

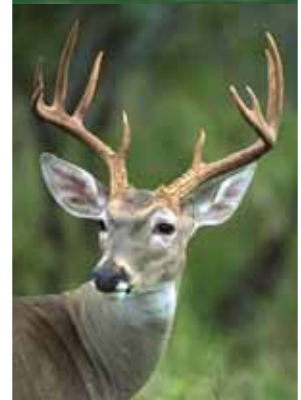


ASSOCIATION *of*
FISH & WILDLIFE
AGENCIES

Association HQ

Highlights Quarterly

Activities of the Association
for April, May & June 2009



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Table of Contents

<u>Executive Director Notes</u>	Page
Finding the “Sweet Spot” in Natural Resource Policy	--- 2
Changes in Member Agencies	--- 3
<u>Fish & Wildlife Funding</u>	
111 th Congress Report	--- 3
FY2010 President’s Budget	--- 3
Farm Bill	--- 4
Fire Suppression Funding Solution	--- 8
Reauthorization of the Sport Fish Restoration & Boating Trust Fund	--- 8
Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act	--- 10
State and Tribal Wildlife Grants	--- 10
Teaming With Wildlife Act	--- 10
<u>Legislation/Policy</u>	
Climate Change Legislation	--- 11
Comprehensive Energy Legislation	--- 12
Joint Ventures for Bird Habitat Conservation Act	--- 12
National Fish Habitat Conservation Act	--- 13
Wild Horse & Burro Act Amendments	--- 13
Other Congressional Legislative Initiatives	--- 14
Joint Federal/State Task Force on Federal Assistance Policy	--- 14
International Affairs	--- 15
<u>Programs/Projects</u>	
Agency-Industry Partnership	--- 16
Amphibian & Reptile Conservation	--- 17
Bird Conservation	--- 18
Climate Change	--- 20
Education, Outreach & Diversity	--- 21
Furbearer Resources	--- 22
Invasive Species	--- 22
Multistate Conservation Grant Program	--- 23
National Fish Habitat Action Plan	--- 23
National Survey	--- 24
Teaming With Wildlife	--- 24
Wind Energy	--- 25
<u>Member Services</u>	
2009 Annual Meeting	--- 26
Communications & Marketing	--- 27
Management Assistance Team	--- 28
National Conservation Leadership Institute	--- 29
Green Team	--- 29
Association Staff	--- 29

Executive Director Notes

Finding the “Sweet Spot” in Natural Resource Policy

Wikipedia defines a **sweet spot** as a place, often numerical as opposed to physical, where a combination of factors suggest a particularly suitable solution. Lately, more often than not in Washington, DC, finding the “sweet spot” in developing policy is proving more and more elusive.

Historically, on the natural resource front, state fish and wildlife agencies and the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies have provided the suitable solution to many issues. Whether it is how to best deliver farm bill conservation programs on the ground or the best way to manage a public resource that become emotionally or politically charged, the Congress has turned to the member agencies of the Association for answers.

While the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies has expanded over the years to address issues beyond just those handled by the Congress, ensuring that good natural resource legislation is passed while preventing bad policy from being enacted remains one of our primary missions.

Unfortunately, the sweet spot, particularly of late, seems to be a moving target. The old adage that “good policy makes good politics” seems to have been forgotten by many in our nation’s capital and finding true bi-partisan solutions to issues plaguing our nation seems to be the exception and not the rule.

Now more than ever, the common sense voice that state agencies bring to bear on natural resource management issues needs to be heard. We very much appreciate the countless hours that so many state agency directors and other senior agency staff spend in Washington, DC testifying before Congress or sharing with their elected representatives.

While the Association staff will continue to spend many hours each week on Capitol Hill, there is no replacement from hearing directly from the experts back home. The success of the Association in Washington has always been the partnership between the agency members working closely with the Association staff. The individual and collective voices of the member agencies are the bullets in the gun. The role of the Association staff is to figure out where to aim and when to pull the trigger. But as we all know, an empty gun is not a very useful tool.

As you read this, the Congress is starting its annual August recess. Please take some time to reconnect with Members you know but may not have spoken to in some time. And also take the opportunity to meet those members of your Congressional delegation that you don’t know. Whether it is a simple phone call to introduce yourself and your agency, a sit down visit in the more relaxed atmosphere of their district office or the opportunity to show off the good work of your agency on the ground, there is no downside to building relationships with your Congressional members.

As former speaker of the House Tip O’Neill observed “all politics is local.” Ultimately it will be those local voices that will help us find the “sweet spot” in natural resource policy that we all desire. ◀

Matt Hogan

► Changes in Member Agencies

The following changes in fish and wildlife agency leadership have occurred in the past three months:

On May 29, Ed Parker retired as Chief of the Bureau of Natural Resources after a 30+ year career with the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. Ed served as President of the Association from 2007-2008 as well as on the Executive Committee for more than 10 years. Bill Hyatt, CT DEP Director of Inland Fisheries, has stepped into the role as Acting Chief.

Greg Duffy, Director of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, retired on July 2, 2009. Assistant Director Richard Hatcher has assumed the duties of Director.

On June 30, Glen Salmon left his position as Director of the Fish and Wildlife Division for the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. Glen is now the Deputy Assistant Director for the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration program with the US Fish and Wildlife Service in Washington, DC. Gregg McCollam is serving as Acting Director until a new Fish and Wildlife Director is named. ◀

Fish & Wildlife Funding

► 111th Congress Report

Once the President sent his FY2010 budget detail to Congress in May, the Appropriations Committees immediately turned to marking up their bills. The House has passed all of its appropriations bills (including Interior, Agriculture and Commerce) with some significant increases to federal programs of significance to the state fish and wildlife agencies. The Senate only passed the Agriculture appropriations bill before the August recess. See details elsewhere in this report.

The House in late June passed a comprehensive climate change and energy bill with dedicated funding to state fish and wildlife agencies for natural resources adaptation programs to remediate the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and their habitats; details are provided later in this report. ◀

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► FY2010 President's Budget

In early May, the President sent his FY2010 budget detail to Congress. The Association immediately convened its review of the budget, and concluded its recommendations and provided those to the state directors on May 27. They were subsequently sent to the respective House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees (the full recommendations are on the Association's website www.fishwildlife.org).

Regarding many agencies, the President's request is very favorable to the Association's priorities, and we support those. However, the budget request does fall short on USDA

funding for conservation programs under the Farm Bill, to which we recommended significant increases in funding. Fortunately, both the House and Senate Agriculture Appropriations bills largely provide funding at the fully authorized level for Farm Bill conservation programs (see treatment following).

On another issue of great importance, the President's budget requests \$28 Million for the USFWS to grant to states to enhance hunter and angler recruitment and retention. Unfortunately, both the House and Senate Interior bills provide no funding for that request, and the Committee reports observe that states can already spend their Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson funds on that activity. ◀

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▶ Farm Bill

USDA Begins Implementation of 2008 Farm Bill

During the last quarter of 2008, USDA began implementing the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) by issuing rules on enacted provisions and programs. However, there was a rush to publish interim final rules for conservation programs in the Federal Register before the Presidential Inauguration. Consequently, USDA successfully published seven (7) interim final rules the week of January 12, with most comments due the week of March 16, 2009. Comments were coordinated, compiled and drafted to reflect a national perspective and submitted by the Association on the following programmatic rules that affect state fish and wildlife agencies and/or the fish, wildlife, and habitats they manage:

Amended Notice to Prepare an EIS for the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP)
Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)
EQIP Amendment
Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program Technical Service Providers
Grassland Reserve Program
Healthy Forest Reserve Program
Regional Equity
Sodsaver Provision
State Technical Committees
State Technical Committee Standard Operating Procedures
Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)
WRP Amendment
Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program
WHIP Amendment

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) published the first rules for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) on June 29, 2009. The Association will coordinate the compilation of comments submitted on the CRP interim rule by August 28, 2009. As of July 9, 2009, no rules have been published on the Conservation Stewardship Program (formerly the Conservation Security Program) or the Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentives Program.

We encouraged all states and regional associations to participate in submitting comments and in helping the Association draft a national response to conservation program rules that promote better on-the-ground program implementation for fish, wildlife and their habitats.

The USDA evaluates problems and needed changes in the rules based on the number of individual comments received.

Jen Mock Schaeffer, the Association's Farm Bill Coordinator, will continue to coordinate the compilation of comments and responses for all pertinent rules. If you have any questions or wish to receive a copy of the Association's comments, please contact Jen at jenmock@fishwildlife.org. ◀

Renewable Biomass Definition in Energy Legislation Affects Wildlife & Habitat Conversion

The House passed a comprehensive energy/climate change bill that includes a definition of renewable biomass, and the important negotiations are ongoing with the Senate. This definition provides considerations for sustainable harvest of biomass on public lands, but it is not adequate, in our opinion, for private lands, relying only on the definition of biomass in the Farm Bill.

The Association would like to see language in the Senate bill that provides for appropriate use and safeguards of fish and wildlife resources on public lands; but, also believes the language should include protections against the conversion of native habitats for renewable biomass development and ensure that sustainability of biomass harvest is defined at the state level through a collaborative process between the state fish and wildlife agency and the state forester.

The forestry community is pushing for the inclusion of the definition of renewable biomass from the 2008 Farm Bill, which was crafted specifically for the Biomass Crop Assistance Program and in our opinion is not a good fit for comprehensive renewable energy legislation. The forestry community objects to federal guidance that would require a common threshold to be met by all to get credit for sustainability because it could affect the state forester's management guidelines and because of concerns for private property rights.

We continue to seek to work together with the leadership of the National Association of State Foresters on this issue to develop either sustainability language or alternatively, a process through which the state fish and wildlife agency and state forester would decide at the state level what is sustainable harvest of biomass and ensure that fish, wildlife, and important habitat considerations are included in the process. It is our opinion that biomass harvest on private lands that would contribute to meeting a Renewable Electricity Standard should have considerations for fish, wildlife, and their habitats as part of the biomass use.

Please talk to and work with your state forester about this issue to help us achieve consensus and a better legislative solution in the Senate bill that benefits fish, wildlife, forests and landowners alike. ◀

White Paper and Position Statement for Review & Potential Adoption: Impact of Biofuels

The Association's Agricultural Conservation Committee through its Biofuels Working Group has developed a position statement and white paper which are slated for a vote and potential adoption at the Association's 2009 Annual Meeting. ◀

New Leadership at the Helm of USDA

On inaugural Tuesday, Governor Tom Vilsack was confirmed as the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, which the Association supported.

Jay Jensen was named USDA's Deputy Undersecretary for Natural Resources and the Environment (NRE) to oversee the Forest Service on Thursday, April 23, 2009.

On July 8, 2009, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the appointment of Ann Mills as USDA Deputy Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment (NRE) to oversee NRCS. Mills was most recently a senior executive at American Rivers. Currently, acting Under Secretary of NRE is Ann Bartuska.

On March 24, 2009, Secretary Vilsack named Dave White as chief of USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). A career conservationist with NRCS, he has provided technical and management expertise in Missouri, South Carolina, Washington, D.C. and Montana, where he served as State Conservationist from 2002 to 2008. White served in the Senate Agriculture Committee where he helped craft the Conservation Title for both the 2002 and 2008 Farm Bills. He also served on the White House Task Force for Livable Communities during the Clinton Administration. White was named Acting Chief of NRCS on January 21, 2009.

As of July 6, 2009, Jason Weller is the new Chief of Staff for NRCS. Jason has previous experience working on NRCS and FSA conservation programs with the Office of Management and Budget and most recently on the House Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee.

On June 17, 2009, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that Tom Tidwell will serve as the new Chief for the U.S. Forest Service. Tom Tidwell is a veteran USFS employee with 32 years of experience.

Newly appointed FSA Administrator, Doug Caruso, resigned on Monday, July 6, 2009, and later that week Jonathan Coppess, former Legislative Assistance (Ag) for Senator Ben Nelson (NE), was appointed Administrator for the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

Lynn Tjeersdma is the Acting Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs until further notice. ◀

"Good Agricultural Practices" in Honor of Food Safety Threatens Wildlife

It seems that increasingly, fresh produce wholesalers are requiring growers to adhere to a new third-party certification for "Good Agricultural Practices" (GAP) in an effort to improve food safety. This was an issue during the Farm Bill reauthorization, specifically in California as it pertained to leafy greens tainted with *E. coli* in spinach grown in California. Ultimately, feces from feral hogs were blamed for the significant human health problems, but it seems that now all wildlife is considered a threat.

This is now a nation-wide fresh produce issue. Wholesalers are now requiring growers to sign an agreement to adhere to GAP. Unfortunately, there are negative consequences in the certification for fish and wildlife. Specifically, one apple grower Jen Mock Schaeffer spoke to was instructed that "no wildlife can be found in the field before or during harvest," and the grower will be penalized during his audit if feces of any type are found in the field. This includes the grower's dog that was being used as deterrent against deer. These practices will affect farmers and fish and wildlife conservation efforts anywhere fresh produce is grown. ◀

Four Million Acre Habitat Loss Looms for the Conservation Reserve Program

Currently, almost four million acres of land enrolled in the CRP are expiring on September 30, 2009, and for the first time in history, USDA was not providing either a one-year extension for those contracts or the opportunity to re-enroll lands through a general sign-up. At the North

American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference, the state directors voted to send a letter to Secretary Tom Vilsack expressing the need and request for such action by USDA that would provide this conservation option for landowners.

In May 2009, Secretary Vilsack announced the opportunity for up to 1.5 million acres of expiring CRP land to accept a one-year contract extension. While we have been unable to ascertain the national acceptance rate of the extensions, it seems to vary by state from 20-80+%. Continuous CRP practices for wildlife continue to be very popular with landowners, but the limiting factor for holding a general sign-up and increasing the acres available for the popular wildlife initiatives continue to be Pay-As-You-Go rules and the 32-million-acre cap imposed by Congress in the 2008 Farm Bill. ◀

Agricultural Appropriations

The Association recommends full funding at authorized levels for the FY10 agricultural appropriations. The 2008 Farm Bill contains approximately \$25 billion in conservation programs overall. Unfortunately, the Administration’s budget reduced several conservation programs that are vital for fish and wildlife conservation.

The House Appropriations Committee restored funding at authorized levels for all conservation programs except EQIP which is still above last year’s appropriations level when it passed the bill out of committee on June 18, 2009. The Senate Appropriations Committee passed its agriculture appropriations bill out of committee on July 7, 2009, and also restored funding to conservation provisions. ◀

USDA Farm Service Agency (in millions)

Appropriation/Activity	FY 2009 Enacted	FY 2010 President’s Budget	FY 2010 Association Recommended Funding Level	FY 2010 House Approps Committee	FY 2010 Senate Approps Committee
Conservation Reserve Program	\$1,946	\$1,936 (up to 32 million ac)	\$1,941	No limitation (1.936m)	No limitation (1.936m)
Voluntary Public Access & Habitat Incentives Program	0	\$16,667	\$16,667	16,667	16,667

Natural Resources Conservation Service (thousands of dollars)

Appropriation/Activity	FY 2009 Enacted	FY 2010 President’s Budget	FY 2010 Association Recommended Funding Level	FY 2010 House Approps Committee	FY 2010 Senate Approps Committee
Conservation Operations	\$853,400	\$867,200	\$867,200	\$874,400	\$898,800
Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program	\$85,000	\$42,000	\$85,000	No limitation	No limitation
Wetland Reserve Program	\$441,000	\$391,164	\$473,000	No limitation	No limitation
Grassland Reserve Program	\$63,000	\$54,000	\$78,000	No limitation	No limitation
Conservation (Security)	\$569,000	\$681,000	\$752,000	No limitation	No limitation

Stewardship Program					
Environmental Quality Incentive Program	\$1,067,000	\$1,200,000	\$1,450,000	Cut \$270m to \$1,180m	Cut \$270m to \$1,180m
Healthy Forest Reserve Program	\$9,750	\$4,750	\$9,750 ^b	No limitation	No limitation
Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program	\$121,000	\$120,000	\$150,000	No limitation	No limitation
Agricultural Water Enhancement Program	\$73,000	\$73,000	\$73,000	No limitation	No limitation
Agricultural Management Assistance	\$15,000	\$5,000	\$15,000	No limitation	No limitation
Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative	\$23,000	\$43,000	\$43,000	No limitation	No limitation

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► Fire Suppression Funding Solution

The Association has long recognized and supported the need for an off-budget solution to catastrophic fire suppression costs, which, particularly in the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), have increasingly consumed more and more of its discretionary budget. Funds are borrowed from other accounts to pay for fire suppression and must await emergency supplemental appropriations to back-fill those borrowed funds.

As a result of this borrowing, significant programs such as fisheries, wildlife, watersheds, threatened and endangered species, and state and private forestry are compromised. The Association has joined with several dozen forest industry groups, conservation organizations and environmental groups to advocate a solution.

In late March, the House passed HR1404 (the FLAME Act) by a wide bipartisan vote of 412 to 3. This bill would provide off-budget supplemental funding to the USFS and BLM to deal with catastrophic fires. The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee just concluded a hearing on the bill (S561) which the Association supports.

The President's FY2010 budget proposes an alternative solution by modernizing the 10-year average cost of catastrophic fire suppression and requesting \$1 billion-plus in the budget for the USFS for catastrophic fire suppression. The budget request also makes available several million dollars in a contingency fund to USFS and BLM to use if their appropriated funds for catastrophic fire suppression are exhausted. Both House and Senate interior Appropriations bills are favorably responsive to the President's budget request. ◀

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► Reauthorization of the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund

The *Angling and Boating Alliance* is an informal partnership of national recreational boating and fishing organizations, industry representatives, and state boating safety and natural resource agencies that is focused on securing reauthorization of the Sport Fish Restoration

and Boating Trust Fund in the 111th Congress, in particular transfer of gas tax receipts attributable to motor boats, in the Trust Fund. The work of the Alliance is guided by a Steering Committee comprised of 13 organizations and Ron Regan represents the Association's interests on it.

Recommended Changes for the Reauthorization Process

In late April, the Alliance reached agreement on a series of recommended changes for the reauthorization process, all of which can be characterized as adjustments to the core architecture of this successful Trust Fund. A number of these are in keeping with the earlier consensus principles reached with the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators. Recommended changes include (for a full list of changes contact Ron Regan at the email address below):

- Use FY09 as the base funding level for administrative costs for the USFWS and the U.S. Coast Guard (CG) with an annual CPI adjustment. The CG administrative costs should be allocated out of the total receipts available (as is done with the FWS).
- USFWS set-aside allocations for the MSCG program, Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council, and fishery commissions should be distributed from the Sport Fish Restoration Account (as opposed to the current "off-the-top" allocation).
- Percentage allocation changes — the Coastal Wetlands Program from 18.5% to 18.3%; the Clean Vessel Act and the Boating Infrastructure Grant Programs, both from 2.0% to 2.1%; the Outreach Program (e.g., the work of RBFF) from 2.0% to 2.2%; and, the Sport Fish Restoration Program from 57.0% to 56.8%.
- The federal/state match requirement for Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) grants should be 75% federal funds and 25% state funds with a Maintenance of Effort clause. ◀

Recreational Fishing Closures and Reauthorization Principles

One difficult issue revolved around recreational fishing closures (e.g., MPA's). Some Alliance members wanted a legislative solution, one that could have SFR funding consequences for states with recreational fishing closures implemented without due scientific basis. The Association resisted this approach and the Alliance agreed to pursue a resolution via 50 CFR 80 — the Code of Federal Regulations for the Wildlife Restoration and Sport Fish Restoration Acts. Proposed revisions are presently out for review to the states and we direct your attention to clauses 80.7 (b)(1)(vi) (Eligible Uses for SFR funds) and 80.8(d) (Ineligible Uses of Funds). A law firm has drafted legislative language to address the changes noted above. ◀

Hill Outreach

Members of the Alliance have been meeting with Senate and House staff to lay the groundwork for the legislative platform. The Alliance's lengthy work, leading to complete agreement, now provides a persuasive position on the Hill; something that has not always been attained in the past. The Highway Bill, to which reauthorization is tied, may not see very quick action, but we are hopefully ready when it does. ◀

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► Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act

The Neotrop Act is a competitive, matching grants program that supports public-private partnerships carrying out projects in the U.S., Canada, Latin America and the Caribbean that promote the long-term conservation of Neotropical migratory birds and their habitats.

Senator Ben Cardin's (MD), Chairman of the Environment and Public Works Water and Wildlife Subcommittee, legislation to reauthorize the Neotrop Act at higher levels (\$20 million by 2015) has overwhelmingly passed the Senate's Environment and Public Works Committee.

It is felt that there are still some hurdles so the conservation community will work with Senator Mike Crapo's (ID) staff to work on overcoming his objections. Congressman Ron Kind's (WI) Neotrop bill has not yet been scheduled for markup in the House Natural Resources Committee. ◀

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► State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Funding

Senators Blanche Lincoln (AR) and Mike Crapo (ID) circulated a "Dear Colleague" letter requesting \$85M for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program in FY10. A total of 54 members of the Senate signed on to the letter. A copy of the letter and list of signers is available at www.teaming.com.

Meetings were held with staff from Senate and House Appropriations committees to advocate for increased State and Tribal Wildlife Grant funding and a decrease in nonfederal match requirements. On June 26, the House of Representatives passed the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (HR 2996) that included \$115 million for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program (\$40M increase over FY09) and a reduction in the nonfederal match requirement from 50:50 to 25:75.

The Senate Appropriations Committee advanced its Interior Appropriation bill with a \$5M increase for State and Tribal Wildlife Grants and no change in the match requirement. Action on the full senate floor has not been scheduled. The Association is working to increase funding and decrease state match requirements in the Senate bill. ◀

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► Teaming With Wildlife Act

Several new co-sponsors were added to the Teaming With Wildlife Act (S655) in the second quarter including Senators Debbie Stabenow (MI), Amy Klobuchar (MN), Jeff Merkley (OR), Jon Tester (MT), John Thune (SD) and Mark Udall (NM). This bill, sponsored by Senator Tim Johnson (SD), would provide states with \$350M over five years to implement State Wildlife Action Plans. ◀

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Legislation/Policy

► Climate Change and Clean Energy Bill

By a one vote margin, the House passed 219-212, HR2454, a comprehensive climate change and clean energy bill. The natural resources adaptation title construct is generally the language the Association and its partners in the conservation and environmental community have been advocating for two+ years.

Under the provisions of the bill, 1% of the carbon allowance (value) from a cap and trade protocol would be dedicated to state and federal natural resource adaptation programs from 2012-2021; ramping up to 2% from 2022-2026; then 4% from 2027-2050. States would receive 38.5% of the 1% under dedicated funding status (not subject to appropriations). The remaining 61.5% to the federal agencies and programs would be deposited in a Trust Fund from which Congress would have to appropriate the funds (but could not spend it except on natural resource adaptation programs).

The 32.5% of the 1% that is distributed to state fish and wildlife agencies would be apportioned to the states through the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration account under the Pittman-Robertson law, with a 90-10 federal - state match. Each state would be required to complete a state adaptation strategy describing needs, projects contemplated, demonstrated coordination with other state and federal agencies etc. Six percent (of the 1%) would go to state coastal zone management agencies. The House also provides offsets and incentives for farming, ranching and forest landowners.

The bill now is being considered in the Senate, where it is clear that there is not yet 60 votes for a cap and trade regulatory protocol. There are six Committees in the Senate that will have input into a climate bill: Environment and Public Works; Energy and Natural Resources; Commerce; Finance; Agriculture and, Foreign Relations. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (NV) has asked all six Committees to conclude their work by late September.

The Association is working with our colleagues in the conservation and environmental communities with the goal of getting the natural resources adaptation title agreed-to and settled in the Senate so that when they conclude the more controversial aspects (e.g., cap and trade; the allowance to coal generated electricity; the role of nuclear) that the natural resource adaptation title can be imported into the bigger bill. We are advocating that the federal natural resource adaptation programs also benefit from dedicated funding status, like the state programs enjoy in the House bill. We are also asking the Senate to consider plusing up the allocated funds for natural resources adaptation programs. Whether the Senate can conclude passage of a comprehensive climate change bill this fall remains uncertain. ◀

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► **Comprehensive Energy Legislation**

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee reported out a comprehensive energy bill (but not including climate change provisions) in early June. The bill is responsive to several of the Association's recommendations with respect to recognizing that there needs to be better balance between domestic energy development, both traditional and renewable, and conservation of fish, wildlife and their habitats.

The bill also recognizes the role of and need for the involvement of state fish and wildlife agencies in those decisions, and explicitly authorizes the BLM to fund the placement of state fish and wildlife agency staff in the pilot Renewable Energy Offices. The Association is not comfortable yet with the definition of biomass in the Renewable Electricity Standard title since we believe that it doesn't adequately address the need for biomass harvest to be done sustainably and in ways that minimize impacts to fish, wildlife and their habitats. We continue to work with Senate staff on that issue.

The House comprehensive energy and climate change bill that passed in late June likewise has a biomass definition that the Association cannot support for the same reason. Unlike the Senate bill, the House passed bill does not address energy development on public lands, and the Association continues to work with the House Natural Resources Committee on those public lands provisions in a bill they are drafting.

It is absolutely vital that a better balance needs to be achieved between increased use of our domestic energy sources and conservation of fish, wildlife and their habitats. Increased use of domestic energy sources both traditional (as natural gas and oil) and renewable (as wind and solar) is vital to enhance the nation's energy security; but it must be done in ways that avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts to fish, wildlife and their habitats. We also continue to advocate that an energy-derived source of funds is appropriate and necessary to assist the state fish and wildlife agencies, USFS and BLM in implementing comprehensive fish and wildlife programs that are consistent with energy development and other landscape-level uses of the land. ◀

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► **Joint Ventures for Bird Habitat Conservation Act**

The U.S. House of Representatives unanimously passed H.R. 2188, the Joint Ventures for Bird Habitat Conservation Act of 2009, which the Association along with the conservation community, assisted in drafting and enthusiastically supports. The bill would formally authorize the USFWS Joint Ventures Program, which has been effectively carrying out bird conservation planning and projects since 1987. The bill has been referred to the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, where it has yet been scheduled for consideration.

The declining trends of many bird species, as recently highlighted in the State of the Birds Report, emphasize the need for strong public-private partnerships dedicated to the conservation of migratory birds. Currently, there are 21 JVs in the U.S. that provide coordination for conservation planning and implementing projects to benefit birds and other species. JVs develop science-based goals and strategies and a non-regulatory approach for achieving conservation.

The JVs are a model public-private partnership with a track record of success that speaks for itself. In fact, because of their success, joint venture-like partnerships for migratory birds are being created in Mexico and South America. If enacted, through this legislation, the bird conservation community will be able to enhance the effectiveness of the JV partnerships through more robust appropriations, and begin reversing the disturbing declines in many bird populations. ◀

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▶ **National Fish Habitat Conservation Act**

The big news is that the National Fish Habitat Conservation Act has been introduced in both the House and the Senate. This legislation, a long-standing priority of the Association, authorizes funding for fish habitat conservation projects (\$75 million annually), establishes the National Fish Habitat Board, with expanded representation, and a Fish Habitat Partnership Office, proscribes criteria for the development of fish habitat partnerships and the approval of projects for funding, and funds the science and technical assistance work of three federal agencies.

The House Bill (HR 2565) was introduced by Congressman Ron Kind (WI) and a hearing was held on June 16 by the House Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans, and Wildlife. Companion legislation, the Pacific Salmon Stronghold Conservation Act, also received testimony that day. In the immediate future, a priority will be placed on securing more bill sponsors on the House bill.

In the Senate, S. 1214, was introduced by Senators Joe Lieberman (CT), Kit Bond (MO), Bob Casey Jr. (PA), Debbie Stabenow (MI), Ben Cardin (MD), Sheldon Whitehouse (RI), Mike Crapo (ID) and Bernie Sanders (IVT). No hearing has been scheduled at this point.

Congress has a full legislative agenda and getting the National Fish Habitat Conservation Act passed will require hard work and persistence in the coming months, but there certainly is plenty of reason for optimism. ◀

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▶ **Wild Horse and Burro Act Amendments**

In spite of objections from WAFWA, the Association, the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus and many in the environmental community, the House passed this bill by a comfortable margin.

The concerns of the state fish and wildlife agencies with provisions of the bill remain the expansion of wild horse and burro populations to all public lands (defined as both BLM and USFS), and the complication to management of wild horse and burro herds by limiting the methods by which the federal agencies can conduct removals. This bill, if enacted, would have devastating impacts to the long-term sustainability of fish and wildlife resources and their habitats. While the fate of the bill in the Senate is uncertain, we need to give visibility for the need for sound science and good land management to prevail on this issue. ◀

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► Other Congressional Legislative Initiatives

The Association is working with the Hill on several other fish and wildlife conservation bills, some of which have been introduced, and some of which are still in draft.

With respect to several introduced bills, in summary, the Association continues to support the reauthorization (S690) of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act; reauthorization of the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act; a bill (HR1831) to make permanent the enhanced conservation tax incentives to private landowners who donate a conservation easement on their property; bills to adjust the collection schedule for the firearms excise tax, and the tax rate for certain educational arrows; and a bill (HR1916) to increase the fee for the Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation stamp (aka the "duck stamp").

The Association also continues to work with the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans and Wildlife on a bill (HR669) from Subcommittee Chair Madeleine Bordallo (GU), which would establish a federal screening program for importation, possession, sale, barter, etc. of non-native invasive fish and wildlife species. The Association's Invasive Species Committee has assembled a work group to inform this effort.

The Association supported, along with five other state executive branch organizations, an amendment in the nature of a substitute to S787, which would tightly restore Clean Water Act jurisdictional status for intrastate, isolated wetlands and intermittent streams, to the pre-SWANCC (Supreme Court) decision level. The substitute was reported out of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

Finally, we continue to work on a bill (HR2807) that would give guidance and direction to the USFS and BLM to design and implement programs in cooperation with the state fish and wildlife agencies to monitor fish and wildlife populations under each National Forest Plan and Resources Management Plan, respectively, in the context of these agencies' other Congressionally mandated multiple-use obligations and responsibilities. ◀

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► Joint Federal/State Task Force on Federal Assistance Policy

The Joint Federal/State Task Force on Federal Assistance Policy (JTF) was established in September 2002 to review issues identified by State and Service personnel in the administration and policies of the Wildlife Restoration and Sport Fish Restoration Programs. The Office of the Director of the USFWS and a state fish and wildlife agency director, as designated by the Association, serve as the co-chairs of the JTF. The Service names six additional federal employees as members and the Association names six additional state fish and wildlife agency employees as members. More information including Director's Orders, USFWS Manual Chapters, Policy Recommendations and Meeting Reports is available at: <http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/Policy/JPTF.htm>

The next JTF meeting will be held August 11-12, 2009 in Portland, ME. ◀

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► International Affairs

CITES Animals Committee Meeting

The CITES Work Group registered for and participated in CITES Animals Committee Meetings held in Geneva, Switzerland in April. **Bob Broscheid** (AZ) represented WAFWA; **Carolyn Caldwell** (OH) represented the MAFWA while the NEAFWA was be represented by **Jack Buckley** (MA). Don MacLauchlan of the Association staff assumed responsibility on the states' delegation and to cover SEAFWA issues. Alligators, bobcats, river otters, black bears and paddlefish were among the species discussed. ◀

CITES Conference of the Parties

All attention in the CITES world is currently focused on preparations for the next Conference of the CITES Parties scheduled for Doha, Qatar next March (2010). Arrangements are being made for **Curtis Taylor** (WV), Chair of the International Relations Committee, to be a part of the U.S. delegation to that conference. Preliminary arrangements have been made for each of the regional associations to be represented at the conference as well. ◀

Preliminary Species for Inclusion in Appendices and Positions by the U.S. Government in CITES

The USFWS has solicited public input concerning a preliminary list of species being considered by the U.S. for possible inclusion in CITES Appendices. Six turtle species were included in this list. The USFWS sought state agency input via the CITES Technical Work Group before developing an official position for the United States.

The Work Group will be continuing to work with our federal partners concerning these reptiles for potential CITES Appendices listing. Other species of importance to the states will be considered in the coming months.

The CITES Technical Work Group continues to work closely with Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (PARC) Joint National Steering Committee. PARC helped to generate a list of the top three to five native reptile and/or amphibian species for further consideration as potential CITES Appendix III listings. The list generated by PARC and its rationale for CITES inclusion will be discussed with the state wildlife agencies before recommending any further action be considered by the USFWS. ◀

Paddlefish Management

The CITES Technical Work Group is presently working to organize another meeting at the Annual Meeting of the Association on Paddlefish issues.

The current situation of paddlefish management represents a case of shared responsibility (international treaty obligations and state management authority); inter-jurisdictional resource management; increasing commercial demand on the resource both within the U.S. and internationally; and volatile allocation politics.

The meeting at the Annual Meeting will be a second step in developing an understanding of the range of issues associated with this species and a commitment to continuing a dialog. A coordinated and proactive solution to paddlefish management can effectively demonstrate to the international community the effectiveness of the U.S. approach to resource management and highlight the importance of state authority. ◀

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U.S. National Ramsar Committee

The Annual Meeting of the U.S. National Ramsar Committee was held on June 25, 2009, in Madison, WI. The meeting was held in conjunction with the Society of Wetlands Scientists/Wisconsin Wetlands Association/Wetland Biogeochemistry 2009 Annual Meeting. Palmyra Atoll National Wildlife Refuge, Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary and the Upper Mississippi River Floodplain Wetlands are the latest sites added in the U.S., bringing the number of Ramsar sites to 27. ◀

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Programs/Projects

▶ Agency-Industry Partnership

The Industry/Agency Coalition's efforts are continuing to move forward on several fronts, due largely to the funding assistance provided by the Coalition's 2009 Multistate Conservation grant. The Coalition's efforts are focused on topics and work plans developed at the annual December Industry/Agency Coalition Summit and also from the refinements determined at its spring meeting which was hosted by AFWA President **Rex Amack**. ◀

Leadership Change

Dave Graham, Ohio Division of Wildlife, was recently appointed to the Coalition's Steering Committee to replace **Glen Salmon**, who has started his new position with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. ◀

Hunting and Shooting Sports Foundation Update

The Association and members of the Coalition have made significant progress in establishing the underpinnings of a new foundation for the hunting and shooting sports. Specifically, **Dale Hall** (USFWS, retired) is spearheading the effort to establish the foundation and is working closely with the Association as well as the National Shooting Sports Foundation and the Archery Trade Association towards this goal. The Multistate Conservation grant project has provided partial funding assistance for Dale's efforts. ◀

Financial Assistance from Industry Partners

The Coalition's efforts are proving fruitful to state fish and wildlife agencies and resulting in increased cooperation with industry partners. The National Shooting Sports Foundation recently provided \$25,000 for travel assistance for state agency employees to attend its 2009 Shooting Summit.

The Association also made available \$10,000 in funding assistance from the Multistate Conservation grant for state agencies to attend the Shooting Summit. Representatives from more than 30 state agencies were able to attend including Association President **Rex Amack**; Vice President, **John Frampton** (SC); and Executive Director, **Matt Hogan**. The National Shooting Sports Foundation is developing a plan to increase participation in hunting and shooting sports based on the Summit attendees input. ◀

Coalition Partner Marketing and Communications Efforts

The Coalition's Partner Communications Team has worked closely with industry trade associations to increase communication between the Association, state agencies and private industry. **John Frampton** recently attended the American Sport Fishing Association's ICAST and National Marine Manufacturers Association's MAATS trade shows in Orlando to represent the states. John is also a member of the American Sportfishing Association's Board of Directors and participated in their meeting at the ICAST event.

The Coalition's Marketing Team is working to implement a national outreach plan to increase awareness of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. **Judy Stokes** (NH) and **Bob Wattendorf** (FL), Doug Painter of NSSF and AFWA staff members, Laura MacLean and Brian Bohnsack, met with the Brothers & Company marketing group to discuss the development of advertising creative to educate the public and industry about the North American Model. The Marketing Team will host a special workshop at the upcoming Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies annual meeting in November to introduce the campaign. ◀

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▶ **Amphibian & Reptile Conservation**

Amphibian and Reptile Subcommittee Competitive State Wildlife Grant

On April 20, the Amphibian and Reptile Subcommittee learned that the Competitive State Wildlife Grant that its members and the Amphibian and Reptile Coordinator submitted (via the Missouri Department of Conservation) was funded in full for \$319,833.

This grant included in-kind or cash contributions from 15 states (including Missouri), plus nine other endorsements from states, NGO and university partners, with (Missouri and) California, Georgia, Michigan and Nevada all receiving a portion of the federal funds toward regional- and national-scale deliverables. You can find the press release on the USFWS website [here](#). Several of the grants awarded via the Competitive SWG program also will benefit amphibians and reptiles.

The five projects funded as part of the grant fall into two major categories:

State Wildlife Action Plan Implementation

- Assessments for climate change vulnerability of State Species of Greatest Conservation Need
- Identification of priority amphibian/reptile habitats (via the PARC Important Herp Areas effort, to launch later this year)
- Development of a scientifically sound and cost-efficient volunteer monitoring framework

Capacity-building for State Wildlife Agency Staff

- Trainings in inventory and monitoring and/or habitat management (using existing PARC training modules)
- An Amphibian and Reptile Regulatory Summit (November 2009 in Atlanta, GA) to discuss challenges in regulating amphibians and reptiles and law enforcement thereof (funds will be applied toward travel assistance for state representatives to attend; see additional information below)

The grant will also fund the Association's Coordinator position through 2011. ◀

Amphibian and Reptile Regulatory Summit

The Amphibian and Reptile Subcommittee will hold an Amphibian and Reptile Regulatory Summit on November 4, 2009 in partnership with the Law Enforcement Committee, to examine some of the challenges state agencies are encountering with respect to regulating the collection/possession, commercial harvest and trade/movement of both native and non-native amphibians and reptiles in their states and to discuss potential solutions.

The Summit will be held as part of the SEAFWA annual meeting in Atlanta, but will be national in scope. Following a query to the Law Enforcement Committee and to the state amphibians and reptile biologists, 39 people indicated an interest in participating, with one-third from Law Enforcement.

We will examine some of the challenges state agencies are encountering with respect to regulating the collection and possession, both personal and commercial, of native and non-native amphibians and reptiles in their states. We will engage state biologists/herpetologists as well as Law Enforcement personnel to assess regulatory efforts and needs within and among states, and to discuss potential solutions.

Speakers will discuss the “state of the union” related to regulations currently in place in the states (with a summary to be presented); case studies from states and the USFWS demonstrating international trade pressures, law enforcement challenges, recent state efforts to revise regulations, and a presentation on the North American Model for wildlife management, leading to a discussion on the application of the model to herpetofauna and other potential solutions. There will be group discussions to determine next steps, and possible follow-up workshops/meetings/products based on needs and priorities identified. The planning team will be finalizing the agenda during the month of August. ◀

Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (PARC)

In April 2009, PARC re-launched its quarterly e-newsletter to update PARC members and partners. You can find the first edition at www.parcplace.org/newsletters/PARCnewsletter2009-1.pdf. The next edition will be available in August.

DoD Legacy Funded Projects: In April 2009, work began on the DoD Legacy-funded project “Do Amphibians Still get Their Kicks on Route 66?” involving disease sampling (in particular for the amphibian chytrid fungus, *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*) by PARC and DoD partners on military installations along the Route 66 corridor (as a cross-country transect). The AFWA Amphibian and Reptile Coordinator assisted in ensuring that state permits were in place prior to sampling. ◀

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▶ Bird Conservation

North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI)

The U.S. NABCI Committee spent the first half of 2009 developing and finalizing its strategic intent for the next three to five years; completing the first ever State of the Birds Report and beginning the next one; promoting the conservation programs of the Farm Bill by developing a “Wildlife Conservationist’s Guide to the Farm Bill” and addressing NRCS and partner capacity to deliver Farm Bill programs; and starting to address key policy and legislative issues that impact the conservation of birds. ◀

NABCI Accomplishments Brochure

At its latest meeting in January 2009, the Committee honed its vision and future direction. The Committee felt it was timely to reflect on where it has been and where it wants to go because NABCI turned 10 years old in 2009. To honor the 10-year anniversary of NABCI, a four-page brochure entitled, *A Decade of Integrating Bird Conservation* was developed. The piece was distributed at the North American Conference and is available on NABCI's website (www.nabci-us.org). ◀

NABCI Committee Update

The Committee's next meeting will be in Arlington, Virginia on August 4-5, 2009. The focus of the meeting will be on finalizing tasks for the focus areas in the three-to-five-year strategic intent document and supporting the Joint Ventures. The first day of the meeting will be conducted jointly with Joint Venture Coordinators and the Association of Joint Venture Management Boards. ◀

Private Lands Subcommittee

The Private Lands Subcommittee is looking at how the U.S. NABCI Committee can improve the conservation of birds on private lands across the country. A subset of the subcommittee is developing a white paper that discusses biological capacity for Farm Bill conservation programs and the need to increase that capacity.

NRCS found that since 2007, NRCS has lost about 30 biologists. The Association did a survey that indicates a similar declining trend in partner biologists. The white paper will be completed in late July and presented to the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service on August 5, 2009.

The subcommittee also completed the 2009 "Wildlife Conservationist's Guide to the Farm Bill." A PDF of the Guide is available for download on NABCI's website (<http://www.nabci-us.org/aboutnabci/FBGuide1.pdf>). A web-based version is also available. It is a living document that is updated as rules are finalized and the conservation programs are implemented (<http://www.nabci-us.org/fbguidhome.htm>). ◀

Monitoring Subcommittee

The Monitoring Subcommittee conducted the database needs workshop on priority initiative databases and their requirements and needs. The objectives were: 1) to develop a white paper on monitoring database needs across the initiatives, and 2) to develop best management practices for data management.

The workshop was held at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center on July 7-8. About 30 people participated with representatives from each bird initiative and IT specialists and database managers that work on priority databases. The meeting attendees developed a final draft of the criteria by which the priority databases will be reviewed. Based on this review by each initiative, a document will be developed that outlines the resource needs of all the priority population level databases for birds. The attendees are also finalizing the best management practices for databases. This document will be an excellent resource for state agency staff that manage databases, input data into databases, and decision makers to determine how secure and effective are their databases. ◀

NABCI State of the Birds Report Subcommittee

A subcommittee of NABCI developed the State of the Birds report. The report was the first of its kind in the U.S. and was developed by a myriad of partners in the bird conservation community, including the Association, with the USFWS facilitating its completion.

The report showed that nearly a third of the nation's 800 bird species are endangered, threatened or in significant decline due to habitat loss, invasive species and other threats. The report was released at the North American Conference on March 19. It has generated more than 700 media stories, including a New York Times editorial, worth an equivalent, estimated "ad value" of more than \$1 million. Copies of the report were sent to each state agency Director. For more hard copies contact Deb Hahn. The report can also be downloaded from the web site. www.stateofthebirds.org.

NABCI's intent is to develop a comprehensive report like the first report every five years. In the intervening years, more focused reports will be developed that analyze a particular issue, habitat or geographic area. In 2010, NABCI will release a report that analyzes climate change and its impacts on birds. The Subcommittee has started developing the report. ◀

Bird Conservation Committee and Working Groups

The Association's Bird Conservation Committee, Partners in Flight/Shorebird/Waterbird Working Group (WG), Resident Game Bird WG, Waterfowl WG and Migratory Shore and Upland Game Bird WG will meet at the Association's Annual meeting in September in Austin, Texas. The main result of the March meetings was the endorsement of the Southern Wings Program. The program has moved toward implementation and state agencies around the country are participating in the inaugural year of the program. The Western, Southeastern and Midwest regional associations are collecting money for their member states. Any state that wishes to participate or has questions should contact Deb Hahn to participate in the program. ◀

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▶ Climate Change

Climate Change-Wildlife Action Plan Workgroup

In 2008, the Climate Change and Teaming with Wildlife Committees joined forces to create a Climate Change/Wildlife Action Plan Workgroup to guide states on how to integrate climate change into State Wildlife Action Plans by the creation of a guidance document. Individuals from state and federal agencies and private conservation organizations were chosen to participate on the working group, which has drafted a formal charter and created subcommittees to focus on various aspects of the guidance document for the States.

The Workgroup met in May on Sapelo Island, GA to discuss the document and will present a rough draft to State Wildlife Action Plan Coordinators during their National Meeting in Boulder, CO in July. The document will be presented at the Association's 2009 Annual Meeting with an accompanying workshop on Vulnerability Assessments. The Executive Summary and a limited number of hard copies of the document will be available at the Annual Meeting in September. The document will be a living document that will be available online and updated as new information arises. ◀

Adaptation Strategies Paper

The Association will collaborate with National Wildlife Federation and Defenders of Wildlife on a publication based on the Natural Resources Strategies Survey of state and federal agencies and academic institutions. Gerry Barnhart (NY, retired) surveyed state participants for this endeavor. Survey results were incorporated into a white paper that was presented at the February 2009 WHPRP Adaptation Workshop in Washington, DC. The group drafting the journal article hopes to have it published in *Frontiers in Ecology* this fall. ◀

Climate Change NCN

The Climate Change Committees Letter of Intent for the Climate Change National Conservation Need for the 2010 Multistate Conservation Grant Program cycle was accepted for a full proposal. The committee is proposing to host a series of regional workshops on climate change natural resource managers for state fish and wildlife managers. ◀

Climate Change Committee Meeting at the North American

During the 2010 North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference, the Climate Change Committee and the Science & Research Committee plan to hold a workshop on Structured Decision-Making and Adaptive Management for Climate Change Natural Resource Management. The inaugural workshop at the 2009 Conference focused on the use of these processes on invasive species management. Speakers from both state and federal agencies spoke on the topic. Representatives from the Adaptive Management course at NCTC guided the workshop participants through an invasive species management scenario using these processes. ◀

State Climate Change Newsletter

The Climate Change Committee will release the first of its quarterly newsletter on State Fish and Wildlife Climate Change Activities. The newsletter will be released prior to the Annual Meeting and will contain submissions from state agencies that are actively planning for climate change impacts in their states. ◀

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▶ Education, Outreach & Diversity

North American Conservation Education Strategy Working Group

The Conservation Education working group met in Chicago May 28-29, 2009 to plan expenditures for the remaining budget and to develop a 2009 work plan and budget for the 2009-2012 multistate conservation grant. Agenda items included how and where the group wants to communicate CE Strategy tools and products; next steps in developing the benchmarks initiated by the K-12 Committee; how can outdoor skills be included in the formal education process; how do we want to incorporate Children and Nature; and how can we partner with state departments of education.

Furthermore, the group decided to formalize a brand to unite the CE tools together under one look and feel. The first product of the brand will be a Conservation Education Strategy Tool Kit – a three ring binder containing a poster of the conservation core concepts and copies of the K-12 Scope and Sequence, Stewardship Education Best Practices Guide and the Field Investigations Guide. The Kit is currently in development.

Presentations

Kevin Frailey, Interpretation, Education and Outreach Section Manager at the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, presented a one-hour session on the Association's Conservation Education work at the Outdoor Writers Association of America 82nd Annual Conference in Grand Rapids, MI in June. Kevin passed to attendees a press kit containing a two-page fact sheet about the North American Conservation Education Strategy; a one-page list of things an 18-year-old should know and do with regards to conservation literacy, stewardship and outdoor participation; and state examples on successful conservation education programs. The Association also sponsored a popular evening event at the conference with the USFWS. The CE working group will conduct a similar presentation at the SEAFWA meeting in November. ◀

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► Furbearer Resources

Ban of the Sale of Humanely Harvested Canadian Seal Products to EU

The Association was represented at the Fur Institute of Canada's (FIC) annual general meeting and the Canadian Fur Managers Committee meetings held June 7-14 in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. The Association's Best Management Practices for Trapping program partners with the FIC in research related to the U.S. Agreed Minute with the European Union.

Along with Officer and Board member elections, the primary topic of discussion at the meetings this year was the recent ban on the trade of Canadian harvested seal skin and products by the European Union.

On July 27, 2009 the European Council of Ministers adopted a regulation effectively banning the sale of seal products to the European Union. The legislation does not contain an exemption clause for humanely harvested seal products, and it specifically prohibits the marketing of products resulting from sustainable and humane commercial hunts.

The Government of Canada views this as a violation of the EU's World Trade Organization commitments under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade. The Honourable Stockwell Day, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, and the Honourable Gail Shea, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, announced recently that the Government of Canada will request World Trade Organization (WTO) consultations on the seal products ban. The Association was represented at the meeting by Bryant White, Furbearer Research Coordinator. ◀

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► Invasive Species

Invasive Weeds as Biofuels

The Invasive Species Committee continues to work with the Biofuels Working Group on issues involving invasive weeds used as a source of Biofuels. The genetically modified species *Miscanthus giganteus* and its use as a biofuel began that discussion. The collective group might collaborate on a roundtable discussion or a forum with the biofuel industry and state and federal agencies. ◀

The Invasive Species Bulletin

The Association's Invasive Species Committee began a quarterly e-newsletter on state efforts to combat invasive species impacts on fish and wildlife, *The Invasive Species Bulletin*. The entire contents of the e-newsletter is written by state invasive species coordinators from different states around the country with different sections focusing on different aspects of invasive species issues. The inaugural Summer issue can be found on www.fishwildlife.org in the Science and Research section under Invasive Species. The next issue will be released this fall. ◀

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► Multistate Conservation Grant Program

To date, the Multistate Conservation Grant Program (MSCGP) has directed more than \$56 million to 152 national and regional priority projects of the state fish and wildlife agencies.

Letters of Intent

In April, 66 Letters of Intent (LOIs) were submitted for the 2010 MSCGP Cycle. Association subject committees reviewed these LOIs and provided feedback to the National Grants Committee (NGC). Subsequently, the NGC met via conference call and invited 21 of the LOIs to submit Full Proposals (a breakdown by NCN is below.) Applicants were notified whether or not their proposal had been selected by June 18. ◀

NCN	Topic	Invited LOIs
1	Farm Bill	4
2	Outdoor Heritage	7
3	Climate Change	3
4	State Agency Coordination and Administration	2
5	Fish & Wildlife Health	1
6	Fish Habitat Partnerships	3
7	International Relations	1

Next Steps in the Annual MSCGP Cycle

Full Proposals were due to the Association by Wednesday, July 22. The NGC will review the Full Proposals during August and recommend projects for funding at the Association's Annual Meeting in September.

Please visit http://www.fishwildlife.org/multistate_grants.htm for more information about the MSCGP. ◀

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► National Fish Habitat Action Plan

"One-Year-Out Workshop"

During June 23-25, 2009, 120 fish habitat conservation leaders gathered at the National Conference Center in Leesburg, VA to attend the "One-Year-Out Workshop." A total of 14 state fish and wildlife agencies participated in the Workshop.

The Workshop was held to solicit feedback on the road ahead for completing 2010 goals of the national Fish Habitat Action Plan. A series of plenary sessions and break-out groups provided a framework for addressing science and data considerations, partnership organization, and communications and marketing strategies - with recommendations for consideration by the National Fish Habitat Board.

The Workshop proved to be a tremendous opportunity for brainstorming, networking, and advancing the work of the Plan. The Board met immediately following the Workshop and has already taken action on some of the recommendations. ◀

National Fish Habitat Board

The Board will next meet October 7 and 8, 2009 in Arlington, VA. ◀

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▶ **National Survey**

During April through June, the USFWS hosted four regional Technical Committee meetings, specifically for state agency representatives, to discuss possible changes to survey questions and reporting for the 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation. State agency participation was very good and at least one member of the Association's National Survey Work Group was in attendance at each meeting.

Earlier this year, all state fish and wildlife agencies were asked to provide data on the number of licensed hunters in their state by county of residence. This data will hopefully enable the Census Bureau to sample hunters more efficiently in the 2011 National Survey. Only a few more states need to respond to the request and thanks to all who have already forwarded the data. ◀

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▶ **Teaming With Wildlife**

State Wildlife Action Plans

A meeting for State Wildlife Action Plan coordinators is being planned for July 2009. The meeting is being sponsored by the National Council for Science and the Environment and is being planned by Dennis Figg of Missouri Department of Conservation. This will be the first meeting of action plan coordinators in three years.

Interviews were held for a Teaming With Wildlife Associate who will help coordinate activities with Action Plan coordinators. The position was filled by Terra Rentz who started in July.

The Bureau of Land Management and the Heinz Center is working with the Association on a proposal to develop performance measures for State Wildlife Action Plans in several western states. ◀

#6000

An award was presented to the Hawaii Wildlife Center in commemoration of becoming the 6,000th organization to join the Teaming With Wildlife coalition. ◀

TWW on Facebook

A Teaming with Wildlife Facebook page was started and the number of fans following the site surpassed 100 within weeks with little promotion. The Facebook page is being used to communicate with and engage supporters of the coalition. To become a fan of Teaming With Wildlife go to <http://tinyurl.com/lwtcwf>. ◀

Central Database

A central database for the Teaming With Wildlife coalition has been developed and is being populated. This will allow the Association to directly communicate with the 6,000 + member coalition. ◀

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▶ Wind Energy

American Wind Wildlife Institute

At the Association's Annual Meeting, membership agreed to become founding members of the American Wind and Wildlife Institute (AWWI). The mission of AWWI is to facilitate timely and responsible development of wind energy while protecting wildlife and wildlife habitat. **Jeff Vonk** (SD) is the Association's representative to AWWI.

The last board meeting was held in May 2009. The next Board meeting will be held in August. AWWI just received its 501(c)3 status and hired its Executive Director, Kraig Butrum and its Research Director, Judd Howell. The organization recently hired Stu Webster to be the Vice President for Corporate Relations and Program Development.

AWWI also issued an RFP for wind/wildlife mapping that was awarded to the Nature Conservancy. The intent is to create a landscape-level planning tool to identify sensitive wildlife areas in relation to potential wind project development. The tool will provide stakeholders with an initial baseline from which to plan medium- and long-range wind energy development, along with conservation plans, mitigation strategies and monitoring scenarios.

Additionally AWWI is producing a detailed report on existing compensatory mitigation concepts, practices and mechanisms; situations where compensatory mitigation is allowed by law and overview of common goals/standards; the extent to which effectiveness has been monitored/assessed and resultant findings; review of publicly available data and a recommendation(s) for making it more widely available; and a discussion and illustration of the economics of compensatory mitigation (re: wind development). This report will be made available to the public by August 2009. ◀

Federal Advisory Committee Update

The Wind Turbine Guidelines Advisory Committee's last meeting was June 28 through July 1, 2009 in Austin, Texas. (www.fws.gov/habitatconservation/windpower/wind_turbine_advisory_committee.html). The state agency representatives are **Keith Sexson** (KS) representing the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies; **Kathy Boydston** (TX), **Greg Hueckel** (WA) and **Scott Darling** (VT).

Prior to the June 2009 meeting, a draft Guidelines document was distributed to state fish and wildlife agencies. State agencies provided comments on this draft. On May 20, the

Association's Coordinator held a webcast for state agencies to discuss the draft document with the FAC state agency representatives. About 30 states participated, providing substantive and important comments. These comments, and those from other FAC sectors, were considered at the June FAC meeting. Another draft will be developed before the September 1-3 meeting of the FAC in Arlington, VA. The draft will be sent to state agencies on August 19 for review and comment. ◀

National Wind Coordinating Collaborative

The Association is now a member of the National Wind Coordinating Collaborative (NWCC) Steering Committee. The Coordinator participates in monthly conference calls. The calls provided an excellent opportunity to discuss wind farm siting and transmission development issues with wind energy and transmission development industry representatives. They are currently producing a series of webinars on transmission development. ◀

Wind Energy and Transmission Subcommittee

The Association's Wind Energy and Transmission Subcommittee met at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference. The subcommittee's top issues were the USFWS FAC, the impacts of the federal stimulus package and addressing transmission development.

Rob Manus, subcommittee member, has developed draft recommendations on connecting the Production Tax Credit to conservation criteria. These will be discussed at the Committee's September 15 meeting. The stimulus package also contained money for BLM to open renewable energy offices in the west. The Subcommittee would like to see BLM coordinate with state fish and wildlife agencies as they advance wind power development of BLM lands.

As a follow up to this request, the Coordinator with the Association's Legislative Director met with DOI and BLM staff. The Association and its partners drafted a letter to Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar supporting the development of BLM renewable energy offices and asking that BLM receive the authority to place and fund state fish and wildlife agency staff in the offices. Regarding transmission, the subcommittee decided to develop draft guidelines for state fish and wildlife agency involvement in transmission siting and development. A draft will be available by the September meeting. ◀

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Member Services

▶ 2009 Annual Meeting

The Association invites you to join us at the 2009 Annual Meeting from September 13 - 16 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Austin, TX. Note, the meeting is shortened by one day due to concerns about state travel budgets. Conference registration and agenda updates are posted as available at www.fishwildlife.org. ◀

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► Communications & Marketing

Materials & Media

The Association produced six issues of the Directors' Line e-newsletter, issues 14 press releases and continued to update the Conservation News page at <http://fishwildlife1.blogspot.com/> on a regular basis. The Association also responded to eight media inquiries.

With assistance from a summer intern, the Association began to catch up on producing back issues of Annual Meeting Proceedings from 2002-2008. The Proceedings will be posted online as PDFs in the third quarter of the year.

Finally, the Association developed several new two-pagers on different topics and issues including "The Benefits of Membership," "Teaming With Wildlife" and "Conservation Education." ◀

Print Advertising

In early May, the Association joined The Nature Conservancy, National Wildlife Federation, The Wilderness Society, Defenders of Wildlife, the National Parks Conservation Association and The Trust for Public Land in producing and placing a series of four (4) print advertisements in *Congress Daily* calling on Congress to GET THE WHOLE JOB DONE and pass comprehensive climate and energy legislation that dedicates 5% of the allowance value for safeguarding natural resources.

Each ad focuses on a different aspect (land, water, wildlife and green jobs) of how safeguarding natural resources from climate change impacts benefits Americans and the nation's economic vitality. The ads direct readers to visit www.nature.org/getthewholejobdone for more information. A fifth ad, paid for by the Association, Ducks Unlimited, The Izaak Walton League, Trout Unlimited and the National Wildlife Federation, highlights the contributions of sportsmen and women in conserving fish and wildlife as well as supporting local communities.

Four of the five ads (excluding the sportsmen creative) ran in *Congress Daily* again in early July as the House approached its vote of the legislation.

To thank Congressman John Dingell (MI) for championing funding to safeguard natural resources from climate change impacts in the Clean Energy and Security Act, the Association signed on to a one-time placement sponsored by the National Wildlife Federation in the Ann Arbor News. ◀

Discovery Channel Documentary Series

The Association was approached by Wild Horizons, Inc. to provide guidance on a new seven-part documentary series the company is producing for the Discovery Channel to capture the North American continent as it has never been seen before. WILD PLANET: NORTH AMERICA will reveal the natural spectacles of the North American continent with each episode focusing on the distinct biomes or habitats found throughout the continent: mountains, plains, freshwater, forest, deserts and coasts, as well as the wildlife that call it home.

In order to capture the most compelling imagery, Wild Horizons sought input from state fish and wildlife agencies concerning the stories that define North America's fish and wildlife and

their habitats. Recommendations were compiled and send to Wild Horizons. The documentary is expected to begin production in late 2009. ◀

State Agency Social Media Links

To keep up with state fish and wildlife agencies that are making the most of social media, the Association created several pages on our existing website providing links to agency social media offerings as well as a page for Affiliate Member listings. To check out the pages, go to www.fishwildlife.org/press_resources.html. In addition, Teaming With Wildlife launched its own Facebook page and one for the Association is under development. ◀

Web Site

Work began with JesseJames Creative to update the Association's website content organization, navigation, timeliness and visual appeal via a content management system. After several rounds of evaluation, an exciting new design for the overall site was selected. A demo site will be presented at the Annual Meeting. ◀

Staff contact:

Laura MacLean / lmaclean@fishwildlife.org

▶ Management Assistance Team

MAT Leadership Training and Workshops

MAT provides ongoing consulting and training for state fish and wildlife agencies primarily focused on leadership development. For more information on MAT and the services offered to state fish and wildlife agencies, please visit www.matteam.org. ◀

Conservation Learning Campus

MAT conducted six online leadership development courses and completed development of a new course, *Leader as Supervisor*, to be offered in the summer session. Courses continue to be filled when offered quarterly by MAT. Currently, multiple staff members from two states are scheduled to receive training from MAT to enable their staff to conduct MAT online courses in house as part of their state leadership program. MAT has migrated all its online courses to the new software format from eCollege. ◀

Face to Face Workshops

MAT has developed a new two-day leadership course entitled "*Team Leader Skills*" and delivered it to Arizona in May. Work began with the AZ staff and commissioners to develop an effectiveness governance workshop for them to be delivered in August. MAT staff prepared to deliver a Franklin Covey "*Leading at the Speed of Trust*" workshop in Utah and a "*Mastering Agency Change*" workshop in Wyoming next quarter. ◀

MAT Consulting with States

MAT staff consulted with fish and wildlife agencies in eight states (AL, AZ, DE, FL, NH, UT, WV and WY) during the second quarter. Subjects ranged from development of state leadership programs to comprehensive agency effectiveness reviews. MAT staff completed the comprehensive agency review for Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife and prepared a debrief meeting to be held with Director, **Patrick Emory**. MAT began initial stages of a comprehensive effectiveness review for West Virginia at the request of Director, **Curtis Taylor**. ◀

Publications and Other Services

MAT prepared an effectiveness governance workshop for state fish and wildlife Commissioners to be conducted at the WAFWA conference in July. ◀

Staff contact:
Sally Guynn, sallyg@matteam.org

▶ National Conservation Leadership Institute

MAT has continued its lead role in planning, managing and staffing the National Conservation Leadership Institute (NCLI). Cohort 3 Fellows completed their NCLI experience this quarter at Big Cedar Lodge in Missouri. Graduating Fellows reported on their adaptive leadership challenge projects. ◀

Thirty-six Fellows were selected from nominations for the coming 2009-2010 cohort. Additionally, MAT continued to develop curriculum, arrange speakers and events and plan the online pre-work for Cohort 4. Additional information is available via the NCLI website (www.conservationleadership.org). ◀

Staff contact:
Sally Guynn, sallyg@matteam.org

▶ Green Team

Association staff kicked off its own internal program to do our part to help the environment and save money. The staff "Green Team" is tracking paper usage, implementing paper- and electricity-reducing practices and has pledged to participate in a Green Team clean-up event. An event was scheduled with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources in June on a riparian habitat restoration project funded by the Landowner Incentive Program (LIP); however, it was canceled due to weather. Staff will reschedule another one for after the Annual Meeting. ◀

Association Staff

Matt Hogan	Executive Director
Carol Bambery	General Counsel
John Bloom	Accounting Manager
Brian Bohnsack	Industry/Agency Coordinator (USFWS)
Arpita Choudhury	Science and Research Liaison
Estelle Green	Administrative Assistant
Dwight Guynn	Management Assistance Team Project Leader (USFWS)
Sally Guynn	Management Assistance Team Project Leader
Deb Hahn	Migratory Bird Coordinator
Mark Humpert	Wildlife Diversity Director
Don MacLauchlan	International Resource Director
Laura MacLean	Communications & Marketing Director
Gina Main	Management Assistance Team Junior Project Leader
Priya Nanjappa	Amphibian & Reptile Coordinator
Amanda Myers	Management Assistance Team Training Services Coordinator

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Teaming With Wildlife Coordinator
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Resource Director
Management Assistance Team Office & NCLI Grants Administrator
National Fish Habitat Action Plan Communications Coordinator
Agriculture Conservation Policy Analyst
Administrative Assistant
Legislative Director
Furbearer Research Coordinator
Multistate Conservation Grants Coordinator



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