

# Amphibian & Reptile Conservation Committee

Chair: David Golden (NJ)

Vice-Chair: Vacant

Date: September 27, 2023  
Time: 8:00 am-11:00 am MDT

## 113<sup>th</sup> AFWA Annual Meeting

TBD

Calgary, AB, Canada



ASSOCIATION of  
FISH & WILDLIFE  
AGENCIES

## Agenda

- 8:00 am      **Call to Order/Introductions**  
*David Golden; New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection*
- 8:10 am      **Review of Agenda/ Committee Updates**  
*David Golden; New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection*
- 8:15 am      **Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (PARC) & Amphibian and Reptile Conservancy (ARC) Updates**  
*Kerry Wixted, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies*  
*JJ Apodaca, PhD, Amphibian and Reptile Conservancy*
- 8:40 am      **Reintroduction of northern leopard frogs (*Lithobates pipiens*) in British Columbia**  
*Rebecca Stanton, Wilder Institute/ Calgary Zoo*

*Currently, only a single extant population of northern leopard frogs exists in British Columbia (BC), located at the Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area. This population is listed as Endangered federally and Critically Imperiled in British Columbia, likely due to habitat loss, invasive species, and disease. As part of the BC Northern Leopard Frog Recovery Team, the Wilder Institute is using conservation translocations in hopes of preventing the local extinction of the species by reintroducing these frogs to parts of their historical range. In 2021, the Wilder Institute and partners developed quantitative assessment tools for selecting a new reintroduction site. This involved establishment of a Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) model and a Site Selection Criteria table based upon the unique habitat requirements of the northern leopard frog in BC. The HSI model spatially filtered for suitable habitat within the historical range based on attributes such as elevation, number of waterbodies, road density, etc., while the Site Selection Criteria table involved scoring each site for numerous habitat attributes important for the northern leopard frog in the overarching categories of breeding habitat, foraging habitat, overwintering habitat, connectivity, and land use/other. We found these methods to be a valuable way to quantitatively compare and select a new reintroduction site. Preliminary results from the first year of reintroduction at the top-ranked site appear to verify that our methods were effective, with a minimum tadpole to young-of-year survival rate of 17% and recently metamorphosed frogs that were significantly larger than at previous reintroduction sites.*

9:10 am **Break**

9:20 am **Bsal Update**

*Kerry Wixted, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies*

9:30 am **Criminological Perspectives on Illegal Freshwater Turtle & Tortoise Trade in Canada and the Intersection with the Legal Market**

*Rachel Boratto, PhD; Monitor Conservation Research Society*

*Unsustainable and illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles continues to threaten the survival of wild populations. Over the last two decades, the Asian turtle crisis has been at the forefront of work on reptile trade, but in recent years, North America's role in the global market, as both a source and consumer of turtles, highlights the global nature of the crisis. Canada's restriction on the commercial import of turtles provides a unique case study for understanding trade dynamics. Research on the supply chain structure and the intersection between legal and illegal markets reveals the complexity of the Canadian turtle trade, which sources both wild-caught native species from Canada and exotic species from abroad. This project explored sanction risk perceptions of turtle vendors under a criminological lens to build a starting point for understanding the underlying drivers of non-compliance in the pet trade. Results also revealed an urgent need for conservation practitioners, biologists, social scientists, and law enforcement to collaboratively develop a Canadian strategy for addressing trade issues. Integrating a much-needed Canadian strategy with the U.S. strategy will provide the backbone for a North America-wide coordinated and proactive response.*

10:00 am **2023-2024 Committee Work Plan Brainstorm**

David Golden; New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

10:15 am **Federal, State, Tribal & Partner Roundtable (All)**

10:55 am **Wrap Up and Next Steps**

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