



The Alberta Wildlifer

Official Newsletter of the Alberta Chapter, The Wildlife Society
Winter 2001, Vol. 12, No. 4
Editors: Sue Cotterill and Matt Besko

President's Message

These are interesting times to be serving as your president! On one hand, we are living and working in a province blessed with riches and opportunities, which of course creates unique challenges for some professionals who work in the wildlife field. On the other hand, the very current down-turn in the economy is creating other kinds of challenges for many people in our society, and doubtlessly for some people in our professional society as well. Yet, recent events such as those in New York City on September 11th remind us all how ephemeral human life can be, and how fragile economies can be. I am also struck, though, by how resilient the human spirit can be in times of great need. Perhaps an appropriate "Irish blessing" for the day is: "May we be good neighbours globally, while also being good ancestors". Each of us can make a difference in these challenging

times, while doing our best to leave a legacy that our children's and grandchildren's generations will value and appreciate.

The same mix of pressures and opportunities is apparent in a partial review of issues and undertakings that the executive board of ACTWS has been involved in over the past several months, as follows:

- Input to the Premier of Alberta on the Meridian Dam proposal (kudos to Dave Prescott!);
- Review of the proposal for cervid hunting preserves in Alberta (in progress, Dave Prescott's lead);
- Preparatory work for review of Livestock Diversification Act (in progress);
- Review of a concept plan for a proposed book (targeted for release in 2005, the province's centennial anniversary) which would document the first one hundred years of fisheries and wildlife management in Alberta;
- Ongoing work in support of our bid (with the Manitoba Chapter of The Wildlife Society) to host the annual conference of the Parent Society in 2004;
- Ongoing preparations for the ACTWS annual conference in Edmonton during March 7-9, 2002 (Jack Nolan is doing a great job!);
- Preparations for a membership drive (lead by Evie Merrill).

When I consider our other, routine undertakings, such as publishing the "Alberta Wildlifer" (thanks Sue Cotterill and Matt Besko, and kudos to Anne Hubbs behind the scenes!), maintaining the web site (thanks Troy Sorensen!), paying the bills and keeping the books (thanks Dave McKinnon!), administering the annual

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scholarships (thanks Blair Rippin and committeees!), it is obvious to me that we are a productive and dedicated group of individuals. Yet, there is still a silent majority out there: For example, **No one answered my call for feedback in the “President’s Message” in the fall issue of the “Alberta Wildlifer”**. Once again, you are more than welcome to comment on the president’s message in this current issue (Phone: 403-297-7349; e-mail: arlen.todd@gov.ab.ca).

There are a myriad of ways to get involved in the affairs of your professional society. For one, if you are really interested in any of the issues and undertakings that I listed in the bullets above, please contact either myself or any other member of the executive. For a second way, contact Harry Stelfox and nominate a deserving individual for the **William Rowan Award**, and/or the **Dedicated Service Award**, (Harry’s phone number is 780-427-2044, his e-mail is harry.stelfox@gov.ab.ca). Each one of us knows one or more deserving candidates for each of our two awards. Express that by making nominations! For a third possible way of getting involved, contact Lorne Fitch who is heading up our search for **nominees for the executive for 2002-2003**. I can guarantee that Lorne would deeply appreciate hearing names of individuals that would either be suited for some spot on the executive, or even be willing to serve on the executive. Why not get in touch with Lorne if you know one or more persons who fit one or both of those criteria? Lorne’s phone number is 403-382-4358; his e-mail is lorne.fitch@gov.ab.ca.

Thank you all, once again, for your support, and for the pleasure of serving as your chapter president.

Arlen Todd, President

Chapter News

Successful Bid!!

The Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society will be hosting the 2004 Conference of the Parent Society of The Wildlife Society in Calgary. see below for details

Highlights from Reno

By Elston Dzus

Bright lights, neon signs, slot machines, concrete ...Reno, Nevada ... two weeks after the September 11 tragedy I took to the air en route to join 1,800 people at the 8th Annual Conference of The Wildlife Society. This trip was co-sponsored by the Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society (ACTWS) and my employer, Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries Inc. The ACTWS sponsorship goes back two years when the chapter membership decided to begin sending the Past-President to annual conference

in recognition for their service to the chapter and in an effort to increase our exposure to the activities of our international organization.

The conference program was a busy one featuring a variety of workshops, symposia and contributed paper or poster sessions. Alberta researchers were well represented throughout these sessions. Highlights for me included a workshop on adaptive management, a symposium on bison ecology and management and various papers too numerous to mention. Many thanks to Mark Boyce, Scott Nielsen and whoever else organized the "Canadian" mixer that allowed the Canucks to visit old acquaintances and make new ones. I attended the 'Leaders Lunch' on Friday where the chapter-of-the-year and the student chapter-of-the-year were recognized. Recipients highlighted the activities that they participated in, and there were many. A plenary speaker addressed the audience with some counsel on delivering messages and influencing using TWS as a vehicle for change (this was a very good speech, so good I requested a digital version of the presentation. Contact me if you'd like to see a copy of it). As with any conference, there was much camaraderie with colleagues from across North America. All in all it was a good conference, but we can do better!

The preceding comment refers to additional function of this trip. While in Reno, several of the Alberta chapter members attending the conference were also actively lobbying TWS council members for our bid to host the 2004 conference. As you may or may not have known, the Alberta and Manitoba Chapters submitted a Canadian bid to host The Wildlife Society's biggest annual function. In July we submitted a bid outlining the level of depth and commitment from both Canadian chapters, including numerous letters of support from various agencies. The Tourism Bureaus of Edmonton and Calgary also put together bid packages for accommodations and conference facilities. While at the conference, Dr. Rick Baydack (Manitoba chapter representative and long time TWS active member) and I addressed TWS council with highlights of our commitment and enthusiasm to host the 2004 conference. I also spent a lot of time talking to the Arrangements Committee co-chairs for the 2002 conference (Bismarck, ND). All in all I left feeling reasonably confident that we had a better than average chance of being successful in our bid.

As I am a biologist I could not leave Reno having only spent time in the Hilton, so Troy Sorensen and I spent a half day touring the mountains. We meandered through pines on our way to Lake Tahoe (one deeeeeep lake:

average depth 800 feet, maximum depth = 1600 feet). A two hour hike at 8,000 feet got my heart going. The return trip took us through a sage-filled valley and back to the gambling Mecca of Reno.

In closing, thank you for the opportunity to serve the ACTWS as president (2000-2001) and for the opportunity to represent the chapter at the annual TWS conference.

With gratitude , *Elston Dzus (Past-President, ACTWS)*

Post-Script: October found Arlen Todd (ACTWS president and proposed Arrangements Committee Chair for 2004) spending three days hosting Sandra Staples-Bortner (TWS conference coordinator) on a site visit in Calgary and Edmonton. Conference centers and hotel facilities were toured in each city while in the company of the respective cities' tourism bureau representative. I joined Arlen and Sandra in Edmonton for a day. We'd like to thank past-presidents Brad Stelfox and Ian Ross; U of A Student Chapter reps (Scott Nielsen – President & Mark Boyce – Advisor); ACTWS director Evelyn Merrill; and long-time TWS supporter Morley Barrett for joining Sandra for supper. This show of involvement is greatly appreciated. And guess what? Drum roll please! WE GOT IT!! ...see message below.

Canadian Bid Succeeds for 2004 TWS Conference

It is a distinct pleasure for me to advise all of you that it is now official; the Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society (ACTWS) will be hosting the 2004 Conference of the Parent Society of The Wildlife Society (TWS) in Calgary. Our partners in the venture are expected to include the Manitoba Chapter of The Wildlife Society, the University of Alberta Student Chapter, the Lethbridge College Student Chapter, and many wildlife employers in the province. More information will follow in the weeks and months ahead.

We had been competing with the Alaska Chapter of The Wildlife Society (and Anchorage) to host the 2004 conference. TWS has now offered the Alaska Chapter the option of hosting the annual conference in either 2005 or 2006. So, we can commence making both official and unofficial announcements about the 2004 conference. Information will follow in both ACTWS and TWS publications.

This is an exciting development. The TWS conference has had in the range of 1500-2100 attendees each year over the past ten years, so it will be a big event. It will be wonderfully stimulating for the province, ACTWS, wildlife employers, and other partners in the venture. So please share in spreading the news and building enthusiasm!

I personally thank everyone who supported, in some way, our bid to host the 2004 conference of TWS. I look forward to working with you, and many others, to make this conference a reality and a great success!

Best Regards!

Arlen Todd

President, Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society

Service Awards

The Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society is seeking Nominations for the following two awards:

William Rowan Distinguished Service Award

The William Rowan Distinguished Service Award is presented to an Alberta wildlife biologist who has made outstanding contributions to the management and conservation of wildlife and their habitats. These contributions might involve excellence in research, teaching, public allocation (hunting, non-consumptive use), habitat protection and development, land use planning, impact assessment, endangered species management, work in professional associations or any other area of the wildlife management profession.

The awards committee is asking for nominations from the membership for this prestigious award. A nomination involves a letter of support from a Chapter member along with the candidate's curriculum vitae/resume. The letter should explain the value of the nominee's contributions in the areas outlined above.

Dedicated Service Award

The Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society Dedicated Service Award is granted to an ACTWS member in recognition of exceptional individual dedication to the

Chapter and Chapter activities. The awards committee is asking for nominations for this award.

Nominations

Please submit your nominations for both these awards, by **January 4, 2002**, to:

Harry Stelfox
Fish and Wildlife Division
Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
2nd Floor, 9920-108th St., Edmonton, AB
Phone: (780) 427-2044, Fax: (780) 422-9557
E-mail: harry.stelfox@gov.ab.ca

Previous Recipients of ACTWS Awards

<i>William Rowan Award for Distinguished Service</i>	
2001	Don Thomas, Canadian Wildlife Service (retired)
2000	Valerius Geist, University of Calgary (retired)
1999	Ian Stirling, Canadian Wildlife Service
1998	Bill Samuel, University of Alberta
1997	Ernie Kuyt, Canadian Wildlife Service (retired)
1996	Dave Boag; University of Alberta (retired)
1995	Morley Barrett, Alberta Fish and Wildlife
1994	Ed Telfer, Canadian Wildlife Service (retired)
1993	Bill Wishart, Alberta Fish and Wildlife (retired)
1992	John Stelfox, Canadian Wildlife Service (retired)
1991	William Fuller, University of Alberta (retired)

Distinguished Service Award	
2001	Kirby Smith, Alberta Fish and Wildlife
2000	Ron Bjorge, Alberta Fish and Wildlife
1999	Jon Jorgensen, Alberta Fish and Wildlife
1998	Blair Rippin, Alberta Fish and Wildlife (retired)
1997	Brad Stelfox, Forem Technologies
1996	Bill Glasgow, Alberta Fish and Wildlife
1995	Mike Dorrance, Alberta Agriculture (retired)
1994	Margo Pybus, Alberta Fish and Wildlife

The Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society Student Awards for the Academic Year 2001-2002

The Alberta Chapter annually presents academic student awards to promote interest and reward excellence in the field of wildlife conservation. This year there are three \$1000 awards being offered to successful candidates enrolled in: a) technical programs; b) university undergraduate programs; and c) university graduate programs.

Student submissions for each award category are reviewed by ACTWS member committees and awards will be presented to successful candidates at the ACTWS annual conference at Edmonton in March 2002.

Details of each award, including submission requirements, are outlined below.

For further information please contact Blair Rippin, Awards Committee Chair:

(780) 464-1626 or rippin@telusplanet.net

Robert (Bob) K. Goddard Memorial Scholarship

Eligibility

Candidates will be students who are presently enrolled in a technical program in the Province of Alberta, focusing on wildlife biology or management. Program examples include, but are not limited to: Renewable Resource Option (NAIT), Fish and Wildlife Major (Lakeland), Renewable Resource Management Diploma or Fish and

Wildlife Technology Certificate (LCC). Please note that programs in conservation enforcement are not eligible for this award. Candidates should have a demonstrable interest in wildlife management.

Submission Requirements

- Transcript of marks for all program courses.
- List of courses planned for remaining years of program, if any.
- Outline of volunteer or work experience in the wildlife field.
- Letter of reference from a faculty member or other professional biologist.
- Typed essay (300 words or fewer) outlining career goals and relevance to this award.

Applications must be received by **January 26, 2002**.

Send applications to:

Ian Ross
Chair, Scholarship Committee
Alberta Chapter – The Wildlife Society
3219 Kinsale Rd SW
Calgary, AB T3E 4S1

Alberta Chapter – The Wildlife Society \$1000 Undergraduate Award

The year 2002 award is now open for applications from students planning a career in wildlife management and preparing to enter their final year in September 2002 in a 4-year Alberta university program in Biological Sciences, Forest Science, Animal Sciences, Zoology, or related field of study.

The objectives are to reward excellence in the new generation of wildlifers and to encourage student participation in the Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society. Applicants must have a demonstrated interest in the profession of wildlife management and should submit an essay of 300 words or less indicating career plans and relevance to this award. The application should also include an outline of relevant work and volunteer experience, a letter of reference from a faculty member or other professional biologist, a transcript of marks for courses taken, and a list of courses planned for their final year.

The award will be officially announced at the Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society conference in Edmonton in early March 2002. The award funds will be disbursed upon confirmation of registration for the next year of full-time enrollment.

Applications must be received by **January 15, 2002**. Send to the Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society, Box 4990 Edmonton, AB T6E 5G8, Attn: Scholarship Committee.

For more information contact: Blair Rippin, Awards Committee Chair:

(780) 464-1626 or rippin@telusplanet.net.

Alberta Chapter – The Wildlife Society \$1000 Post-Graduate Award

The year 2002 award is now open for applications from students planning a career in wildlife management and accepted into a full-time post-graduate degree program at an Alberta university in Biological Sciences, Forest Science, Animal Sciences, Zoology, or related field of study.

The objectives are to reward excellence in the new generation of wildlifers and to encourage student participation in the Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society. Applicants must have a demonstrated interest in the profession of wildlife management and should submit an essay of 300 words or less indicating career plans. The application should also include an outline of relevant work and volunteer experience, a letter of reference from a faculty member or other professional biologist, a transcript of undergraduate marks, and marks for any graduate courses completed, a list of courses planned, and an outline of proposed thesis work.

The award will be officially announced at the Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society conference in Edmonton in early March 2002. The award funds will be disbursed upon confirmation of registration for the next year of full-time enrollment.

Applications must be received by **January 15, 2002**. Send to the Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society, Box 4990 Edmonton, AB, T6E 5G8, Attn: Scholarship Committee.

For more information contact: Blair Rippin, Awards Committee Chair:

(780) 464-1626 or rippin@telusplanet.net

2002 Annual General Meeting – Updates

[Coast Edmonton Plaza Hotel - March 7, 8, 9, 2002]

Plenary Session

“Challenges and Opportunities for Riparian and Wetland Management in Alberta”.

The plenary speakers have been selected:

- Lorne Fitch, Wildlife Biologist, F&W
- Terry Veeman, Professor, UofA
- Lee Foote, Professor, UofA
- Milo Mihajlovich, Forestry Consultant

AUCTION! AUCTION! AUCTION!

We need Auction items

The Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society will hold a silent/live auction to raise funds for our student scholarship. Members attending the conference are asked to bring along a “Wildlife-Related” item to be auctioned. This can be done several ways:

- 1) Stop by your local “Wildlife-Related” stores and ask if they would be interested in donating an auction item to our student scholarship fund. Also mention that we publicize the names of companies that donate to the ACTWS and that we are a non-profit organization.
- 2) Create a one and only masterpiece.
- 3) Auction items don’t need to be new; look around the house for an item you no longer use or want and let’s see who really wants it.
- 4) Maybe you have a special skill you would like to share with someone, for example a day birding at Elk Island Park or maybe you know of some neat wildlife sightings.

Let’s start thinking about what we can bring to the auction - it will be fun!

Those intending to bring an auction item are asked to contact Len Peleshok as soon as possible.

Please contact Len Peleshok for ACTWS pamphlets or more information. len@arc.ab.ca; work: (780) 632-8312 home: (780) 662-2628

THE ALBERTA CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING COAST EDMONTON PLAZA HOTEL MARCH 7, 8, 9, 2002



Address: 10155–105 Street, Edmonton, AB T5J 1E2

Phone: Coast Edmonton Plaza for room reservations:
toll-free 1-800-663-1144 or (780) 423-4811

- **For Reservations:** Special Conference Room Rates at the Coast Edmonton Plaza: Student rooms \$78, Superior rooms \$88, Premium rooms \$98, single or double occupancy, additional person add \$10. Student ID must be presented to acquire \$78 student room rate. Deadline for reserving rooms is February 1, 2002.
- We have reserved a block of rooms for the meetings, so when you call to reserve rooms, please tell the reservation clerk at the Coast Edmonton Plaza that you are part of the Wildlife Society meeting group. This will assure you the special group room rate.
- Plenary session Friday morning: 'Challenges and Opportunities for Managing Alberta's Riparian - Wetland Systems'.
- Paper Presentations: Friday afternoon and Saturday.
- Registration: at the Conference, Thursday night and Friday
- Registration Fees: Student \$40; Regular \$100.
- Luncheons included in registration fees: Friday and Saturday.

- Auction: Contact Len Peleshok, Email: Len@arc.ab.ca, Phone: (780) 632-8312
- Corporate Donations: Contact Ian Ross, Email: iross@canuck.com, Phone: (403) 217-8246; Ken Kranrod, Email: K.Kranrod@AEMLTD.ca, Phone: (780) 831-7231; Robert Anderson, Email: R.Anderson@AEMLTD.ca, Phone: (403) 845-2559
- Conference Chair: Jack Nolan, Email: Jack.Nolan@arc.ab.ca, Phone: (780) 632-8347
- Call for Contributed Papers and Poster Papers: Contact Jim Schieck, Program Chair, Alberta Research Council, Bag 4000, Vegreville, AB, T9C 1T4, Email: Jims@arc.ab.ca,

**WILDLIFE PHOTO CONTEST:
CONTACT TROY SORENSEN
E-MAIL: TROY.SORENSEN@GOV.AB.CA
PHONE: (780) 778-7176**



Photo Contest

We're asking members of the Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society to electronically submit their favourite photos for a contest that will be judged at the Chapter's annual conference in March 2002.

Full details on **Photo Categories, Contest Rules, Submission Guidelines, and Photo Judging** are available on the ACTWS website (www.albertadirectory.net/actws).

Contest Prize Donation

The contest would greatly benefit from any contributions towards prizes from members, chapters, organizations, or businesses. The conference organizers are open to any type of prize donation (clothing, camera supplies, frames, arts and crafts, field equipment, etc.). Financial donations to the contest will be used to buy prizes.

To donate prizes for the contest contact Troy Sorenson (Troy.Sorenson@gov.ab.ca, (780) 778-7116).

All contributions from chapters, organizations, or businesses will be acknowledged at the conference and within chapter newsletters.

Let's make this a great Photo Contest!



Student Chapter News

University of Alberta Student Chapter of the Wildlife Society: September Update

Hey all! We had our first seminar on September 20. Mark Hebblewhite, a graduate student in the Department of Biological Sciences, gave a presentation on interactions between wolf and elk populations in Banff National Park. We had our first meeting afterwards (47 people attended), and we filled up our vacant executive positions. The 2001/2002 University of Alberta TWS Executive looks like this:

2001/2002 U of A TWS Executive/Project Leaders	
Name/Position	E-Mail
Scott Nielsen <i>President</i>	scottn@ualberta.ca
Stephen Taerum <i>Vice President</i>	staerum@ualberta.ca
Tammy MacMillan <i>Treasurer</i>	tammac@telusplanet.net
Steph Neufeld <i>Secretary</i>	stephneuf@yahoo.com
Marc Plamondon <i>Secretary</i>	plamondonmarc@hotmail.com
Christine Rice <i>Activities</i>	clrice@ualberta.ca
Cam Aldridge <i>Fund Raising</i>	aldridge@ualberta.ca
Jess Dunford <i>Membership</i>	jdunford@ualberta.ca
Lisa Cockburn <i>Education</i>	lisacobe@hotmail.com
Curtis Stambaugh <i>ALPAC Representative</i>	curtiss@ualberta.ca
Nicky Koper <i>Wetland Coordinator</i>	nkoper@yahoo.com
Tara MacDonald <i>Wetland Coordinator</i>	taram@ualberta.ca

We will be continuing the wetland project and the urban deer project this year. Sampling for the wetland project begins September 30, weather permitting.

Well, that's all for now... if there are any questions, just e-mail me or Scott.

Stephen Taerum, Vice President

Parent Society News

Northwest Section Awards

The Arthur S. Einarsen Award was established in 1966 to recognize outstanding service to the wildlife profession by individuals residing in the area encompassed by the Northwest Section of The Wildlife Society. The Wildlife Administrator Award was designed to recognize and reward excellence in the areas of wildlife program development and administration. The Awards Committee encourages nominations from the membership of the Section by 4 January 2002 for both awards. Nominations benefit from supporting documentation so please contact Lowell Suring, Committee Chair, for more details if you have deserving candidates in mind.

Lowell Suring: Rocky Mountain Research Station; 316 East Myrtle Street; Boise, ID 83702; Voice: (208) 373-4351; Fax: (208) 373-4391; e-mail: lsuring@fs.fed.us.

Conservation Information and Requests

Fish, Fur and Feathers...

The executive board of ACTWS has made a commitment to donate \$5000 to The Fish and Wildlife Historians Club in support of the development and production of a new book project that will document the history of fish and wildlife management and conservation in Alberta. Members are invited to contact the executive for more information on the commitment.

The proposed title of the book is "Fish, Fur and Feathers – A Historical & Pictorial Review of Fish and Wildlife Management in Alberta, 1905 to 2005", and if you think that you may be able to contribute information to this effort, please read on.....

IF YOU KNOW THE ANSWER TO THESE QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT US...

- Did you know Alberta's first **Game Branch** was established in 1906 under the Department of Agricultural Administration and the province's first **Game Act** was written in 1907? As we've all heard before "those who don't know their history are doomed to repeat it". So, if you're keen to learn a bit about the history of fish and wildlife management, try your hand at the rest of these questions:

- Who was the **first wildlife biologist** hired by the province?
- When was the **first waterfowl survey** conducted in Alberta and who conducted it?
- Who was the **first fisheries biologist** hired by the province? Who was the **first Director of Fisheries**?
- Who was the **first salaried enforcement officer** (volunteer game guardians had been enforcing game laws since 1906) and in what year was he hired? In what year did enforcement officers finally get **uniforms**?
- Who was the **first female wildlife biologist** hired and in what year was she hired?
- In what year did the **Fish and Game Division** become the **Fish and Wildlife Division**? Who was the first Director of this new division?
- Here is a tough one. Between 1906 and the present, how many different **departments** have held the responsibility for the fish and wildlife resource as it evolved from the Game Branch, to the Fish and Game Branch and finally to the Fish and Wildlife Division? (Hint: I've already mentioned the Department of Agricultural Administration at the beginning of this article.)

The Fish and Wildlife Historians Club is currently seeking information for a new book project to document the history of fish and wildlife management and conservation in Alberta between 1905 and 2005. If you know the answers to any of the above questions, or have a few "firsts" of your own you'd like to ask, please contact Petra Rowell at prowell@telusplanet.net or (780) 458-5560. Answers to these and other historical questions will appear in future articles. Stay tuned!

ARE YOU A STUDENT OF WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AND STILL TRYING TO GET PUBLISHED? Here's your chance. The Fish and Wildlife Historians Club is currently working on a book project to document the history of fish and wildlife management and conservation in Alberta between 1905 and 2005. We are currently looking for student volunteers with a flare for research and nonfiction writing to contribute short biographies of prominent historical figures such as R.B. Miller, J. Dewey Soper and William Rowan. Writers will be acknowledged in the final published project. If interested, please contact Petra Rowell at prowell@telusplanet.net or (780) 458-5560.

Crayfish Conundrum

Crayfish are an important component of aquatic ecosystems and foodwebs, playing key roles as predators, prey and detritivores. World-wide, numerous native populations of crayfish have become imperilled by habitat alteration and degradation, chemical pollution, and by introduction of non-indigenous crayfish species. Non-native crayfish may also negatively affect a number of other taxonomic groups including algae, macrophytes, macroinvertebrates, amphibians, and fish.

Alberta is home to one native crayfish species, *Orconectes virilis*, the virile crayfish. It occurs naturally in the Beaver River drainage, but has been introduced to several other waterbodies, including the North Saskatchewan and Battle rivers. Occurrence of non-native crayfish species in Alberta has yet to be officially documented, however, reports of crayfish at other locales suggest additional introductions of our native species or potentially, introduction of non-native species.

Within Alberta, limited information exists on the diversity and distribution of this freshwater group. Alberta Fish and Wildlife Division is interested in documenting crayfish occurrences throughout the province to determine distribution and species composition. If you have observed crayfish in Alberta, please forward the details of your observations, including date, location, species (if you know it) and any other notes to:

Sue Cotterill, Alberta Fish and Wildlife Division
sue.cotterill@gov.ab.ca, Phone: (780) 422-3400

West Nile Virus Information Bulletin

There were a number of media reports concerning West Nile Virus (WNV) this summer and I know a number of staff received calls from the public. The following is a brief update, based on information received this week from the US National Wildlife Health Centre:

- Mortality of wild birds in the eastern U.S. continues unabated, with cases reported in at least 20 states.
- To date in Canada, WNV has been found only in crows and blue jays in Ontario.
- Crows and blue jays are the most susceptible and are showing high mortality. However, the virus has been found in at least 60 species of wild birds and 20 domestic or exotic species.
- In contrast, the number of human cases is declining (62 in 1999, 21 in 2000, and approx 12 this year). A

few fatal cases in humans are recorded (n=7 in 1999, 2 in 2000, 1 in 2001). Horses also can be affected, some of which die (data not available at this time). Public Health officials consider the risk to humans to be low.

- WNV first appeared in North America in 1999 in New York. The geographic distribution continues to expand and now reaches Wisconsin, Illinois, and Louisiana on the western boundary - in essence, throughout the area east of the Mississippi River.
- It is anticipated that the virus will continue to spread, particularly with migrating birds.
- Active surveillance is underway in many states and in eastern Canada from the maritimes to Saskatchewan.
- A vaccine for crows is being evaluated and one for horses may already be in use in U.S. but other than that, there is little potential for stemming the spread. The virus is overwintering in common mosquito species.

To date, there have been no cases in western North America and no reason to believe that WNV occurs here. However, we will continue to monitor the spread and as it comes closer we will implement appropriate programs to detect presence/absence of the virus in wild birds.

There is no active surveillance in Alberta at this time. We continue to investigate any report of dead wild birds and determine appropriate follow-up for WNV or any other disease concern - just as we have always done.

Detailed information is available from:

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgspsp/publicat/info/wnv_e.html

<http://wildlife.usask.ca/english/frameWestNile.htm>

http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov/research/west_nile/west_nile.html

http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov/whats_new/wha/wha0102.html

Margo Pybus, Wildlife Disease Specialist

Alberta Fish and Wildlife Division

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Upcoming Events

- **63rd Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference**
December 9-12, 2001; Des Moines, Iowa
For more info: <http://www.state.ia.us/midwest2001>
- **Canadian Wildlife Service Seminar Series: The Northern Rivers Ecosystem Initiative - Current Activities and Future Plans**
December 13, 2001; Edmonton, Alberta
For more info:
<http://www3.gov.ab.ca/env/info/library/confinfo.htm#858>
- **Canadian Wildlife Service Seminar Series: Decline of Arctic Sea Ducks**
January 10, 2002; Edmonton, Alberta
For more info:
<http://www3.gov.ab.ca/env/info/library/confinfo.htm#859>
- **2002 Certification Watch Conference - Forest Certification and Corporate Responsibility**
January 31-February 1, 2002; Montreal, Quebec
For more info:
<http://www.certificationwatchconference.org/>
- **37th Central Canadian Symposium on Water Pollution Research**
February 4- 5, 2002; Burlington, Ontario
For more info:
<http://www3.gov.ab.ca/env/info/library/confinfo.htm#867>
- **8th Annual Whirling Disease Symposium: Putting a Fresh Spin on Whirling Disease**
February 13-15, 2002; Denver, Colorado
For more info: <http://www.whirling-disease.org/whirling/callforpapers.pdf>

at risk program and projects 2000-2001. Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Edmonton, AB (electronic access:
<http://www3.gov.ab.ca/srd/fw/riskspecies/>)

- Fish and Wildlife Service. 2001. The general status of Alberta wild species 2000. Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Edmonton, AB (electronic access:
<http://www3.gov.ab.ca/srd/fw/riskspecies/speciesatrisk/index.html>)
- Georgantzis, N. and I.J. Barreda Tarazona (editors). 2000. Spatial economics and ecosystems: the interaction between economics and the natural environment. WIT Press, Boston.
- Kerr, Steven J. 2000. Ecological impacts of fish introductions : evaluating the risk.. Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife Branch, Peterborough, ON
- Kneeshaw, D. 2000. Towards ecological forestry : a proposal for indicators of SFM inspired by natural disturbances. Sustainable Forest Management Network, Edmonton, AB.
- Miège, David J.A. 2001. A pilot study of silvicultural systems for northern caribou winter range: lichen response. Ministry of Forests Research Program, Victoria, BC.
- National Invasive Species Council (U.S.). 2001. Meeting the invasive species challenge. National Invasive Species Council, U.S.
- (electronic access:
<http://www.invasivespecies.gov/council/mp.pdf>)
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 2001. Sustainable development : critical issues. OECD, Paris.
- Woosaree, Jay. 2000. Market assessment of the native plant industry in Western Canada. Alberta Environment, Edmonton, AB.

New Books

- DeNicola, Anthony J. 2000. Managing white-tailed deer in suburban environments : a technical guide. Cornell Cooperative Extension, Ithaca, NY.
- Fish and Wildlife Division. 2001. Alberta species

Next Issue

Expect the next newsletter in your mailbox February 1, 2002. You are encouraged to submit any type of article (letter to editor, research, stories, humor, poetry, conservation issues, etc.) for the next newsletter by e-mailing it to sue.cotterill@gov.ab.ca by January 2002.

Letters to ACTWS

As you may remember from the last issue of the *Alberta Wildlifer*, we profiled a letter to Premier Klein regarding the Meridian Dam Project Proposal, written by Dave Prescott on behalf of the ACTWS. The Chapter has received return correspondence on this issue from Premier Klein, and Environment Minister Lorne Taylor:



THE PREMIER OF ALBERTA

August 29, 2001

David R.C. Prescott, Ph.D.
Conservation Committee Chairman
Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society
Box 4990
Edmonton, Alberta
T6E 5G8

Dear Dr. Prescott:

I wish to acknowledge your August 20, 2001 letter regarding the Meridian Dam project.

I appreciate being made aware of your society's concerns and have taken the liberty of asking the Honourable Dr. Lorne Taylor, Minister of Environment, to provide you with a further response on behalf of the Alberta government.

Thank you very much for taking the time to share your thoughts on this matter.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ralph Klein".

Ralph Klein

RK/bcl

cc: Honourable Dr. Lorne Taylor



ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT

Office of the Minister

AR 1023

September 4, 2001

Dr. David R. Prescott, Ph.D.
Conservation Committee Chairman
Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society
Box 4990
Edmonton, Alberta
T6E 5G8

Dear Dr. Prescott:

Premier Ralph Klein has provided me with a copy of your recent correspondence regarding the pre-feasibility study on what is commonly known as the Meridian Dam. I am responding to you on behalf of the Alberta government about this potential water supply project on the South Saskatchewan River.

Given the current pressures on water supplies, especially in southern Alberta, the debate continues on how to address these pressures and whether or not such a dam would provide relief to these current pressures.

I want to assure you that paramount to this study is determining what effects this may have on the environment. That is why it is crucial we hear from Albertans for and against the project. We are developing a process so Albertans can provide their views in a formal way. Golder Associates Ltd., a consultant, has been hired to help us with this process.

The consultant's first step will be to work with the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan to determine primarily whether there is a cost-benefit to the project. The consultant will also be responsible for seeking input on and identifying the environmental concerns. I want to stress that only if it is deemed feasible from a cost-benefit standpoint will the next part of the process be launched with a complete analysis of the potential environmental impacts that Albertans helped to identify.

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I appreciate receiving your comments and will pass them on to the consultant for consideration in preparing the pre-feasibility study. The results of this study will allow Alberta Environment to make an informed recommendation to government on how, or if, to proceed.

Thank you for taking the time to write. Your comments are extremely valuable to this process.

Yours truly,

Lorne Taylor, Ph.D.
Minister of Environment

cc: Honourable Ralph Klein
Premier

Alberta Environment
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Sincerely,

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