

The Alberta Wildlifer

Official Newsletter of the Alberta Chapter, The Wildlife Society
Winter 2006, Vol. 17, No.1
Editor: Dave Hobson

President's Message

Hello everyone; I know I caught you in the middle of making your plans to attend our 16th Annual Conference at Lethbridge on March 9, 10, and 11th, 2006. Chair, Terry Kowalchuk and the rest of the Program Committee have been working hard to put together a great plenary session on "Time to Repay Alberta's Ecological Debt" and two special sessions on "Wind Turbines and Wildlife Issues in Southern Alberta" and the "North American Waterfowl Management Plan", in addition to the usual array of concurrent sessions.

In regard to the conference, I would like to remind members that we need lots of "Auction Items" for both the silent and live auctions in order to maintain funding for our scholarships. We slacked off a bit last year because of the joint meeting with our parent organization, so we would like to get back, Hell No!, exceed our previous auction totals. With the tremendous talent pool in our membership and time still available before the conference we can make it happen. (Dave, can you please put this paragraph in a box?)

Several key issues are emerging that members should get involved with, (1) Under the Water for Life Strategy, basin groups such as the North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance, Bow River Basin Council, Oldman Watershed Council, Red Deer River Watershed Alliance etc. are in various stages of reporting on State of the Basins and are moving to develop integrated watershed management plans to address land use impacts identified in the basin reports. There is ample opportunity to get involved regionally and locally to ensure wildlife and habitat has a voice during the planning phase; check with the council in your watershed to see how the process is advancing and how you can become involved.

Looks like the provincial government is taking another run at the integrated land management process (ILM). Recently, the Chapter was invited to an external stakeholder scoping workshop attended by about fifty

people from a broad diversity of industry, conservation, and other sector groups to provide ideas on what elements should be involved in ILM. Concurrently, the provincial government is developing a Land Use Framework and an Alberta Biodiversity Strategy to go with the implementation of the Water for Life Strategy.

With less fanfare, Alberta Environment has entered into an agreement with the Alberta Stewardship network to administer a new Stewardship Grant Program. The fund of \$100K for 2006, is aimed at supporting local watershed and stewardship group projects to a maximum of \$5K each, for activities that support the objectives of Water for Life. For more information contact the Alberta Stewardship Network at 1-877-7ASKASN.

Remember, if you have any burning issues (other than 'prescribed') that our Chapter should be addressing, please contact any of the current executive.

Hope to see you all in Lethbridge on March 9, 10, and 11th, 2006.

Thanks.

Ernie Ewaschuk,

President

Editors Note

Once again I'd like to thank those who took the time to provide some very excellent feature articles for this issue. Sherry Feser of DU provided the DU articles that were first published in Alberta Outdoorsman in June and November 2005. Gavin Berg, Hugh Wollis and Arlen Todd also provided great articles on the Wabamum oil spill cleanup and the Ord's Kangaroo Rat recovery program.

Chapter News

Announcement of the 16th Alberta Chapter-TWS Annual Meeting

March 9, 10 & 11, 2006 in Lethbridge, Alberta

Alberta will be hosting 2 international conferences this coming year. ACTWS chapter members are organizing both conferences. Kirby Smith (780-723-8248) is the lead for the 11th North American Caribou Workshop in Jasper on April 23rd to 26th, 2006 and Jon Jorgenson (403-678-5508 ext. 291) is the lead for the 15th Northern Wild Sheep and Goat Council Conference in Kananaskis on April 2nd to 6th, 2006. My guess is that they will be looking for volunteers. I've included announcements and call for papers for these conferences at the back of this newsletter.

At the back of this newsletter, you will find the agenda for the upcoming ACTWS annual meeting. Please book early.

Fish, Fur & Feathers Update

Petra Rowell, The Fish and Wildlife Historical Society

Finally! It's done! *Fish, Fur & Feathers: Fish and Wildlife Conservation in Alberta, 1905 – 2005* hit the bookstores the first week of December, right after a grand evening at the provincial museum where volunteers, sponsors, friends and family gathered to celebrate the culmination of four years of heart and soul poured into this project.

To date, the book, a hard-cover 432 pages, seems to be well-received by a wide variety of fish and wildlife enthusiasts including hunters, anglers, biologists, naturalists, and many others. Comments from old-timers and "youngsters" alike indicate that they enjoy the pictures, personal anecdotes, and more detailed chronological text.

Like many projects of this nature, we couldn't have done it without the support and contributions of many. We are particularly indebted to our sponsors including the Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society, to our many contributors including many ACTWS members, and to everyone that helped with reviewing, editing, submitting pictures, etc.

On a personal note, I want to publicly acknowledge the "ragtag" band of fellow management committee members who rolled up their sleeves and helped to guide this project to completion. This includes Ernie Ewaschuk, Gordon Kerr, Don Meredith, Margo Pybus, Blair Rippin, Bob Stevenson, Jim Struthers, and Bill Wishart – thanks guys, for all your hard work and for keeping it fun!

If you haven't already, copies of *Fish, Fur & Feathers* can be purchased from the Federation of Alberta Naturalists. Call 780 427-8124 or go online at www.fanweb.ca

Conservation plans unveiled for six wildlife species

Provided by Geoff Holroyd, CWS

Montreal, 30 November 2005 - The Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), in cooperation with federal agencies, scientists, academics and nongovernmental organizations, today published the first trilateral conservation plans ever to be formulated for North American wildlife species.

Under the North American Conservation Action Plans (NACAPs), a common conservation approach will be applied to six wildlife species—the leatherback turtle, humpback whale, pink-footed shearwater, burrowing owl, ferruginous hawk and black-tailed prairie dog—across Canada, Mexico and the United States. Each plan suggests actions to reduce threats, share expertise and provide key information to the public and wildlife officers.

Highlights of the NACAPs include a proposal to reduce the use of pesticides that affect the burrowing owl's food supply, distribute information to ship masters and their companies on how to avoid striking whales, promote sustainable fishing practices and eliminate at-sea dumping of debris that may affect sea turtles.

"We're taking a holistic approach to wildlife conservation by acting to save critical habitat, addressing human activities that threaten each species, and garnering public support to effect change," says Hans Herrmann, head of the CEC's Conservation of Biodiversity program. "We believe a plan like this can work anywhere in Canada, Mexico and the United States." Alberta biologists Geoff Holroyd and Ursula Banasch, both of Canadian Wildlife Service, Edmonton were the lead for the burrowing owl and ferruginous hawks plans respectively.

In June 2003, the three North American governments adopted a long-term strategy for the conservation of critical species and habitats in North America. The action plans form a key element of this strategy, as does a complementary process aimed at establishing a North American Marine Protected Areas Network and grasslands conservation corridor.

For more information on the actions proposed by the NACAPs, please consult our web site at <www.cec.org/NACAP>. A limited number of hard copies of the NACAP books are also available upon request by sending an e-mail to info@cec.org.

For more information, please contact: Hans Herrmann
Commission for Environmental Cooperation, phone (514) 350-4340, email: hherrmann@cec.org
393, rue Saint-Jacques Ouest, Bureau 200
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Feature Articles

DUC proud part of Alberta history

When it comes to celebrating all of the things that make this province truly great, a growing number of Albertans are looking past the pump jacks, beef industry and wheat fields. Indeed, they're looking up. Way up.

Alberta is, after all, located along one of North America's most important waterfowl flyways, says Dave

Kay who manages Ducks Unlimited Canada's (DUC) operations in Alberta.

Ducks, geese, swans and myriad of other winged species fly our skyways en route to summer breeding grounds in the north and winter respites down south. But they don't just fly over, says Kay. "These birds depend on our

wetlands and uplands. These birds are part of a continental resource and Alberta habitat is essential to their life cycle.”

Conservationists recognized the habitat value of the Alberta landscape soon after the province was incorporated in 1905. By the 1930s that interest took on a more formal role and in 1938 DUC launched its first waterfowl habitat initiative in southern Alberta.

In a province where the vast majority of prime waterfowl habitat is on private land, DUC has since cultivated relationships with 6,000 private landowners and with partners that include the Alberta Government, the Alberta Conservation Association and the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

Working project-by-project, DUC’s 76-year-old Alberta roots now nourish a network of 1,900 habitat projects securing 2.2-million acres of habitat, says Kay. Since 1938, DUC’s investment in Alberta habitat conservation has surpassed \$300 million. With over 24,000 supporters in Alberta, DUC’s work benefits from the input of many Albertans, 1,800 of whom organize about 200 community-based annual fundraisers.

It all adds up to a track record even the Province depends on, says Jim Skrenek, director of wildlife management, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development. In that position, Skrenek also chairs the North American Waterfowl Management Program (NAWMP) in Alberta. Established in the mid-1980s, NAWMP aims to halt wetland habitat loss and rebuild the province’s wetland inventory to where it was in the 1970s. DUC is the main delivery partner.

“Alberta NAWMP’s success is owed in large part to DUC’s strong commitment and science-based approach to conservation and stewardship,” says Skrenek. “They’ve done a really good job of building successful partnerships with a diverse group of stakeholders from landowners across the prairies and parkland eco-regions, to the forestry industry in northern Alberta and the City of Calgary in the south.”

Based on that tradition, DUC’s on-going focus is on sustainable land-use changes. “We can make a strong link between wetland health, water quality and overall human health and ecological biodiversity. But we never lose our focus on mutually-beneficial land use,” adds Kay.

Applied to agriculture, that means hiring range management specialists to work with livestock producers on issues of interest to herd health and waterfowl conservation. On the crop side, it means supporting leading-edge research into winter cereals and hiring agronomists to help innovative farmers make money growing fall-seeded crops that provide valuable spring nesting cover.

“A core misunderstanding of our business is that we raise ducks for hunters to shoot,” adds Kay.

“There is nothing wrong with the sustainable harvest of a resource. But the root of our business is habitat conservation. That’s why we have strong ties to both hunters and to non-hunters and all people who are interested in conserving biodiversity by conserving habitats that improve watershed health.”

Alberta is home to some of the continent's most productive waterfowl habitat, says Kay. "That was the

case 100 years ago – and we're working hard to see that it holds true 100 years into the future."

Conservation Easements protects a landscape legacy

Jim M^cDavid's academic research and university teaching on public administration will leave an intellectual legacy long after M^cDavid's professorial career ends at the University of Victoria. A piece of land he owns in the heart of the central Alberta parkland will spawn an even more enduring legacy; not because of what's happening on the land -- because of what's not.

helped M^cDavid minimize the ecological impact on the land of two natural gas pipelines and one coal-bed methane well.

Earlier this year, M^cDavid and Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) signed a formal conservation easement (CE) that protects waterfowl and shorebird habitat in the Buffalo Lake moraine. "I have a history of being connected to that land," says M^cDavid of the quarter section of land he inherited from his father in 1989.

Historically, this land was owned by M^cDavid's grandfather, who bought it in the early 1900s. By the time M^cDavid assumed ownership, the land was being used to graze livestock and areas once converted to annual crop production had been returned to grasses.

The CE will be an enduring legacy for the M^cDavid family and area wildlife, since the agreement remains in perpetuity, says Bob Thomson, a conservation specialist with DUC.

Concerned about the impact of over-grazing on native and tame vegetation, M^cDavid stopped renting the land for grazing in the late 1990s. By the time DUC approached him about a possible CE in 2003, berry-producing shrubs, native trees and grass and shrub communities were already re-establishing themselves and the landowner was seeing "how the land recovered once the grazing stopped. It was remarkable," notes M^cDavid, who grew up on an adjacent farm.

Like other landowners with CEs, M^cDavid will be responsible for perimeter fencing and noxious weed control, since these are municipal landowner requirements, explains Thomson. DUC periodically monitors the area to assess naturalization, water bird use and possible access by third-party interests, such as petroleum firms. In the CE negotiation process, DUC

The M^cDavid CE is interesting on several fronts, says Thomson. "First, the habitat land covered by the CE was a donated eco-gift with guaranteed long-term protection. Second, Professor M^cDavid keeps title of the property. Third, a federal tax benefit will occur and fourth, the property has been idled for maximum ecological benefit," says Thomson.

As an added bonus, the parcel surrounds a 60-acre shallow basin wetland owned by the Province of Alberta. That wetland, combined with native vegetation, enhances the site's value to local and migrating waterfowl populations and is a boon to other animal species as well.

A continued link to the land is an important part of M^cDavid's long-term vision. With memories of wild strawberries still flavouring his memories of childhood visits to his grandparent's farm, M^cDavid sees a time when he lives on the land for part of each year.

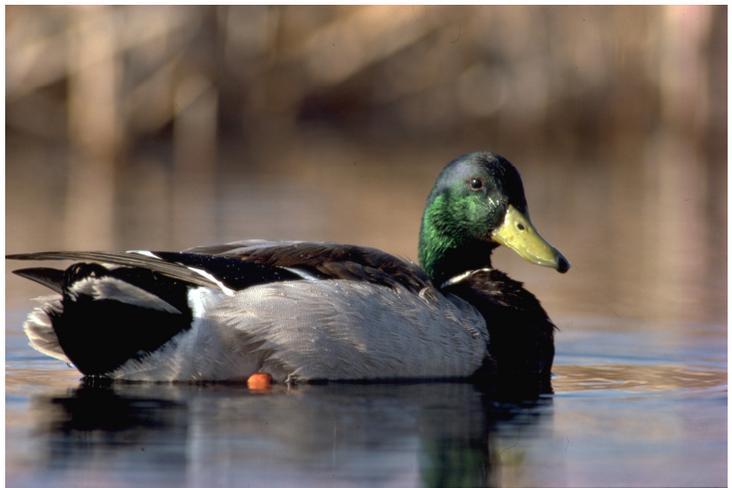
To make sure that's possible, the CE includes two five-acre residential sites for the M^cDavid family. M^cDavid

plans to develop one of the sites himself and looks forward to welcoming family and friends to land only nature will change. "I feel like I'm inviting birds and animals back to reclaim that space," says the professor. "But I don't want to lose that experience for the people I care about either. My family has been supportive of my vision for this land and my Aunt Jean Logan, who grew up on that land has encouraged me to build a place for our family. This land is a legacy."

Conservation easements are designed to conserve habitat in perpetuity -- and that takes a lot of planning, say Thomson. "Each CE has to balance the landowners' recreational interests, residential plans and petroleum issues without reducing habitat integrity."



Jim M^cDavid and Bob Thompson



Photos by Ducks Unlimited Canada

Birds, Oil and Wabamun Lake

Gavin Berg and Hugh Wollis, Wildlife Biologists, Fish and Wildlife Division, Alberta Department of Sustainable Resource Development – Spruce Grove

On August 3rd, 2005, the residents of Wabamun Lake were awakened by the screech of metal on metal and the thunder of railway cars careening off the track literally into their backyard. The now infamous CN derailment spilled almost 800,000 liters of Bunker “C” oil and Imperial Pole Dipping Oil into the lake and surrounding area. It was one of the largest freshwater spills to be recorded in Canada, and wreaked havoc on the wildlife in the area.

Many government agencies including, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (SRD), Alberta Environment, Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS), Health Canada, Capital Health, Environment Canada and Indian and Northern Affairs Council played various roles during the clean up response. SRD coordinated an oiled bird retrieval program at the lake with the assistance of staff from CWS and consultants hired by CN. CN then hired a professional bird cleaning and rehabilitation company, who with the aid from hundreds of volunteers, set up a wildlife rehabilitation center where oiled birds were taken to be cleaned and processed. A total of 1015 birds were retrieved of which 582 were dead on arrival, 110 were cleaned and released, and the rest (323) died during the cleaning process. Birds were not the only animals affected by the spill, as the center also processed beavers, muskrats, snakes and even bats.

High winds during the first days of the response moved a large amount of the oil across the surface of the lake and was caught up in the reed beds and attached to the reeds. Although reed beds are important wildlife habitat, the reeds had to be removed in order to access this oil and to take out the oil covered reeds. Biologists from SRD and CWS worked together to ensure the maximum amount of healthy habitat was being conserved, while the maximum amount of oil was being removed from the system. A large amount of oil was recovered using this process, and biologists have high expectations that the beds will re-grow in the coming years.

Initial harvest of the reeds was done using a commercial weed harvester, usually used to cut submergent vegetation in front of recreational properties. However, large areas of the lake were too shallow for the machinery and required ground crews with modified hedge trimmers to complete the task. As the cleanup progressed, the oil on the lake started to weather and form tar balls that were semi-buoyant and eventually sank to the bottom, forming tar patties. Using hand dip nets and modified pitchforks to collect submerged tar, crews had to walk carefully so that they did not trample the oil into the sediments.

With the coming of the fall migration, thousands of new birds were expected to arrive at the lake, and with them, threatening more deaths due to oiling. CN, SRD and CWS drafted hazing plans to keep birds out of dangerous areas and help to reduce this threat. A combination of a late migration and a lessening threat to birds, as the oil was removed, meant that only a passive hazing program (using human effigies, red strobe lights and bangers) was necessary. Had the threat to the birds been greater, more aggressive measures (propane canons and Breco buoys) were available.

A closure on migratory game hunting within two miles of the lake was put in place. This prevented scaring birds out of the clean parts of the lake and was for the safety of the crews working on the lake.

A concern of fisheries biologists was the spawning of the whitefish in the fall. Underwater surveys with SCUBA and video systems confirmed the presence of tar from the spill in essential spawning shoals, but it was limited in quantity and should pose very little threat to the whitefish eggs. Over-winter studies using Semi-Permeable Membrane Devices and egg trays are being conducted and will develop a better understanding of the effects of the oil on the fish and their eggs.

Wabamun Lake is one of only three lakes in the area with a nesting colony of western grebes. A 5-year survey of this population by SRD biologists showed the

nesting population to have dropped dramatically from a high of approximately 755 nests in 2003 to approximately 243 nests in 2005 (pre-spill). A total of 368 adult western grebes were processed by the recovery center, 35 were released after being cleaned and the rest died. Only two juvenile grebes were brought to the center, but it is expected that as a result of their size and vulnerability, their survival rate at the lake was extremely low. An additional five-year monitoring program has been instigated at all three lakes with historic nesting colonies (Wabamun, Lake Isle, and Lac St. Anne) in the Stony Plain area to determine the overall effect of the oil spill on the grebes at Wabamun Lake. Some of the additional species impacted include:

- Red-necked grebes: 272 brought to the center, of which 28 were released
- Eared grebes: 17 brought to the center, of which 1 was released
- Canada geese: 24 brought to the center, of which 14 were released

- Common loon: 13 brought to the center, of which 0 were released
- Forester's tern: 6 brought to the center, of which 0 were released
- Muskrats: 43 brought to the center, of which 5 were released
- Garter snakes: 3 brought to the center, of which 3 were released

There was good progress with the cleanup, but there remains evidence of tar from the spill in the lake. Future monitoring efforts will be concentrated on reed bed recovery, the effects of oil on fish populations and the population levels of waterfowl using the lake habitat for nesting. As the temperatures continue to warm up and the ice melts off of the lake, crews will begin to gear up and ready themselves for what will hopefully be the final stage of the clean up.



Vacuuming of oil.



First release of birds on August 19.

Recovery Program For Ord's Kangaroo Rat in Alberta

By Arlen Todd, Fish & Wildlife Biologist, Calgary

NOT a Rat!!

The Ord's kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys ordii*) is a small, nocturnal rodent that is highly adapted to survival in arid environments. Despite their name, they are only distantly related to Norway rats and actually more closely resemble the domesticated gerbil! The species

is identified by orange-brown fur on its back, white ventral fur, large eyes, five-toed feet, and extremely long tails for the body size.

Where They Live...

In Canada, Ord's kangaroo rats occur only in the sand hills of southeastern Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan. Natural habitats for kangaroo rats

typically feature open, sparsely vegetated, sandy surfaces to facilitate their bipedal locomotion and excavation of extensive burrows and tunnels. Suitable natural habitats comprise a relatively small proportion of the landscape of southern Alberta, and appear to be declining rapidly, as a function of gradual climatic changes, and human-imposed landscape changes.

The Problem With Human-Created Habitat...

Recently completed research indicates that populations in human-created habitats are not as viable as those in more natural habitats. Human-created habitats appear to represent population “sinks” whereby kangaroo rats using these features suffer higher mortality and/or reduced recruitment compared to kangaroo rats in natural habitats.

An Endangered Species

In May 2002, Ord’s kangaroo rat was listed as Endangered under the Wildlife Act in Alberta. This designation was based on the Alberta population of Ord’s kangaroo rats exhibiting a small breeding population (less than 1000 adults in

early spring) and dramatic within-year fluctuations in population size.

Ord’s Kangaroo Rat Recovery

The Director of Wildlife Management initiated the Alberta Ord’s kangaroo rat recovery team in 2003. Membership of the recovery team includes representatives of parties likely to affect or to be affected by recovery actions: Fish & Wildlife Division, CFB Suffield, Canadian Wildlife Service, Royal Alberta Museum, Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration, Special Areas Board; and a representative from each of the oil and gas industry, the ranching community, and the scientific community. The recovery team has developed and formally submitted (Jan. 2005) a draft recovery plan that is currently in the review/approval process. The goal of the draft recovery plan is to ensure a viable, naturally self-sustaining population of Ord’s kangaroo rats in Alberta

Recovery Program For Ord’s Kangaroo Rat In Alberta?



Upcoming Events

2006 Forest Leadership Conference: The Sustainability Challenge

March 1-2, 2006 / Toronto, Ontario

2006 Annual Conference and AGM of the Alberta Society of Professional Biologists - Water: Science and Politics

March 25-28, 2006 / Calgary, Alberta

Northern Wild Sheep and Goat Council 15th Biennial Symposium.

April 2-6, 2006/Kanaskis Country, Alberta

International Conference on Hydrology and Management of Forested Wetlands

April 8-12, 2006 / New Bern, North Carolina, USA

The 11th North American Caribou Workshop: Managing Caribou Populations That Are At Risk

April 23-27, 2006 / Jasper, Alberta

2006 Alberta's Environment Conference

May 2-5, 2006 / Edmonton, Alberta

2006 Annual Conference and Meeting of the Organization of Wildlife Planners: Planning for Wildlife Conservation in Cultural Landscapes

May 14-17, 2006 / Canmore, Alberta

Multidisciplinary Approaches to Recovering Caribou in Mountain Ecosystems

May 30 - June 1, 2006 / Revelstoke, British Columbia

12th International Symposium on Society and Resource Management (ISSRM), the official meeting of the International Association for Society and Natural Resources

June 3-8, 2006 / Vancouver, British Columbia

Sustainable Forest Management Network Conference: Sustaining Canada's Forests - Building Momentum

June 20-22, 2006 / Edmonton, Alberta

Climate Change and Water in the Prairies Conference

June 21-23, 2006 / Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Western Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies Summer 2006 Annual Meeting

July 21-27, 2006 / Bismarck, North Dakota

Annual Nature Canada Conference

July 6 - 9, 2006, Black Knight Inn, Red Deer, Alberta. Hosted by the Red Deer River Naturalists

91st Annual Meeting of the Ecological Society of America: Icons and Upstarts in Ecology

August 6-11, 2006 / Memphis, Tennessee, USA

10th National Forest Conference: Sustainable Forest Land Management in the Boreal

September 24-27, 2006 / Gatineau-Ottawa, Ontario

Boreal Conference 2006: Dynamic Forests, Dynamic Thinking

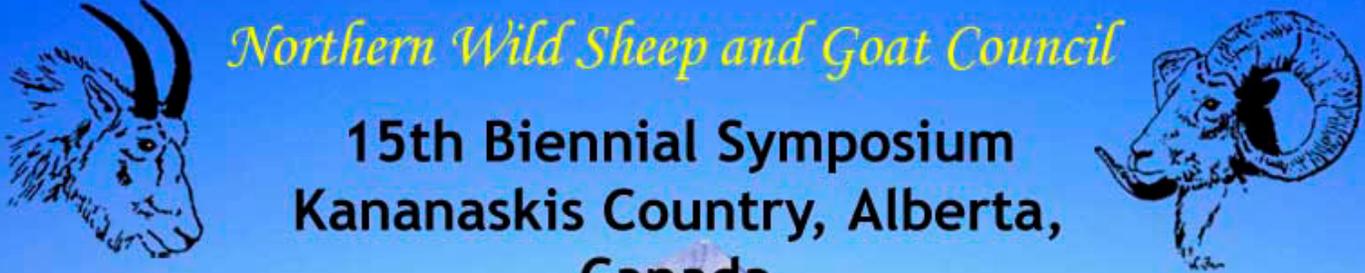
October 2-5, 2006 / Cochrane, Ontario

Bear Conservation in a Fast-Changing North America

October 24-27, 2006 / Revelstoke, British Columbia

For information on these and other conferences, check the following website.

<http://www3.gov.ab.ca/srd/library/conf.html>



Northern Wild Sheep and Goat Council

15th Biennial Symposium
Kananaskis Country, Alberta,
Canada
April 2-6, 2006
FIRST CALL FOR PAPERS

Deadline for Abstract Submission will be January 15, 2006

The Alberta organizing committee cordially invites you to submit abstracts for review and inclusion in the 2006 Symposium. Arrival and registration will begin in the evening of April 2nd.

Technical sessions/presentations will be scheduled for April 3 (all day), 4 (all day), and 6th (AM).

On April 5th there will be a field trip planned with hike into North Ribbon Creek to view one of the largest bighorn winter ranges in the Area.

This will be followed by a BBQ and evening festivities.

We welcome all abstracts. Papers/posters will be selected based on their relevance to research/management of wild sheep and mountain goats and their habitats. There will be limited space for presentations, so we may not be able to accommodate all submissions. Submissions will be reviewed on a first come/first served basis.

Notification of selected abstracts will occur by February 15, 2006.

Abstracts should follow JWM format, and should be sent electronically to:

Beth MacCallum, Program Chair (ovis@telusplanet.net)
780-865-3390

Please share this Call for Papers with your colleagues!

For additional information, contact:

Jon Jorgenson (Jon.Jorgenson@gov.ab.ca)
403-678-5508 ext 291



1st Call for Papers

for

The 11th North American Caribou Workshop

April 23 – 26th, 2006

The Sawridge Inn, Jasper, Alberta, Canada

Workshop Theme: **Managing Caribou Populations That Are At Risk**

You are invited to submit titles and abstracts for presentations at this Caribou Workshop in Jasper, Alberta. Presentations on the Workshop theme and other topics of caribou biology and management are welcome. Presentations will be 20 minutes in length, including introduction of the presenter and time for questions.

You are also invited to submit abstracts for poster presentations.

All abstracts will be printed in the program booklet.

We would like to develop a draft of the program ASAP. Consequently, we will accept **Titles** for presentations until **February 28, 2006**. **Abstracts** must be received by **March 31, 2006** in order for them to be included in the final program.

Please submit the Abstract Submittal Form (attached) with each abstract, and include the following information:

1. Lead author name, affiliation, mailing address, phone number(s) and email address
2. Names and affiliations of additional authors
3. Title of abstract
4. ABSTRACT (You must use the following guidelines and example; please note that the abstract you submit will be the final that is printed in the program booklet).
5. Biosketch

Abstract Format Guidelines:

- Use Microsoft Word (**preferred**) or WordPerfect.
- Hard copies of abstracts must be typed single-spaced within a 10 X 16 cm space. Use a one-line space between the title and the text block.
- Font size should be 10 point, Arial font preferred.
- No hard returns within a paragraph.
- Abstract should be a distillation of the purpose, methods, results and conclusions, and should not exceed 250 words.
- Geographical location of the work should appear in the abstract or the title.

Format Example (measures 10 X 16 cm):

Foruew, E. Z. and U. R. Krasey. A new way to conduct wildlife management in the boreal forests of Alberta. Wildlife Science Group, Alberta Natural Resources Service, #625 Ivory Towers, Edmonton, AB T6J 1E9 and Department of Regional Perspectives, Athabasca University, Athabasca, AB T4T 7K3

Begin text here. This is where you tell us your story.....

Biosketch Guidelines:

-
- Follow first four bullets of abstract format guidelines
 - Include pertinent background information on presenter
 - Limit to three sentences

Abstract Submission Guidelines:

- The abstract submittal form is included on the following page and can also be found at the Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society Website www.albertadirectory.net/actws
- E-mail (**preferred**): Submit the abstract, other required information and the abstract submittal form to asykes@ualberta.ca.

Or mail to:

c/o Ainsley Sykes
CW405 Biological Sciences Building
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB. T6G 2E9

- No e-mail: Submit a disk with the required information, a hard copy and the abstract submittal form.
- Clearly label all submitted information with the pertinent information (name of lead author, abstract title, and lead author contact phone number and e-mail).

Titles and Abstracts will be acknowledged within three days (unless received during the Christmas break, in which case receipt will be acknowledged by Jan 3/06), and authors will be advised of the final decision on their abstract (and the session in which it will be given) by **April 5, 2006**.

Venue

The conference will be held at the **Sawridge Inn, Jasper, Alberta, Canada**. A block of rooms will be held until **March 8, 2006**. Room rates are \$90.00 Single/\$100.00 Double and this includes a buffet breakfast. Triple and quadruple occupancy available at an additional cost of \$20.00 per person. Conference rates will be available 2 days prior and 2 days after the conference. Reservations can be made by calling **1-800-661-6427** or **1-780-852-5111**. Indicate that you will be attending the **North American Caribou Conference** and quote reservation number **300679**.

For more information contact regarding the 11th NA Caribou Conference contact:

Kirby.Smith@gov.ab.ca

780-723-8248

Recently Published

Knapton, R., G.L. Holroyd and H.E. Trefry. 2006. Mountain Plover in Canada: Surveys and Records up to 2005. Canadian Wildlife Service Technical Report Series No. 448. Prairie and Northern Region. Edmonton, Alberta. iv + 50pp

Summary

The Mountain Plover was described along the Montana-Canada border by the US boundary commission team in 1874. All of their specimens were collected in Montana. Since then this species has been recorded 44 times in Canada. The first confirmed breeding record was in 1979; prior authors did not consider Mountain Plover a Canadian breeding species. In the past 25 years, there are 16 Canadian records of eggs or flightless young and 10 records of pairs suspected of breeding; the remaining records were of singles or in the non-breeding season. The species was first listed as an endangered species in Canada in 1987 partly based on a perceived decline from 1980 to 1986. Intensive searches for Mountain Plovers in 2005, together with field work for Burrowing Owls in key plover habitat from 1998-2005 resulted in only a few additional records. A re-evaluation of the status of plovers in Canada indicates that it is a peripheral species with no evidence that it was ever a common or regular breeder in southern Alberta and Saskatchewan. Despite major declines in the core of its breeding range in Montana and Colorado it occasionally continues to appear at isolated sites in low breeding numbers in Canada at the northern limit of its range, probably fluctuating with climatic conditions and the availability of overgrazed nesting habitat. It remains to be seen if the Mountain Plover is a regular breeder in Canada.

Please send any references of recently published articles to dave.hobson@gov.ab.ca. Articles of interest include those authored by ACTWS members on Alberta wildlife.

ACTWS Executive Contact List - 2005/6

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TWS Conference Agenda

Cullen RAC, LCC
Campus

Thursday March 9, 2006

18:00 - 21:00 Registration and Meet and Greet, LCC student chapter photo contest

Insert Place

Friday March 10, 2006

8:00 - 8:10 Introduction

8:10- 8:20 Welcome to Lethbridge

8:20 - 8:30 Housekeeping

Insert Place

Plenary Sessions : Repaying Alberta's Ecological Debt

8:30 - 9:00 Riparian Health Session

9:00 - 9:30 Water Quality/Quantity Session

10:00 - 10:30 Loss of Grasslands Session

10:30-11:00 **Break**

| | |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11:00-11:30 | Ecological Goods and Services Session |
| 11:00 - 11:30 | Cumulative Effects |
| 11:30 - 12:00 | Questions |
| 12:00 - 13:00 | Lunch |
| Insert Place | Special Session North American Waterfowl Management Plan |
| 13:00 - 13:10 | Introduction |
| 13:10 - 13:25 | Overview of Alberta NAWMP Partnership |
| | David Kay |
| 13:25- 13:40 | NAWMP and Alberta's Water for Life Strategy |
| | Ian Rundland |
| 13:40 - 13:55 | Environmental Farm Plans |
| | TBD |
| 13:55 - 14:10 | The Science Around Alberta's NAWMP's Landscape Approach |
| | Michael Barr |
| 14:10 – 14:25 | NAWMP – Alberta's Largest Habitat Program |
| | Don Watson and Dana Blouin |
| 14:25 – 14:40 | NAWMP – Looking Forward |
| | Jim Skrenek |
| 14:40 – 15:10 | Panel Discussion/Questions |
| 15:10 – 15:30 | Break |

| | |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Insert Place | Session 1 – Foraging Ecology |
| 15:30 - 15:50 | Walleye versus Cormorants: Will All the Fishes Come Home to Roost? <i>Andrea McGregor</i> |
| 15:50-16:10 | Estimating Forage Intake of Mule Deer Using n-Alkane markers <i>Gerry Kuzyk</i> |
| 16:10- 16:30 | Estimating Wolf Kill Rates in a Multi-prey System Using GPS Collars <i>Nathan Webb</i> |
| 16:30- 16:50 | Prairie Rattlesnake Foraging Ecology Strategies: the Influence of Changing landscapes and changing risks. <i>Dennis Jorgensen</i> |
| 16:50- 17:00 | Closing/Housekeeping |
| 17:00-18:30 | Dinner (on your own) |
| 18:30 - 19:30 | Poster Session |
| 19:30 - 22:00 | Mixer - Auction |

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|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Insert Place | Saturday March 11, 2006 |
| 8:00 - 8:10 | Good Morning/ Housekeeping |
| Insert Place | Special Sessions Wind Turbine effects on Bats/Birds |
| 8:10 - 8:30 | Bats and Windfarms: A North American Perspective Robert Barclay |
| 8:30 - 8:50 | Birds and Windfarms: An Alberta Perspective |

| | |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Kent Brown and Brenda Hamilton |
| 8:50 - 9:10 | Filling in the Gaps: Surveying Bats In Alberta |
| | Cori Lausen |
| 9:10 - 9:30 | Avian Use Studies at Two Proposed Wind Resource Areas in Southern Alberta |
| | Stephen Glendinning |
| 9:30 - 9:50 | Migratory Bats and Wind Turbines in Alberta |
| | Erin Baerwald |
| 9:50-10:20 | Panel Discussion/Questions |
| 10:20 - 10:40 | Break |
| 10:40-12:00 | ACTWS Business Meeting |
| 12:00-13:30 | Lunch and Awards |
| Insert Place | Session 2 – Landuse Impacts |
| | Concurrent to Session 3 |
| 13:30 - 13:50 | Responses of avian communities to modified river flows |
| | Andrew Hurly |
| 13:50 - 14:10 | The Effects of Cattle Grazing on the Breeding Biology of Riparian Birds |
| | Katheryn Taylor |
| 14:10 - 14:30 | Effects of access and hunting on the demographics of black bears |
| | Sophie Czetwertynski |
| 14:30 - 14:50 | Barred Owls (Strix Varia) in an Agricultural Landscape: the Demographic Response to Forest Cover |
| | <i>Mike Russell</i> |
| 14:50 - 15:10 | The Wabamun Oil Spill: From a Wildlife Perspective |
| | Gavin Berg |

Insert Place

Session 3 – Monitoring and Managing

Concurrent to Session 2

13:30 - 13:50 **Integrating Wildlife Baseline Data Collection Programs with Long-term Monitoring**

Corey De La Mare

13:50 - 14:10 **Colonial and non-colonial waterbirds in the northeast region of Alberta: monitoring, management, and conservation**

Christine Found

14:10 - 14:30 **The 2005 Alberta Ferruginous Hawk Inventory and Population Analysis**

Brandy Downey

14:30 - 14:50 **Know Thy Enemy: Insights into the success of elk translocations to risky landscapes**

Jim Allen

14:50 - 15:10 **Raising the bar: new integrated indices for measuring and reporting changes in biodiversity**

Jim Schiek