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Acting Executive Director

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WAFWA has a new Executive Director!

J.D. Strong, outgoing President of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA), made the announcement at the annual business meeting this week. “I’m pleased to announce after an extensive search that Dr. Zach Lowe will be joining our team as the new Executive Director. Dr. Lowe is a proven leader in the wildlife conservation world, and he garnered the unanimous support of our Directors to lead this preeminent organization into its next century of existence.”

Zach is a familiar name to many in State and Federal wildlife agency leadership, having successfully grown the Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow (CLfT) program and several national professional development and research projects at the Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation for more than a decade. A native to the Midwest where he began his career as an Extension Habitat Specialist, the Western US is familiar territory for Zach, as he has established on-the-ground program delivery and research in Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming.

Zach will take over from Dr. Chris Moore who has served as the Acting Executive Director since April of 2019. Chris has served in that role as part of a professional development opportunity with the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council. “WAFWA is incredibly lucky to have had Chris at the helm for the past couple of years,” noted Strong. “Chris has been a skilled and steady hand through a great deal of challenging transition and rebuilding, and there’s no doubt WAFWA is in a much better place as a result of his leadership.”

“The Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and Dr. Moore have thoughtfully crafted a strategic vision for WAFWA that will keep it nimble and able to address some of the most pressing challenges facing its member agencies,” said Lowe. “The opportunity to help deliver and shape conservation on such a diverse ecological and social scale makes this incredibly appealing and meaningful work, and I am eager to hit the ground running in August.”

Zach lives on a small homestead in Indiana with his wife and three children where they enjoy a life in the outdoors gardening, hunting, boating, and hiking. He is an accomplished cook of locally sourced foods and collects original works of wildlife art and historical literature in his spare time.

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