

Business Meeting Minutes

2022 WAFWA Summer Meeting – Friday, July 15, 2022

Omni Hotel, Oklahoma City, OK

1. Call to Order (Jennifer Psyllakis)

2. Roll Call (Zach Lowe): Voting Members Present (or their proxies): Ben Mulligan (in place of Doug Vincent-Lang) (AK), Ty Gray (virtually) (AZ), Jennifer Psyllakis (BC), Chad Dibble (virtually, in place of Chuck Bonham) (CA), Heather Dugan (CO), Ed Schriever (ID), Brad Loveless (KS), Tim McCoy (NE), Tony Wasley (NV), Stewart Liley (in place of Michael Sloane) (NM), J.D. Strong (OK), Curt Melcher (OR), Clayton Wolf (in place of Carter Smith) (TX), Mike Canning (in place of J Shirley) (UT), Nathan Pamplin (in place of Kelly Susewind) (WA), Angi Bruce (in place of Brian Nesvik) (WY)

3. Welcome and WAFWA President's Opening Remarks (Jennifer Psyllakis)

4. Announcements, Review of Agenda, Request for Additional Agenda Items

5. AFWA Report (Tony Wasley): Priorities are 1) RAWA covered in Directors and Commissioners Forum and hopeful for passage this federal fiscal year, 2) NFWF/America the Beautiful Challenge grants – regional AFWAs have requested eligibility, 3) Landscape Conservation Task Force – met yesterday in person and made progress. Curt Melcher and Brad Loveless representing WAFWA, 4) Relevancy and Diversity Equity and Inclusion in AFWA – 4a) committees were charged w/ a self-review through this lens and not quite where they want to be. Creating a worksheet to aid this review process 4b) Significant efforts need to be both creating inviting spaces but also meeting people where they are. Traveling to Alabama to partner with Minority Outdoor Alliance and Outdoor Afro. 5) One Health – Shane Mahoney wrote a white paper with a unique perspective will report out at AFWA meeting in September. Report continued by Ron Regan: 10 AFWA people attending the meeting in Oklahoma City. Encourage people to attend the 112th annual AFWA meeting in Fort Worth, TX this September. Ron previewed highlight events planned for the meeting. Business meeting held on the afternoon followed by a President's reception that evening. Curt Melcher (Oregon director) will replace Tony Wasley (Nevada director) as AFWA president.

6. Executive Director's Report (Zach Lowe): Thank you to Oklahoma for hospitality and leadership. State of the association report summary (contained within the [State of WAFWA document](#)): 1) renovate business operations, 2) added capacity and staff/contractors, 3) Species Restoration Fund (SRF) and Lesser Prairie-Chicken (LPC) Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances (CCAA) updates. Compliance met on all points but one, and that's in the works. 4) Inventoried committees and working groups. Need to establish how we communicate and set expectations and process (governance). 5) Strategic alignment of landscape efforts 6) Initiatives, committees and workshops create output, publications, etc. 7) getting back together.

Between now and next meeting how do we best serve groups. We did a little better than break even on Winter Meeting. Need to focus on intentional work and predictable outcomes.

7. Executive Committee Report (Jennifer Psyllakis): Executive committee has been meeting regularly (every 4-6 weeks) since winter meeting supporting Zach on his review of the organization. Topics of focus have been Landscape scale efforts, need to focus attention on reviewing strategic plan. It is doing

us well where we are right now, but we need to identify what success looks like. Expect communications w/ directors as we prepare for winter meeting. Focusing efforts on intentional deliberate discussions for output. Executive Committee will be meeting for a retreat to work on this plan.

8. CITES Update (Stewart Liley): Conference of Party in Panama coming up soon. Up to 1,000 species of consideration originally, but it has been reduced. Alaska provided data to remove caribou from this list. Some species from this original set of species are still listing. Some are Appendix 1, which designates no trade and Appendix 2 which is regulated trade. Some species of consideration are several turtle species – and need to provide results for a successful down listing. Also listed for consideration are some shark species.

9. Directors Forum (Jennifer Psyllakis): Approval of the America the Beautiful approach where WAFWA will focus on corridors with Wyoming to support the effort. Advanced the planning for western elk symposium. Zach will connect with Western Governors Association. Explore a “what if” scenario for Western Native Trout Initiative for the America the Beautiful Challenge Grant, too. For the elk symposium, we will recognize social science versus boiling with full consideration. There will be an opportunity for future feedback to fill in sensitivities related to elk.

10. Joint Directors and Commissioners Meeting (Jennifer Psyllakis): Kevin Robling hosted an access discussion. David Buggs updated on minority internship program and diversity of thought. Initiative updates (see State of the Initiative reports contained within the [State of WAFWA document](#)). Discussed controversial issues and the time lost dealing with controversial issues. Because of technical difficulties, some media were unable to be shared during the meeting. These will be shared in the director after-action report.

11. Commissioners Committee Report (Leigh Gaddis provided written report-out read aloud to group)

The Commissioner Committee meeting, Part 1, held on Tuesday, July 12, was made up of the State of the State reports (contained within the [State of WAFWA document](#)) presented by all attending Commissioners, and one virtually attending Commissioner. The ‘Part 2’ meeting was comprised of discussion, facilitated by Phil Seng, on two topics: 1) Managing habitat in areas with multi-use and 2) Engaging with non-hunting/fishing public. Commissioners shared with the group what their experiences have been in both areas, their successes and struggles among their respective states, as well as the public’s responses to their handling. It’s very apparent, that much more time could be spent on these two topics, and it’s likely that real resolution to the challenges will take some time, if they ever are arrived at. The attending Commissioners clearly appreciated the time spent in valuable discussion, and several expressed their wish to do make this a regular conference schedule item. As for topics suggested for future meeting discussions, many were named, including restrictions on advancing technologies with a focus on maintaining fair chase; Solutions to relocate/reduce increasing populations of wild horses and burros; and Management of or restrictions on, off road vehicles, namely side by sides, with guidance on the use of e-bikes on trails as a compromise solution on WMA’s. Added note: Phil Seng will provided [this report](#) of the facilitated discussion.

12. Wildlife Chiefs SWAP Guidance (Bill Dinkines): Comments regarding the SWAP regional review team guidance will be provided next week. Fifteen wildlife chiefs in attendance. The guidance document was overall supported for a standardized review process. [[NOTE: This has since been updated.](#)] One suggestion was that the review team be within the same FWS region as the reviewed state because of

inconsistencies between regions. They support that they 8 points of review be emphasized. Spread out review assignments as much as possible and reviewers need plenty of lead time.

13. Nominations Committee (Curt Melcher): Previously, the predetermined host state director became President, regardless of their involvement or circumstance. Now the President position is peer-elected. Thank you to Dr. Psyllakis and Mr. Nesvik for serving as leadership for the last year. Nominating committee consists of Curt Melcher, Brad Loveless, and Kevin Robling. Pleased to nominate Dr. Psyllakis and Mr. Nesvik to a second term. Curt moved. JD seconded. Motion passed.

14. Other Committee and Working Group Meetings:

Lesser Prairie Chicken Initiative Council (Brad Loveless): With the help of Chris Moore, Zach Lowe, and Chanda Pettie made progress on the following items with the program with the help of the US Fish and Wildlife Service: 1) CCAA annual report had improvements to the business report 2) updated the directors on the business plan and financial report 3) webinar last fall for outreach purposes was well-received 4) strengthening and updating by right-sizing conservation assessment and compliance monitoring and reporting 5) genetic work supplying available science by mapping the genome of the LPC 6) mapping of habitat layers 7) update on the ranch – selling the property but maintaining the conservation easement 8) surveys and population level data.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee (Brad Loveless): 1) plans to send survey out to states in September (note: AFWA will be sending a survey about employee retention in the next few weeks, unrelated) 2) David Buggs is working on a proposal to promote minority interns and will ask for a vote in winter. Question asked – for survey, do those agencies who include parks respond to the surveys with park data as well?

Habitat Committee (Tim McCoy): Focusing attention on Home on the Range mapping. black-tailed prairie dogs, greater prairie-chicken and sharp-tailed grouse plan. To be posted soon. The Western Monarch working Group was just featured in DC. Have asked to change their name to “Western Monarch and Native Insect Pollinator Working Group.” Curt moved to adopt new name with committee report. JD seconded. Moved.

Mule Deer Working Group (Jim Heffelfinger): no new fact sheets, but some in the works. Teamed with Wildlife Health. Updated Guideline for seeding ([Rangewide Guidance for Blacktail and Mule Deer Seeding Booklet 2022.pdf](#)) Mule Deer Foundation paid for production. May 2023 will be mule deer and elk working group. Bringing forth Andy Holland to be considered for MDWG vice-chair. New book will be out on September 1. Proceeds will go back to Mule Deer Working Group to fund future publications. Working group met with Wildlife Health committee to discuss SARS-CoV2 and Chronic Wasting Disease. Produced the [Trail Camera fact sheet](#) approved Jan 2022. Produced the [2022 Mule Deer Report](#). JD moved to approve report. Brad seconded. So moved.

Wild Sheep Working Group (Mike Cox): Finishing this year the capture/handling guide. Now have a wild sheep initiative story map that will be posted next month on the website. 1-day workshop to assess product’s projects /success from pack llamas. Produced a brief. Requested support of a facilitated forum this fall for health professionals, land managers, llama owners,

and NGOs to find common ground re: husbandry and use of llamas in wild sheep range. The goal is to provide guidelines to federal partners to encourage permitting. If low pathogen carry-over is found, support for use of llamas in thin-horn range may be appropriate. Timeline is tight so information may not be ready to report out Winter 2023. JD moved to support moving forward with planning meeting. Time seconded. Motion carried.

Mike also noted need for WAFWA to work to help Bureau of Land Management to reduce wild horse herds to appropriate management levels.

Wildlife Chiefs Committee (Bill Dinkines): Recommended that WAFWA assign the host state as committee chair and the next host state as vice-chair. The Forest Carnivore Sub Committee plans to continue as-is but the technical group will meet prior to the next chiefs meeting. RAWA staffing and match are concerns with no roadmap on how to proceed. Discussed Chronic Wasting Disease and cougar expansion. Nonresident hunter draw rules are a concern for reciprocal laws in other states impacting their hunters. Cougar management book due to go to press. WAFWA is picking up the expense of the production. Will be ready this copyright year. \$6k WAFWA pays for publication, and then the cost will be \$20 per book for the states. Brad motioned to approve report. JD seconded. So moved.

Public Affairs Committee (Ty Gray): first ever Information & Education Retreat held at this meeting and request to continue. Steward confirmed that one is planned for next summer in New Mexico. JD moved to accept report. Tim second. So moved.

Human wildlife Conflict Working Group (Bill Dinkines): no chair currently. Recommended Eric Gardner for chair and Brian Wakling for vice-chair. To be determined by President Psyllakis.

15. Other Business

Zach: We are reviewing how committees operate. Will send open chair requests to Executive Committee to review and assign the open slots

Curt Melcher: Releasing the R3 Chair position. Also recognizes host state in ad-hoc resolution. Tim McCoy drafted and read resolution recognizing JD, his team, and Oklahoma for hosting the meeting and launching WAFWA's 100th anniversary.

16. New Mexico Welcomes WAFWA (Stewart Liley): showed video for hosting winter and summer 2023 meetings.

17. Closing Remarks by President (Jennifer Psyllakis)