

President's Message

Scott Osborn

I love my job! As the California Department of Fish and Game's coordinator for small mammal conservation, I've had the opportunity over the past few weeks to participate in three outstanding scientific meetings. I attended the 39th North American Symposium on Bat Research in Portland and was blown away by the variety and sophistication of research being conducted on bats today. In addition to work on white-nose syndrome and at wind-energy facilities with important implications for the conservation of bats, researchers presented a wide variety of work on the evolution, physiology, ecology, and behavior of bats. It's gratifying to see so many top-notch biologists working to increase our understanding of this important group of vertebrates.

A couple weeks ago, some colleagues and I organized a one-day meeting to share information and to coordinate research efforts on the American pika in California. We managed to fit almost 30 researchers and agency biologists into a small room in Davis for a full day of presentations and discussion. Ultimately, we developed a list of priorities for research, monitoring, and conservation actions for the pika and other high-elevation species that may be at risk due to climate change.

Finally, this past week was the first meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee for the revision of CDFG's Mammal Species of Special Concern (SSC) list. This group of eight mammalogists discussed how best to assess the conservation status of California's native land mammals, from shrews to elk. We began the process of evaluating all the mammal species and subspecies for possible inclusion of the SSC list – a process that eventually will solicit public review and input.

"Without information on the current status of our wildlife species, we cannot be good stewards."

Throughout all these meetings, I was struck by one overwhelming fact: our understanding of the conservation status of bats, pikas, and all other mammals depends on the hard work of field biologists who collect basic information on the abundance and distribution of these animals. Such work may not be considered "cutting edge" and it may not attract grant funding like other types of work, but it is essential to the proper management of these species. Of the hundreds of mammals discussed during the SSC Technical Advisory Committee meeting last week, I lost track of how many subspecies for which any sort of detailed information on population trend is lacking. This confirmed for

me that many of us appear to have lost sight of the most fundamental information needs our profession requires. I encourage all of you who are teachers, mentors, or starting out as biologists to consider taking up the call to find out more about what's going on with our native wildlife. Without information on the current status of our wildlife species, we cannot be good stewards.

Western Section Executive Board members come and go throughout the year. Usually, such changes are noted in the Board meeting minutes and may be mentioned in the reports from Chapter Reps and others in the Newsletter. I'd like to highlight two important changes in the Board that occurred recently.

Continued on Page 6

**2009 Election Info
Inside & On-line!**

Please Vote!



President-Elect

Armand Gonzales

The 2010 Annual Conference in Visalia is just around the corner. It has been both a challenging and rewarding experience to serve as program chair for this annual gathering and I am confident we will have a highly successful and informative meeting. I am very honored and excited to have a distinguished group of scientists scheduled to speak at the plenary. The plenary theme is "Fostering Resilient Wildlife Populations", and speakers include Dr. Terry Root from Stanford University, Dr. James Thorne from U. C. Davis, Dr. Patrick Kelly from California State University, Stanislaus, Dr. Amber Pairis, from the California Department of Fish and Game, and Dr. Michael Hutchins, Executive Director/CEO of The Wildlife Society.

Dr. Tony Barnosky, UC Berkeley professor and author of "Heatstroke: Nature in an Age of Global Warming" is our guest speaker during the banquet on the 28th.

We will be offering sessions covering a wide array of topics pertinent to wildlife biologists, and several professional working group meetings on topics such as Pacific fishers, pika, and bats are planned. There are workshops scheduled that will help sharpen skills needed for a career in wildlife biology or management, including Animal Necropsy, Media Relations, and Orienteering.

Finally, Visalia is less than an hour from Sequoia/Kings Canyon National Park, which in January should be gorgeously covered in snow, so bring your skis.

If you have not already registered for the conference, there is still time, and space is still available in all the workshops.

January 27-29, 2010

Visalia Convention Center, Visalia, CA

The latest updates will post to: <http://joomla.wildlife.org/Western>

Tuesday, January 26

8:00 - 5:00 Animal Disease and Necropsy Workshop

Wednesday, January 27

8:00 - noon Media Relations Workshop

8:00 - noon Orienteering Workshop

Noon: Official Conference Opening

1:00 - 5:00 Concurrent Sessions

5:00 - 8:00 Welcome mixer, social, poster session

7:00 - 9:00 Chapter Meetings

Thursday, January 28

8:30 - noon Concurrent Sessions

1:00 - 5:00 Plenary Session

5:00 - 6:00 Annual Business Meeting, Member's Forum

7:00 - 11:00 Annual Awards Banquet, Raffle

Friday, January 29

8:30 - 4:30 Concurrent Sessions

noon - 1:30 Student Leadership Lunch and Career Fair

5:00 - 7:00 Western Section Executive Board meeting
(all members are welcome)

Saturday, January 30

Field Trips To Be Announced

Hotel Accommodations

Comfort Suites

210 E Acequia Ave, Visalia, CA

(559) 738-1700

www.comfortsuites.com

Standard Room Rate \$95.00

Adjacent to Convention Center

Hampton Inn

4747 W Noble Ave, Visalia, CA

(559) 732-3900

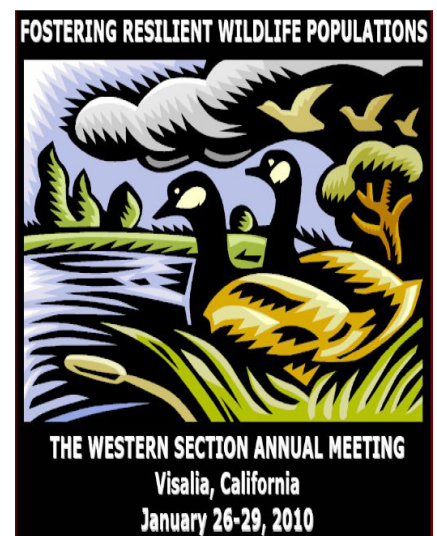
www.visalia.hamptoninn.com

Standard Room Rate \$95.00

1/2-mile from Convention Center

Register On-line at:

www.wildlifeprofessional.org/western/ac2010_reg.php



"Fostering Resilient Wildlife Populations"

Concurrent Sessions

This year's concurrent sessions are organized primarily around common suites of species, with the addition of several sessions related to techniques used in wildlife research and management. Session titles may be added or changed at a later date. Check <http://joomla.wildlife.org/Western/> for an updated list of technical sessions and schedule.

Session Topic, Chair:

Waterfowl, Greg Mensik
 Raptors, Jeff Lincer
 Shorebirds and Wetlands, Dave Shuford
 Neotropical Migrants, Geoff Geupel
 Wildlife Response to Restoration, John Carlon
 Game Species Management, Doug Updike
 Amphibians and Reptiles, Rhys Evans
 Managed Forests (timber, grazing, recreation), TBA
 Fire in Wildlife Management, Kevin Shaffer
 Genetics Techniques in Wildlife Research and Management, Mark Statham
 Statistical Innovations and Modeling, Mark Herzog
 Disease and Wildlife Management, Deana Clifford and Krysta Rogers
 Wildlife/Human Conflicts, Jason Holley
 Non-game Species Management: rodents, lagomorphs, bats, carnivores, Scott Osborn
 Climate Change Effects on Wildlife, Sarah Petiglia
 Wildlife Education, Bruce Foreman
 Large Scale Conservation Strategies (banking, easements, and landscape planning), Tina Bartlett and Hal Holland
 Techniques in GIS, Tom Lupo
 Wildlife and Pollution Events, Julie Yamamoto and Mike Anderson

Poster Session

A poster session will be held for the Annual Conference on the evening of Wednesday, January 27, during the welcome mixer and social. Posters will also be available for viewing at other times and locations throughout the week.

Student–Professional Lunch and Career Fair

The Section will host a student–professional lunch and career fair, free to students, at noon on Friday, January 29, 2010. Students will have the opportunity to discuss career choices, the job market, and job qualifications with practicing professionals from the Western Section. Students should indicate their intent to attend the free lunch when they register for the conference. To participate in the career fair, please contact our 2010 Career Fair coordinator Karen Swaim (kswaim@swaimbio.com). Space is limited. Those not indicating their intent to attend on the registration form will be accommodated as space allows.

Field Trips

Several field trips are being planned in the Visalia area for Saturday, January 30, immediately following the conference. Monitor the Western Section website for recommendations, updates, trip schedules, and additional trip information. Additional fees may apply.

Annual Raffle & Auction

A raffle and silent auction will be held during the conference banquet on Thursday, January 28. Tickets for the raffle will be available for purchase throughout the conference. Typical donations for the raffle include wine, wildlife artwork, books, travel and field gear. In addition, the Section is seeking, and will offer through the raffle and auction as available, hunting and fishing trips, adventure travel trips, whitewater rafting trips, and similar items. To donate items for the raffle, please contact raffle coordinators Sandra Hunt-von Arb at pnwb@suddenlink.net or Lisa Ollivier at lollivier@fs.fed.us

Résumé Workshop

The Western Section is pleased to announce the return of our résumé workshop! Barbara Peters from the Career Center at Humboldt State University (along with other professionals) will be present (tentatively scheduled for Friday morning) to offer outstanding guidance on job searching to students and young professionals.

Coalition of Natural Resource Societies

TWS, along with the American Fisheries Society (AFS), Society of American Foresters (SAF), and Society for Range Management (SRM) are in the process of forming a new coalition of like-minded professional and scientific societies called the Coalition of Natural Resource Societies or CNRS. The four organizations will meet regularly to share ideas on society management and look for possible areas of collaboration, particularly in the legislative arena. Working together, they will represent a new and powerful coalition of 30,000 plus natural resource professionals. Efforts of the coalition will begin slowly and focus on one or two initiatives that will be mutually beneficial. AFS and TWS are already expanding their level of cooperation and will be co-hosting a symposium on introductions and reintroductions at Mississippi State University in 2010.

Introducing the New California Invasive Species Advisory Committee!

Mike Chapel is chairing a subcommittee on invasive vertebrates. The subcommittee's first task is to assemble a list of species. The usual suspects - invasive species that have been here a long time, are known, but the subcommittee is seeking details on new or potential invasive species occurrences.

The invasive vertebrate subcommittee is soliciting your help. If you have information to share, please contact Mike at:
Mike.Chapel@yahoo.com

The subcommittee's next steps will be to evaluate potential risks and make recommendations about state investments for invasives control.

Grant in Honor of Robert C. Stebbins

The Western Section is pleased to announce it has awarded a \$500.00 grant to support a student research project in herpetology, funded by a generous gift from Swaim Biological Incorporated. The grant was presented to a graduate student at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo studying snake diversity and abundance between intensively grazed and non-grazed fields at Chimineas Ranch in Eastern San Luis Obispo County.

The Western Section
has a new mailing address:

TWS Western Section
P. O. Box 6756
Albany, CA 94706

Pre- and Post-Wildfire Forest Management for Ecological Restoration and Fire Resiliency

February 9-11, 2010

McClellan Park Lecture Theater, Sacramento, California
<http://ucanr.org/wildfire2010>

Sponsored by USDA Forest Service and the University of California

This conference will bring scientists, forest managers, environmental organizations and interested members of the public together to present and discuss information relevant to management of forested land before and after wildfire.

Focus will be on the conifer forest types common to the Sierra Nevada and Trinity-Klamath Region of California, but the information presented will have application to similar forest types in other regions.

Posters are solicited for presentation at an evening session on Wednesday, February 10. Call for Posters deadline is December 9, 2009. You will be notified by December 21, 2009, if you are selected.

Program Questions? Contact:

Richard R. Harris, UC Cooperative
Extension 707-678-3504 or
Mike Chapel, USDA Forest Service
916-498-5323

Logistics Questions? Contact:

Sherry Cooper, UC Cooperative
Extension 530-224-4902

Western Section Travel Grants

In pursuit of the objective to encourage high standards of professional achievement, the Western Section has established an honoraria fund to assist participation in professional meetings.

Eligibility

Applicants must be current dues paid members of the Western Section. Funds will not be provided when employer or agency funds are available to the applicant. Applicants must not have received a Travel Grant (from TWS-WS) in the current year.

Non-TWS and International Conferences/Symposia

Travel grants to International and non-TWS conferences/symposia will only be reviewed if the applicant is presenting a paper or poster. Travel Grants may be approved contingent upon paper/poster acceptance by the program committee.

Review and Approval of Grant Requests

Travel Grants must be submitted to the Awards and Grants Committee Chair. Proposals are reviewed on a continual basis and award depends on fund availability. The Awards and Grants Chair distributes Travel Grant request copies to all Western Section board members for review and consideration. Approval requires a majority vote.

Priority is given to attendees of TWS meetings (Parent, Western Section, Chapters) and to attendees presenting a poster or paper at a given conference, symposium, etc.... Combined requests for shared expenses for the same meeting by two or more students will be considered and are preferred. A maximum of two grants may be awarded for a particular meeting (depending on funding).

Amount and Conditions

In most cases, the Travel Grant may only cover a portion of the total cost of attending an event. Applicants should consider the award only as a supplement to other funding sources. Travel Grants are to be used only for registration fees, meals, lodging, and/or transportation expenses. Individual Travel Grants will not exceed \$300.00/applicant/event/year. Reimbursement rates shall be as follows:

- Mileage reimbursement is 48.5 cents/mile for a personal vehicle (if a Government Owned Vehicle is not available)
- Meal reimbursement is for actual cost, not to exceed \$6.00, \$10.00 and \$15.00 for breakfast, lunch and dinner, respectively.
- Lodging reimbursement is for actual cost, not to exceed \$75.00 per night.

Each applicant must submit a written request/application to the Awards and Grants Chair at least 60 days in advance of attending an event. The application must clearly state the amount of support requested and identify how costs will be incurred. A statement that alternative funding is not available from any other source must be included in the application.

Applicants must submit receipts for reimbursement. A statement of the professional benefits derived from attending the event and a summary evaluation of information gathered must accompany the receipts. To apply for a Travel Grant, submit:

1. Application form (PDF, 25kB);
2. abstract of paper/poster (if presenting);
3. evidence of acceptance of the abstract (if required), and
4. draft text of paper/poster to be presented (2-4 pages).

Failure to provide the above requested material will disqualify the applicant.

Application and all requested materials should be submitted to: rburg@parks.ca.gov

Awards

The Western Section recognizes outstanding individuals and organizations that have gone above and beyond to make contributions toward the Western Section's goals. If you know of a deserving nominee for any of these awards please contact the Awards and Grants Committee Chair Rich Burg: rburg@parks.ca.gov

The Raymond F. Dasmann Award for the Professional of the Year (the "Dasmann Award") is presented to Professionals who have made an outstanding contribution to wildlife resources management and understanding in California, Nevada, Hawaii or Guam.

Qualifications: The nominee can be any member(s) of the Wildlife Society-Western Section, who develops, applies, administers or completes an especially significant program of management, education, research or communications that results in an outstanding contribution to wildlife resources in the Western Section geographic area.

The Conservationist of the Year Award is presented to a person or group, engaged in wildlife conservation either as a profession or as an avocation, who has made an outstanding contribution to wildlife conservation in California, Nevada, Hawaii or Guam.

Qualifications: The nominee can be any individual or group who has demonstrated an active concern for wildlife conservation by accomplishing projects or programs that have significantly enhanced wildlife resource conservation within the Western Section geographical area.

The Barrett A. Garrison Outstanding Mentor Award is bestowed to a professional within California, Nevada, Hawaii, and Guam who has contributed to our profession by assisting the continued development of students and/or young professionals.

Qualifications: The nominee can be any member(s) of the Wildlife Society-Western Section, who is responsible for mentoring young professionals over their career in the Western Section geographic area.

President's Message

Scott Osborn, continued from Page 1

First, we welcome back Debra Hawk as the Section's Newsletter Editor. Debra was serving as Newsletter Editor when I first joined the Board many years ago. As a former Chapter newsletter editor, I was always impressed with Debra's calm handling of the editorial tasks and the high quality and timely production of the newsletters during her tenure. After Debra's departure in 2003, the Section has relied on a series of interim editors, who tried to juggle the editorial work along with one or more other Board positions. Although we have benefited from the dedication of all our recent Newsletter Editors, I am appy to have Debra back at the helm!

Second, for the first time in a decade, Cynthia Graves Perrine is not a member of the Executive Board. Cynthia has served as Western Section Representative to TWS Student Affairs Committee, Secretary, Professional Development Committee, President-Elect, President, Past-President, Central Coast Chapter Rep, and as one of those recent multi-tasking Newsletter Editors! Cynthia is not leaving the Western Section, thankfully, but is starting a new stint under contract to the Section as its Program Director. This is a new position created to help the Section ramp up its professional development and education/outreach activities. The Program Director will identify educational needs and opportunities and provide crucial support to the Board in developing workshops, creating partnerships with other natural resource professional societies, and implementing long-term planning for the Section. This is a very positive and very low risk development for the Section. The Program Director position is a very part time contract position, so we won't get into the kind of trouble we did several years ago when the full-time employee (with benefits) position of Executive Director was briefly

instituted. As the Board discussed the need for a contractor to address these needs, it was clear that Cynthia is the perfect match for the job description. I look forward to many great successes with Cynthia as our new Program Director.

If you've made it this far into my column, you're probably not the sort of Section member who needs encouragement to participate in our elections. But I would be remiss if I did not urge you to vote in the current election for President-Elect and to approve the proposed Bylaws changes. We have two outstanding candidates for President-Elect, Don Mitchell and John McNerney, so we can't really go wrong no matter who wins the election. Thanks to Past-President Rhys Evans for convincing both Don and John to run.

The proposed Bylaws changes would acknowledge the creation of the University of Nevada-Reno student chapter and would create two new membership categories (New Professional and Retired), and would clean up inconsistencies related to membership categories throughout the Bylaws. My thanks to Cynthia Perrine for initiating these changes, and to Rhys Evans and Don Yasuda for preparing the revised Bylaws text and associated explanation for the membership.

I'll also note that another election will be held early next year. Don Yasuda is completing his first term as the Section's Representative to TWS Council. Don has done an outstanding job and will be standing for election to another 3-year term. Running against Don will be long-time Board member from Hawaii and former Section Webmaster Bill Standley. Look for more election information from TWS later this year or early in 2010. Both Don and Bill deserve your vote, so good luck deciding who to vote for in the election!

Hawaii Chapter

Bill Standley

The Hawaii Chapter participated in the annual Hawaii Conservation Conference (HCC) in July, both through financial support of awards for best student presentation and best student poster, and the University of Hawaii Hawaiian Internship Program. Chapter members also helped organize the Conservation Opportunities and Career Fair at this year's HCC. The Chapter continues to sponsor a number of wildlife conservation projects throughout the state. The Chapter has continued participation as a partner with the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in a cooperative effort to construct a predator-proof fence and remove all alien mammals within the proposed fence at the Kaena Point Natural Area Reserve on the island of Oahu (photo), and it is hoped that construction can begin early next year. Once completed, the project will create a 59-acre area of coastal habitat free from alien mammals, including feral dogs, cats, mongooses, and rodents.



Kaena Point Natural Area Reserve

**The Western Section
election deadline for
President-Elect is
Monday, January 25, 2010.
Turn to pages 10 & 11 and
Vote On-line TODAY!**

UNR Student Chapter

Nova Simpson

The First Annual UNR Single Fly Fishing Derby was a success. It was a beautiful day out at McCarran ranch, as the weather was perfect with blue skies and a comfortable temperature in the high 70's. There were 17 contestants fishing the Lower Truckee River where both brown and rainbow trout were caught and released. First place went to local angler Mikey Weir who caught two 17.5" rainbows, second place went to local angler Ryan Shea who caught 17.25" and 10.5" rainbows, and third place went to local angler Mike Curtis who caught 11.5", 10", and 9" rainbows.

First place winner Mikey Weir donated his prize, a Orvis Helios 9' 5 wt. 4 pc. rod set valued at \$775.00, to the UNR Student Chapter. The chapter will do a silent auction for this item. If you are interested in making a bid, email Jason Barnes at flyfishtruckee@yahoo.com - thank you Mikey!

The derby was followed by a BBQ and guest speakers. Patti Bakker with The Nature Conservancy talked about the McCarran Ranch restoration project, and Lisa Heki with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service focused on biology and movement of the local fish species. Thank you to Patti and Lisa for volunteering your time! Western Section Representative of TWS, Don Yasuda, came up from Sacramento to show his support of the event and the new UNR Student Chapter. Thanks also to Don for his effort and support.

The TWS board would like to thank all the volunteers that were involved throughout the event, either prior to, or during the derby. The volunteers came from all walks of life including students, wildlife professionals, and local supporters. The event would not

UC Davis Student Chapter

Chris Mosser

The new school year is just getting under way for the UCD student chapter. One of our first activities this quarter will be a nature photography workshop followed by a series of workshops, all of which focus on methods for detecting presence; detecting and identifying animal tracks and sign, camera traps, and point surveys to name a few. The workshop series will culminate with a brief introduction to occupancy modeling. Staff from the Museum of Wildlife and Fish Biology at UC Davis will assist with the workshops, as well as allow an opportunity for students to use what they learn to contribute to the museums biodiversity monitoring program along Putah Creek. A poster will be presented at the Western Section Conference.

Our new board members for this year are as follows: Chris Mosser – President and Chapter Representative to the Western Section and Sacramento-Shasta Chapter; Monica Stupaczuk – Vice President; Bridgette Kirk – Secretary / Treasurer; Renee Weems – Public Outreach; and Kris Robison – Chapter Representative to UCD. We are off to a busy start recruiting new members and fundraising to provide opportunities for more of our students to attend the Visalia conference.

have been a success without you! A special thanks goes to the following; Mary Adams, Melany Aten, Kevin Badik, Jason Barnes, Bob Barnes, Robert Barnes, Liz Berry, Kate Blubaugh, Ashley Fanning, Jessica Felton, Damiira Gulvara Burkan, Kevin Keef, Jade Keehn, Marjorie Matocq, Sabrina Morano, Nova Simpson, Tom Smith, Kelley Stewart, and Thad Stewart. Here's to hoping no one was missed as each of you was critical in the success of the first UNR chapter annual derby!

Treasurer

Gary Falxa

The Section began 2009 with total assets of \$150,796.51. Our cumulative balance was about \$128,130.86 at the end of September; a net reduction in assets during 2009 through September of about \$22,600. By the end of 2009, we can expect a pulse of income from registration for the 2010 annual meeting in Visalia, but also, there are substantial outstanding expenses from the National Conference held in Monterey last month.

"With assets exceeding \$100,000, the Section continues to be financially solid."

One major contributor to 2009 losses is expenses associated with hosting the national conference in Monterey last month. The Section expected this, and in recent years set aside \$15,000 in anticipation these expenses. Hosting expenses total roughly \$12,500 to date, and there are still considerable outstanding expenses. By the end of 2009, we will likely have spent that \$15,000, which will contribute to any loss on the books for this year.

With assets exceeding \$100,000, the Section continues to be financially solid. We have no outstanding loans or other long-term debt, considerable income was generated in each of several years prior to 2009, and our bank reserves are substantial. As expected, the Section dipped into reserves in 2009. Given the Section's relatively modest fixed expenses, and its robust financial condition, the losses in 2009 have been well within reserves. However, it would be prudent for the Section to look to keeping expenses down in 2010, in anticipation of another economic recession year.

Western Section Members:

Along with voting for a President-Elect candidate, we request your review and consideration of two groups of bylaws changes. The Western Section Executive Board recommends approval of both groups of proposed bylaws changes, however we recognize that there may be limited opposition to the second group.

The first group of changes is primarily administrative in nature.

1. Article I, section 4: Entirely new section describing "composition" and adding some language on ethics as well as a non-discrimination clause.
2. Article III, Section 2: Approving and welcoming the newly formed (and already approved by the Society) student chapter from the University of Nevada, Reno.
3. Article VI, section 2D: Add a reference to electronic voting. Also, we correct a grammatical error in this clause.
4. Article VI, section 3E: Add a reference to the relatively new magazine, the Society's "The Wildlife Professional".

The second group of proposed changes is more comprehensive, and is worthy of your close review. Our primary aim is to officially recognize two new membership categories, "Retired" and "New Professional." However, while doing so, we also made a few changes to terminology. Most of these changes (unless otherwise noted) are in Article V, Membership. In the following discussion, "the Society" refers to our "national" organization based in Bethesda, Maryland.

1. Section 1: Change "Voting Member" to "Regular Member." This is the term used by the Society. However, a "Regular Member" must be a member of the Society (that means you must pay Society dues as well as Section dues). Members in this group may vote in Society and Section elections.
2. Section 2: Change "Other Member" to "Associate Member." This is the term used by other Sections. Associate members could be either "regular" members who live and/or work outside our geographic area OR persons who are members of the Section but NOT members of the Society. Members in this group may only vote in Section elections.
3. Section 3: Minor change to definition of "Charter Member."
4. Section 4: Minor change to definition of "Honorary Member."
5. Section 5: Removes a November cut-off date.
6. Section 5A: Minor change to section on "Dues" regarding location of the Society headquarters.
7. Section 5A: Clarifies how we determine dues.
8. Section 5B: Major change, wherein we add the two new membership categories. Please note that we have consciously NOT called this the "young professional" category, in that some "new professionals" may not be young!
9. Section 6: Major change, wherein we explain that (as one example) Associate Members may vote in Section elections, but only Regular Members may vote in Society Elections. Additionally, only Regular Members may hold office for Western Section AND/OR our affiliated chapters, and only Regular members may serve as Committee Chairs for the Western Section. Associate members may serve on committees and perform other volunteer functions.
10. Section 7: Change stating that upon resignation, no refund of dues will be considered.
11. If this group of changes is approved, we must change "Voting Member" to "Regular Member" in several locations, including Article VI Section 1A, Article VI Sections 3 and 5, and Article VIII Section 1.

If you have questions or concerns about these proposed changes, please contact Past-President Rhys Evans (sirsnav@verizon.net, 805-736-9285) or Section Representative to Council Don Yasuda (dysadatws@comcast.net).

**Attention Certified and Associate
Wildlife Biologists:
Flaunt your acronyms!**



You worked hard to earn your AWW® and CWB®, so add them to your business card and emails and stand out from the crowd.



TWS membership is now required for certifications to remain valid, so be sure to join or renew at wildlife.org

The Western Section is offering electronic voting!

Members can read the current bylaws, with proposed changes and then cast an on-line vote! Simply log-on to:

https://www.wildlifeprofessional.org/western/elec2010_reg.php

Past-President

Rhys Evans

I've been told that this is my last opportunity to officially report on my actions as an officer of the Western Section, and that I'm supposed to make this column memorable, insightful and witty. Oh, the pressure.... I can honestly say that it's been a pleasure serving as an officer of the Western Section! Sure, there were some challenges in there, but I'd highly recommend it to anyone with a few thousand hours of spare time. (Note: that's an attempt at being witty; it only requires 983.76 hours over three years...). It truly is fun serving as President-elect, because that lucky individual gets to guide the entire program for the Section's annual meeting: develop the plenary, schedule the technical sessions, persuade nice people to be session and subcommittee chairs and even more important, decide what you get to eat at the refreshment breaks and banquet! ("You didn't have granola on the second day, dammit!" – that's the general idea of an actual comment from a workshop we organized a few years ago). And I STILL think that the band we selected for Redding was pretty good.... After President-elect, the rest is easy! It's simply keeping the Executive Board from ignoring their action items, drafting a budget, sending out occasional e-mail blasts and writing columns for newsletters that most members won't read.

But you're not entirely free of my diatribes—I will continue to work with the Western Section. I'm returning to co-chair the Professional Development Committee (that's where I was before Cynthia blackmailed me into running for President-elect a few years ago).

I would be remiss to not mention a few other things, though: I am incredibly pleased about the work of, no joke, dozens of people, for the outstandingly successful "National" meet-

ing in Monterey. I am thrilled that EVERY CHAPTER in the Western Section signed on as a sponsor of that meeting, and as a result, the Western Section blew away all other sections and chapters COMBINED in our support of the Monterey meeting (and that our Fundraising Subcommittee met and exceeded our optimistic goal, even in these challenging economic times). I am ecstatic Monterey attracted such a high attendance for a national meeting, but the all time highest attendance record still belongs to (wait for it...) (any guesses?)...RENO! (The last meeting hosted by the Western Section). I'm glad that "our" Humboldt State University team cruised into the Quiz Bowl finals (and finished a very respectable second place...). I'm also looking forward to helping UC Davis, UN Reno and maybe Cal Poly SLO form quiz bowl teams in the future!

I'm working with "national" on a few things, because Don Yasuda apparently thinks I never say "no" when I am asked to volunteer for a committee or working group (that's a character trait for which I apparently need some assertiveness training). Don and I (and others) will be looking at "the future of the [national] conference," something that is of great interest to me on several levels. Don will probably mention that activity in his column.

My last "official" duty as Past-President was to seek qualified candidates for our next President-elect. I am VERY pleased with the two outstanding candidates we have running this year, and I am very confident that whomever you elect, the Western Section will be taking a solid step into the future. Please vote!

My last unofficial duty, then, is to close this submission with an anecdote about feces. You see, in my memorable Presidential year, I started

both of my newsletter columns with feces-related humorous anecdotes, so here's one last example. In the early winter of 2002, when I worked for the U.S. Marine Corps in the Mojave Desert, I was spending some quality time with a few archeologists (not recommended if you want to retain any level of sanity) in a very remote area. THEY were looking for petroglyphs. I was looking for tortoises. We separated

"... I was soon looking at a beautiful wall of rock art with more than 200 previously unknown (to us) images from the past."

and wandered around. I happened to look down and find a desiccated tortoise scat. I bent over to pick it up and break it open (We biologists do things like that. I know, non-wildlifers think that's gross). As I stood back up, I glanced at a large rock wall about 30 meters away. My subconscious said "look for petroglyphs over there." I proceeded to do just that, and I was soon looking at a beautiful wall of rock art with more than 200 previously unknown (to us) images from the past. I shouted something that probably shouldn't be printed here. The site is now formally called the "Tortoise Canyon petroglyph site," but we all recognized that it might not have been found if my search image wasn't set on scat. So, the moral to my story is: "Take some time to look for feces, and you may find something even cooler!" Wouldn't that make a good fortune cookie saying? Evans...signing out.



Photo: Troy Kelly, desert tortoise, Mojave Desert



My name is John McNerney and I'm running for President-elect of the TWS- Western Section.

I've been a member of the TWS-Western Section for the last 10 years. During this time I have volunteered at section conferences, served on the Awards Subcommittee and, more recently, served as a subcommittee chair on the Arrangements Committee for the 16th annual TWS Conference in Monterey.

I received my degree in Wildlife Management from Humboldt State University in 1996. After receiving my degree, I kept engaged in the wildlife field by taking seasonal positions with the Forest Service and California Department of Fish and Game, working on various projects involving T&E species survey, special habitat inventory, and the Wildlife Habitat Relationship System. My first full-time wildlife job was with a large environmental consulting firm where I spent a great deal of time surveying and monitoring species and habitats around California.

I'm currently working in a unique position as the staff wildlife biologist for the City of Davis, California. I say unique in that not too many municipalities have a full-time staff biologist. The position keeps me busy with a full range of duties, including habitat planning and restoration, wildlife and habitat management, CEQA document preparation/review, and natural resource interpretation. I'm married and have a 7 year old son who loves to hit the trail and get dirty with his dear old dad.

I grew up in the foothills of Orange County, California, where I was lucky to have daily access to remote and fairly wild ar-

eas. The chaparral community located near my home offered endless hours of nature immersion to observe wildlife, study invertebrates under rocks, and just plain enjoy the absence of symmetry and the distractions of modern life. My curiosity and appreciation of plants and animals as a child continues as an adult. It is clear to me that that exposure in my formative years helped guide me to become a wildlife professional.

Today, children are faced with significant challenges in not only curbing global warming, but managing the resulting succession and loss of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, among other issues. What concerns me the most about this prospect is that children, in general, are receiving less exposure to nature. Whether it's

from a reduction of accessibility or the addictive draw of video games and the internet, children are becoming less familiar with wild areas and the plants and animals that inhabit them. It is my belief that this often called "Nature Deficit Disorder" poses a threat to the sustainability of our profession, and thus, the future management and conservation of wildlife and their resources. For this reason, I believe that the TWS-Western Section should begin to explore and implement ways to connect with younger students. We've already made great advances in engaging college students. This is important, but most of these students are already pursuing careers in wildlife. Reaching out to K-12 students would help to foster interest in wildlife and natural resources, and help steer high school students on a path of wildlife science and future contribution to our profession.

Thank you for taking the time to read my statement. I also encourage you to take time to vote and stay involved in our great professional society.

2010 Calendar of Events

January 26-29 ~ Visalia, California (Page 2-3)
Western Section Annual Conference
"Fostering Resilient Wildlife Populations"

February 9-11 ~ Sacramento, California (Page 4)
Pre- and Post-Wildfire Forest Management for
Ecological Restoration and Fire Resiliency

October 3-7 ~ Snowbird, Utah
The Wildlife Society 17th Annual Conference!

My name is Don Mitchell. My wife of 16 years and I live in a 1915 Craftsman house in Redlands, California where she runs our side business buying and selling antiques, and keeps our rescue mutt Meritage out of trouble. My hobbies and other interests include historic preservation, wine, single malt scotch, and soon – skydiving. I received my Bachelor of Science in Biology in 1985 from the University of Redlands and Master of Science in Zoology in 1987 from Northwestern State University of Louisiana, Natchitoches, where I did a life history study of the scaly sand darter (*Ammocrypta vivax*) in the bayous of northern Louisiana.

I am currently Vice President for Southern California Operations for ECORP Consulting, Inc., Environmental Consultants, where I am responsible for our Inland Empire, Orange County, and San Diego offices. In addition to my corporate duties, I manage large multi-disciplinary and biological programs for the company. My specialties include designing, budgeting, and managing large biological studies throughout southern California. I still manage to keep my sanity by conducting a few field studies each year and I am Principal Investigator on ECORP's MOU with CDFG for studies of Mohave ground squirrel and other sensitive southern California small mammal species.

I've been a member of The Wildlife Society (and Western Section and Southern California Chapter) since the late 1980s. In 1999, upon hearing that the SoCal Chapter was being threatened with the loss of its charter due to inactivity, several coworkers and I stepped in to keep things going (albeit with continuing struggles). I served as Southern California Chapter Representative from 1999 until 2008.

I am pleased and honored to have been asked to run for President-elect of the Western Section. I believe that the time I spent on the Executive Board as a Chapter Rep gives me important insight into the Section and what it takes to get things done. If elected, I'll do my best to help the other officers and volunteers make the 2011 Annual Meeting in nearby Riverside a huge success. I've been involved with the planning of other large meetings and helped with several of our previous meetings and workshops.

My primary goals for the Section are to increase membership, continue to improve the service (especially in terms of professional development) we provide to our members, and to promote the organization's role as an advocate for wildlife conservation.

Growing and maintaining membership are ongoing struggles for all professional organizations. Convincing experienced wildlife biologists to get and stay involved despite



their busy work and personal lives is one key to attracting and keeping new members. There is a wealth of knowledge out there that needs to be passed on and built upon. Drawing on this experience allows us to continue to provide scientific and career development for our members. Most people join organizations like ours because they see membership as an important venue for professional development, networking with peers, and a stepping stone to career advancement. The Western Section's student chapters have been highly successful in recruiting members and I think it's important that we tap into the resources and energy of additional colleges and universities to provide opportunities to professors and students in exchange for their involvement in TWS.

Conservation biologists and environmental advocates have made huge strides during the past several decades in educating the public and making changes in attitudes and legislation to protect the environment. To a large extent, the single-species crisis management of the 1970s and 1980s has matured into a recognition that the best solutions for protecting the earth for future generations will come from thoughtful, long term regional ecosystem-level planning. We still have huge challenges ahead. Resting on the perception that something is "green" should never be a substitute for doing good science to ensure that we're not being short sighted and trading one problem for another. The TWS goal should be to provide support for our members to become better scientists to ensure that they are equipped to lead us into the future.



The Wildlife Society
Western Section
P.O. Box 6756
Albany, CA 94706

NON-PROFIT
US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 325
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Printed on 50% recycled-content paper

**Printed and mailed by Achievement House, www.achievementhouse.org
Providing vocational opportunities for the developmentally disabled since 1957.**

Scott Osborn, President
CA Dept. of Fish & Game
ScottOsbornTWS@gmail.com ~ 916/324-3564

Rhys Evans, Past-President and
Professional Development co-chair
sirsnave@verizon.net

Armand Gonzales, President-Elect
CA Dept of Fish & Game
agonzales@dfg.ca.gov

Richard Burg, Awards and Grants
CA Dept of Parks and Recreation
rburg@parks.ca.gov ~ 619/204-0182

Rick Truex, Conservation Affairs
USDA Forest Service
rick.truex@yahoo.com

Jim Yoakum, Historian

Debra Hawk, Newsletter Editor
CA Dept of Fish & Game
dhawk@dishmail.net

Janae Scruggs, Secretary
Sacramento County Airport System
jscruggs@tidepool.com ~ 916/874-0820

Don Yasuda, Section Representative and
Membership Committee Chair
dyasudaTWS@comcast.net

Gary Falxa, Treasurer
US Fish & Wildlife Service
gfalxa@earthlink.net

John Harris, Transactions Editor
Biology Department, Mills College
johnh@mills.edu ~ 510/430-2027

Tim Belton, CA Central Coast
eecomman@yahoo.com ~ 805/720-4480

Lisa Ollivier, CA North Coast
US Forest Service
lollivier@fs.fed.us ~ 707/825-2953

Chris Mosser, UC Davis Student
cmmosser@ucdavis.edu

Bill Standley, Hawaii
US Fish and Wildlife
bill.standley@wildlifer.com

Sara Peterson, Humboldt Student
sapearth@yahoo.com

Shaun Oldenburger, Sacramento-Shasta
CA Dept of Fish & Game
soldenburger@dfg.ca.gov ~ 916/445-3763

Natasha Dvorak, San Francisco Bay Area and
Professional Development co-chair
Environmental Science Associates
ndvorak@esassoc.com ~ 707/795-0937

Craig Bailey, San Joaquin Valley
Westervelt Ecological Services
craigtws@yahoo.com ~ 559/308-6122

Jeff Lincer, Southern California
jefflincer@gmail.com

Nova Simpson, UNR Student
simpsonn@tmcc.nevada.edu

Katie Moriarty, outgoing Student Affairs
co-chair, Oregon State University
ktmoriarty22@gmail.com

Darla DeRuiter, Student Affairs co-chair
Feather River College, Quincy, CA
dderuiter@frc.edu ~ 530/283-0202 x262

Denise Walker-Brown, Professional
Development co-chair
deniselwalker@hotmail.com

vacant, Nevada Chapter Rep

Contract Staff:

Mike Chapel, Bookkeeper
mike.chapel@yahoo.com

Cynthia Perrine, Program Director
cperrine@wildlife.org ~ 530/570-7036

Candace Renger, Registrar
twsregistrar@sbcglobal.net

Eric Renger, Webmaster
tws-west@tws-west.org

Cover photo credit: Mary Ann Kruse, ducks and geese, Deschutes River