Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

64th Annual Director's Meeting Proceedings

13 - 15

July ~~15 - 17~~, 1997

Des Moines, Iowa

Hosted by:
Iowa Department of Natural Resources

RECEIVED JUL 0 8 1997

Association of Midwest Fish and Wildlife Agencies

ANNUAL MEETING
ASSOCIATION OF MIDWEST FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES

Place: **Embassy Suites Hotel, Des Moines, Iowa**

Time: **July 13, 14, and 15, 1997**

"Almost-Final" Agenda:

July 13	3:00 - 7:00 p.m.	**Registration**
	4:00 - 5:30 p.m.	**Executive Session**
	6:00 - 10:00 p.m.	**President's Reception**
	7:30 - 8:00 p.m.	**REAP (Resource Enhancement And Protection)** Kevin Szcodronski, REAP Coordinator
July 14	8:00 - 8:30 a.m.	**Welcome** - Larry J. Wilson, IDNR Director
	8:30 - 9:00 a.m.	**Hunting Accident Investigation - Lesson For Hunter Safety Program Improvement** Rod Slings, Recreational Safety Officer, South-Central District
	9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	**Aquatic Education** Barb Gigar, Aquatic Education Coordinator
	9:30 - 10:00 a.m.	**Wetland and Partnerships** Neil Heiser, Wildlife District Supervisor, Northwest District
	10:00 - 10:30 a.m.	**Coffee Break**
	10:30 - 11:00 a.m.	**A Decade of Lakes - Restoring the Old and Building the New** Martin Konrad, Iowa Fisheries Federal Aid
	11:00 - 11:30 a.m.	**Partners in Flight - Habitat Conservation Plan Update** Jane Fitzgerald, IAFWA
	11:30 - Noon	**Iowa's County Conservation Board System** Don Brazelton, Executive Secretary
	Noon - 1:00 p.m.	**Lunch**
	1:00 - 1:30 p.m.	**Youth Hunter Education Challenge** Craig Jackson, Recreational Safety Officer, Southeast District
	1:30 - 3:00 p.m.	**Provincial and State Reports - Representatives**
	3:30 - 6:00 p.m.	**Tour - Walnut Creek National Wildlife Refuge**
	6:00 - ?	**Cookout - Chichaqua Wildlife Area**

July 15	8:00 - Noon	**BUSINESS MEETING**
		• **Reports**
		- **Midwest Private Lands Wildlife Management Group** Todd Bogenschutz, Iowa DNR Wildlife Biologist
		- **Legal Committee** Amelia McIntyre, Kansas Wildlife and Parks
		- **Council on Environmental Education Update** Jim Wilson, Missouri Department of Conservation
		- **Wildlife Diversity Technical Committee** Dennis Figg, Missouri Department of Conservation
		• **Business**
	Noon	**Lunch**

~ SPECIAL NOTE ~

PROVINCIAL AND STATE REPORTS--I would like for each state and province to come to the annual meeting prepared to share a brief (8- to 10-minute) report with each other on Monday afternoon. Feel free to tell us what you think are the important recent happenings in your agency.

COOKOUT--Sometimes you get lucky with your timing and this has happened with this annual meeting. The cookout on Monday evening will be a combined event with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Directorate staff who will be meeting in Iowa at the same time. This group will include Acting Director John Rogers, all of the Regional Directors and their top staff, and hopefully, Director Designate Jamie Clark. This will provide an opportunity for you to socialize and/or talk business with these folks.

ENCLOSURES -- **Iowa Highway Map**
Map of Des Moines
Report of Midwest Private Lands Wildlife Management Group
(one copy per state and province--note the recommendations and proposed letters)

(A:AF182.sp)

Iowa Proceedings

Association of Midwest Fish & Wildlife Agencies

Minutes - Business Meeting
July 15, 1997

President Farris called the meeting to order.

Roll call of states:

Colorado*
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Kentucky
Michigan*
Minnesota
Missouri
Nebraska
North Dakota
Ohio*
South Dakota
Wisconsin

*Absent

Reports:

A. Midwest Private Lands Wildlife Management Group
The report was presented by Todd Bogenschutz, Iowa D.N.R.
Four recommendations were made:

1. Encourage the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies to support, through financial assistance or in-kind services, the Farm Bill Policy Coordinator position (Don McKenzie) of the Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) in Washington D.C.
2. Strongly encourage the Association to recommend that member states have one staff position dedicated to work primarily on USDA farm policy issues. Each state agricultural liaison should work closely with the Farm Bill Policy Coordinator (WMI) and local farm program officials.
3. Strongly encourage, through letter to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and Congress, recommendations repealing the emergency use (haying/grazing) clause of CRP and providing compatible use alternatives that would minimize wildlife impacts.

4. Suggest the Association provide the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture a letter with recommendations to enhance the wildlife benefits of the 1996 Farm Bill.

Action:

1. Recommendations 1 was disapproved and a substitute recommendation approved:
   The Association recommends that the new president and the executive committee meet with the Wildlife Management Institute and Max Peterson in September at the IAFWA meeting in Arizona and work out a cooperative position.
2. Recommendation 2 was amended and approved as follows:
   Strongly encourage the Association to recommend that member states have one staff position designated to work on USDA farm policy issues. Each state agricultural liaison should work closely with the Farm Bill Policy Coordinator (WMI) and local farm program officials.
3. Recommendation 3 was approved.
4. Recommendation 4 was approved.

B. Legal Committee
Report was presented by Amelia McIntyre of Kansas Wildlife and Parks. No action items.

C. Council on Environmental Education
Update was presented by Jim Wilson, Missouri Department of Conservation. No action items.

D. Wildlife Diversity Technical Working Committee Report was presented by Dennis Figg, Missouri Department of Conservation. No action items.

E. Midwest Pheasant Study Group presented a written report that was provided to all member states.

F. Awards Committee: No report.

G. Treasurer: Presented by Joe Kramer (attached).

H. Audit Committee: Tom Young presented the report for the committee of Dean Hildenbrand, Doug Hanger, and himself. Found the treasurer's report to be true and accurate as corrected. Moved and accepted.

I. Executive Committee: Presented by Al Farris
The Executive Committee met to discuss bequest from Mr. Anton W. Jaschek. The Executive Committee recommends that the Association establish an Anton W. Jaschek endowment with the $208,907.18 and enter into a legal instrument to establish an endowment that would protect this base amount and only the interest from this endowment would be spent by the association. Further, the Executive Committee recommends the new president be directed to establish a committee to develop criteria for the disbursement of the annual interest.

Motion to accept by Al Farris.

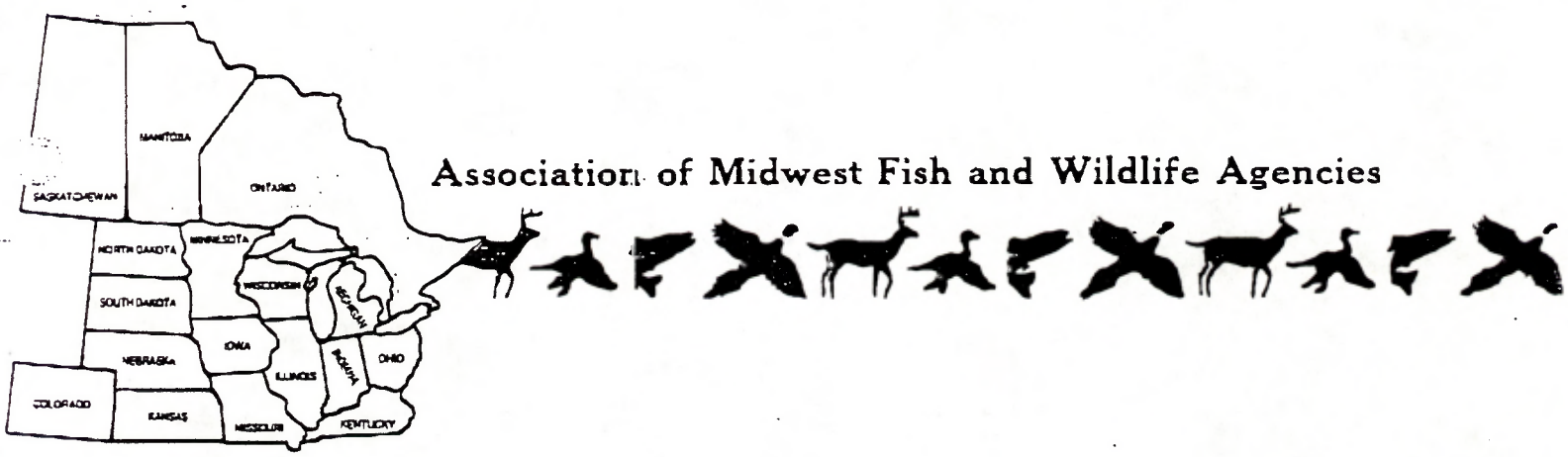
Second by Dennis Figg.

After discussion, the motion passed.

J. President Farris formed the membership that he had received a letter from Roger Holmes asking each regional association to appoint a representative to the Migratory Wildlife Committee. Since Al Farris was serving as a Midwest Association representative on the Partners-in-Flight subcommittee of the Migratory Wildlife Committee, he appointed himself as the Midwest Association representative to the Migratory Wildlife Committee also. President Farris asked if there was an objection. None was heard.

K. Al Farris turned the meeting over to Joe Kramer representing the incoming President Steve Williams of Kansas.

L. Meeting adjourned.



June 25, 1997

ALLEN FARRIS
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
WALLACE BUILDING, EAST 9TH & GRAND AVE
DES MOINES IA 50319-0034

Dear Al:

Enclosed please find the 1996 Treasurer's Report. Please review it and if you have any questions feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Joe D Kramer

Joe D Kramer, Treasurer
c/o KS Dept. of Wildlife & Parks
512 SE 25th Ave.
Pratt KS 67124
(316) 672-5911
(316) 672-6020 FAX

Association of Midwest Fish and Wildlife Agencies

TREASURER'S REPORT

1996 Transactions

Total Assets beginning January 1, 1996		**$13,223.73**
Receipts 1996		
Annual Dues	$100.00	
Conference Registrations	2,146.00	
Conference Donation	2,000.00	
Inheritance - Anton Jaschek	208,970.18	
14 U.S. states TWW Support (2,143 ea)	30,002.00	
Interest-Checking/Savings/Money Market	6,743.22	
Total Receipts		$249,961.40
Total Available Assets		**$263,185.13**
Disbursements 1996		
Teaming with Wildlife Donation	$30,000.00	
Illinois Conference Charges	4,389.63	
Purchased placques, etc.	~~50.06~~ 60	
Total Disbursements		$34,440.23
NET ASSETS, DECEMBER 31, 1996		**$228,744.90**

Accounting of Assets, December 31, 1996

Cash in checking account	$4,548.87	
Cash in savings account	215,182.55	
Money Market account #1212990-4750	9,013.48	
Total Assets		$228,744.90
ASSETS, DECEMBER 31, 1996		**$228,744.90**

COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS
OF THE ASSOCIATION OF MIDWEST FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES
including other related organizations

July 1997

Standing Committees (identified in bylaws)

Executive Committee
Auditing Committee
Resolutions Committee
Nominating/Awards Committee

Official Technical Working Committees*

Legal Committee
Midwest Private Land Wildlife Management Group
Wildlife Diversity Technical Working Committee

Related Working Groups/Organizations (incomplete list)

Midwest Deer and Turkey Study Group
Midwest Pheasant Study Group
Mid-Continent Warmwater Fish Culture Workshop
Association of Midwest Fish and Game Law Enforcement Officers
Prairie Grouse Technical Council
Western Sage/Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse Workshop
Midwest 4-State Quail Working Group (in formation - IL, IN, KY,MO)

Bodies on Which the AMFWA is Represented

Migratory Wildlife Committee of the IAFWA (Al Farris)
Council of Environmental Education (formerly Western Regional Environmental Education Council) (Jim Wilson)
Responsive Management Advisory Board (George Burgoyne, Jr.)
Partners in Flight (Al Farris)

*Note that two of the three official technical working committees of the AMFWA do not use the term "technical working committee" in their title. This no doubt creates confusion about their affiliation and official status. Consideration should be given to renaming those groups as the appropriate "AMFWA Technical Working Committee." Direction to rename those groups may also reinforce their direct tie to and support from the AMFWA. The opposite effect is also possible, however.

DNR

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

LARRY J. WILSON, DIRECTOR

RECEIVED
JUL 25 1997

To: Midwest Private Land Wildlife Management Group

From: Todd Bogenschutz
Upland Wildlife Biologist TBB

Date: July 22, 1997

RE: AMFWA Directors Meeting.

The Association of Midwest Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AMFWA) met July 13-15, 1997 in Des Moines, Iowa. All member states were present except Colorado. South Dakota was in attendance, but left before the PLWG report was given. Also represented at this years meeting were the USFWS, WMI, and IAFWA.

I gave a brief overview on our 1997 meeting and the topics discussed, farm bill, recreational access programs, and private land program evaluation. I informed the directors that the only recommendations our group made requiring their action were related to the farm bill.

I reviewed each farm bill recommendation in detail and tried to give the directors an understanding of our reasoning behind each recommendation. Terry Riley (WMI) also was able to provide some additional insight into some of the groups recommendations. The directors accepted all 4 of our recommendations with regard to the farm bill, with some modifications of recommendations 1 and 2. Our first recommendation to the directors requested that, "*the IAFWA support (financially or in-kind) the Farm Bill Policy Coordinator position (Don McKenzie) of the WMI*".

The directors recognized the importance of maintaining this national agricultural liaison, but were divided as to whether they should support a position over which they have no control. There was also concern that if a permanent position were established within the IAFWA that this would add additional cost to states' membership in the IAFWA. Motion was made and passed that the incoming AMFWA president (Steve Williams, KS) organize a meeting between AMFWA executive committee, WMI, and Max Petersen of the IAFWA to discuss the possibility of the IAFWA partially funding the Farm Bill Policy Coordinator position of WMI. The IAFWA would host this discussion at their fall meeting in Arizona. Terry Riley informed the directors that this issue had been discussed in the past with little success. My read on this issue from the directors is that the WMI and Max Petersen do not always see eye to eye on farm bill issues, thus the resistance to funding a WMI position.

Outgoing AMFWA president Al Farris noted that the AMFWA was recently left a donation of approximately $200,000. The AMFWA has decided to put this money into a trust fund and spend only the interest, approximately $12,000 to $14,000 per year. Al stated the AMFWA could use this money to challenge the other associations and create a permanent position. Whether this comes to pass depends upon the Arizona meeting and what other priorities the directors have that need funding. I suggest the new PLWG chair (Jeff Sole) contact Mr. Williams later this fall or early next spring to get the details of this meeting. It may be that the PLWG will need to discuss this issue further at our 1998 meeting.

Our second recommendation to the directors requested that, "*the AMFWA recommend member states have 1 staff position dedicated to work primarily on farm policy issues. Each agricultural liaison would work closely with the Farm Bill Policy coordinator of the WMI*". The directors felt most member states already have such a position and the decision for primary work responsibilities rests with the individual state. A motion was made and passed that the AMFWA recommend member states have one staff position designated to work on USDA farm policy issues. If some members of our group feel that this issue needs more emphasis in their state then working with your individual administrators is probably the best approach.

Our recommendations regarding CRP emergency haying and grazing and other improvements to the farm bill (51% rule, field borders, and state EBI) were accepted by the directors as presented. I got several compliments from the directors on our report and I think they were pleased with our action oriented recommendations. I informed the directors that we intend to be on the same state rotation (alphabetical) as the AMFWA by 1999 or 2000. I also indicated that the PLWG would standardize its methodology for interacting with the directors (e.g., getting our report to the directors, group members informing their individual directors before the AMFWA annual meeting). These are 2 issues that the PLWG should discuss at our meeting in Kentucky.

It has been a pleasure to serve as our group chair during the past year. My task was much easier because of the excellent support I received from group members. You can all pat yourself on the back for a job well done. I look forward to seeing everyone again in Kentucky next year.

TRB

cc: Mr. Al Farris (Iowa), AMFWA President- outgoing
Mr. Steve Williams (Kansas), AMFWA President- incoming

bc: Richard Bishop
Terry Little

MIDWEST PRIVATE LANDS
WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT GROUP
7TH ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1997 Meeting Agenda

1997 Annual Report to AMFWA

1997 State Attendance
- Colorado
- Illinois*
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Michigan
- Minnesota*
- Missouri
- Nebraska
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- South Dakota
- Wisconsin

* states not represented at this years meeting

Midwest Private Lands Wildlife Management Group
Annual Meeting
April 6-9, 1997

Sunday April 6, 1997

5:00 - 7:00 pm	.....	Registration/Mixer
7:00 - 8:00 pm	.....	Dinner

Monday April 7, 1997

8:00 - 8:15 am	.....	Opening Remarks and Welcome Group Chair - Todd Bogenschutz, Iowa DNR
8:15 - 12:00 am	.....	The New Farmbill - Making It Work for Wildlife Moderator - Jeff Joens, Iowa DNR Staff Specialist
8:30 am	.....	CRP Under the New Farmbill Iowa NRCS - Duane Miller & Mark Lindflott
9:30 am	.....	WRP and WHIP Under the New Farmbill Iowa NRCS - Jim Ayen
10:30 am	.....	Break
10:45 am	.....	Role of Private Organizations in the New Farmbill Pheasants Forever - Jim Wooley
11:00 - 12:00 am	.....	Evaluation of the New Farmbill Iowa DNR - Al Farris, Admin. Fish & Wildlife Division Missouri DOC - Ray Evans Wisconsin DNR - Todd Peterson
12:00 - 1:00 pm	.....	Lunch
1:00 - 5:00 pm	.....	Farm Bill
1:00 - 2:30 pm	.....	Panel Presentation on the 1997 Farm Bill
2:30 pm	.....	Group Discussion on the Farm Bill
3:00 pm	.....	Break
4:00 pm	.....	Development of Recommendations
6:00 pm	.....	Dinner

Tuesday April 8, 1997

8:00 - 10:00 am	.....	Use of Plateau Herbicide on Native Prairie Restorations - Joe Vollmer, Cyanamid Corp.
10:00 am	.....	Break
10:15 - 11:30 pm	.....	Program Updates Attendees will give a 5 minute update on their private lands program
11:30 - 12:00 pm	.....	National Wildlife Refuge System--Too many snowgeese. Can we solve the problem? Iowa State University Wildlife Professor - Erv Klaas
12:00 - 1:00 pm	.....	Lunch
1:00 - 6:00 pm	.....	Field trip to DeSoto NWR, Missouri River
6:00 pm	.....	Dinner

Wednesday April 9, 1997

8:00 - 8:30 am	.....	Ohio SWCD's presentation - Dave Risley
8:30-9:30 am	.....	Recreational Access & Private Land Program Evaluation Kentucky DOC - Jeff Sole
9:30 - 10:00 am	.....	Group Discussion on the Issues
10:00 am	.....	Break
10:15 -12:00 am	.....	Business Meeting
12:00 - 1:00 pm	.....	Lunch
1:00 pm	.....	Depart

MIDWEST PRIVATE LANDS WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT GROUP ANNUAL REPORT JULY 13-15, 1997

The seventh annual meeting of the Midwest Private Lands Wildlife Management Group was held April 6-9, 1997 in Guthrie Center, Iowa. The group was formally sanctioned by the Association of Midwest Fish and Wildlife Agency Directors in 1994 as advisory regarding private land wildlife management matters - this includes being visionary as well as alert to important private land issues in the midwest. Recommendations of the group are provided to the directors at their annual meeting.

The group held their annual meeting at the Springbrook Conservation Education Center, a natural resource education facility owned by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. States in attendance included Colorado, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. The Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Wildlife Management Institute, and Pheasants Forever were also present.

The 1996 Farm Bill "Making it Work for Wildlife" was the meeting theme, but recreational access and evaluation of private land programs was also discussed. The meeting stimulated considerable idea sharing and problem solving. These processes allow all states to benefit from a diversity of perspectives and experiences. This report reflects the consensus and recommendations of the Group.

FEDERAL FARM BILL

The 1996 Farm Bill was the major topic of discussion among states attending this year's meeting. The Group agreed the 1996 Farm Bill is the largest private land wildlife habitat management program ever implemented in the United States. Because wildlife was given coequal status with soil and water quality, and because of new programs like the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), and the continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) sign-up, the 1996 Farm Bill offers more wildlife potential on private land than ever before. However, the Group discussed several issues that warrant further action among the midwestern states, including participation in farm bill process (nationally and at the local level), CRP emergency haying/grazing, and timing of all USDA programs.

Farm Policy Development

State wildlife agency personnel were much more effective in the 1996 Farm Bill because of continuing active participation in all phases (national and state) of policy development and implementation. The Farm Bill Policy Coordinator position (Don McKenzie) of the Wildlife Management Institute provided coordination at the national level during 1996 Farm Policy development that had been lacking among midwestern states in previous farm bills. Don's timely and insightful updates on Washington DC farm policy debates allowed the states to develop unified and prompt responses to farm policy issues. Unified and prompt recommendations during the development 1996 farm policy paided big dividends for wildlife. The Group voiced concern that this progress could be lost if the individual states did not make active involvement (e.g., dedicated staff positions) in farm policy development and implementation a priority issue at both state and national levels.

Conservation Reserve Program--Emergency Use (Haying/Grazing)

USDA requested comments on the emergency use provisions of CRP in its recent comment period on the long-term policy for CRP. Recommendations were mixed and no policy change was recommended. However, Don McKenzie of WMI stated that USDA officials in Washington would be willing to work with the wildlife community on this issue if a unified consensus can be reached. The Group drafted a policy statement and recommendations regarding emergency use of CRP and submit it for the Associations consideration.

Implementation of USDA programs

a) National Buffer Initiative: The group recognized the tremendous wildlife potential in the new NRCS National Buffer Initiative to promote the continuous CRP sign-up, and agreed state wildlife agencies should do their part in promoting this initiative. The Group noted field borders and pivot-corners are not eligible for the continuous CRP sign-up under current guidelines, but both practices could provide tremendous wildlife benefits in agriculturally intense regions.

b) Environmental Benefits Index(EBI): Under the new EBI, type of cover planted weighs heavily in the points assigned to the Wildlife Subfactor. Some states are allowing the 51% rule. The 51% rule states that if wildlife friendly covers are planted on 51% of a CRP contract full wildlife points are awarded even though the remaining 49% of the contract may be planted to non-friendly wildlife covers. This rule violates the coequal status given wildlife with other natural resource concerns under the new law. Certainly the same rule would never be allowed for

soil erosion standards. Group consensus was that a weighed average should be used, so points are awarded for wildlife contributions provided.

c) Timing of USDA programs: The group also expressed concern about the timing of all USDA programs. The late passage of the 1996 Farm Bill created an incredibly short time frame to implement new programs (State EBI, Continuous CRP, EQIP, WHIP). Cuts in USDA staff and poor promotion led to the hasty implementation of new programs. The Group stressed that it will likely take 1 to 2 years to successfully implement new programs, both from an agency and landowner standpoint, and realistically evaluate their success.

The Group developed a draft letter to Secretary Dan Glickman outlining recommendations to improve implementation of farm programs and submit it for your consideration (see attachment #2).

Recommendations regarding the Federal Farm Bill:

1. ***Encourage the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies to support, through financial assistance or in-kind services, the Farm Bill Policy Coordinator position (Don McKenzie) of the Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) in Washington D.C..***

2. ***Strongly encourage the Association to recommend that member states have one staff position dedicated to work primarily on USDA farm policy issues. Each state agricultural liaison should work closely with the Farm Bill Policy Coordinator (WMI) and local farm program officials.***

3. ***Strongly encourage, through letter to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and Congress, recommendations repealing the emergency use (haying/grazing) clause of CRP and providing compatible use alternatives that would minimize wildlife impacts (see attachment #1).***

4. ***Suggest the Association provide the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture a letter with recommendations to enhance the wildlife benefits of the 1996 Farm Bill (see attachment #2).***

RECREATIONAL ACCESS PROGRAMS (RAP)

Several midwestern states (MI, SD, NE, KS) pay landowners for access to privatelands to increase hunting opportunities. The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife is being pushed by its constituency groups to provide a recreational access program. Kentucky asked what approaches other states have taken to implement access programs and what problems have been encountered.

Reasons cited for needing a RAP:

Additional areas are needed, in lieu of public lands, for the sporting public to hunt and/or fish. It is convenient for hunters to not have to contact landowners for permission. Urbanization has led to the loss of landowner contacts. Due to time constraints the sporting public is too busy to develop landowner contacts.

Eligible lands and cost:

Most states tie eligibility for RAP's to some measure of habitat quality or improvement. Some states also prioritize applications because access is only a problem in certain regions of the state. Funding for RAP comes from a number of different sources depending on the state. Some states derived funding from license sales, others from permit fees, and still others by appropriation. Cost to lease recreational access rights ranged from $0.50 to 8.00/acre for states with a RAP.

Pitfalls of RAP:

State liability laws prohibit the implementation of a RAP, Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife attempted to implement a RAP but was defeated when it was determined the landowner could be liable for personal injuries and property damages. Where access is most needed, state agencies cannot afford to lease access because of competition with private leases. Isolated tracts of land concentrate hunters and cause landowner problems (i.e., negative press). Leasing may cause surrounding landowners to close their lands because leased areas are available for the sporting public.

The Group recommended the following guidelines for addressing this issue

1. ***There should be an identified need for a RAP (i.e., is the sporting public having a problem with access?).***

2. ***A careful review of state liability laws is necessary before any attempt to implement a state RAP.***

3. ***Acceptance into a RAP should be tied to some measure of habitat quality or improvement and targeted to areas/regions where access is an identified problem.***

4. ***Keep it simple. The more complicated the process, the higher the administrative costs and staff requirements. A stable, self-supporting funding source is a plus.***

5. ***Evaluate the program to determine landowner and hunter satisfaction.***

EVALUATION OF PRIVATE LANDS PROGRAMS (PLP)

Most midwestern states have a dedicated private lands program and staff. State programs are designed to provide private landowners, with an interest in wildlife, technical and financial assistance to improve wildlife habitat and populations on their lands. Evaluation of PLP's is necessary to gauge landowner satisfaction, determine wildlife benefits, and defend annual program budgets. Benefits derived from landowner satisfaction and wildlife population improvements provide justification for annual PLP budgets.

Information on landowner satisfaction is most often attained by mail surveys to program participants. Mail surveys generally gather information on wildlife plans, technical assistance and staff responsiveness, and availability of cost-share assistance. This kind of information is usually easily attained. However, information on wildlife benefits is much more difficult to quantify. Most states attempt to quantify wildlife benefits in the same way landowner satisfaction is assessed, through mail surveys. Participants are typically asked how many of their wildlife practices are still in place on their land and if wildlife populations have increased. These surveys provide information on the longevity of practices but provide very subjective information on wildlife population benefits.

The benefits of PLP's on wildlife populations can only effectively be evaluated by standardized survey procedures. However, standardized surveys are generally costly and labor intensive. Research with many upland species has shown that 10 to 15% of a township size landscape must be impacted for wildlife agencies to detect population changes. For most states to affect this percent change would require spending their entire PLP budget in a township-sized area, much too small a focus for a statewide program. The crux of evaluating PLP's for wildlife benefits is that PLP's rarely impact enough of the landscape in a region for state agencies to detect wildlife population benefits. This is not to say there are no wildlife benefits; they simply cannot be detected with current survey techniques.

The Group recommends evaluation of PLP's should include other factors such as additional recreational opportunities provided by PLP's, in addition to the usual methods(e.g., landowner satisfaction, dollars spent) of evaluating PLP's. If wildlife population benefits are necessary for evaluation of PLP's, then PLP's need to be targeted to areas where there is a realistic chance that wildlife benefits can be documented with current survey techniques.

Attachment 1

June 27, 1997

The Honorable Dan Glickman, Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
14th Street and Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Glickman:

During the recent federal comment period on the Long Term Policy for Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) you requested comments regarding periodic non-emergency haying and grazing of CRP. Comments were varied and USDA opted to make no change to the emergency use provision.

The Association of Midwest Fish and Wildlife Agencies offers the attached policy change and recommendations for repealing the emergency use provision of CRP and replacing it with a haying and grazing management system.

Mr. Secretary, I hope your commitment to wise land stewardship can be demonstrated by action on this issue as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Allen Farris, Chairman
Midwest Association of Fish
and Wildlife Agencies

cc:
Robert Smith, House Agriculture Committee Majority Chair
Richard Lugar, Senate Agriculture Committee Majority Chair
Charles Stenholm, House Agriculture Committee Minority Chair
Tom Daschle, Senate Agriculture Committee Minority Chair ??
Paul Johnson, Chief NRCS
Keith Kelly, Administrator FSA

Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Proposed
Haying and Grazing Policy for the Conservation Reserve Program

In all but one year since the beginning of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), an emergency release has been declared for haying and/or grazing. In most years substantial acres were released. Each year it appears that the criteria used to justify an "emergency" have become less restrictive, and use of CRP vegetation by producers who are not suffering from any emergency has surfaced fairness issues.

The 1996 Farm Act elevates wildlife habitat to a major goal of CRP; forage production is not a goal. Haying and grazing during the primary reproductive season of ground nesting species are woefully incompatible uses of CRP for wildlife production. Haying or heavy grazing during nesting and brood-rearing periods destroys nests and offspring as well as adults. Late-fall haying and grazing seriously reduces the value of cover for winter roosting and early-spring nesting.

Recurring emergency releases of CRP acres for haying and grazing has frustrated many conservation and producer groups. In the new CRP, with wildlife habitat as a primary goal, these releases threaten to undermine the integrity of the program. In addition, haying and grazing of CRP creates direct competition with producers who cash-rent pastureland and those who produce hay as a crop. These uses are often referred to as "incompatible" or "unfair" and are among the most contentious aspects of CRP.

Creating an opportunity for participants to hay or graze their CRP acres periodically, in order to maintain a readily available supply of hay, may be one way to defuse an increasingly difficult situation. Allowing limited use will enable local hay producers and those who rent out pastureland to plan ahead, since they will know at the outset what to expect from the program. Requiring a reduction in payment for use will send a clear message that this is not a forage subsidy.

Haying and grazing management systems can, with careful planning, be implemented to maintain wildlife habitat benefits. Management plans must incorporate wildlife biologist input to ensure wildlife benefits are maintained. The appropriate entity to develop prescriptions for wildlife and other cover-related enhancements is the State Technical Committee.

The following recommendations are offered as a framework for replacing the emergency release authority of CRP with a system of haying and grazing management. The system would reduce the effort associated with emergency releases and also remove much of the ill will associated with the program, thereby strengthening this important conservation effort.

Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Proposed
Recommendations
(Order is Important)

1. Repeal the authority for emergency haying and grazing of CRP.
2. Authorize the Secretary to approve grazing and haying management plans to replace the authority for emergency haying and grazing.
3. Require the FSA State Committee to consult with the State Technical Committee on the use of CRP acres for haying and grazing purposes.
4. Establish new authority for planned haying and grazing of CRP as follows:
   a) Contractees may hay or graze an **entire** CRP tract **once** in five[1] years, **or 1/5** of the tract per year for tracts over 80 acres in size, provided:
      i) 1/2 of the payment for the tract portion used for that year is forfeited;
      ii) since wildlife and their habitats are the only resource to be negatively impacted, any forfeiture in payments are added to, and retained for use within the state of origin, funding designated for WHIP;
      iii) one portion of a field may not be re-hayed or re-grazed until all of the rest of the field has been either hayed or grazed.
   b) Periods in which haying and grazing can occur should be developed by the State Technical Committee and should take into account all program objectives.
   c) Haying and grazing activities should not be considered to constitute wildlife habitat or vegetative management practices, but should seek to maintain those values.
   d) Any unused portion of each CRP tract must be left in one contiguous block.
   e) Grazing must follow a plan developed with NRCS.
   f) Harvested hay (e.g., bales) must be removed by October 1.

---

[1] The State Technical Committee could request—with written justification—that the period be shortened to as little as three years or lengthened to as many as seven years.

Attachment 2

June 27, 1997

The Honorable Dan Glickman, Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
14th Street and Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Glickman:

The Association of Midwest Fish and Wildlife Agencies is very supportive of the 1996 Farm Bill and USDA's efforts to date to incorporate additional wildlife benefits into an already-successful program. Although we have several suggestions for further improvements in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) of the 1996 Farm Bill, we are pleased that overall, the rule reflects Congress' intention in the 1996 Farm Act, as well as our own desires, for increased emphasis on wildlife habitat.

Implementation of State Environmental Benefits Index (EBI): Provide states a reasonable time period to implement state EBI's.

During preparation for the 1996 Farm Bill, the Department of Agriculture in cooperation with several conservation organizations, developed a national EBI to rank contract bids for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The intent of the EBI was to place national priority on CRP contract bids that address problems in environmentally sensitive areas. As you know, the EBI was used to rank contract bids for the 15th CRP sign-up in March 1997. The national EBI should help focus the benefits of the CRP on environmental problems associated with agricultural production at a national scale; however, more localized problems might not be addressed by the contract bid ranking provided by the national EBI.

Prior to the 15th CRP sign-up, State Technical Committees (STC) were given the option of developing a more localized EBI to address environmental problems within their individual states. The time period to complete this task was very short; not a single state developed their own EBI for the 15th sign-up. The result was that some CRP contracts were awarded that do not address the more-localized problems within certain states, and that other contracts were rejected that would have focused on those environmentally sensitive areas.

Mr. Secretary, the Association of Midwest Fish and Wildlife Agencies supports the concept of a national EBI, but we also support more localized EBI's. We recommend that you direct the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Farm Service Agency to jointly develop state EBI's in cooperation with the NRCS State Technical Committees. We recommend the national EBI be used to provide an initial ranking of contract bids for the CRP. After the initial ranking at the national level and acres are awarded to each state, we recommend that contract bids be re-ranked by the states through consultation with the STC's using the state EBI. Each state should still be required to stay within the acreage

figures generated with the national EBI, but they should be able to award contract bids that address local environmental problems.

<u>CRP General Sign-up:</u> Eliminate the 51% rule for wildlife covers.

As you know, under the new Environmental Benefits Index (EBI), type of cover established on CRP contract fields figures heavily in the points assigned to the Wildlife Subfactor (N1). In some states, USDA is allowing landowners to establish wildlife friendly covers on 51% of contract fields and awarding producers full wildlife points even though the remaining 49% of the contract may be poor wildlife habitat. The 51% rule violates the coequal status given wildlife with the other natural resources concerns under the 1996 Farm Bill. Certainly these percentages would never be applied to soil erosion standards in the same field.

We request you eliminate the 51% rule and apply a weighted average to partial field plantings, thereby awarding points for the actual wildlife benefits provided. This change would reaffirm USDA's goal of maximizing environmental benefits per dollar expended.

<u>CRP Continuous Sign-up</u>: Make field borders and center-pivot irrigation corners for wildlife eligible practices for the continuous CRP sign-up.

NRCS has implemented a national campaign to promote the use of buffer strips through the continuous CRP sign-up. The focus of this initiative is to draw attention to small, high-priority practices which have important soil, water, and wildlife benefits but do not require producers to enroll whole fields. To enhance the wildlife benefits of the continuous CRP sign-up, we request that you add two additional practices to the program; 1) field borders and 2) center-pivot irrigation corners.

Field borders and pivot-corners, which may be considered modified field borders, are small-acreage, low-cost, high-return practices that could easily be incorporated into the continuous CRP sign-up. In regions with intense agriculture, field borders provide disproportional habitat benefits to certain "edge" species of wildlife such as northern bobwhites, ring-necked pheasants, mourning doves, and cottontail rabbits. Such practices will require only a small percentage of the cropland, and thus may be more acceptable to landowners in agriculturally intense regions than practices requiring larger acreages. Consequently, field borders may be the most practical opportunity available for landowners to provide any meaningful wildlife habitat in intensively cropped areas. We request that you include field borders and center-pivot irrigation corners as eligible practices for wildlife under the continuous CRP sign-up.

Mr. Secretary, I hope your commitment to conservation can be demonstrated by action on these issues as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Allen Farris, Chairman
Midwest Association of Fish
and Wildlife Agencies

cc:
Paul Johnson, Chief NRCS
Keith Kelly, Administrator FSA

STATE OF IOWA

TERRY E. BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LARRY J. WILSON, DIRECTOR

Reg FW Supv
NRCS Area Bio's
Regl DWB's
Charlie Lee
Joe Kramer

FYI +/or comment
Gray

May 30, 1997

Mr. Troy Schroeder
KS Dept Wildl & Parks
PO Box 338
Hays KS 67601

RE: Annual PLWG Report to the Association of Midwest Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

Dear Troy:

Fellow private land enthusiasts. Attached is a draft of the report I will present at the directors meeting July 14 or 15. The report contains a summary of our 1997 Iowa meeting, a list of states in attendance, a draft letter regarding new policy for haying and grazing of CRP, and a draft letter regarding the implementation of USDA programs. I am sending this draft to one representative in each state, so please share with others who may have attended the meeting in your state. Please review this document and return any comments (phone, fax, e-mail) to me by **JUNE 14th.**

I have composed two draft letters for the directors consideration. One with policy changes regarding the emergency use of CRP and another letter addressing the Groups other concerns with the Farm Bill. I did this because I felt the emergency use provision was a big enough issue to stand alone and I also think combining the two letters creates a very large document. Letters on a single issue I think receive more response.

I would like to thank Steve Riley, Terry Riley, Troy ~~Davis~~ Schroeder, and Tim Davis for drafting parts of this report. I will mention three concerns with this draft related to the policy change for haying and grazing of CRP.

1. Should we promote haying and grazing as a wildlife management tool? Or are we trying to accomplish to much with this change. There is a concern among the group that allowing haying and grazing on CRP will turn the it into a forage reserve program. This is a very real concern. Forage production is not even mentioned as a minor objective in CRP, do we want to promote it as one? Comments from the group on Steve's 1st draft suggest that we should

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not promote haying and grazing as beneficial to wildlife even though we in the wildlife community know that it can be if done correctly. I think we have to remember that this recommendation repeals the emergency clause and that any new policy has to address future emergency situations. If we promote haying and grazing as beneficial for wildlife, we may be opening the door for USDA to promote emergency use as good for wildlife. As drafted, our recommendation states haying and grazing negatively impact the wildlife resource with minor impacts on other resources (soil, water, air). As wildlife is the only "real loser" with haying and grazing, money saved from reduced rental payments should be funneled to enhance the wildlife resource (e.g., WHIP). I believe this is the point we should hang our hat on, and NOT that haying and grazing "can" be beneficial to wildlife. After the rule change, the individual states can make their forage management plans as wildlife friendly as possible through their STC.

2. Group members also had concerns that funneling money from CRP into WHIP would essentially let Congress and USDA off the hook for funding WHIP in the future. It is my understanding from the proposed rule that money for WHIP will come from the CCC, the same pot of money that pays for CRP. Whether WHIP has funding after FY98 is simply a decision on Paul Johnson's part (Vice President of CCC) whether to fund the program? Congress is removed from any appropriation decisions. Am I incorrect in my understanding? If anyone has more information they can share please forward it to me.

3. Item #4 of the Haying/Grazing Recommendations states, "Authorize the STC to develop appropriate prescriptions for vegetative management on CRP". In light of the Groups comments (see 1 above), it seems to me that we may be trying to accomplish to much again by including this recommendation. Vegetation management is a bigger issue than just haying/grazing (e.g., CRP maintenance fee). Perhaps the Group should address vegetation management in another policy statement. Comments?

Todd Bogenschutz
Upland Wildlife Research Biologist
Wildlife Research Station
1436 255th St.
Boone, IA 50036

Phone: (515) 432-2823
Fax: (515) 432-2835
E-mail: toddiadnr@aol.com

MIDWEST PRIVATE LANDS WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT GROUP ANNUAL REPORT JULY 13-15, 1997

The seventh annual meeting of the Midwest Private Lands Wildlife Management Group was held April 6-9, 1997 in Guthrie Center, Iowa. The group was formally sanctioned by the Association of Midwest Fish and Wildlife Agency Directors in 1994 as advisory regarding private land wildlife management matters - this includes being visionary as well as alert to important private land issues in the midwest. Recommendations of the group are provided to the directors at their annual meeting.

The group held their annual meeting at the Springbrook Conservation Education Center, a natural resource education facility owned by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. States in attendance included Colorado, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. The Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Wildlife Management Institute, and Pheasants Forever were also present.

DRAFT

The 1996 Farm Bill "Making it Work for Wildlife" was the meeting theme, but recreational access and evaluation of private land programs was also discussed. The meeting stimulated considerable idea sharing and problem solving. These processes allow all states to benefit from a diversity of perspectives and experiences. This report reflects the consensus and recommendations of the Group.

FEDERAL FARM BILL

The 1996 Farm Bill was the major topic of discussion among states attending this year's meeting. The Group agreed the 1996 Farm Bill is the largest private land wildlife habitat management program ever implemented in the United States. Because wildlife was given coequal status with soil and water quality, and because of new programs like the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), and the continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) sign-up, the 1996 Farm Bill offers more wildlife potential on private land than ever before. However, the Group discussed several issues that warrant further action among the midwestern states, including participation in farm bill process (nationally and at the local level), CRP emergency haying/grazing, and timing of all USDA programs.

Farm Policy Development

State wildlife agency personnel were much more effective in the 1996 Farm Bill because of continuing active participation in all phases (national and state) of policy development and implementation. The Farm Bill Policy Coordinator position (Don McKenzie) of the Wildlife Management Institute provided coordination at the national level during 1996 Farm Policy development that had been lacking among midwestern states in previous farm bills. Don's timely and insightful updates on Washington DC farm policy debates allowed the states to develop unified and prompt responses to farm policy issues. Unified and prompt recommendations during the development 1996 farm policy paided big dividends for wildlife. The Group voiced concern that this progress could be lost if the individual states did not make active involvement (e.g., dedicated staff positions) in farm policy development and implementation a priority issue at both state and national levels.

Conservation Reserve Program--Emergency Use (Haying/Grazing)

USDA requested comments on the emergency use provisions of CRP in its recent comment period on the long-term policy for CRP. Recommendations were mixed and no policy change was recommended. However, Don McKenzie stated that USDA officials in Washington would be willing to work with the wildlife community on this issue if a unified consensus can be reached. The Group drafted a policy statement and recommendations regarding emergency use of CRP and submit it for the Associations consideration.

DRAFT

Implementation of USDA programs

a) National Buffer Initiative: The group recognized the tremendous wildlife potential in the new NRCS National Buffer Initiative to promote the continuous CRP sign-up, and agreed state wildlife agencies should do their part in promoting this initiative. The Group noted field borders and pivot-corners are not eligible for the continuous CRP sign-up under current guidelines, but both practices could provide tremendous wildlife benefits in agriculturally intense regions.

b) Environmental Benefits Index(EBI): Under the new EBI, type of cover planted weighs heavily in the points assigned to the Wildlife Subfactor. Some states are allowing the 51% rule. The 51% rule states that if wildlife friendly covers are planted on 51% of a CRP contract full wildlife points are awarded even though the remaining 49% of the contract may be planted to non-friendly wildlife covers. This rule violates the coequal status given wildlife with other natural resource concerns under the new law. Certainly the same rule would never be allowed for

soil erosion standards. Group consensus was that a weighed average should be used, so points are awarded for wildlife contributions provided.

c) Timing of USDA programs: The group also expressed concern about the timing of all USDA programs. The late passage of the 1996 Farm Bill created an incredibly short time frame to implement new programs (State EBI, Continuous CRP, EQIP, WHIP). Cuts in USDA staff and poor promotion led to the hasty implementation of new programs. The Group stressed that it will likely take 1 to 2 years to successfully implement new programs, both from an agency and landowner standpoint, and realistically evaluate their success.

The Group developed a draft letter to Secretary Dan Glickman outlining recommendations to improve implementation of farm programs and submit it for your consideration (see attachment #2).

Recommendations regarding the Federal Farm Bill:

1. ***Encourage the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies to support, through financial assistance or in-kind services, the Farm Bill Policy Coordinator position (Don McKenzie) of the Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) in Washington D.C..***

DRAFT

2. ***Strongly encourage the Association to recommend that member states have one staff position dedicated to work primarily on USDA farm policy issues. Each state agricultural liaison should work closely with the Farm Bill Policy Coordinator (WMI) and local farm program officials.***

3. ***Strongly encourage, through letter to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and Congress, recommendations repealing the emergency use (haying/grazing) clause of CRP and providing compatible use alternatives that would minimize wildlife impacts (see attachment #1).***

4. ***Suggest the Association provide the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture a letter with recommendations to enhance the wildlife benefits of the 1996 Farm Bill (see attachment #2).***

RECREATIONAL ACCESS PROGRAMS (RAP)

Several midwestern states (MI, SD, NE, KS) pay landowners for access to privatelands to increase hunting opportunities. The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife is being pushed by its constituency groups to provide a recreational access program. Kentucky asked what approaches other states have taken to implement access programs and what problems have been encountered.

Reasons cited for needing a RAP:

Additional areas are needed, in lieu of public lands, for the sporting public to hunt and/or fish. It is convenient for hunters to not have to contact landowners for permission. Urbanization has led to the loss of landowner contacts. The sporting public is lazy or too busy to develop landowner contacts.

Eligible lands and cost:

Most states tie eligibility for RAP's to some measure of habitat quality or improvement. Some states also prioritize applications because access is only a problem in certain regions of the state. Funding for RAP comes from a number of different sources depending on the state. Some states derived funding from license sales, others from permit fees, and still others by appropriation. Cost to lease recreational access rights ranged from $0.50 to 8.00/acre for states with a RAP.

Pitfalls of RAP:

State liability laws prohibit the implementation of a RAP, Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife attempted to implement a RAP but was defeated when it was determined the agency could be liable for personal injuries and property damages. Where access is most needed, state agencies cannot afford to lease access because of competition with private leases. Isolated tracts of land concentrate hunters and cause landowner problems (i.e., negative press). Leasing may cause surrounding landowners to close their lands because leased areas are available for the sporting public.

DRAFT

The Group recommended the following guidelines for addressing this issue

1. ***There should be an identified need for a RAP (i.e., is the sporting public having a problem with access?).***

2. ***A careful review of state liability laws is necessary before any attempt to implement a state RAP.***

3. ***Acceptance into a RAP should be tied to some measure of habitat quality or improvement and targeted to areas/regions where access is an identified problem.***

4. ***Keep it simple. The more complicated the process, the higher the administrative costs and staff requirements. A stable, self-supporting funding source is a plus.***

5. ***Evaluate the program to determine landowner and hunter satisfaction.***

EVALUATION OF PRIVATE LANDS PROGRAMS (PLP)

Most midwestern states have a dedicated private lands program and staff. State programs are designed to provide private landowners, with an interest in wildlife, technical and financial assistance to improve wildlife habitat and populations on their lands. Evaluation of PLP's is necessary to gauge landowner satisfaction, determine wildlife benefits, and defend annual program budgets. Benefits derived from landowner satisfaction and wildlife population improvements provide justification for annual PLP budgets.

Information on landowner satisfaction is most often attained by mail surveys to program participants. Mail surveys generally gather information on wildlife plans, technical assistance and staff responsiveness, and availability of cost-share assistance. This kind of information is usually easily attained. However, information on wildlife benefits is much more difficult to quantify. Most states attempt to quantify wildlife benefits in the same way landowner satisfaction is assessed, through mail surveys. Participants are typically asked how many of their wildlife practices are still in place on their land and if wildlife populations have increased. These surveys provide information on the longevity of practices but provide very subjective information on wildlife population benefits.

DRAFT

The benefits of PLP's on wildlife populations can only effectively be evaluated by standardized survey procedures. However, standardized surveys are generally costly and labor intensive. Research with many upland species has shown that 10 to 15% of a township size landscape must be impacted for wildlife agencies to detect population changes. For most states to affect this percent change would require spending their entire PLP budget in a township-sized area, much too small a focus for a statewide program. The crux of evaluating PLP's for wildlife benefits is that PLP's rarely impact enough of the landscape in a region for state agencies to detect wildlife population benefits. This is not to say there are no wildlife benefits; they simply cannot be detected with current survey techniques.

The Group decided that if wildlife population benefits are necessary for evaluation of PLP's, then PLP's need to be targeted to areas where there is a realistic chance that wildlife benefits can be documented with current survey techniques.

June 2, 1997

The Honorable Dan Glickman, Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
14th Street and Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Glickman:

During the recent federal comment period on the Long Term Policy for Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) you requested comments regarding periodic non-emergency haying and grazing of CRP. Comments were varied and USDA opted to make no change to the emergency use provision.

The Association of Midwest Fish and Wildlife Agencies offers the attached policy change and recommendations for repealing the emergency use provision of CRP and replacing it with a haying and grazing management system.

DRAFT

Mr. Secretary, I hope your commitment to wise land stewardship can be demonstrated by action on this issue as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Allen Farris, Chairman
Midwest Association of Fish
and Wildlife Agencies

cc:
Robert Smith, House Agriculture Committee Majority Chair
Richard Lugar, Senate Agriculture Committee Majority Chair
Charles Stenholm, House Agriculture Committee Minority Chair
Tom Daschle, Senate Agriculture Committee Minority Chair ??
Paul Johnson, Chief NRCS
Keith Kelly, Administrator FSA

Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Proposed
Haying and Grazing Policy for the Conservation Reserve Program

In all but one year since the beginning of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), an emergency release has been declared for haying and/or grazing. In most years substantial acres were released. Each year it appears that the criteria used to justify an "emergency" have become less restrictive, and use of CRP vegetation by producers who are not suffering from any emergency has surfaced fairness issues.

The 1996 Farm Act elevates wildlife habitat to a major goal of CRP; forage production is not a goal. Haying and grazing during the primary reproductive season of ground nesting species are woefully incompatible uses of CRP for wildlife production. Haying or heavy grazing during nesting and brood-rearing periods destroys nests and offspring as well as adults. Late-fall haying and grazing seriously reduces the value of cover for winter roosting and early-spring nesting.

Recurring emergency releases of CRP acres for haying and grazing has frustrated many conservation and producer groups. In the new CRP, with wildlife habitat as a primary goal, these releases threaten to undermine the integrity of the program. In addition, haying and grazing of CRP creates direct competition with producers who cash-rent pastureland and those who produce hay as a crop. These uses are often referred to as "incompatible" or "unfair" and are among the most contentious aspects of CRP.

Creating an opportunity for participants to hay or graze their CRP acres periodically, in order to maintain a readily available supply of hay, may be one way to defuse an increasingly difficult situation. Allowing limited use will enable local hay producers and those who rent out pastureland to plan ahead, since they will know at the outset what to expect from the program. Requiring a reduction in payment for use will send a clear message that this is not a forage subsidy.

Planned haying and grazing management systems can provide wildlife habitat benefits. Management plans must incorporate wildlife biologist input to ensure wildlife benefits are maintained. The appropriate entity to develop prescriptions for wildlife and other cover-related enhancements is the State Technical Committee.

The following recommendations are offered as a framework for replacing the emergency release authority of CRP with a system of haying and grazing management. The system would reduce the effort associated with emergency releases and also remove much of the ill will associated with the program, thereby strengthening this important conservation effort.

Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Proposed
Recommendations
(Order is Important)

1. Repeal the authority for emergency haying and grazing of CRP.
2. Authorize the Secretary to approve grazing and haying management plans to replace the authority for emergency haying and grazing.
3. Require the FSA State Committee to consult with the State Technical Committee on the use of CRP acres for haying and grazing purposes.
4. Authorize the State Technical Committee to develop appropriate prescriptions for vegetative management on CRP.
5. Establish new authority for planned haying and grazing of CRP as follows:
   a) Contractees may hay or graze an **entire** CRP tract **once** in five[1] years, **or 1/5** of the tract per year for tracts over 80 acres in size, provided:
      i) 1/2 of the payment for the tract portion used for that year is forfeited;
      ii) since wildlife and their habitats are the only resource to be negatively impacted, any forfeiture in payments are transferred to WHIP and retained for use in the state of origin;
      iii) one portion of a field may not be re-hayed or re-grazed until all of the rest of the field has been either hayed or grazed.
   b) Periods in which haying and grazing can occur should be developed by the State Technical Committee and should take into account all program objectives.
   c) Haying and grazing activities should not be considered to constitute wildlife habitat or vegetative management practices, but should seek to maintain those values.
   d) Any unused portion of each CRP tract must be left in one contiguous block.
   e) Grazing must follow a plan developed with NRCS.
   f) Harvested hay (e.g., bales) must be removed by October 1.

DRAFT

[1] The State Technical Committee could request—with written justification—that the period be shortened to as little as three years or lengthened to as many as seven years.

May 30, 1997

The Honorable Dan Glickman, Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
14th Street and Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Glickman:

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Implementation of State Environmental Benefits Index (EBI): Provide states a reasonable time period to implement state EBI's.

DRAFT

During preparation for the 1996 Farm Bill, the Department of Agriculture in cooperation with several conservation organizations, developed a national EBI to rank contract bids for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The intent of the EBI was to place national priority on CRP contract bids that address problems in environmentally sensitive areas. As you know, the EBI was used to rank contract bids for the 15th CRP sign-up in March 1997. The national EBI should help focus the benefits of the CRP on environmental problems associated with agricultural production at a national scale; however, more localized problems might not be addressed by the contract bid ranking provided by the national EBI.

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Mr. Secretary, the Association of Midwest Fish and Wildlife Agencies supports the concept of a national EBI, but we also support more localized EBI's. We recommend that you direct the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Farm Service Agency to jointly develop state EBI's in cooperation with the NRCS State Technical Committees. We recommend the national EBI be used to provide an initial ranking of contract bids for the CRP. After the initial ranking at the national level and acres are awarded to each state, we recommend that contract bids be re-ranked by the states through consultation with the STC's using the state EBI. Each state should still be required to stay within the acreage

figures generated with the national EBI, but they should be able to award contract bids that address local environmental problems.

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We request you eliminate the 51% rule and apply a weighted average to partial field plantings, thereby awarding points for the actual wildlife benefits provided. This change would reaffirm USDA's goal of maximizing environmental benefits per dollar expended.

CRP Continuous Sign-up: Make field borders and center-pivot irrigation corners for wildlife eligible practices for the continuous CRP sign-up.

DRAFT

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this is my part of the rest. JL

Field borders and pivot-corners, which may be considered modified field borders, are small-acreage, low-cost, high-return practices that could easily be incorporated into the continuous CRP sign-up. In heavily agricultural regions, field borders provide disproportional habitat benefits to certain "edge" species of wildlife such as northern bobwhites, ring-necked pheasants, mourning doves, and cottontail rabbits. Such practices will require only a small percentage of the cropland, and thus may be more acceptable to landowners in heavily agricultural regions than practices requiring larger acreages. Consequently, field borders may be the most practical opportunity available for landowners to provide any meaningful wildlife habitat in intensively cropped areas. We request that you include field borders and center-pivot irrigation corners as eligible practices for wildlife under the continuous CRP sign-up.

Mr. Secretary, I hope your commitment to conservation can be demonstrated by action on these issues as soon as possible.

State of Wisconsin \ DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

WISCONSIN
DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

George E. Meyer
Secretary

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August 14, 1997 IN REPLY REFER TO: Africa.mdw

RECEIVED AUG 18 1997

Allen Farris
President
Midwestern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
C/O Iowa DNR
E. 9th St. and Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50319-0034

SUBJECT: CITES Africa Trip Summary

Dear Al:

I really want to express my sincere thanks to the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies for allowing me to attend the 1997 10th Conference of The Parties CITES meeting from June 9th to June 20th (COP 10) in Harare, Zimbabwe. I felt that it was an honor to be selected for this assignment. I enjoyed myself thoroughly, and learned many things about CITES along with meeting many interesting people.

I left Madison on June 4th to join Don MacLauchlan and Bruce Taubert in Baltimore en route to London. We were in London from June 5-6 and left for Harare on Saturday, June 7th. At the end of COP 10, my wife and cousin joined me for a vacation through parts of Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana, and South Africa from June 21 to July 13th. I returned to Chicago on July 13th from Capetown, South Africa.

COP 10 SUMMARY:

Bruce Taubert, on July 9, 1997, sent you a copy of the "Report TO IAFWA and Regional Associations On The 10th Convention of The Parties (COP 10) Convention On The International Trade In Endangered Species", that I helped to prepare along with the other authors. This report covers the essential business elements of the meeting.

For the rest of my report, I will give some insights and other details that were of interest to me and that were not covered by the above summary.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS:

The COP 10 Conference was similar to other wildlife legislative procedures that all the states deal with in one form or fashion. Considerable lobbying, informal discussions, and meetings were a standard feature of COP 10. When we arrived in Harare, we were issued 4 enormous notebooks with all the various proposals. Some were very wordy and not very informative, while others contained excellent information. Following these issues through 2 weeks of meetings was very difficult to do.

The opening ceremonies were colorful with the Zimbabwe Army band; native dancers (both men and women) in full costume. Then costumed individuals, with flags representing each signatory from 1975 to the present, were paraded in and planted in a stand on the stage.

Former KGB Soviet Union official I. Topkov, outgoing CITES Secretary General, gave the introductory remarks; 96% of the members were present.

Eighty-nine TAXA were presented for consideration at COP 10.

President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe spoke in a somewhat clipped British accent. He spoke of the concern for dwindling resources. He stressed the need for wildlife conservation and praised the CAMPFIRE program, which redirects monies spent on animal damage (like elephant damage) back into the local communities.

The general meeting procedure at COP 10 was to start with a plenary session then sessions were divided into 2 Committees (Committees 1 and 2). Then at the end of the convention, the 2 committees were once again united and all the issues were permanently decided by voting (some votes were tallied on a secret ballot basis).

Headphones were provided for translations into German, Spanish, and French.

Fortunately, we did not meet over the weekend, which gave everyone an opportunity to see some wildlife around Harare. This allowed Bruce Taubert, Ken Taylor, and I to go upland game bird hunting for francolin, doves, and guinea fowl on private land, 30 miles northwest of Harare. I shot one dove; the others bagged 6 francolins in total. What an experience to go hunting on Father's Day!

The COP 10 routine that our group followed during the 10 days of meetings was to meet at breakfast with Steve Lewis and discuss various issues. Steve was the official pipeline to the U.S. Delegation. We also had an 8:00 A.M. discussion most mornings with Rick Parsons, who represented Safari Club International. Then, each evening at 6:00 P.M., the U.S, delegation held a de-briefing session for all the Non-Governmental Organizations like our group, PETA, the pet industry, Safari Club International, etc. The NGO's seemed to be either animal rights groups or sustainable use groups. The animal rights groups like PETA and HSUS were all there in force.

In summary, it was an extremely interesting and informative meeting. I have also attached some newspaper clippings from some African and American papers to give you an idea of some media thoughts about the conference.

I am in the process of putting together a slide show covering aspects of the COP 10 conference as well as slides of my vacation after the COP 10 Conference. Steve Miller suggested that I could show these slides to the 1998 summer meeting of the midwest, which I believe will be in Kansas. I could also show them to any interested participants at the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference, which will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin from December 7-10, 1997. Please let me know what you think of these ideas.

Sincerely,

Chuck

Charles M. Pils
Director, Bureau of Endangered Resources

c: S. Miller- AD/5
G. Meyer- AD/5
Directors- Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
D. MacLauchlan- IAFWA- Washington D.C.
J. Tarver- LA Fish and Game Dept.
B. Taubert- AZ Game and Fish Dept.
K. Taylor- AK Fish and Game Dept.
A. Elser- VT Fish and Game Dept.
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THE STATE OF ARIZONA

GAME & FISH DEPARTMENT

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Distribution List

FROM: Bruce D. Taubert, Assistant Director
Wildlife Management Division

SUBJECT: 1997 CITES Meeting

DATE: July 8, 1997

As you know, all four regional wildlife associations were represented as nongovernmental organizations at the 1997 CITES meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe, Africa. I am pleased to announce that our presence was absolutely necessary and extremely effective in assuring that a "states" perspective was brought into the CITES negotiations.

Please find attached a copy of the minutes of the meeting from your representatives' perspective and a list of recommendations for future work on CITES issues. In a separate letter Don MacLauchlan, of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies office, will be submitting these minutes to all fifty states. I expect that at each of your regional association meetings your representatives will brief you on the minutes and answer any other questions you might have, and I will be presenting an update of CITES activities at the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Conference in Scottsdale, Arizona.

If you have any questions please contact your regional representative or me at your convenience.

BDT:ljt

Attachment

REPORT TO IAFWA AND REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS ON THE 10TH CONVENTION OF THE PARTIES (COP 10) CONVENTION ON THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES

JUNE 9-20, 1997

ZIMBABWE, AFRICA

The 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES began June 9 in Harare, Zimbabwe. Registration was estimated at 1300 delegates, NGO's and visitors.

Representing the Regional Associations of Fish and Wildlife Agencies were:

Don MacLauchlan, IAFWA, Northeast Association
Bruce Taubert, Asst. Director, Arizona Game and Fish, Western Association
Ken Taylor, Dep. Director, Wildlife Div., Alaska Fish and Game, Western Association
Chuck Pils, Director, Endangered Resources Div., Wisconsin, Midwestern Association
Johnnie Tarver, Asst. Sec. Louisiana Wildlife and Fish, Southeastern Association
Al Elser, Director, Vermont Fish and Wildlife, Northeastern Association
Steve Wilson, Director, Arkansas Game and Fish, State Delegate to the U.S. Team.

CITES was established in 1975 as an international effort to control, restrict, or prohibit trade of endangered species between countries. Currently, 139 countries are Parties to CITES. One hundred twenty-three were present with voting credentials. CITES conducts its business through two committees which meet concurrently. Committee I focuses on listing proposals of plants and animals. Committee II addresses policy, procedures, and amendments to the CITES Convention. Proposals approved in each committee are brought before the Plenary group for final approval. Proposals which were not approved may be brought before the Plenary group with the support of 1/3 of the Parties. All proposals require 2/3 majority of the voting Parties for passage. Abstentions are not considered in the total vote.

The importance of state representation at CITES cannot be overstated. Many international issues considered at this convention have serious implications and potential impacts on state management of fish and wildlife resources. Those of greatest importance at this convention are discussed in the following reports.

BEARS

A resolution encouraging tighter restrictions and increased national legislation to control the import and export of bear parts and products was introduced by the U.S. delegation with less than 24 hours notification to the state representatives. Our primary concern with this resolution is that illegal trade in bear parts in North America is minimal, is not threatening any North American bear populations, and that national legislation addressing species under state management is unnecessary.

After conferring with the IAFWA attorney, our state delegation met with the U.S. delegation to discuss the resolution and suggest modifications to several paragraphs in order to clarify that this resolution is directed to those countries that do not already have appropriate laws and regulations governing trade in bear parts. We were partially successful in this effort, although wording addressing "sub-national" legislation, which would have alleviated many of our concerns, was not included in the final resolution. Our U.S. delegation, however, is on record as stating that illegal trade in bear parts is not threatening any North American bear populations, that bears are well managed by the states in the U.S., and that current state laws and regulations are adequate to address this concern. We were successful in our efforts to ensure the committee report reflected this in the written record.

Finland introduced a proposal to increase protection of European and Asian brown bears by placing all populations in these regions on Appendix I. Passage of this proposal could have had some long term negative impacts upon brown bear management in North America as it

would have ultimately affected export of hunting trophies from Alaska and the Canadian provinces to the European and Asian countries in the range states covered under this proposal.

This proposal met with considerable resistance from Norway and other countries with expanding brown bear populations, and it was defeated in Committee I.

WOOD BISON

Canada proposed downlisting of the wood bison (*Bison bison athabascae*) from Appendix I to Appendix II. Downlisting this species was of particular importance to Alaska because of their interest in reintroducing wood bison into an area along the upper Yukon River which contains the largest potential habitat for this species left in North America. Archaeological data indicate that wood bison became extinct in Alaska sometime during the previous 500 years. Much of the land in this region is owned by Native corporations interested in potential oil development and sensitive to introduction of any species listed as threatened or endangered. While wood bison are not on the U.S. endangered or threatened species list, downlisting from CITES Appendix I to Appendix II would help alleviate some of their concerns and would remove the necessity for a CITES import permit. Importation would simply require a permit for importing an alien species.

Downlisting wood bison from Appendix I to Appendix II was approved by unanimous consensus of the Parties in Committee I.

ALLIGATOR SNAPPING TURTLE

Upon arrival in Harare, Zimbabwe, contact was made with the U.S. delegation through Steve Wilson, the International delegate on the U.S. delegation. Don Berry (head of the U.S. delegation) and others from the Department of the Interior remained firm on listing the alligator snapping turtle on Appendix II. Several rounds of discussion resulted, but the U.S. refused to

consider withdrawing the proposal. Our NGO group representing the Regional Associations contacted several other NGO's friendly to our position and were well received with pledges of support.

Zimbabwe and Germany were particularly interested in supporting our position after learning that the range states were opposed to the listing proposal. Additionally, it was pointed out to these delegations that the report from TRAFFIC was inaccurate in that the turtles exported during the past several years were actually farm raised hatchlings and not adults from the wild, as was implied in the TRAFFIC report.

The U.S. delegation, after learning that fact and observing that their position on this issue was severely weakened by dissemination of more current and factual information, arranged a meeting with representatives of TRAFFIC to attempt to reach some consensus on this issue. The meeting was unsuccessful as TRAFFIC maintained that the turtles met the criteria for listing and that they would maintain that posture.

The Regional Associations were successful at intervening on the initial round of discussion held in Committee I, but our representative was cut off by the Chairman after presenting only a brief and incomplete statement on this matter. This intervention, however, was enough to raise the level of interest by several parties, and we were satisfied that a more complete discussion later, at the appropriate time, would provide an opportunity to gather more support from sympathetic parties. It was felt that if the proposal was questioned by several parties, then the U.S. may withdraw it to concentrate their efforts on other more pressing proposals. The U.S. delegation indicated that could happen and that it would provide them with an opportunity to save face in light of the strong U.S. protectionist NGO pressure applied to the delegation.

A fact sheet on the alligator snapping turtle proposal was prepared and distributed to all parties through the Secretariat.

The Chairman of Committee I was forced to limit debate to Parties only. Consequently, NGO intervention was prohibited on the remaining proposals. The U.S. delegation approached the Regional Representatives concerning a compromise to withdraw the Appendix II proposal and pledge to institute an Appendix III listing. Without our ability to raise the level of interest in the Appendix II proposal through intervention, chances were that the U.S. proposal would have been approved by the Parties. Additionally, the contact person from Zimbabwe that had pledged support for not listing the turtle was replaced on the Zimbabwian delegation by higher profile dignitaries to handle the African Elephant proposals. It should be noted that the Zimbabwian delegation commanded great respect at COP 10, and without their intervention our prospects for defeat of the U.S. Appendix II proposal were greatly reduced.

Reluctantly, the Regional Association's representatives agreed to an Appendix III listing instead of Appendix II. This represents the first time that the U.S. has placed any species on Appendix III. It is our understanding that Appendix III listing does not require CITES approval and can be instituted by any nation by simply notifying the Secretariat. Appendix III requires a permit from the Department of Interior but does not require a finding of "No Detriment". The U.S. delegation assured us that a streamlined permitting system would be put in place as well as meeting with the affected states to ensure that the system would work as designed.

MAP TURTLES

Proposal 10.59 introduced by the U.S. delegation to include the entire turtle genus *Graptemys* in Appendix II as follows:

1. *G. barbouri*
2. *G. caglei*
3. *G. ernsti*
4. *G. flavimaculata*
5. *G. gibbonsi*

6. *G. nigrindda*
7. *G. oculifera*
8. *G. pulchra*
9. *G. versa*

In accordance with Article II, 2(a) and

10. *G. geographica*
11. *G. ouachitensis*
12. *G. pseudogeographica* (includes *G. kohnii*)

The U.S. proposed to include all of the above species (1-9) on Appendix II. The rationale for this proposal was that harvesting of the specimens from the wild for international trade may have a detrimental impact on the species by reducing their populations to levels at which their survival would be threatened by other influences. The remaining 3 species (10-12 above) were proposed for inclusion in Appendix II under the provisions of Article II 2(b) of Resolution Conf. 9.2A, because their inclusion in Appendix II is necessary to bring trade in the aforementioned species under effective control. Scientific Authority export findings for these 3 species (10-12) will be based only upon the potential impact of their trade in any of the nine species (1-9) listed under Article II 2(a).

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

All members of the various Associations of Fish and Wildlife Agencies had concerns with this proposal because we all felt that it was unnecessary for the following reasons:

- All 12 species are covered by state management authority and are protected either by the respective state fish and game regulations or by endangered species status.

- The 3 "look-alike" species (10-12) can be identified and separated from 1-9, and thus do not need to be placed under Appendix II.

- Various state population studies have been conducted in various states, and the states have the best estimates of these populations and have or can develop the necessary management regulations.

- Most species of *Graptemys* do well in captivity. Several U.S. turtle farms have propagated many *Graptemys* which are exported to other countries, thus reducing the pressure on wild map turtle populations.

The Western, Midwestern, Southeastern, and Northeastern representatives at the COP 10 meeting expressed their concerns to the U.S. delegation through Steve Wilson during daily meetings of the delegation, as well as individually during the daily debriefing sessions. We expressed our concern, which was a common objection raised throughout COP 10, that the map turtle issue was a state management issue under the authority of various fish and wildlife or natural resources agencies, not the U.S. Government.

As a result of our efforts and concerns, which we also spread to other NGO's, who in turn related our concerns to various delegates from other countries, there was not sufficient support to pass the measure. The vote on Prop. 10.59 was 37 for and 19 opposed, which did not meet the 2/3 majority required for passage.

TIMBER RATTLESNAKE

The recommendation that came to COP 10 for the timber rattlesnake was to list it in Appendix II. On this particular issue the U.S. had concurrence of the Regional Fish and Wildlife Associations. Unfortunately the placement of the timber rattlesnake on the agenda right after the discussion on map turtles and the alligator snapping turtle caused the European group to

ask the same questions about the rattlesnake as it did on the two turtles--isn't this a domestic problem that should be handled at home and not at COP10? With this comment the U.S. dropped their proposal to list the timber rattlesnake.

INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

Downlisting proposals for elephants, whales and rhinos were major issues at this convention. All focused on the theme of "Sustainable Use", a term repeatedly used and much in evidence at this convention. Four whale proposals (3 by Japan and one by Norway) were hotly debated in Committee I. Votes were taken by secret ballot, and while none passed, the support for passage grew with each vote. The Norway proposal on Minke whales was the last of these to be considered, and it received a majority vote of the Parties, but narrowly missed the 2/3 vote required for passage.

South Africa proposed downlisting the white rhino in South Africa from Appendix I to Appendix II to allow trade in products made from rhino hide. Trade in horns was not included. This proposal was defeated by one vote, another indication of the philosophical shift among the Parties from protectionism to sustainable use.

The elephant issue was very complex. Three countries (Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Botswana) proposed downlisting from Appendix I to Appendix II and a resumption in ivory trade from these countries. Several amendments were offered which allowed for consideration of the primary proposal on more than one occasion. It was first amended by South Africa to establish further restrictions in the ivory trade. It was narrowly defeated in a secret ballot. A working group was established to develop a consensus position, and the matter was brought back before Committee I two days later. Amended versions for all three countries passed by a significant margin.

The focus upon the sustainable use concept and the resistance many countries exhibited towards the protectionist interests seemed to help reestablish the credibility of CITES among many of the developing countries. Those who have attended several CITES meetings commented upon the strong philosophical shift of the convention when compared to previous ones.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is absolutely imperative that the Regional Fish and Wildlife Associations continue to be involved at the Conference of the Parties (COP). Without our direct input at the COP the bear resolution would have impacted the manner that the States manage their resource and there would have been a perceived need for Federal intervention into the States' bear management programs. In all likelihood both the map turtle and the alligator snapping turtle would have passed as requested by the U.S. (Instead they both failed--the desired outcome from our perspective). The timber rattlesnake issue also failed.

2. A work group within the International Affairs Committee needs to be formed. This work group would have the responsibility to follow CITES issues continually (not just when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service asks for input). The work group would meet with representatives of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop a higher and more intensive level of communication. Members of the work group would also interface with other CITES interested parties such as SCI, WMI, etc. Members of the work group should include at least the Regional CITES representatives. In fact they should be the core of the committee and select a chair from among their ranks. Reports would be given to the Chair of the International Affairs Committee for him to pass along to the Executive and Business meetings.

3. Whether in work group form or not the Regional CITES representatives would meet with members of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife CITES team at the September IAFWA meeting in Scottsdale. We have already discussed this with Marshal Jones and he wholeheartedly supports

this meeting. This will allow us to debrief each other and get a head start on communication and coordination in preparation for the next COP.

4. We need to develop a small working group to evaluate the map turtle and timber rattlesnake issues. These will both likely come back at the next COP and we want to be prepared to scientifically and administratively support or reject them. We also want to share all of our information with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that we are working from the same script. There should be no surprises from either side. Louisiana needs to work closely with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure they feel comfortable that the turtle farms in Louisiana are ensuring that no wild alligator snapping turtles are exported from the U.S.

5. We have been asked by Congressman Pombo that both he and his staff be more involved in CITES issues. He requested an invitation to the September IAFWA meetings. He also requested that we send a representative to the post COP 10 congressional hearings.

MAP OF SOUTH AFRICAN COUNTRIES THAT I VISITED (YELLOW)

Pits-9R14

Environmental Officials Relax Ban on Ivory

■ Africa: Zimbabwe summit allows three countries to sell stockpiled tusks. An earlier such proposal was defeated.

6-20-97

By MARLA CONE
TIMES ENVIRONMENTAL WRITER

In a major shift of international policy, world environmental leaders Thursday eased a 7-year-old ban on trade in African elephant ivory, capping years of rancorous debate over a far-reaching treaty that protects endangered species.

Whether to open exports of elephant products has been one of the world's most contentious ecological issues, and it has dominated a two-week summit, being held in Zimbabwe, of environmental ministers representing 138 nations.

An earlier proposal to relax the ban failed Tuesday.

Most Western countries, including the United States, have opposed any relaxing of the ivory embargo because they fear it would prompt the illegal slaughter of elephants, reigniting the "ivory wars" of the 1970s and 1980s that depleted Africa's herds.

But governments in southern Africa have passionately argued that they should be rewarded for their successful anti-poaching and conservation programs, which have allowed elephant populations to flourish. Without ivory trade, they say, they are unable to persuade villagers that elephants are worth more alive than dead, and funding for their work is waning.

Under the new experimental program, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Botswana will be allowed to sell 59.1 tons of ivory tusks, worth millions of dollars, to Japan, according to officials in Zimbabwe for the meetings. The sales will be allowed to start in 21 months, if special conditions are met to try to prevent contraband from being exported along with legal ivory. Zimbabwe also will be allowed to export elephant hides, leather goods and small ivory souvenirs beginning in 90 days.

Those conditions—including an international monitoring system to track ivory trade and stepped-up enforcement of anti-poaching laws—were critical to winning the votes needed to ease the ban. The earlier proposal by the three southern African countries that did not include the anti-smuggling provisions lost by three votes.

The three nations promised that no elephants will be legally killed for trade, and that the ivory will come from large stockpiles of tusks from animals culled to manage herds. The revenue must go toward conservation and community programs for wildlife.

Elated officials of Zimbabwe's government leaped from their seats and sang the anthem "God Bless Africa" when the vote was announced in the cavernous hall where delegates convened.

"It is a victory for African sovereignty and their right to utilization of their natural resources in a sustainable manner without dictation from the industrialized countries," said Chen Chimutengwende, Zimbabwe's minister of environment and tourism.

U.S. Assistant Interior Secretary Don Barry said in Zimbabwe that the Clinton administration is disappointed by the vote. But, he added, the U.S. government "is prepared to work cooperatively" with the three African nations and an international enforcement team to ensure that exports are controlled.

"For the sake of the elephant," he said, "we all cannot afford to fail."

Elephants—the world's largest land-living endangered species—are beloved in much of the Western world but a nuisance to many people in southern Africa, where herds are now so plentiful that they are trampling some communities, injuring people and damaging crops. By contrast, elephant populations remain low in West, East and Central Africa. The giant tusked creatures epitomize the tense wrangling over sustainable use of wildlife that divides many nations.

Some conservationists say Third World countries should be allowed to sell limited amounts of their rare resources because it gives animals or plants an economic value, providing an incentive for sustainable management. Blanket embargoes lead to higher prices that encourage smugglers, they argue.

The opposing side argues that preservation and eco-tourism are key to protecting rare species. Any legal trade will lead to abuses, since many countries are unable to stem poaching and smuggling, these advocates say.

For example, several African nations, including Kenya and Liberia, and some Asian countries, led by India, opposed lifting the embargo—fearing that resuming ivory sales would encourage elephant poaching in their own countries.

"The fear is that some of these other African countries that don't have many elephants, or the capacity to manage them, will be completely overwhelmed by well-established poaching and smuggling rings. There are very little means in place to help them deal with it," said John Perrine of the U.S.-based Defenders of Wildlife.

By contrast, supporters of limited trade hailed the vote.

"This is a triumph for sanity, objectivity and for recognizing developing countries' ability to make their own decisions on natural resource management," said Dick Pitman of a group in Zimbabwe, the Zambezi Society. "It's a major, major achievement."

The vote "reflects the fact that governments have recognized that revenues from well-controlled elephant trade can support elephant management," said Ginette Hemley, the director of international policy for the World Wildlife Fund, which is one of the few major environmental groups to back limited ivory trade.

The world's most sweeping conservation pact—the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species—restricts or prohibits trade in thousands of animals and plants at risk of extinction. The meeting, which ends today, is the 10th and largest of the CITES signatories.

Los Angeles Times 6-20-97

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Environmentalists vs. Wildlife

By Karl Hess Jr.

Southern Africa is facing an environmental crisis. On June 9, the source of that crisis arrives in Harare, Zimbabwe, with the opening of the 10th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (known as Cites). There, the fate of elephants will be debated and the lot of millions of poor farmers will be held in the balance.

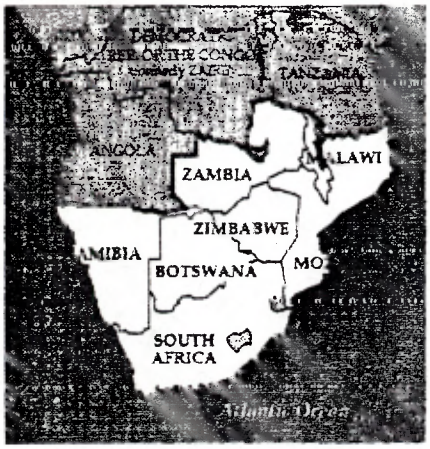
Two issues are at stake. The first is the ivory ban currently enforced by Cites. Zimbabwe, Namibia and Botswana, with the support of nine neighboring states, will ask for a limited resumption of the ivory trade. The second is trophy hunting of elephants. Animal-rights groups will push for an end to all hunting, counting on sympathies for Bambi to carry the day.

But there is something much larger at stake: a bold conservation initiative under way to win over rural villagers to elephant conservation. Begun in Zimbabwe in 1985 as the Communal Areas Management Program for Indigenous Resources (Campfire), it has—under the generic label of community-based conservation—spread to Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Zambia, South Africa and Mozambique. Its idea is to give rural villagers an economic stake in putting up with wildlife and its costs—like crop loss and loss of human life and limb. It does so by giving small communities the right to market predetermined levels of elephant and other big game to safari companies and keep the revenues. And it works: $12,000 per elephant is a lot of money for a village where household income is $300 a year.

In Zimbabwe, for example, poaching is down and the number of elephants killed annually to protect crops and human lives has fallen from 300 to fewer than 30, allowing annual trophy kills to rise to more than 100 from 50. At the same time, elephant numbers have soared to 66,000 from 46,000 since 1980, making Zimbabwe one of the world's prime elephant producers. Much the same has happened in other nations with programs like Campfire.

Cites threatens Campfire in two ways. First, its ivory ban punishes the good managers of elephants—the Campfire nations—for the failure of other countries in Africa and Asia to adequately protect their elephants. At this moment, 33 tons of ivory sit in warehouses in Zimbabwe alone. Gradual sale of that ivory could more than double Campfire revenues, yielding even stronger incentives for villagers to protect both elephants and elephant habitat. Indeed, a recent study sponsored by the World Wildlife Fund, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the World Conservation Union, the Species Survival Commission and Traffic, a group that tracks illegal sale of animal parts, concludes that the ivory ban has had at best a minimal effect on elephant poaching. Even with a total ivory ban, global elephant numbers will fall as humans usurp more and more elephant habitat—a trend Campfire could help stem.

This is where the Cites membership—135 countries, including those of Southern Africa and Europe as well as the U.S.—actually threaten to hasten the extinction of



elephants, and to keep rural villagers in poverty. If animal rights groups—led by the U.S.-based Humane Society—are successful in their bid to outlaw trophy hunting of elephants (either through Cites or through the U.S. Endangered Species Act), Campfire will be snuffed out. Fully 90% of village Campfire revenues come from trophy hunting, and 65% of those come from elephants. Moreover, most African trophy hunters come from the U.S. Take them and the income they provide away and Campfire dies—and with it the economic incentives needed to persuade poor farmers to share their meager landholdings with elephants.

The U.S. should stand up for Southern Africa and support limited resumption of the ivory trade. Vice President Al Gore should stand up for the millions of Africans who benefit from Campfire-type programs. Environmentalists should stand up for the promise that Campfire holds for elephants. But they won't. Those who do stand up for Campfire—the Congressional Black Caucus, conservation biologists, and a handful of libertarian-minded think tanks—will remain voices in the wilderness.

A month ago on this page, Julian Simon tendered a bet "to any prominent doomsayer that just about any trend pertaining to material human welfare [anywhere in the world] will improve rather than get worse." I am neither prominent nor a doomsayer, but I am convinced that material human welfare—not to mention elephant welfare—will worsen in rural Southern Africa, as a result of U.S. and European wildlife policies.

It is not in the interest of politicians in either the U.S. or Europe to save elephants, especially when doing so risks the backlash of voters who see African wildlife only on TV. The problem is a widening cultural divide. Elephants are marvels to us; to Africa's struggling poor they are marauding pests. Elephants are cheap to us, costing only the price of the Discovery Channel; they are dear to the African farmer who must pay for land set-asides for wildlife parks and for lost crops, and who face loss of life. Witness also the rise of wildlife protectionism in developed nations and its equation of human and animal rights. In a subcontinent where human rights are barely respected, demands that wildlife be given even greater rights smacks of racism and imperialism.

I am prepared to take up Mr. Simon's bet, but not because I think his argument is wrong. The world-wide environment is improving, and it will continue to improve so long as people are free to control where they live and to benefit from the market process. But those conditions do not hold in Southern Africa. So I leave to Mr. Simon the terms of the bet, a bet I will work to lose, and one that I will gladly pay off.

Mr. Hess is a senior associate of the Thoreau Institute in Portland, Ore.

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