



MIDWEST

Association of
Fish & Wildlife
Agencies

**87th Annual
Directors Meeting
Cancelled**

**Business Meeting Only Virtually
October 8, 2021**

**Follow Up Meeting Virtually
October 20, 2021**

**Includes Committee Reports and
State of State Reports**

Hosted by:



**South Dakota
Game, Fish and Parks**

Section One – October 8, 2020 Minutes and Exhibits

Section Two – October 20, 2020 Minutes and Exhibits

Section Three – Committee Reports

Section Four – State-of-the-State Reports

Section One

**October 8, 2020
Zoom Meeting
And
Exhibits**

is as of December 31, 2019. If you want to see something different, I am open to do that. The first page is account balance summary of all MAFWA and Conservation Enhancement Fund (CEF) accounts. It shows end of 2018 cash balance, overall change amount and amount ending December 31, 2019. The first is banking services account which handles special projects that do not involve federal funds, the big player is National Pheasant Coordinator as well as Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow. This account used to handle the profits for the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference (MFWC). At end of 2019 those prior balances we were holding were transferred to CEF account; a decrease of \$45,000, we moved MFWC funds from 2012, Kansas funds we are holding for them, about \$34,000 so biggest reason for decrease. This balance can be volatile depending on special projects we have going on. A lot of these funds are designated or held for some other entity. The next account is conference account, our main operating account and receipts coming in are from annual directors meeting, membership dues, banking fees and indirect costs reimbursement from banking services account or federal account. Disbursements are annual directors meeting expenditures, executive secretary and treasurer pay and travel, recording secretary travel, liability insurance, tax preparation and website maintenance. This account went down quite a bit, \$118,000, but footnote describes that we moved \$160,000 into our investment money market and securities account. We did that for two reasons 1) to be invested; and 2) wanted to keep balances we have at the Credit Union under federal insurance coverage of \$250,000. This does not imply our credit union is weak, just good policy. Next is Southern Wings account, states contribute to this and those funds are disbursed to American Bird Conservancy, we do withhold 5% banking fee as we do with all of our special projects. Next is federal grants, that went down because we had a NFWF project winding down at end of 2019 and it had state matching funds, federal grants are 100% reimbursed so we don't have to carry those matching funds anymore. Credit union share account we are required to maintain a \$25 minimum balance. Next is big account, money market and securities account, increased quite a bit, \$160,000 due to transfer and the rest from investments. Had a good year. Below is CEF accounts, our 501(c)(3) foundation. That credit union checking account started off with a penny and moved money from share account to checking account so we could make payments. Next is share account, beginning balance is \$55,000, 11 states contributed \$5,000 each as seed money for MFWC and made some payments. CEF also has an investment account, not a lot in it but it did earn about \$893, balance of \$5,500. The footnote at the bottom talks about the transfer. Keep in mind designations for some of these accounts, earmarked for other entities or special purposes. Run through rest of pages quickly, line numbers on the left for reference. Page 2 is banking services account which handles National Pheasant Coordinator, Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow and others and several Ohio projects. Disbursements are National Pheasant Coordinator and Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow and administrator 5% banking fees to conference account. Balance is \$141,000 and lines 22-28 list the designations of about \$121,000; the top one, 2019 MFWC funds belongs to Ohio and has been moved to CEF and so has the one from Minnesota for upcoming conference. Difference between \$141,000 and \$121,000 are MAFWA funds. Page 3 is the conference account which is our main operating account. Receipts from 2019, line 5 is annual directors meeting we had in Ohio, actual receipts was \$92,000, and membership and affiliate dues, banking fees and indirect cost reimbursed and a little interest. Disbursements, line 19, is disbursements for annual director meeting, \$47,000. Total receipts \$92,000 and disbursements \$47,000, had a very good conference. Have executive secretary pay and travel; treasurer pay and travel expenses, recording secretary travel, insurance, tax form preparation, website maintenance and miscellaneous. Transferred of \$160,000 for

balance of \$89,000. Southern Wings account, a pass-through account, receives contributions from various states which are disbursed primarily to the American Bird Conservancy after deducting a 5% banking fee. Sent out invoices two weeks ago for the contribution. Typical balance is very small. Federal grant account, have state contributions for monarch NFWF project that we were finishing up at end of 2019. Have federal reimbursement from USFWS and NFWF reimbursements for monarch project, \$175,000 in receipts. Disbursements for state liaison pay and travel; monarch coordinator pay and travel; monarch planning travel and meeting expenses; steering committee participation; and indirect cost transfer to conference account. Designations is confusing, around \$22,000, but a little timing difference, we still had a NFWF reimbursement to come in for \$19,000. Page 6 is the credit union share account where we have \$25 required minimum balance at end of 2019. Page 7 is our big account, our money market and securities investment account showing interest, dividends and capital gains income, about \$37,000, a change in market value, increase of \$64,000 and the transfer of \$160,000 from the conference account. The balance as of December 31, 2019 was almost \$700,000. Page 8 is conservation enhancement fund 501(c)(3), foundation accounts, checking account at the credit union, these accounts were established in 2018 and hosts contributions from the states; the new procedure for handling the Midwest Fish and Wildlife conference. Line 2 shows transfer from CEF credit union share account of \$41,000, and interest for total receipts of \$41,013. Disbursements include fees, deposits from MFWC conference and Kansas used \$10,000 of funds we were holding, \$30,000. The bottom part of the page is the share account which shows the transfer from the conference account on line 12 and on line 15 the disbursement to the CEF. The checking account has almost \$41,000, interest was \$14. Disbursements were hotel deposits and Kansas used \$10,000 of their money, so total disbursements was \$40,000 and we have an \$11,000 balance. On bottom, share account, beginning balance of \$55,000 (\$5,000 from 11 states) and transferred from conference account those Kansas funds, \$32,000 and interest was \$234 and transferred \$41,000 to the checking account for ending balance of \$46,000 and of that \$22,000 is being held for Kansas. Page 9 is the conservation enhancement fund investment account held at the broker. Started with \$4,600, had dividends and capital gains; holding reporting fee of \$50 and change in market value of positive \$800 for balance of \$5,500. If you want different format or timeframe I am open to that. *Kelly* – Roger received a phishing attack a couple days ago he received an email supposedly from me asking him to send \$2,400 to somebody in South Carolina; it looked real. Ollie sent it to me and it was fraudulent. Roger stopped the action going forward. What is troublesome is it shouldn't have gotten to that point. How do we help Roger from an uncomfortable position like this? We have to have a back-up in there. This is the first time it happened, but it was awkward. Don't know if there has been any follow up on where the money was supposed to go. We need to talk about this and buffer so that doesn't happen again. *Sara Pauley* – Similar thing almost happened to me, where my financial services staff got an email from the director saying to withhold their paycheck and send it to another account. This is a national, world-wide scam, using executives and going through financial staff who maybe don't feel comfortable questioning executives; typical scenario now. We do need to talk about it. Now that Roger on alert, we have checks in place, contacting Ollie or president directly, or whoever is making the inquiry. We can talk about something more formal. *Roger* – I usually do a check with Ollie and he caught it. I am alert now. *Ollie* – Really a good thing, Roger checks with me on almost everything. Discovered this was fraud, was not from Kelly, payment was in process but able to stop it, because of time frame, it should have been a red flag. *Roger* – I am up to speed. *Kelly* – Want to help you so we have a fallback position. In some places two people have to sign

the checks, not suggesting that, but do need to talk about this some. Lesson learned. *Brad Loveless* – If people have references for financial people who let them get away with stuff, send them my way, I can't get away with anything with my folks.

Audit Committee Report – *Keith Warnke, Wisconsin* – Kendra, Dale and I met in July, we sent a list of revenues and expenditures over our director of planning, we don't have a CFO, and she reviewed the funds, Roger coordinated with Karen and she came back and indicated that she was pleased that MAFWA had an independent audit. The information that Roger provided agreed with our accounting records. She had a few short questions because she was unfamiliar with claims, taxes and some ownership of equipment bought with the grant, also no withholding from paychecks, but we don't have employees, we have private contractors. Minor points and Roger shot right back with easy answers. She encourages us to continue annual audits. We appreciated her straight forward and positive attitude, happy having desk audits and independent audits because it gives us double protection. Very positive report. *Kelly* – Consistent when I looked at it too. Reinforcing that we have a good system in place.

Contracted Audit Results – *Ollie* – Board requested we do a professional, independent audit we budgeted for it and contracted a firm in Jefferson City, Missouri to do it. I listed Kelly to report results of the audit, which were quite good. *Kelly Hepler, South Dakota* – Nothing stood out, happy with controls in place, no suggestions to change things. *Roger* – Two minor suggestions, one to develop a deposit log to have someone log in the checks before I get them and put them into QuickBooks. So now the Missouri Department of Conservation financial services has a staff person doing that and staff at credit union is tracing log to actual deposit. Yesterday, Missouri internal auditor reconciled, she is making that deposit log part of that, so got that process tight. Other suggestions was NFWF reimbursements, I was logging into accounting system the date I submitted it and they suggested it be the date paid. Very minor things. *Ollie* – We budgeted \$15,000 for audit and it came in significantly cheaper. Desire is to do professional outside audit every three to five years, it is budget item and will need to be in the budget. *Kelly* – Jim, is that what we are doing in WAFWA too? *Jim* – Not 5 years, 3 years is a good time period, past presidents and investment leaders change and it doesn't cost that much. *Kelly* – Three years unless we hear something different. *Ollie* – It was conducted and was a successful audit. If we have a change in staff that may be a good time to do one. Three years is fine.

Investments Committee Report – *Jim Douglas, Nebraska* – We have Keith and Brad on this call who made contributions to this. Dan Eichinger valued part of committee too. Asked Roger to have some documents to put up. Met a couple of times virtually since the last board meeting. Decided to take a fresh look at investments to see if we had good understanding of investment philosophy being followed and make sure committee understood the nature of investments. Have third party investment advisor also look at these reports. To start out with, latest report from Shane Hessman (Exhibit E). General nature of investments is securities and bonds; 38% of portfolio is in 14 individual bonds, as of September 20, \$272,000. These bonds have an annual interest rate return of 6.4% (list of bonds on report). Also, 54%, \$379,000, is invested in 11 mutual funds, primarily American and Lord Abbertt funds, including large and small company stocks. The remaining part 8% is in a federally insured money market account with an interest rate of 0.15%. This portfolio has done well historically and has tripled over the 14 year period. Questions from investments committee, what are bond ratings, mostly triple B; what risk on

bonds is and are these held by companies that are fairly stable in this volatile environment. Looked at investment risk and we also reviewed investment philosophy done quite a while ago. History shows beginnings of the dollars in these accounts (*Exhibit F, Jaschek Fund History, Guidelines and Investment Policy*) and there were instructions. *Roger* – The guidelines talk about the purpose of the fund. *Jim* – It is general, and the board further defined that. The Investment committee is not suggesting we need changes to the investment policy. *Roger* – It had a 75% fixed income in 2006 and the current one is dated in 2016. *Jim* – We asked ourselves if we want to make changes in how we allocate the investments between stable and volatile funds and part of that depends on keeping good track of what is happening with the markets. There are some investment firms or advisors that provide detailed reports to customers on what is happening in the market to make you change our minds. Not getting those detailed reports from Shane but did talk to him about those. He is not big on providing those types of reports but would provide them if we asked him to; but would cost us some money. He doesn't make very much money on making our investments. He hasn't done a bad job. Ask Brad to weigh in on third party look we had and whether getting enough information on investments to make the right decisions. *Brad* – I serve on Kansas Land Trust Board and they work with an advisor, Tony Hayden, who has grown the board into an investment strategy, taking risks we want to and producing work we want to do. He supports conservation organizations in a pro bono way for Kansas Land Trust. When I got on this investment committee with Jim and the rest of the team, I was weighing what I was seeing from Shane, who has given us what we asked for, and what we were getting from the other board I served on. I asked Tony to look over our investments and he did an evaluation. He asked our philosophy, which is broad; he wants to help. He is affiliated with Raymond James and he said, from his perspective, our return is low for our level of risk. Two options he recognized; for that level of risk we could get better returns or have higher earnings, he thought he could get that with no more level of risk. Since then, we asked if we were to make a change in approach and work with him what would it take. He forwarded documents to let us know what pathway to go. We talked with Shane, he is faithful to us and taking a low key approach, stable and modest with reporting. No one suspects anything going on, but he has a low key approach and doesn't charge us much, put money in funds that are stable and he doesn't have to manipulate them or do much, he has been modest on reporting and I don't think anybody suspects that there is anything improper going on. On monies we have, it seems like we might need a greater level of oversight and reporting of clarity and transparency in future going forward. *Jim* – For example, talked about things investment advisors look at in volatile times like these, compared annual rate of return to a volatility index that professionals use to determine if you need to make a move; they do a wide variety of analysis. It depends on whether we want that kind of analysis and advice moving forward. We could ask Shane to do that or contemplate making a larger move. We don't have a precise recommendation. Hard to speak for someone not here, Dan has desire for more information more in line with what Tony presented. Want direction, should we do a deeper dive with whole board into investment philosophies and ask pertinent questions to be sure we have the philosophy we want going forward. *Kelly* – Want general direction and more formal action at a later time. Thoughts on options? *Jim* – Roger, any comments? *Roger* – I think investment committee it is good to look at this again, needs review. Our current broker, seems reluctant to provide information and that concerns me a little. Like to see us take a deeper dive. *Kelly* – I concur with that. Dan is treasurer for AFWA and executive committee as well, that is absolutely right. Reluctance from firm we are dealing with. Sound advice. Not hearing firm direction from anyone, audit committee needs to go down the path and look into this. Ollie, when is next

executive committee meeting? *Ollie* – During North American, in Grand Rapids or virtually in March. *Kelly* – Jim, have investment committee bring further directions back to executive committee in March. *Jim* – In the interim there is some things we can do; consolidate existing philosophy and history and share with board members. There are specific questions we can develop to gain more insight on whether that is what we want to continue to do going forward. May be some questions about what we want in the future. We have a growing account, ability to move some of those dollars into programs and projects, not that shortage we might consider, but philosophies on choosing those, goes hand in hand with how fast you are trying to grow money. Getting information on if we were to move \$800,000 to another investment company how would you go about that because tied up in certain kinds of investments. *Brad* – Good marching orders, we can work with that. *Dave Olfelt* – If we change financial advisors what kind of process would we go through to select that firm? Brad had investment specialist look at this but how would we pick someone else? Could committee do investigation on that as well? *Brad* – Can look around, they came to us with interest in helping a conservation organization. Tony, who we were talking to recently, will have no problem reaching out to others and getting a feel for what they would charge for fees. A fair consideration. *Kelly* – Good question, that should be part of due diligence and come back with recommendations.

Bylaws Committee Report – *Sara Parker Pauley, Missouri* – Bylaws are very straight forward (*Exhibit G*), executive committee recommended full board make final edits. Change date on first page, added recognition of CEF and added statement about Conservation Fund foundation and “the fund” language was added. Changes related to description of executive committee, a lot of changes in directors, so kick out word “immediate” which allows greater flexibility. Changed dates on committees. Took out legal committee, engaged at AFWA level and not at our level, intention to use annual meeting or North American meeting to have full committee meet, and meet before or after that committee to stay on top of things, but they didn’t feel need for separate committee. Dates changed to extend committees. Approved name change of Wildlife Action Plan Technical Committee to Wildlife Diversity Committee and amended date of this change to the bylaws. *Sara Pauley, Missouri moved to approve revisions, Brad Loveless, Kansas second.* *Kelly* – Minor but good editions. *Ollie* – What about NCN committee, should we delete that, recommending extending to 2023, but don’t think that committee will be active. *Sara* – Not call it NCN, but still a need for board to have discussions on priorities. Probably not call it NCN, but hold place until after October 22 meeting, when recommendations will be coming out of President’s Task Force that will lend to this discussion. *Kelly* – Agree, no NCN, but will still need to identify regional priorities and roll them into national discussion. Three recommendations coming out of Task Force on how we engage regional associations and that engages Kelley Myers and we deal with those. Change title at that point and talk about potential human dimensions committee too. Leave it in as a placeholder and come back to it. ***Motion passes.***

Resolutions Committee Report – *Sara Parker Pauley, Missouri* – No resolutions, approved two back in July.

Awards Committee Report and Award Presentations – *Kelly* – Unfortunate part of zoom meetings, like how we do business in the Midwest, it is unique, and to be able to show accolades they deserve. Suggest, if possible, work with people in your agencies to recognize people from

your state; that doesn't take away from what these people deserve. Thank you for nominations. *Terry Steinwand, North Dakota* – Typically do this during a noon lunch, great nominees and tough to choose one. Credit to Kendra Wecker, Dale Garner, Jim Douglas and Brian Clark for scoring and Sheila Kemmis for keeping us in line. Sheila came up with idea of instead of plaques this year we would do actual statue-like awards. There were well written narratives in these nominations (Exhibit H, report and winning nominations).

Law Enforcement Officer of the Year goes to Jason McCullough, Michigan DNR. We can break down Jason's award into four very important categories - Achievement, Public Service, Education, and Natural Resource Conservation. Jason takes the basic pieces of information and turns them into quality game and fish cases ending with successful prosecution. A successful example was a deer illegally taken on a military preserve where he garnered the support of civilian employees and Jason was able to obtain a confession from the individual. Jason is also heavily involved in the public service sector where he's often called upon to assist with special assignments including career days, science fairs, local chiefs' meetings, disabled veteran hunts and the list goes on. He has also worked with another conservation officer to establish a hunter education program for the local Amish community. One of the items that caught my eye was his involvement with a young man that had Hodgkin's lymphoma and Jason delivered Christmas presents to the individual and he now wants to work as a conservation officer when he grows up. This is truly the variety of activities law enforcement is involved in on almost a daily basis and also shows that Jason, like many of law enforcement individuals across the nation, can have a lasting effect on how natural resource agencies are viewed.

Wildlife Biologist of the Year is Alan Leary, Missouri Department of Conservation. You can sum up the award winner in this category in one phrase - Feral Hog Eradication and Bear Aware Programs. In concert with the USDA, Alan renewed the Missouri Feral Hog Partnership, which gained momentum in the vision of total removal of feral hogs from Missouri. While the effort was formally coordinated it became apparent to Alan that a formal strategic plan was needed to better coordinate the growing intensity of removal efforts and convey the need for investment in removal and communication efforts. Alan was an integral part of this effort. At the same time, Alan drafted a Departmental regulation prohibiting hunting of feral livestock on lands managed by MDC. As you can imagine, this wasn't necessarily popular with some but Alan remained professional and on point with the communication plan in an atmosphere that was less than congenial. As if that weren't enough, he was also instrumental in the development of the Bear Aware Program. There had been several negative community encounters with juvenile bears which resulted in the death of the bear and were largely due to the public lack of awareness of how to respond to the presence of bears. Alan worked with staff to implement a successful communication plan as well as leading staff to develop bear nuisance report guidelines that empowered staff to respond to different situations. And with a vision as to what might occur, he coordinated Wildlife-Human Incident Training and established regional teams equipped to respond in case of a wildlife-human attack. These are just a couple examples of the tremendous job Alan has done and continues to do.

Fisheries Biologist of the Year goes to Jacob Davis, South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP). As is the case of many of us in this profession, Jacob started his career as a summer intern and then worked as a seasonal for GFP and was subsequently hired as a fisheries biologist in Rapid City, where his focus has been research and management efforts on trout in the Black Hills. As is crucial in our profession, Jacob has built and maintained strong relationships with Department staff and a wide variety of external partners. His positive, can do attitude along with strong

interpersonal skills have made him an important part of fisheries research and management activities across the state of South Dakota. Since joining the department, Jacob has been the lead author on four peer reviewed journal publications as well as co-authoring three publications. The three qualities that make Jake an outstanding fisheries biologist are his ability to really listen, his openness to change and his willingness to collaborate and he has the ability to work with urban professionals as well as rural blue-collar workers. He hears what they have to say and takes it, and them, seriously. A few of the examples of his ability to work with others is the forging of a partnership with various federal and local entities to develop a partnership that ultimately led to discussions about increasing over winter flows to increase survival of brown trout in Rapid Creek as well as garnering financial contributions to stream habitat projects, including increasing stream connectivity and installation of in stream habitat. Additionally, he engaged the hydraulic engineering faculty and students at the SD School of Mines and Technology to evaluate changes in stream hydraulics resulting from overwinter releases. As if that weren't enough, Jake has used the Advanced Fisheries Management class at SDSU to help evaluate the effectiveness of an artificial lures only, catch and release section of Rapid Creek on wild brown trout. And finally, due to Jake's willingness to listen to hatchery staff suggestions, changes in fish stocking sizes and numbers in the Black Hills have greatly increased angler satisfaction.

Spirit of the Shack, Joe Paul, Wisconsin DNR Warden. Joe represents our profession because of his dedication to protecting our natural resources as well as his commitment to promoting outdoor opportunities, especially for youth with life threatening illnesses. As is apparent from Joe's title as a warden, his work emphasizes public safety and the protection of fish and wildlife and their habitat. He does the job in a highly skilled manner and has a reputation as a thorough a trusted law enforcement officer. While he's doing his job as a warden it's always accompanied by a dose of compassion. If you receive a citation from Joe, it will probably come with some good advice and an understanding ear. Joe is good at his job but he excels at community involvement and public education and his ability to build relationships. He works with a variety of people and groups as well as internal and external partners. He understands that protection of the natural resource is more than catching violators but involves working together with our customers to help them learn about the resource and develop an appreciation for them. Joe not only works for opportunities to help people discover our natural resources; he finds ways to lead the effort. His work in this area has helped veterans, kids and their families discover - or rediscover—the wonders of the natural resources in Wisconsin and beyond. An example of how Joe works in promoting the outdoors is working on a project called Oconto River Kids. He worked with a local landowner, whose godson was receiving treatment for leukemia and also observed how other kids were struggling with serious illnesses. Joe led the cause to help provide outdoor opportunities for those kids. They started by providing bear hunts and the interest soon spread and they developed partnerships that helped build wheelchair accessible hunting blinds, receiving donated bear tags and taking kids outdoors across the state of WI. This program has grown thanks to Joe since when he transferred stations he quickly began recruiting volunteers in his new area. The program has given hundreds of kids and their families opportunities to enjoy outdoor opportunities that would normally be out of reach due to physical impairments. The examples of Joe's commitment to the resource and the people are numerous but a well deserving recipient of the Spirit of the Shack Award. Sheila shared that Joe was hurt in a use-of-force confrontation; he will be okay but off duty right now.

Excellence in Conservation winner is Give Adventure Grant Team, Indiana. As the name implies, this is truly a team award. The goal of the Give Adventure project is to foster a conservation ethic in an underserved Indianapolis community by installing native plant and wildlife habitat at a traditionally underserved school. The project was made possible by a \$10,000 grant from the Indian Natural Resources Foundation. With the success of the first project a second grant application was submitted and the team subsequently received an additional \$14,000 grant for Reconnecting to Our Waterways to further project funding. The team led efforts to engage the school and others in planting plugs in the front pollinator garden, sensory garden and a monarch waystation. The team also worked to develop the text and design three bilingual interpretive signs that were installed to highlight the pollinator garden, wetland pond and monarch waystation. The team also led an effort to host a workforce development day for a non-profit organization working with underemployed youth ages 15 to 25. The event involved outdoor activities for youth including fishing and bird watching and a presentation by DNR staff highlighting DNR staff, their career paths and networking opportunities. After the event, students reported an increased knowledge of the purpose and goals of the DNR. They also provided a Project WILD workshop with 55 teachers at the school previously mentioned to introduce teachers to the school's habitat installations and provide training on how to incorporate the habitats into curriculum plans. All of this occurred during 2019 and culminated in a community festival at a park adjacent to the school. Approximately 50 community members attended and in post event surveys attendees indicated that the event helped them learn about outdoor recreation opportunities, the importance of native plants for their community and that it was very informative. Although the grant specific project commitments have ended, the team still plans to stay engaged in ongoing habitat maintenance and partnerships with the school and associated entities. Team members involved in the effort were Jenn Domenich, Megan Dillon, Colleen Hartel, Elizabeth Middleton, Morgan Sussman, Rachel Woodworth of Indiana DNR Julia Kemnitz of USFWS and Phyllis Boyd of Groundwork Indy.

Special Recognition Award goes to Kyle Kaskie, GIS Program Specialist for South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks. Kyle is a dedicated and valued staff member who can visualize, interpret and analyze the need for R3 strategies in the outdoors. He's recognized for his technical expertise of dashboard creations to track public class attendance of GFP programs and license sales. His use of these data analysis products create powerful and encompassing overviews of trends, progress and goals that have become the standard for staff use statewide. He created and maintains the State Record Fish dashboard, which is a public facing product that not only show the location of state record catches but provides a name, date and photo of the trophy fish reported to GFP. Other applications that Kyle provides technical expertise on includes waterfowl, hunting unit, and research maps. Kyle's creation of the Class Attendance Dashboard through ESRI applications is a fantastic way for staff to track class participation, timing and locations throughout South Dakota. Previous records were handwritten and unorganized but with Kyle's creation they are now streamlined and readily available for review and citation by GFP staff. Most recently, Kyle created the Recreational Licensing dashboard. This allows staff to track recreational license sales in real time and offers a filterable experience so any user can find exactly what they need. His work is truly pioneering for any agency within South Dakota and can be considered a shining example of how his motivation and a need for data display and visualizations play a part in all facets of our MAFWA states projects and initiatives. (*Exhibit I – PowerPoint with photos of awards*).

Kelly – Congratulations to winners, apologize we couldn't share with you. President has latitude to go out and choose somebody who has done some outstanding things for the Association, an outstanding professional. *Kelley*, I can't thank you enough for all of the things you have done since I have known you. First you were a good director and when you went to the USFWS we really started to see you go. Can't be happier because it was the right move for you personally and professionally and the Midwest. Worked on President's Task Force, the Midwest Landscape Initiative, you are life blood making that work. You are intellectually powerful and a nice person. Talking about empowered women and how great they are, you stand up as one of those heroes. Thank you for everything you have done for us. Congratulations. *Kelley* – Holding back tears, unexpected and unnecessary. Thank you but I couldn't do this without relationships and trust, I see Todd and team I know who was always standing behind me. This group is part of the team that makes all of this possible. I wouldn't be doing this without Ed, Craig and Claire and others; award shared with a lot of people. Thrilled for what we are doing and thank you for your leadership, to trust us and see what is possible. *Kelly* – Old school, you come up through the ranks as a fish or wildlife biologist and work your way into the ranks of administration. The people on the phone have taken different paths, it is good because we are getting a diverse path coming in to lead agencies and get diversity of thought. We have made a lot of progress. Last award; we talk about people behind the scenes, the heroes that make it all work, Sheila, since I have been involved in MAFWA, you and your husband Dan have spent so much time making us look good; volunteer year after year and are always cheerful; incredible work ethic. We can't thank you enough. You typically work away and we don't hear from you so you don't get the recognition we really want to give you. This last award goes to you for all of the volunteer time you put in, the help you have been, you have done it so graciously. Thank you from all of us. *Ollie* – I want to share the plaque. Sheila has been a true workhorse for our Association. How many years Sheila? *Sheila* – Since 1999. *Ollie* – We appreciate you and Dan, your husband, who always comes with you to the meetings and helps set up the sound system and he is fun too. So, this award is to both of you in recognition of all you have done for us for all of these years. I also want to thank Kansas for allowing you to do this, a significant contribution to MAFWA. Thank you Sheila, hope you keep on doing it. *Sheila* – I appreciate that, thank you. *Brad* – You get to understand a little about what we get to enjoy every day in Kansas, Sheila is a gem and every time we get to see Dan it makes our day. Thank you for recognition. *Kelly* – My hats are off to all of the recipients, to get peer recognition, doesn't get better than that. Thank you.

Executive Secretary's Report – *Ollie Torgerson, Executive Secretary – (PowerPoint - Exhibit J)*. We were at North American in Omaha last March when virus hit and shut everything down. Middle of planning for annual conference in South Dakota and registrations dropped or were delayed, as were sponsorships, out of state travel was banned and airline reservations were cancelled or changed, people were afraid to travel, and there were county restrictions on group size. So, the decision was made to postpone the conference to October. But, the virus had its way with us and we reconvened board and made decision to cancel conference, the first time since World War II. We will hold 2021 conference at Custer State Park in South Dakota. We had a successful conference at Maumee State Park in Ohio in 2019. We welcomed four new directors, Amanda, Keith, Brian and Dave and welcomed promotion of Charlie Wooley to Region 3 Regional Director of USFWS. Ron and I travel to meet new directors; however, Charlie and I went to Iowa to meet Kayla Lyon; Ron and I went to Madison Wisconsin to meet Preston Cole

and Keith Warnke. One of most important items last year was Midwest Landscape Initiative (MLI) co-chairs Kelly and Craig, key to making this work is capacity, you have to have people. Thanks to contributions from USFWS, Kelley, Ed, Claire and Bill. Also launched Mid-America Monarch Conservation Strategy, which is now imbedded in MLI. Also, MLI tested as forum to deal with complex, multijurisdictional large scale issues, and chronic wasting disease (CWD) chosen as the issue and value stream mapping as a process to help manage decision making with Sara and Kelley taking the lead. Will discuss MLI more deeply on October 20. Conducted financial audit, completed successfully. I operate on state of Wisconsin computer system, after operating our web site on it for eight years, and we were notified by state that online hosting company was insecure and they shut down our website, hired a different hosting company, back online and hopefully not issue in the future. Another busy activity is our new relationship with the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference (MFWC); last one held last January, a successful conference. Our Foundation assumed oversight of this conference, we have a committee chaired by Sara Pauley, with Kelly Hepler and Dale Garner as members. They negotiated a 3-year contract with Delaney Meeting and Event Management for next three years for MFWC. Challenges with Covid continued but planned for St. Paul for January meeting. Transition of president occurs in October, had successful transition last October from Kelly Hepler to Kelly Hepler, and next week will have another transition from Kelly to Kelly; he stayed president. This is the first time in history to have same president for three consecutive years. Important job of president is to make appointments, 53 in all. In addition to assisting the president, grant and contract work is increasing duty for me, for hotels contracts, insurance, grants, audits, contracts is taking more of my time. We are a small organization and we operate on \$160,000 annual budget and we get a lot done. Annual conference planning takes much of my time in the first half of my year. We will resume working with South Dakota Game and Parks and Delaney Management about the first of the year to plan next conference, hopefully in person at Custer State Park in the Black Hills. This includes raising sponsorships, right now at \$60,000 each year, a major activity of mine. We recruited one new affiliate, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers. Next conference scheduled for June 28 to July 1, 2021 at Custer State Park. I would like to recognize the contributions of Dale Garner who retired last week. Tremendous leader for us, in addition to serving on executive committee and CEF board, he has served on Audit , Awards, NCN, Midwest Fish and Wildlife conference committees, plus he was director/liaison to Health and Deer and Wild Turkey committees as well as two posts at AFWA, National Fish and Wildlife Health Initiative representing us and on National Grants committee. What a work horse and a great friend. We are going to miss him. Fortunate to have Roger Luebbert and Sheila Kemmis. *Kelly* – Echo what he said about Dale.

Break until 10:00

OLD BUSINESS

Mid-Continent Monarch Strategy Report – *Bill Moritz, Michigan* – Reminder upcoming December anticipating finding on status of monarchs. Ed and I were talking about scheduling a virtual monarch board of directors meeting to talk about communications around that. Put together notes in 2019 when we originally anticipated a finding so we will dust those off and see if there is any need for change and communicate with the directors. I retired from Michigan two years ago and time to have a director serve as chair of the board instead of me, happy to help

until that selection is made. *Kelly* – I would like you to continue for now and I will let Keith deal with it when he takes over. *Bill* – We had a brief report from Roger on status of NFWF grant, have Ed report on mechanical side of that. *Ed Boggess* – MAFWA was involved in a series of NFWF grants starting with one Kelley Myers helped with when she was the director in Iowa, there actually was a grant the year before that when I was MAFWA president, a partial grant but the part we got went to the National Wildlife Federation and that allowed us to host our kick-off meeting in Texas, which worked well for the Mid-America Strategy which covered not only the 13 Midwest states but also south-central states that are core to monarch first generation breeding and fall migration, Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas, as was the Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. Historically, MAFWA started project with commitment in 2015 of \$10,000; USFWS kicked in some money and Iowa hosted an organizational meeting and NFWF allowed us to have that organization meeting and hire Claire Beck as the technical person. Then we got a subsequent NFWF grant. All of those have closed out. NFWF grants required one-to-one match or in-kind or cash, so states were asked to contribute suggested amounts, some contributed more, some less, some in-kind. At end of that we polled all of you about the remaining cash match, did not spend it all, and your decision was to put money into an account, roughly \$20,000 left. Dale suggested using that after the funding decision in case we need to get people together. We finished NFWF grants and Claire and I are still working on Mid-America Strategy as part of MLI duties. Just a reminder, some money left to use at appropriate time. *Kelly* – Ron, anything to offer from AFWA's perspective? *Ron* – Nothing to add.

National Wild Pheasant Plan Update – *Scott Taylor* – (PowerPoint – Exhibit K). We are a relatively new partnership; the National Wild Pheasant Conservation plan was finished in 2013, written by national pheasant tech committee which is pheasant biologists from across the country. That plan was approved by MAFWA and AFWA directors, fund raising began to support a plan coordinator position. Funds were secured 2015, in 2016 agreement made between MAFWA and Pheasants Forever (PF). I am PF employee but they bill MAFWA for salary. I was hired in April and started the management board that summer. The board is made up of administrators from agencies that contribute, as of 2020, 20 states as well as PF. Funding-wise in good shape, invoices went out in May and total \$105,000 this year. We did fund raising this summer for next 3-year term which will be invoiced annually 2021, 2022 and 2023. Funds collected are a year ahead, should get us through 2024/25. Haven't heard from Indiana or Minnesota as regards to their support, losing New Mexico out of the partnership as they have few pheasants, other than that in good shape. A few states do not, for administrative reasons, make multiyear commitments (TX and CO) but expect them to continue their support. Thanks for support and pledged amounts. Our mission is to foster science-based, socially-supported policies and programs that benefit pheasants, pheasant hunters and communities. The past year highlights included helping to administer a multistate research project designed around the question of whether roadside brood surveys reliably predict population size and hunting prospects. When there is a mismatch between what surveys are telling us, what forecasts are and what hunters are experiencing there are R3 implications for that as well as agency credibility. Member states had that question, seven states contributed funds to support a graduate student at Iowa State, collecting data in 13 states and next year will be final year of data collections and hopefully will have results by this time next year. We are also trying to raise the flag on small game hunter R3, like to build more attention. If you look at trends of small game participation, lost more than 160,000 hunters per year on average over the last 25 years plus. The decline in

small game hunting participation is driving the decline in hunting participation as a whole, so this deserves more attention. Garnered support for AFWA resolution last year to look at this issue more closely. Worked through resident game bird working group of AFWA and bird conservation committee and hunting and shooting sports participation committee to not only sponsor the resolution and develop document to identify a set of key questions and issues on small game R3 hunter declines and recommended actions that AFWA and affiliates could take to understand and address this issue. Continue to work on document and will have it prepared for consideration in March. Decided to do a major revision of the national plan, written before partnership, now that Farm Bill is in the books we want to look forward to what we want to accomplish and concentrate on as a partnership. We had a joint meeting of the management board and technical committee last October in North Dakota to talk about common needs. Out of the meeting we developed a problem statement, a set of objectives, issues and prioritized work items. Went through prioritization process this spring and fall. We identified 16 new and 9 ongoing work items. We are also developing and improving state scale habitat pheasant abundance model to better quantify predictions and what happens when acres of habitat of different types are gained and lost and what that means for pheasants and hunter participation. There is a version one of original plan, working on version two. Had video conference with tech committee yesterday to start vetting that and also development of a conceptual chain of influence model to put pieces together. Trying to affect habitat, hunter R3, and protect under R3, agency function and policies. Hope to get draft of revised plan before management board, which is chaired by Russ Mason of Michigan, in March. *Terry* – Is it possible to put that slideshow on the MAFWA website or send it out? *Scott* – I can share with Ollie or anyone who requests it directly. *Amanda* – Said Indiana hadn't paid, haven't seen those invoices so I am not sure where they go. *Scott* – I think you paid your 2020 invoice, we are looking for pledges for the next three years. *Sheila* – Anyone making presentations, please share those with me after the meeting. *Kelly* – In South Dakota we dropped our brood surveys this year, couldn't tell you if it was a good or bad year. We are participating in work coming out of Iowa State, had professor on the phone in one of our Commission meetings, he is good and we are anxious to see how it goes. The 10 areas of brood surveys we did this year were off the charts. It goes together, if we are seeing good numbers in South Dakota, we see good numbers in Kansas or Nebraska, for example. Looking forward to getting reliable numbers that would be great. Our brood survey has been done since the 1940s. Happy with science on that. Like that you are calling out small game, which is a big deal; we are running an aggressive marketing campaign on that. When the management board gets back together I wouldn't mind having Emily and our tourism department come give you a briefing on marketing approach, spending about \$2.1 million. We are tracking individuals, residents and nonresidents, out of pheasant hunting group. If you want time to have us talk about that in management group sometime let me know. Love to see pheasants, makes my heartbeat faster.

National Fish Habitat Initiative (NFHP) Update – *Doug Nygren, Kansas* – Represent you with two roles with fish habitat partnership, I am on Reservoir Habitat partnership executive committee and NFHP executive board at national level. The reservoir partnership is a mature partnership functioning at high level, 10 years into this effort now and running like a well-oiled machine. Accomplishments include a nationwide assessment of all reservoirs in the country and that information is available on our fish habitat website. That assessment allows someone to look at a particular lake, look at impairments and figure out what can be dealt with cost effectively.

That is available in hard-back book and on the website; a best management practice manual. Six states in MAFWA who received grants from the reservoir partnership, Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana and Iowa. I have a report from Jeff Boxrucker, coordinator for the partnership, I will have Sheila send out (*Exhibit L*). Currently, nationwide, we have 130 chapters in 31 states affiliated with reservoir fish habitat partnership, which can be a regional group, national organization as well as state and location groups and individuals. We have quite a reach and working across the landscape on impoundments nationwide, the only one as opposed to regional species oriented. NFHP at national level, 20 partnerships under umbrella. The executive board working on revising 5-year action plan, including 2-year work plan for the board members to help them moving forward. Well under way and then two weeks ago passing of the ACE (America's Conservation Enhancement) Act will affect additional conversations and revisions to that document. Have strong sense of program was looking for partners not only to provide in-kind and leverage but also people who wanted to make financial contributions to fish habitat work nationwide. This year Bass Pro Shops set up a small grants program and made \$50,000 available this year to fund small projects across the nation. Wisconsin received one of those for Gilbert Creek trout habitat improvement as part of fishers and barbers partnership. There are six partnerships that lie within Midwest boundaries. America's Conservation Enhancement Act that just passed will hopefully be signed by the President soon. That Act has money for NAWCA, invasive species and CWD but also codified the National Fish Habitat partnership into law and will provide \$7.2 million a year for next five years through the partnership. It also provides \$2 million to five federal agencies to provide science and technical assistance to the partnership, Forest Service, USGS, USFWS, and NOWA, and will provide additional funding and is not going to come out of \$7.2 million, not sure if coming off allocation or a separate allocation to help support federal efforts. NFHP having virtual meeting later this month, October 19-22, workshops and board meetings to look at legislation to figure out what it is going to mean and how it will change the way NFHP is operating and does business. We have more questions than answers on how this is going to roll out. There will be a new board, with some of same members and new members added. As soon as the Act becomes law, the current board has no status anymore but we anticipate we will continue to do our work as needed as we transition into the language and execute the Act. Questions have come up that we hope to get answers for over the next few weeks; not sure how much board will receive to operate the partnership for operations, unclear where that will come from, if out of \$7.2 million or somewhere else. One-to-one match federal to nonfederal and that has a lot of implications because a lot of projects and partnerships in place have used Corps of Engineers money for in-kind operations. Match requirements will be interesting to see how that rolls out. It has not been determined how the board is going to be prioritizing projects and funding amongst the 20 partnerships. There are quite a few additional hoops the board will have to jump through, reporting requirements to Congress. The administration of money is going to shift from the USFWS to the Board itself. Other concerns about how we handle 501(c)(3) part of NFHP. The way the language is written it appears that money will become the property of the U.S. government so hopefully we will have something in place to make sure any money donated to efforts will be under the control of the executive board. Those are issues that need to be answered. How USFWS adapts to money no longer coming to them, quite a few coordinators are USFWS employees and there are questions about what their role will be. Exciting that it is codified and in law, hope to grow \$7.2 million to \$80 million, but first step was to make it official under the Act. *Kelly* – This is 12 years in the making, perseverance is the word, when people think about conversation legislation you can't get

discouraged if it doesn't happen the first two or three years. This Congress is one of the better congresses we have had for funding conservation packages, Recovering America's Wildlife Act will probably become the greatest; it has bi-partisan support and wonderful pieces in land and water conservation up to this point. This is a lot of work, Doug and I working on this for 12 years. Hats off to you and your diligence, Doug. Excited about this and know that some people in the USFWS may be concerned what this means. We have a partnership with the Service and we are not going to break that. It makes more sense to have this part of the Board. Hadn't thought about 501(c)(3), will work on those issues. Great work.

Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference (MFWC) – *Sara Parker Pauley, Missouri* – Listed as a conference, but CEF board of trustees, myself, Kelly and looking for replacement for Dale. Money made at last conference, netted \$23,000 in profit from 2020 conference, typically Board would distribute to TWS and AFS for travel grants. Held off because in a bind with contract in place for 2021 St. Paul conference. Until we understood penalties we might have for breaking that contract because Minnesota has decided to do the 2021 conference virtually. *Cindy Delaney* has some news and updates on that. *Cindy Delaney* – Back and forth with the Intercontinental Hotel and the River Center since June because we knew this was coming. We can't offer them a rebook because of rotation schedule, talking about an outright cancellation and they are playing hardball. They came back and offered a \$10,000 penalty if we cancel right now. The way the language of the contract is written they say we can't invoke the Force Majeure clause until January. If we agree to pay the \$10,000 to each, \$20,000 total, postpone that until January and we can't enforce Force Majeure, if things haven't gotten better, then we pay in January. Basically, I countered and I haven't heard back from either of them. We have to move forward with the virtual meeting, the Minnesota team can only support us virtually. We have a lot of technical talks, so we ran a budget with that penalty in it and they will still make about \$17,000 if numbers come in where we want them to. Full speed ahead on virtual meeting, just debating whether we lawyer up and threaten more or get some sort of counter-offer with a delayed payment. Meg working with host team for over a year now. *Sara* – That amount is significantly lower than what we heard before. It is probably time for us to get back together and decide what we want to do on travel grants, but no travel. *Cindy* – I suggest you do student scholarships, numbers for Southeast meeting are down, so that might incentivize students to use towards registration would be great. *Sara* – Helpful, Kelly, I will circle back with you and Ollie. *Kelly* – Frustrated with this hotel, all that has gone on in that city and to come back and try to play this game when everyone else is going out of their way to work as a good community and business partners realize we all have to get through this together. *Cindy* – It is frustrating to me because we have brought two groups to them in last four years, Citizen Science Association, a couple of thousand people and AFWA's annual meeting. We love St. Paul and want to go back, but not going to get us back if they do this but they don't seem to care right now. *Kelly* – A lot of short-sighted businesses right now. I don't mind lawyering up and we have a great one on the phone. *Sara* – It should be another spectacular conference and Minnesota is getting the program put together. *Ollie* – I looked at Force Majeure clause for the Iowa conference coming up the following year, who knows what virus is going to be like, but more flexibility in 2022 MFWC with hotels in Des Moines. We've got to keep eyes open on hotel contracts, this was a wake-up call for us and we need some strong language to place in the contracts. *Cindy* – We actually have some great clauses, which have gotten better this past year with Lane's help, but sometimes we

can't negotiate those clauses in, some properties are not flexible. As we grow with Lane and through Covid pandemic we will certainly have stronger language. *Kelly* - Thanks for your help.

Midwest Landscape Initiative – *Kelly Hepler, South Dakota* – Uplifting positive topic, amazing where we started from and where we are now and a lot of it due to the efforts of Kelley and the great partnership with Craig and the USFWS. Kelley – (*PowerPoint Slide – Exhibit M*). Thank you, share a slide and keep this brief. Ed and Bill standing by to provide updates as well. Update on working group since the last time we met in September and July, will cover time sensitive those reports. Our at-risk regional species of greatest conservation need (RSGCN) project is underway. We contracted Karen Terwilliger Consulting who helped with the Northeast and Southeast associations. It was a miracle of contracting, it happened so fast, caught off guard with timing. What we are doing is a little different than what happened in NEAFWA and SEAFWA by getting Service participation from the get-go. The NE states came together and put together a regional list and then presented that to their Service colleagues and it worked well. Folks in MAFWA region and different programs of USFWS come together. We don't want to dilute the survey state voice in this important work so Brad Potter and I are working behind the scenes with Claire Beck to make sure we get a unified Service perspective. We are asking for three responses from each state. Some work has gone out to threatened and endangered and diversity folks are meeting this week. We are in process of looking at methodology on how we are going to work the next year to come up with this list. One of the big foundation blocks on how we are going to set more species or habitat-specific priorities going forward, so this is important component of work. The habitat assessment team is working with the University of Nebraska at Lincoln to develop a survey tool to get a sense of all the different tools out there. It became clear no shortage of tools out there, team is getting a sense of what is available, what is being used, why using them, why not using them, some spent considerable funds to develop. This is beyond USFWS, USGS and states and possibly Department organizations like Forest Service, EPA and others. Wind team is off to the races, meeting couple weeks ago and every state represented, both Service and state and USGS all in attendance to go over first cut of the work plan. They have four products they are working to develop with assistance of our consultants. Creating four ways for states to engage in this workgroup, whether community of practices, as a member, a reviewer or feedback loop; thought drivers of group, much more robust and starting to develop products. Need input from states and your staff, getting great feedback. I will work with Kelly or Ollie to put out requests to specific states, only works if we get a lot of input from everyone, get broad-based input. So far working and doing okay, want it demonstrative of whole region. Strategy development: MAFWA charged MLI to develop a comprehensive action plan, so we are taking working groups and their action plans and integrating them, a lot of nuance. Ed Boggess and I have been talking with USGS, we have a member on technical committee who has agreed to figure out if there is a way to work collaboratively to come up with robust way to integrate these action plans and still keep the original intension of work group in them but make them scientifically rigorous and scientifically based. So, actions we are proposing are hopefully more acceptable to scientific community. Upcoming events, SEAFWA having symposium and Southeast Association Adaptation Strategy is going to be highlighted along with local. It was originally be held in Missouri so using opportunity to highlight great work going on in Missouri and locally that is scaling up into regional efforts. I was asked if we would connect MLI with what is going on with that in an attempt to further our edges and coordinate across broad regions. There will be a full day of discussions from local tools, scaled up regional models and how all

working together or possibly could be doing better. If you have an opportunity to go it is going to be virtual and attendance can be remarkable in virtual settings. Also, participating in Mississippi River Flyway Grassland Bird Roadmap development, we are involved and engaged, don't know where effort will go but there is a lot there. The team working on this under the grant has some deadlines coming up but beyond that want to be thinking what our engagement is with groups like this. Ed and I continue to work with that group where we have some connection. In a couple weeks I will be briefing you on CWD findings. *Ed Boggess* – We have gotten core direction from the steering committee that there is a desire for MLI to develop a communications and engagement strategy and a robust website that would be a source of information internally for agency partners and other people that want to work on MLI. Claire and I are working with Kelley, Ollie and others to put together a team of communication engagement strategy team that would consist of technical MLI folks representing all of the work groups, At-risk, Habitat and Wind and communication professionals, some staff, thanks to Missouri and Michigan, and the USFWS; a small team populated. Also discussed efficient way to do this is to bring on a communications consultant, so working on a request for information from potential consultants. If any of you have ideas on potential consultants we could ask for a request of information that could lead to a request for a proposal for a consultant, we are interested. Aggressive timeline to do this, like strategy development to be efficient and streamlined with help of consultant. Working on preliminary draft by March to bring to MAFWA executive committee and steering committee and complete strategy by the time this board meets next summer. Similarly, with the website, this is one mechanism for implementing our communications and engagement strategy, looking to have website designed and initially populated by next summer and live by September. Exciting, may be call on some of you or your staff more as we go forward. Working out how to select the appropriate consultant(s), could be more than one consultant, one to work on strategy and one that works on the website. There may also be some longer term issues of hosting, maintaining and updating the website. Next step is to bring back to this group. *Kelley* – Jim, said important to have communication and having a plan to talk across programs and talk internally, so this is our attempt to give energy to that. If you have staff that want to be involved in this, Ed and Claire have been putting together an internal team and would appreciate people coming forward to be that consultative body to help us out. Going forward, having a network of communication professionals across the region is something we don't have right now. This is the beginning of putting people together to build something and then maintain network going forward. Helping form our priorities, because communications staff see a broad swath of the agency and can help put things in perspective. This is beginning of good work we know has been needed. Vision and governance is next piece, Bill working on that. *Bill Moritz* – Couple of different objectives, 1) development of vision statement as well as identify current and emerging issues for conservation. I have put together an approach to do that but need to set up meeting of steering committee and walk through that process and be able to report back out soon. 2) Look at governance model we have in place and make recommendations for improvement. The way I am approaching that is to participate in as many meetings as I can and look for opportunities to improve communication among the various entities within the MLI as well as externally. You will see activities soon to start narrowing down these pieces so we can have information available for upcoming year. *Kelley* – The second part is looking at how we include notion of continuous improvement of operational efficiency. The idea that it is never too early to look at how we are functioning and how we can make sure we are meeting the intention. In the hopper are extra things we are working on that are starting to take shape. We are going to be talking in a

couple weeks about the AFWA task force recommendations that came out in connection to science and research priorities and some of the landscape efforts. Potentially new take on SWAPS and looking at SWAPS in new ways. I held a first meeting of professionals from around the region related to PFAS, not just Great Lakes states, an issue happening everywhere in lots of different ways and in varying levels. Some groups working on this for years and some new to this and it has a lot of eerie similarities to CWD. As that shapes up and we know what form it might take I will brief you more. Ed and I working on staffing and capacity planning, came out of retreat this summer with steering committee. It is a dialog piece and part of internal planning with USFWS who just started our new fiscal year, may be good to working off a continuing resolution budget so that is what we are planning around. We are starting to look at our capacity and where we want to grow in certain areas. Ed and Claire have been coming to our internal meetings to see how we work together as a team and where we can share some resources across our regions, with states and partnerships in MAFWA and how we can become an innovative team. Ed and I will be talking about MLI staffing plan and outlines of how we are organized now across work groups and hopefully will prepare some visuals that will help you see where we need help and where you might have staff with expertise, recognizing everybody is over-taxed and no one has extra bandwidth. If interest in leadership opportunities or growth opportunities to participate in some of these teams. Set value in your staff working on some of these initiatives and I will provide refined opportunities so you can see who might best fill some of those gaps.

Kelly – Incredible, nice work. I want to ask you what is coming up in the next section, Faryn works with me and is good at her job and she is interested in getting a broad working group in the Midwest for social science, which I appreciate. We have been talking about the need, besides the communication piece, social science and all the work we are doing. Between now and when we take that topic up I want you to think about having this being a satellite working group to this, attach it to this exercise. Number one thing, as far as research in the Midwest, is this. Get working group assigned to this team and have them work under your purview.

Kelley – Good timing, I remember Sara's words earlier when we talked about social science as a stand-alone priority or how we wanted to look at it; it was weave it into the fabric of every part of MLI. The USFWS, before Covid, had this amazing summit where we brought in social scientists and people who were social science champions from around the country to talk about the role social science needs to play in conservation. There are networks developing and in the process of bringing on a recent graduate who interned with us over the summer and one of things I want her to do is start thinking about a network across the Midwest, so there is going to be a lot of good opportunities there. Open to talk about it and open to your ideas; tremendously needed.

Kelly – She moved during Covid, to an area where she didn't know anyone and was isolated; it is hard to onboard at that time, a unique thing you are never prepared for. She is talented and has a lot of energy and I want her to be able to spend that energy and learn from other people and get that network growing, that will help her professionally and the whole team. Ollie, we could talk about that now since I have kicked that off.

Ollie – Go ahead.

Forming Human Dimensions Technical Working Committee – *Kelly Hepler, South Dakota* – Kelley, I will put Faryn in touch with you and see if we can come up with a recommendation to share with directors and see if that is in keeping with their vision. Looking for help on technical side, communications support and social scientists and whether they want to be engaged in that network or not. Not interested in having a separate group but assign it to MLI because that is where the action is happening.

Ollie – Depends on whether you want to form another committee

within the Midwest Association called the Human Dimensions Committee or not. If you want to do that then that requires the Board to take action and you would need to name a temporary chairperson. According to our bylaws they would need to have a mission statement and operating procedures and bring that back in a year for Board to approve. It depends on where you want to go with this. An official standing committee of MAFWA or subset of MLI that is not an official committee. *Kelly* – I am leaning towards turning it to MLI. *Ollie* – That is fine. *Kelly* – If there is enough enthusiasm at that point and interest from other states then we can go back and ask if we want to make this a standing committee and go through the formal process you identified. The immediate need, may be one or both, may be separate standing committee this is what they would be working on. Let's go down and road and see where it progresses. *Ollie* – Your staff person could work directly with Kelley's new staff person in the USFWS to help set that up. *Kelly* – Faryn will be excited she has a lot of energy and will be very good. *Jim* – Good idea to start with it included in MLI to keep it going. We have personnel that want to contribute to this and be part of a network. The social scientists that exist in the states also have access to other networks, we work with universities a lot, from a capacity standpoint to get some things done. They will bring more potential personnel and resources to the table. I found in social science arena, from state agency perspective, you don't have as much capacity as you need to do all the work needed. Prioritization becomes a big issue. Starting with MLI, at least we could get priorities figured out and where to go. *Sara* – Kelley has already included that. I am in complete agreement with direction you are headed on social science and human dimensions, appreciate your leadership there. I was going to mention call earlier this week with EPA on research and development and how they can be of greater assistance to state fish and wildlife agencies is one of the areas they mentioned. A lot of research in area they are interested in that intersects with us. As looking at membership we could help make a contact there. Talk about on 22nd, related to potentially greater capacity EPA could provide on PFAS. *Russ* – A good idea. Michigan further along than a lot of states in dealing with PFAS and related derivatives. Our standards, because of political reasons, are more than EPA has been able to accomplish. I think they probably do have useful information they could share. *Kelly* – Sara, to be clear we are talking about the meeting on the 20th, not 22nd correct? *Sara* – Yes, whatever the date is. *Ollie* – It is October 20, 10:00 am to noon. *Kelly* – Thank you all for your work.

NEW BUSINESS

Non-lead Partnership Recommendations – *Keith Warnke, Wisconsin* – MAFWA approved joining the non-lead partnership as a supporting partner in July. Subsequent to that, we tasked the R3 committee and Wildlife Health committee to work with non-lead folks to come up with path going forward of what that partnership would look like and what it would involve for us and our commitment. Commitments can be in-kind or financial support and we didn't know how the partnership was going to work and we wanted to explore that. The two committees met with the non-lead partnership on a call in August. Had a robust discussion of what was going on in other parts of the country, what other states are doing, what other entities are working on non-lead partnership and how that could work over the long haul. What we settled was to have the non-lead partnership send links to resources so we could do resource sharing, do promotional resource on MAFWA website or through other means through Midwest states. We got that list of resources, interesting things, pamphlets on use of lead, mission and science behind non-lead ammunition, why it was developed, what it was good at and how it has been improved over the

years and links to some of the other partners and how they are involved with the partnership. We left it that these two committees would have to reconvene and make recommendations to MAFWA board of directors. Time to reach out to Megan Wisecup and Lindsay Long and ask them to reconvene their work groups to come up with recommendations to bring back to the Board. *Kelly* – Good work, appreciate you following through on that. Nothing official at this time besides information.

2021 Budget Approval – *Roger Luebbert, Treasurer – (Proposed Budget - Exhibit N)* – First two pages shows budget versus actual for 2019; budget status for 2020, receipts and disbursements; and 2021 proposed budget. Page one is 2019 budget, shows actual and has line numbers along the left for reference. Line 5, total conference receipts, budgets \$85,000, actual was \$92,000, favorable variance of almost \$6,700. Everything beyond that was spot on. Had a few more banking and administrative fees than budgeted, primarily projects that popped up after budget was approved. Line 16, total receipts, budget was \$159,000 and had actual receipts of \$177,000, favorable variance of \$18,000. Next page, 2019 disbursements; line 21 annual directors meeting disbursements, budget was \$56,000 and we spent \$47,000, favorable variance of \$9,400. Some of unfavorable variances, line 24 was executive secretary travel, unfavorable variance of \$2,900, reason is we had a higher turnover of directors, so more travel than normal. Another unfavorable variance was treasurer pay of \$1,400 because after the budget the executive committee approved increased hours to 450. Everything else is pretty much in line. Line 35 total disbursements, budget of \$152,000 and spent \$135,000, so \$17,000 to the good. Overall, we through receipts would be over disbursements by \$6,600, but was over by \$41,000 so we had a \$35,000 favorable variance. Remember, earlier we transferred \$160,000, partly due to having such a good year in 2019. Move onto 2020 budget, as of September 22, 9 months into the year. Line 5, total conference receipts, budget \$85,000, we cancelled conference but did have some sponsors and some registration fees totaling \$35,300, which we will apply to next year's conference but will give refund if requested. In the process of getting membership dues and administrative fees, tagging those in federal banking account and at the end of the year I will transfer them, we should be okay. Next page is 2020 budget disbursements, line 21, annual directors meeting, budget of \$54,000 and spent \$7,800 and probably won't spend much more; \$600 to Delaney for setting up this meeting. Pay for executive secretary should be close, probably won't spend travel, also true for treasurer's and recording secretary's travel. The CPA audit, we had \$15,000 budgeted and it cost \$5,400, so \$10,500 won't be spent. The firm that did the audit prepared our tax return, so that was less expensive than in the past, saved \$500. Had an unfavorable variance for liability insurance but this is a three-year policy we paid for. We thought receipts would be less than disbursements by \$3,300. I think we will end the year with receipts exceeding disbursements by about \$9,000. The 2021 proposed budget, on far right is explanations for each line item as to how we arrive at the number. To the left of that is budget number and for historical purposes, 2020, and 2018 and 2019 actual. The budget for 2020 sponsors was \$56,000, we took 2020 budget minus what we received in 2020, so new money for sponsors we think is around \$25,000. Conference have \$1,800 already received so new money would be about \$27,000. If you look at total conference receipts the budget for this year is \$85,000, we think new money will be around \$53,000. Lines 5, membership dues is increased for consumer price index, 2.5%. Line 6, if this budget is approved, this will be the dues for next year, \$4,111.10 for states and provinces will also be up 2.5%. Everything else is basically based on the 2020 budget. Overall, total receipts \$163,000 was budget in 2020, we think around

\$131,640 for 2021. The last page shows disbursements; line 21, total conference disbursements is pretty much the same as 2020 except increasing Delaney coordinator fees for consumer price index. Executive secretary pay increasing 2.5% for consumer price index; executive secretary travel we shot for the middle, \$7,000 in 2020, expenditures were almost \$10,000 in 2019 so we bumped it up \$1,000. Treasurer's pay increased by 2.5% and travel is the same. Recording secretary travel we are using 2019 actual, a little higher than the budget. Tax preparation fees using 2019 actual. Audit for \$15,000, finished so nothing set aside for next year. The executive committee requested we install a new item; annual director's meeting website be redesigned for \$2,000. Insurance we had a 3-year policy we paid so don't need those funds. Everything else the same. Total budget disbursements of \$155,000, we think that receipts will be under disbursements by about \$24,000, so this is a deficit. We should have enough cash in this conference account to handle this and if not, plan B would be to go to investment account. This is proposed budget so can change if needed. ***Sara Pauley, Missouri moved to accept budget as presented, Amanda Wuestefeld, Indiana second.*** *Ollie* – I doubt I will be spending that much travel money, hard to predict and depends on how many directors turn over. Lost Iowa director so an opportunity to travel, but don't know if Ron and I will, given virus situation. *Kelly* – Roger is trying to be up front about possible deficit. ***Motion passes.***

Kelly – Christie, not very often we get a director from Canada joining on these, anything you want to share? *Christie Curley, Ontario* – Appreciate the warm welcome and the opportunity to engage. Getting massive value for our dues. What was discussed today is quite similar on what we are facing in Canadian provinces. Lots of uncertainties in terms of how we are going to engage with folks and continue to enhance and retain going forward. Looking forward to digging in more to conversations and appreciate the opportunity. *Kelly* – It really is value-added MAFWA has one of the smallest amounts of dues in Association. The Midwest mafia is pretty much running AFWA right now, which is a benefit. A lot will get done and it will be frugal, we are doing everything we can to make this country better.

Sara – Quick reminder to complete fireside chat survey, deadline is Monday and we have 33 responses. *Kelly* well done today, Thanks *Ollie*, *Roger*, *Sheila* and others for good work.

Kelly – I asked *Amanda* if she would volunteer to represent MAFWA on AFWA executive committee and she said yes. More horsepower *Sara*, no reason you won't succeed. Thanks *Amanda*, we had a meeting yesterday, and I should have had you set up before that, I will catch you up *Amanda*.

Kelly – Working with USFWS partners at 1:00. Great engagement. *Cindy*, thank you for your support. *Jim* – I will probably be coming into Zoom meeting this afternoon a little late. *Cindy* – Different Zoom link this afternoon, log off and come back on.

Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 11:30 am.

MAFWA ANNUAL BOARD MEETING AGENDA

**October 8, 2020
8:00 a.m.—Noon CDT
Zoom Meeting**

Call to Order—Kelly Hepler

Roll Call—Ollie Torgerson

Agenda Review—Kelly Hepler

Approval of July 1, 2020 Virtual Meeting Minutes—Kelly Hepler

Treasurer's Report – Roger Luebbert

Audit Committee Report – Keith Warnke (WI)

Contracted Audit Results—Kelly Hepler (SD)

Investments Committee Report – Jim Douglas (NE)

Bylaws Committee Report – Sara Parker Pauley (MO)

Resolutions Committee Report – Sara Parker Pauley (MO)

Awards Committee Report and Award Presentations– Terry Steinwand (ND)

Executive Secretary's Report – Ollie Torgerson

Old Business

Mid-Continent Monarch Strategy Report – Bill Moritz (MI)

National Wild Pheasant Plan Update – Scott Taylor

National Fish Habitat Initiative Update—Doug Nygren (KS)

Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference – Sara Parker Pauley (MO)

Midwest Landscape Initiative – Kelly Hepler (SD)

New Business

Non-lead Partnership Recommendations—Keith Warnke (WI)

Forming Human Dimensions Technical Working Committee—Kelly Hepler (SD)

2021 Budget Approval – Roger Luebbert

Adjourn



Memorandum

To: Whom It May Concern
From: Dr. Dale L. Garner, IA DNR
Date: 09/23/20

RE: Proxy - MAFWA Annual Director's Meeting

I hereby authorize Todd Bishop to vote my proxy at the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual Directors' Meeting on October 8, 2020, and to act in my stead, authorizing this person fully to do all things that I could or might do if personally present. I also authorize this person to do every act whatsoever necessary or proper to be done in all matters that may lawfully come before the meeting or any adjournment thereof. Further, I hereby revoke any proxy or proxies previously given by me to any person or persons.

Signature: 

Printed Name and Title: Dr. Dale L. Garner, Division Administrator

Send to MAFWA Secretary via email at: sheila.kemmis@ks.gov



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING



DANIEL EICHINGER
DIRECTOR

To: Whom It May Concern

From: Daniel Eichinger, Director

Date: October 5, 2020

RE: Proxy - MAFWA Annual Director's Meeting

I hereby authorize **Russ Mason** to vote my proxy at the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual Directors' Meeting on October 8, 2020, and to act in my stead, authorizing this person fully to do all things that I could or might do if personally present. I also authorize this person to do every act whatsoever necessary or proper to be done in all matters that may lawfully come before the meeting or any adjournment thereof. Further, I hereby revoke any proxy or proxies previously given by me to any person or persons.

Signature,

Daniel Eichinger, Director

Michigan Department of Natural Resources

PO Box 30028

Lansing, Michigan 48909



MEMORANDUM

ODNR-Division of Wildlife

Administration

To: To Whom It May Concern
From: Kendra S. Wecker, Chief
Date: October 1, 2020
Subject: Proxy - Ohio

I hereby authorize Peter Novotny to vote my proxy at the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual Directors' Meeting on October 8, 2020, and to act in my stead, authorizing this person fully to do all things that I could or might do if personally present. I also authorize this person to do every act whatsoever necessary or proper to be done in all matters that may lawfully come before the meeting or any adjournment thereof. Further, I hereby revoke any proxy or proxies previously given by me to any person or persons.

Signature:



Printed Name and Title: Kendra S. Wecker, Chief

Minutes
MAFWA Annual Meeting
July 1, 2020
8:00 am
Zoom Meeting

Wednesday, July 1, 2020

Agenda (*Exhibit A*).

MAFWA BUSINESS MEETING

Started meeting at 8:05 AM

Kelly Hepler, MAFWA President – Jonathan could not be on the call today. RAWA is being debated at 10:00 eastern time, good chance of making it out of the House. A lot of work behind the scenes made that happen, Colin, Jen and a bunch of people as well as Dingle staff. Get it out of House and into the Senate, bipartisan support should hopefully make a difference, exciting news.

Ron Regan – Standing by waiting for news, Jen will join call later. **Kelly** – Some movement on Senate side too.

North American Non-Lead Partnership

Leland Brown, Oregon Zoo (*PowerPoint presentation – Exhibit B*) – I am the co-founder of the North American Non-Lead Partnership, presented to wildlife health committee a year ago. Excited to share info, disappointed not at Custer SP, do what we can. Invited Chris Parish to the call too, discussion at the end. Partnership was created to preserve wildlife conservation and hunting heritage specifically by working in coordination with fellow hunters to encourage use of non-lead ammunition. See major conservation opportunity for hunting community. Good research available showing we are having unintended impacts through consumption of remains of ammunition by scavenging species. We already have tools in place to address this with simple choice in ammunition, but it requires some behavior change. The Partnership is to work together with community to share information and provide increased opportunity. We are attempting to accomplish connecting historic values of community with conservation, good stewardship, and hunting ethics, with this new research documenting unintended impacts. Go back to long history of hunters and the conservation movement and this is just another step down the road. Not a different concept just adapting new information into that historic value system. Have some brief research around mortality and the biggest piece is out of the top four causes of death, poisoning is in top four, number four for golden eagles it is number one for bald eagles; lead poisoning responsible for over 50 percent in both species. Research heavily links that to ammunition. Recent research coming out of Michigan, if break down individual larger causes of mortality of trauma and poisoning you see vehicle collisions are a large source but lead poisoning is the second cause, 97% and next highest cause is disease, not human caused and more challenging for us to address. We can address vehicle collisions by pulling roadkill carcasses away from the roads and lead poisoning where we can encourage the use of non-lead ammunition voluntarily by hunters. Mortality is main focus, easy to study but only recently, coming out of Scandinavia, interesting studies looking at behavior changes from lead exposure and changes in flight and movement rates at low levels of lead exposure. There is some physiological research that has

documented changes, but this is some of first concrete research seeing behavior changes caused in wildlife species. Levels of mortality and compare to much higher levels of exposure, worth consideration. Non-lead ammunition is new technology developed in 1980s and improving ever since. It was developed to solve known issues with lead core bullets and weight loss and fragmentation, a performance change not based on environmental conservation movement. We are lucky that it also happens to address newly understood conservation concerns. Looking at performance we see limited research on terminal performance, a lot of research on wounding and that kind of terminal performance comes out of the military and a lot less around hunting ammunition. What we do see is focused around non-lead because it is new technology and people have questions, don't have the 100 years of development. We do see very comparable performance across a variety of ranges. Partnership works to bring consensus to broad variety of stakeholders and adoption of technology, theories of innovation adoption. Innovators are where we are at and early adopters are already using non-lead ammunition. The Partnership is to assist people moving through bell curve and speed it along faster. In doing so we need to be careful of well-known psychological behaviors, like backfire. If we challenge people too hard or disconnect information we can end up cementing behavior against new information we have. Part of our role is to make sure we are not creating the backfire effect and it doesn't result in an unproductive response. In 2018 or earlier, three organizations, myself at the Oregon Zoo, The Peregrine Fund who Chris Parish works for doing outreach in California, and Institute of Wildlife Studies, all realized serious need for serious messaging and coordination of efforts across the U.S. and the continent as we see new efforts being started. Not repeating mistakes made in the past, hopefully we can help alleviate some of those growing pains. We start a conversation with a region, state or organization, give folks time to absorb information and consider it, we revisit and reengage, work through the process of people joining the partnership and what that would look like, how we would work with them at different levels we have available, build and implement programs and focus on evaluation and adaptive management of any program. Since July 2018, we have visited a large part of the country and Canada and had some great success in these conversations, shifted from us against them to how do we all pull together for conservation efforts and improve the future of hunting in the process. Worked and presented with states individually and AFWA groups (Northeast and Western). Within partnership three levels we ask people to consider joining 1) partner, which is generally state agencies, talk about funding support and developing and implementing programs to encourage use of non-lead ammunition. We use a resolution as guiding document so, any organization that decides to partner has to agree to terms of our resolution, which is saying we will focus on education incentive programs and voluntary efforts, not towards legislative regulatory support. 2) Supporting partners, can do either/or, in-kind support, put staff time in or provide funding to help support the Partnership. 3) In support of, good for hunting organizations, put local...how you are going about this...if we are important one for hunting organizations as they dip their toes in the water where they can say they support how we are going about this, put logo saying we do support this. If they consider and we follow through on all the things we promise they may consider shifting up in partnership levels. We launched with three states, Oregon, Utah, Arizona; Arizona and Utah have been working with The Peregrine Fund for 10-15 years, established working relationship with Oregon, a great relationship moving forward. Worked to build partners, currently have 27 partners as of this week; hunting organizations, hunter education, landowners, hunting gear companies, not because we wanted access, they have conservation arms who get some benefit as well. Hopefully, provide Partnership with incentives for hunters as well. Work closely with well-known leaders in the industry, like Boone and Crockett who updated their position statement last year and went even further than we may have gone ourselves in some of this discussion. They are supportive of state wildlife agencies addressing this issue and doing it in a way that continues to support

hunting into the future. Also, include individuals should consider whether or not this is something worth efforts to switch. Work with a lot of podcasts, did one for Mule Deer Foundation at North American last year, which was released just before hunting season in fall of 2019. BHA did podcasts looking at how people consume information and how we get that information to the hunting community and consumer without reinventing the wheel and keeping consistency. Have website with documents, our resolution, our efforts and media we have put together. That is how we are going about business on a more detailed level. We have created an online course as pathway for our incentive program and as partners come on and funding is available we can adapt that or release in new regions; contractor working on that is very excited about those possibilities. Worked with zoo in Iowa developing program that started to change the conversation and challenges there. Excited to see Northeast AFWA and other agency representative groups considering the Partnership. Time for conversations which can be more beneficial than you listening to me.

Chris Parish – You nailed it, looking forward to questions concerns, comments or advice. *Kelly* – Comments? *Sheila Kemmis* – Anybody who puts a presentation up could you make sure Rachel and I get copies please. *Leland* – I sent to Rachel and updated notes so, information is close to what I said. We have a small information packet that hopefully you all received; it has our resolution on there. We worked heavily with our state partners developing that trying to make sure acceptable across the board for state agencies. *Ollie* – Nice visual on presentation. Do you have established levels of financial support? *Leland* – Not to date, working individually with organizations to figure out what is appropriate for each individual. Going through a process of lining out some benefits at different levels, like what it would cost to have online course reset for a local region or a state. To date, because of initial low number of engagements doing on individual basis through conversations. Will have more information in the next couple of months. *Kelly* – Like soft sell because you are not coming in and saying you want directors to go to commissions and get lead bullets out away from hunting. Stating how you want to engage and that there is an issue here. When you talked to Northeast directors, what comments did they have and did anyone ask what the downside was or unintended consequences of signing on as an Association? *Leland* – The initial unintended consequence you generally have is standard reactions to any discussion around non-lead ammunition, there is some belief that means anti-hunting. What we have managed to do with the Partnership is starting to shift that conversation away from us versus them polarization concept into we all want a better future for conservation, habitat and wildlife and how do we accomplish this in a way that is effective, durable and supports the future of hunting. That is the difference of partnership versus some other groups that have put some effort into talking about non-lead. A lot of their conversation has been at or to hunters where ours is generally with hunters and how we can move forward and develop systems together. *Kelly* – I personally shoot non-lead bullets and I found the last time I hunted it wasn't the bullet, it was my shooting. I am not shooting animals in the neck anymore, I have learned my lesson the fourth time, it took about three hours to find the animal. We have a resolution, directors, that we will take up during the business meeting later this morning, it is attached to information sent out and it pretty much mirrors soft approach. Time to think about that. *Dan Eichinger* – Assume you brought forward to Northeast Association; any other regional associations adopted similar resolution to support the Partnership? *Leland* – To date we have talked with the Northeast and been at WAFWA meeting the last several years and they had a decision a couple of years ago to submit a letter to IATA to help develop standards, there seems to be some issues with follow through on that and we are trying to track down who was responsible for letter. Talking with members of WAFWA about a similar resolution, some support but not moved to vote yet. Not great contact with Southeast Association right now, working on building better relationship. *Chris* – The notion that an organization that represents

multiple states, the reason that came about is within philosophy of soft approach is that if a larger organization that represents multiple individual states signs on at “in support of” it paves the way and allows for initiation of the conversation and then we can take it further if states decide to. That is same philosophy behind why we partnered mostly with agencies, groups of agencies or hunting groups. We have had a lot of other environmental groups show interest in the Partnership but working as hunters working with hunters, so that approach has been best. For WAFWA, given that Arizona has been a part of the program since 2005 it is old news to a lot of western states, so playing catch up there. We have programs in Arizona and Utah. We have gone through initiation stage where everybody’s nerves are settled, we have to maintain our presence there and continue moving that along in the western states. As far as links to the Southeast, the closest we have come is a presentation to the commission in Texas over a year ago and our trip to IATA in Florida this year was thwarted which also messed up the opportunity we had to speak in Louisiana. *Sara Pauley* – Several of us are also members of SEAFWA too and happy to help make a better connection. *Leland* – That would be fantastic. We have contacts with some individual states. We are both in the west and I am originally from the Northeast so a little easier. Southeast culture is a little different so trying to connect to that. *Kelly* – Speak slower. *Kendra Wecker* – Thanks for presentation, contacted by Cincinnati Zoo last year about this. A good idea. *Leland* – Interesting potential partner; I am not a zookeeper, but I work for a zoo. It really does seem to provide a pathway for engagement that we hadn’t considered. If you work with them to develop it, often times don’t have expertise, they may have resources to help. Potential of getting information, even if just working to share with the general public. We didn’t mention that we have to do a fair amount of work with the public because if we don’t you end up with people hearing information and deciding to put legislation forward, which ends up destroying opportunities to engage with actual hunting community. You really have to make sure you are working with the non-hunting public as well to inform them why this approach is so important and something to consider as we build programs. *Brad* – Appreciate the presentation, it seems like a path we ought to go down. *Kelly* – Will have good discussion around the resolution. Thank you for your time.

Wildlife Disease Topics

Jonathan Mawdsley, AFWA – could not be present

Kelley Myers, USFWS (**PowerPoint presentation – Exhibit C – DON’T HAVE YET BUT HOPE TO GET**) – Last summer the steering committee of Midwest Landscape Initiative (MLI) discussed idea of taking a hard look at chronic wasting disease (CWD), not from biological or disease perspective but from how are we organized around this complex, controversial multijurisdictional issue. Last July the steering committee began probing this notion of using this forum in MLI to look into CWD and improve how we were coordinated and organized around it. Sara graciously offered to sponsor an event in Missouri, with full use of her staff called value stream mapping. We hope to present in September or October, group has been working hard on this and this is an opportunity to touch base on where they are at. Value Stream Mapping event held in Columbia, Missouri and lasted about a week where we worked through some big challenges. You look across a process or system and try to do analysis on it. Our scope was to examine coordination efforts around various research, prevention, management and communication efforts. Just the first day, the word “prevention” was a lightning rod and the group spent a lot of time churning on some of these words. We also wanted to evaluate how these different efforts interact. We took specific objectives looking at understanding all of the different authorities, priorities and basic function of partners and goals of different ongoing and identifying areas of greatest need for improved collaboration. Ultimately developing our detail

on what should be included in a framework. Could be talking about anything, any kind of sticky complex issue but in this case talking about CWD. We spent a fair amount of time in the first meeting and meetings leading up to this event. In the first couple days of the event resisting the urge to jump into solutions and jump into what we needed for CWD specifically. We held space to get after how we are all assembled around it and how we can work together in a way that helps us leverage our resources better. Had broad based participation across the region. Also recognized a number of players working on CWD outside of MAFWA region. As part of our objectives we wanted to make sure what we did in Midwest wasn't flying in the face of what is going on nationally or what might be going on in another region. In the Midwest we are in the space where we have had CWD for a long time or don't have it yet, so we wanted to make sure we had all these different voices represented. In addition, we had the big game biologist from Kansas, wildlife disease specialist from another state and more generalists from some states, had person responsible for managing CWD in another, in Iowa had a chief attorney; when I was in Iowa we were litigating CWD; and Dale joined us later. We had AFWA staff, John and Jen joined by phone; tremendous participation. We had Colin Gillin, AFWA health committee and John Fischer who has been very involved in CWD and development of best management practices AFWA has. We felt we had a good group. Thank Sara and her staff for great place to meet and helped facilitate so Jason and I could be team leaders so we could participate in discussions more and help carry it forward. Ollie was able to join us for a couple days of the meeting and has been touching in with the group attending meetings as he could to stay on top of this issue. Value Stream Mapping is a business process part of Kaizen theory of business process improvement. It was formed at Toyota manufacturing company but is system of tools that are utilized; a prescribed method of going through different systems and different ways to evaluate how different groups might be working together or not and whether you can identify gaps more easily. It is very visual. Kaizen means continuously moving toward perfection, recognition you can never be perfect but can work toward it, even if really good you can always get better. Wish I had pictures of the whole room, imagine a large conference room covered with lots of paper and sticky notes, lots of discussion and ideas. For four days we mapped out who was doing what and tried to figure out our goals and started evaluating and analyzing potential ways we could improve the connections, coordination and identify how we could fill some of the gaps. Outcomes: immediately we had a broader network, appreciate MLI, bringing people together who don't know each other; in our world we have a small community so when you get together with people who don't typically work together you get new perspectives and outcomes. Going around the table and making introductions, now we have a broader network of people working on CWD who know each other. As part of our efforts we developed findings and problem statements to articulate the needs and what we discovered around those needs, ongoing problems we need to fix, and a lot of our recommendations are designed to address that. Came up with four high level recommendations. From December to now this group has been meeting across different platforms, from phone calls to webinars, endured Covid and trying to get our feet under us after having them knocked out for a little bit. The group has gone from pages of recommendations to boiling it down to a couple of succinct things. The first one is around improving engagement and reliance on the hunting community, industry stakeholders, landowners and the public to better understand and incorporate their motivations and responses; not saying we are going to take all findings of professional wildlife staff or professional disease biologists and throw out the window and say, whatever the hunting industry wants. We did recognize that as a community we need to sit down with hunting community and industry stakeholders and landowners and figure out where we can better use them in some of our responses and be open to some of the ideas they might be bringing forward because ultimately their participation is the key to success and there is a full group of recommendations around that.

Improve governance and coordination of CWD actions within MAFWA boundaries; that is overall scope, but a lot of key actions or tasks recommended under that and really get at how we do that. Having a coordinator, a person responsible to carry forward messages and some are as simple as each state having a go-to person so as states are trying to share information and resources there is a point of contact. Everything from big, to easier to do, that could be impactful about that recommendation. Clear positions and messages on CWD and coordinated strategies to achieve what MAFWA defines as success with respect to CWD. Having a clear position and message, looking at coordinated strategy and defining success; which hasn't happened across MAFWA region. If there is single or related definition of success, so key starting point with that recommendation. Improve understanding of actual and potential financial implications of CWD, a wide topic that covers everything from ongoing work to evaluate how states talk about financial implications, how you define how much money or staff resources are being spent on it. That is apples to oranges and not a uniform way to evaluate how much CWD might be costing state fish and wildlife agencies across the Midwest. Looking at improving some standard reporting so there can be more comparison and coalition building. On the flip side, a lot of talk about what happens if CWD starts to impact hunting, herd health, or start to see reductions in hunting; limits on what can be done or human health consumption advisories. If deer hunting takes a huge hit what does that do to licensing revenues and what does that mean for state agencies. Talking about importance of being proactive in being able to answer those questions rather than waiting for something to happen, like disaster planning. What is going to be happening now through September, group has come to these four recommendations with sub-elements under them, we have regional and national committees represented on this team, but they wanted to be able to go back and discuss with their groups. We decided to go to other committees first and have some of these discussions now through September and continue to work on recommendations so we can report to MLI steering committee in September and then come back to you in October with full suite of recommendations. Part of what MLI talked about when we took on CWD was using our forum as a place where there is federal and state interests to come together and talk about this in a limited way. If we find this is not something MLI should hold on to then we take it back to the groups that might be more apt to do things with it. There is a lot of work for MAFWA states and possibly for some of other committees in MAFWA or national committees to take some of these ideas and see if they want to run with them. On team participants, we did involve some of the federal partners recognizing this is state issue but the Department of Interior does have a CWD task force, at the Service we manage land through national wildlife refuge system and this is an issue of importance to the Fish and Wildlife Service and we wanted to make sure we could be there to have conversations about what the role of USFWS should be. That is reflected in some of the recommendations. We have a number of people on this call that were there, Bill Moritz, maybe Mark Chase, Dale Garner, Ollie, John Fischer and maybe others. Comments of where we are. *Kelly* – Well done. Sara, overview comments since you were energy behind this idea? *Sara* – Kelley does a remarkable job and appreciate her leadership. Remind MAFWA members this is the value of MLI. It creates this safe space to discuss complex and contentious issues, gets us space to identify shared conservation priorities that we are all wrestling through and all trying to find a path forward with finite resources. They are multijurisdictional issues that we identify as priorities. I hope people will comment on this particular project. I hope newer members see and appreciate the benefit and value of MLI and having cooperative relationship with the Service of providing an amazing asset in Kelley and now Ed, Claire, Bill and others. It gives us this ability to think longer term on these very complex issues and set aside time and resources to look at the future. We all know as directors we don't get enough of that time. Knowing we have this ability to create shared path forward together gives me a sense of gratitude for what we are putting together for MLI.

Appreciate Kelley's leadership, moving in a good direction and appreciate MLI steering committee's faith because this one was different, more of an emerging issue, so when we identified process forward it was our first emerging issue that didn't take the regular course, but MLI steering committee gave the nod and we are in a better place because of that. *Kelley* – Highlighted last slide to show who was there, we were well represented across the region. Appreciate you authorizing your staff to be there. *Kelly* – Sara gave a great lead-in to talk about Midwest Initiative. We have common borders with Montana and Wyoming and concerns in Wyoming with CWD so things we are learning here are discussions we want to take and tee up with the Western also, not all western states are into this discussion, but some are, like Colorado. Assuming September discussion will also be around coordinator and funding and this might also fit into multistate grant potentially because it is across multiple regions. Great work. *Sara* – Kelley mentioned one of objective was better coordination from member states, so this led to a four-corners CWD meeting between Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri, now working on a four-corners involving Oklahoma and Arkansas as well and Brad we want Kansas to be part of that moving forward. There are already border discussions happening as a result. *Ollie* – I want the directors to understand how much hard work went into this and sometimes it was very frustrating, you get diverse group of people together and they really worked hard on this. The process reminded me of strategic planning process and those of you who have been through that know how difficult it is to develop a strategic plan. Give credit to who was there and people to send to work on it, this was a good group. *Brad Loveless* – This makes obvious sense to us, all working on the same issue and it only makes sense to collaborate and feedback I got from Levi Jaster, our big game coordinator, was how much potential value there was in this. It has been hard work, all sorts of challenges but he reflected terrific potential and value of this already. Encouraged by that and appreciate everybody's leadership in helping us be part of this, benefitting in Kansas already and look forward to future of the conversation. *Kelley* – Looking at CWD is a huge issue, but part of conversations we were having was how can this value stream mapping process be used. Sara and I had seen value of it in our states, but there was a big question of whether we could translate it across a region, the jury is still out. After analysis of all of this when we look at value stream mapping I am seeing it is likely a powerful tool for multijurisdictional, cross-boundary issues. Excited about potential of what the next big issue is that we can tackle with this. *Kelly* – Thanks Kelley and Sara for your leadership as well as other members. MLI started with conversation with Terry in North Dakota, it has matured and what the directors are going to hear, after they talk about issue, how it is growing. It is going places I didn't envision it was going to be two years ago, so. It is nice to see the Midwest not just as fly-over-states, but innovators and it is nice to be the leaders.

John Fischer, WMI – Appreciate time on agenda. Information I am presenting Ollie distributed last week (*Exhibit D*), one pager and pdf questionnaire that Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) has sent out to all 50 states. I am a contractor with WMI on a multistate conservation grant, the technical title is national coordination and technical assistance for prevention, surveillance and management of CWD. We have six primary objectives and Kelley has touched on a few of them. 1) Assess the greatest non-fiscal CWD-related needs of the states; work in progress. 2) Enhance consistency and dissemination of accurate CWD messaging. 3) Increase public knowledge to hunters, taxidermists, processors, et.al regarding CWD to enhance support and compliance with regulations and guidance. Skip 4) and 5), drop down to 6) promoting consistency of CWD regulations and guidance in order to reduce confusion which jeopardizes hunter participation and compliance. 4) Provide requested technical assistance to states and provincial wildlife agencies on CWD response plan and surveillance response strategies as well as information recommendations on diagnostic and disposal options, which are becoming

problematic in some states. 5) Enhance communication between states and provinces. Currently assessing non-fiscal CWD-related needs of state agencies by evaluating results of questionnaire conducted by AFWA last summer. Also, by using a new questionnaire, to prioritize technical assistance needs of state agencies. We also will use information from survey to update and redesign portions of the CWD alliance website, particularly regarding individual state regulations in order to make the website more useful to state agencies, hunters and the public. We had a draft of survey that went out to members of AFWA fish and wildlife health committee, finalized the document and then sent out to all 50 states last week. It only takes 5-7 minutes to complete and will go a long way in helping us determine how this grant uses dollars to assist the states with non-fiscal CWD needs. We encourage you to have appropriate folks in your agency complete this electronic questionnaire with deadline of July 10. A brief research updates, some back to 2019, you may be familiar with it already. NIH researchers found that soaking stainless steel wire in a 40% solution of household bleach for five minutes will inactivate prions, they did point out you have to remove all solid material from the stainless steel in order for this technique to be effective. It was ineffective if any organic matter present. Late last year and early this year researchers detecting prions in post-mortem samples of semen and reproductive tissues from preclinical, white-tailed bucks, await results of additional studies to determine if sexual contact or AI are plausible means of CWD transmission. The CWD Alliance currently is administering three applied CWD research grants, funded initially by Boone and Crockett and Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation which each contributed \$100,000. This was leveraged by \$220,000 from three recipient organizations, a total of \$420,000 for applied CWD research. Proposals were evaluated by a small group of experts and following projects were funded: 1) modeling spatial harvest strategies for CWD transmission; 2) perspective simulation assessments of alternative harvest strategies to mitigate and control CWD invasion and spread; and 3) accumulation of CWD prions in plant tissues. *Kelly* – Didn't hear about the research of finding CWD in semen, not a good thing. *John*, when you sent the survey out who did it go to, state director or who? *John* – Sent out by Matt Dunfee from WMI to a list of people, not to directors, CWD contacts in 50 states, a list Matt updates twice a year. *Kelly* – We will double check with Chad Switzer who is our lead. *John* – Even though I have retired from University of Georgia, my university email remains functional and my cell phone the same if you want to contact me.

Midwest Landscape Initiative

Kelly Hepler, MAFWA – Lead in from Sara which gave you a heads up. Had a neat opportunity a couple days ago to talk to Maime Parker, a long time USFWS employee, she is going to be the keynote at WAFWA. Mixed in there, we play the what ifs, we talked about Dan Ashe and him bringing his idea of the LCCs and where we are now versus then. Look forward to a conversation with Dan to tell him he had the right idea and tell him how it has evolved. The seed was there, and we wondered if he would be happy with where we are. Work is being done and partnership with USFWS has truly been outstanding. It is seamless and I know there are some concerns in Alaska of federal overreach, but not here in the Midwest. *Craig and Kelley*, I don't think of you as USFWS employee but one of the conservation people and that is the way it is supposed to be. The reason we are moving forward like this is because of that support we are getting from the Service or we wouldn't be where we are now. Appreciate state directors who have wonderful people working on the technical committee and appreciate directors on the steering committee. You are the energy for this, *Craig* and your staff and *Kelley* are outstanding.

Craig Czarnecki, USFWS – Previous session with *Kelley's* presentation and your and Sara's follow up I don't know of better words for lead-in for MLI. On behalf of *Charlie Wooley* who just led a briefing with Director *Skip* with a few weeks ago regarding MLI. The next two years of

an agreement between USFWS and MAFWA, which the director just signed off on, is awesome news. It keeps the USFWS, my words working alongside MAFWA and member states on this common venue. Your thoughts about Dan Ashe, we are in the midst of second generation landscape collaboration and we learned a lot from where we were 6-8 years ago. The key is we were so project oriented, projects USFWS would fund through LCCs and we would wait for somebody to use them, a huge lesson there. Where we are now is more focused on shared capacity. I was also going to congratulate Kelley Myers; she is here as shared capacity as a leader for all of us. With Ed Boggess and Claire Beck and how we are pushing forward for the next two years. I think there is leadership here in the Midwest. On behalf of Charlie Wooley and all of us in the Midwest region, Kelly Hepler, we are all in and looking forward to where we go next.

Kelley Myers, USFWS (*PowerPoint – Exhibit E DON'T HAVE YET BUT HOPE TO GET*)– We have been busy at work with Midwest Landscape Initiative (MLI), so do a little background and offer to come and meet with you and your staff or a group you are working with, let me know. If you want to know more I will tell you more. Doing enough work last couple of years and have a much better idea of what this is looking like, how it is shaping up and where we are going. I want to highlight all of the different interior regions in MAFWA that are also working with this initiative; Iowa and Missouri are working with Great Lakes region but technically there is this new interior delineation occurring as well. This is bringing a lot of states together, different regions of the Service together and Canada and the tribes. A lot of different governmental groups working as well as USGS Coop Units and NGO partners, the map would get crazy. Up in North Dakota had conversations and conversations in Nebraska in 2017 and yielded this big body of work going on across the country. Looking at what does landscape conservation look like as next generation of LCCs, what are functions we think are really important carrying forward. So, conversations that started in Nebraska when Jim led a panel discussion really launched MLI in 2018. Originally Terry was going to move this as a presidential initiative to explore what was possible and the board voted to create the MLI, a different name then, but developed initiative to provide a forum identify and implement collaborative approaches for shared conservation priorities. Part of national work going on at same time we were conceiving this, national work was resulting in a resolution on landscape collaboration at AFWA. We tried to design MLI around that resolution as well. Our structure: have steering committee comprised of members of the MAFWA board and Service leadership; technical committee that a lot of your staff participates in who meets every other week to talk about business of MLI; have different work groups that meet around specific priorities. In terms of formal participation, we have connections with all 13 states; 11 of 13 states represented on committees or workgroups. We have all regions of the USFWS represented and USGS is participating at every level. Most recently the Migratory Bird Joint Venture have reached out to us ask how they could be working with MLI on some of the work we are doing; heard of them in Central Flyway and Mississippi Flyway; having meeting in September they have invited us to, to see how we can get better synthesis between the JVs and some of their coordinated efforts. Later this morning we will talk about cooperative agreement proposing continuing for two years with executive level liaison, Ed Boggess, extending work of Claire Beck, who has been the technical coordinator under the Monarch plan and last year worked more expansively across MLI. Also support for improved communications and partner engagements, something we see as important. In addition, there is some interest in working to improve collaboration between some of the committees, some of workgroups of MLI and engage more with USFWS WSFR, wildlife restoration program to ensure some of the tools we are developing and how we talk about SWAPs and species of greatest conservation need and at risk species in parallel with how WSFR is using them in states in that relationship work. Looking at

developing a conservation vision for MLI; talking with Bill Moritz and Ed Boggess about how we can survey different groups and work with different groups to start laying out what our shared sense of success is, what we see as challenges and what we see as vision that binds us all in this region. Working on improving governance and operation, idea of continuous improvement and self-evaluation into MLI in the beginning. It is never too early to start asking if it is working, what are we missing, or how can we improve. Ultimately, all of this will coalesce into report a finding and engagement with MLI steering committee to figure out how to incorporate recommendations. Current priorities are what came about from initial conversations; looking at at-risk species and species of greatest conservation need across the Midwest region, trying to start coordination on SWAPS across the region and figuring out where there is overlap and where groups can work together better. Developing habitat inventory and assessment tools across Midwest to inform strategic use of resources and evaluate the effectiveness of conservation actions. Thinking of other tools out there, if state has a particular tool or CHAT in the West and SECAS in Southeast and how what we are doing in the Midwest integrate with some of those existing tools states may already be using. One of more specifically defined priorities starting out was wind and looking at wind energy development, making sure we do so in a way that mitigates negative wildlife interactions; looking at urgency of how and where it is being sited, located and installed and what are some of the big issues; not commenting on value of wind in the long term and benefits it might have for wildlife, but we make sure we are doing it in the best way now; it is a very temporal priority. Developing and refining long lasting governance model, when we started we wanted to create something that was durable that would survive changes in federal and state administrations, something of the partnership and became enduring to the partnership. We have also served as forum in last year to hold discussions on CWD, not another place to do it and there was some urgency. Then Covid happened and there was some discussions and work on what was going to be some of those challenges and where there might be opportunities and feeding into national dialog happening from a regional perspective. The idea of PFAS has come up recently, the idea of how to use a model you used with CWD to get more aligned around PFAS. I have been poking at that in my role for the Service but may come to MLI as well. We have had a lot of conversations and there is this tension between landscape conservation and traditional USFWS part of suite of bigger issues on the landscape. Fish and wildlife agencies being one of many partners that might come together around a particular landscape to work on issues and not traditional view of long range. How can we think ahead versus space for emerging or urgent issues and recognizing that sometimes one feeds into the other? Wildlife disease itself is something that can impact landscape but needing to make sure we have that place and can use some of this capacity to address those emerging issues without being overcome by them. Part of what has been great about MLI is being able to have that place where you can think about what is going on or what you anticipate down the road and not being overwhelmed by the crisis of the day. Talked about his concept of pillars to priorities, set up MLI looking at at-risk species and habitat assessment tools and convening power we have. As we are having more discussions and analysis those initial priorities are moving into pillars, more of the defining characteristic of the MLI. Now as we start to get more into the analysis and starting to do studies around some of the work that is happening, like wind, we are getting into a place where we might start identifying more specific topic areas; a lot of different ways we can go based on analysis that will be happening. There is a column we are holding for innovations or urgent issues. If we want to be proactive in the long term we need to be relevant and working in the short term as well. Seeing a place, we can have some of those discussions about innovations we need to be pursuing. Looking at putting together a regional list of species of greatest conservation need, like in the Northeast and Southeast, taking that regional list and mixing it with this version that Bill Moritz is going to help us develop in the next year and compiling that

against other plans the UFSWS has, or Coop Units or states may have. Putting it all together and baking it into a Midwest conservation strategy, a document that lays out our priorities and how we feel the groups need to respond. If you take that strategy and mix it with all of the different GIS tools and data standards and integration of other blueprints or tools, whatever other frameworks. Take into account plans and needs from other sectors because that is something our technical committee has voiced, for our work to be relevant and useful outside of fish and wildlife community. Hoping all of that mixes together into some type of Midwest Habitat Assessment Tool. Tools you may be familiar with are CHAT in the west and SECAS in Southeast and Nature's Network, one of different layers, not providing because this is the direction we are going, but you can see there is a stop in the Midwest, a few individual states have tools, but trying to figure out how to bring something together, whether integrating with other tools or taking into account existing state tools out there, but asking hard questions of what we need, or what will this get us, is it enough to have a strategy or do we also need some kind of planning tool. In terms of what we have been working on this last year: new members at all levels of MLI, so growth. Work groups all have a draft action plan, MAFWA's resolution last year authorized continuation of MLI but asked for comprehensive action plan, working groups working on theirs and we are working to integrate them into a more comprehensive action plan. Had CWD value stream mapping event and several of us who serve on various levels of MLI are participating in the presidential task force that Kelly initiated to look at science priorities on the landscape conservation priorities; I worked on a subgroup that paid attention to potential role of SWAPS and how we might identify some of these shared priorities and work on a regional basis. A lot of connection between what is going on at the national level and what we are trying to do with MLI through me and other members of task force and committees of MLI. Covid-19 happened and we can't underscore all of the impacts that had; has had a little bit of benefit for us in that we have always been a remote group, most of the work we do has been through phone calls and the web, so we have gotten better at this and feel technical committee meetings are much more productive, dialog is better and we figured out how to work better. So, if one silver lining to Covid-19, besides time we have gotten to spend with the family, is we have gotten better at working remotely. We have a share point site; the Department of Interior approved me to be able to develop this place where everyone can come and collaborate in one place, a game changer for co-production and co-development. Our wind working group has conducted a needs assessment, developed a comprehensive work plan and are starting to chip away at the action. Working with a facilitator because we recognized this is a space that is right for a lot of work and controversy. From needs assessment, what has been value about this working group is that so far it is a place for government only and we don't mean to be insulated and non-inclusive but there are not many places in wind space, a lot of different work groups but very few, if any, that are a place where government can have peer-to-peer conversations about issues the government faces. We are starting to reach out to other groups, like AWWI, TNC and a lot of membership of AFWA wind group are interested in what we are doing. We want to talk about it but hold part of space we have for just peer-to-peer government conversations. Work underway and soon be an invitation to states to participate a community of practice around wind issues, an opportunity to share what the group has come up with and make sure all states are comfortable with it, coming out in next couple of weeks. At-risk working group is MAFWA facilitated, Claire helps with it, a well-represented group who is looking at identifying priority species and working to come up with RSGCN and looking to identify a pilot project that will measure with an objective three, which is urgent actions highlighting success and precluding need to list. There is some identification of what that pilot project could look like. There is an NWF grant, where NWF is seeking to put in multistate grant application to complement as this group works through putting together that RSGCN through robust process, NWF is interested in being communication

sideboard for that. Using its affiliate, using similar process they used with urban monarch outreach, to talk to citizens about SWAPs and what species of greatest conservation needs are and share messages of what goes into developing some of these plans and why this is all important. Habitat Assessment Work Group, this group got sidelined with Covid because we were going to put together a structure of decision making to start getting at questions of what we need a tool to do, what are existing tools and what blueprint and modeling tool we want to come out of it; unable to have that process because it relies on people coming together, like value stream mapping. Looking to do surveys and other things to start gathering some of the information that would be gathered in an event like that. If inability to meet goes on, come up with a different plan and modify SDM to be virtual. Very well represented and had successful workshop earlier this spring virtually where we invited representatives from 6-7 different tools over the course of two days to come and share. It was an exploratory workshop, not published or promoted in any way and we had to change our phone line in the middle because we had more than 50 people trying to get in, know we were somewhere between 50 and 125 individuals who were listening in and part of that workshop. There was a lot of hunger to learn about some of these different tools that are available around the country to help us manage our habitats. We held a technical committee retreat successfully and virtually in May. They identified nine big strategies to come out. Outcomes were: making sure we had a regional landscape conservation strategy and not just individual action plans, wanted improved engagement across sectors and partners; improved communication; looking at that proactive long-term work and keeping focus there; organization of work around SWAPs; looking at internal coordination, good information flow from work groups to steering committee and back; social science; self-evaluation; and making sure logistical and funding support. Engagement and communication is something the group really focused on, and the role of working lands in the Midwest and importance of private lands and making sure whatever we do going forward that we engage with those sectors to make sure plans are useable to them. Planning to have a steering committee retreat virtually. A couple of big topics will be priorities; communication and engagement; and funding models. We hope to follow up in September for plan refinement; CWD review; and strategy review in anticipation of an in-person board meeting in October. Our timeline: in the past we have established governance; populated our group; developed priority setting framework through the help of Ed Boggess and used it to evaluate our priorities every year. Have preliminary action plans drafted; have draft conservation strategy; and gone through exploratory processes through all of the work groups to conduct needs assessment to figure out what the work is that this group needs to pursue to reach our goals. Over the next six months hope to have first draft of Midwest conservation strategy and work to have communication and engagement strategy. In MAFWA agreement we put a little extra funding to work on communications so lots of ways we could work with staff from around the region, communications staff from states and Service, to build a network to help us develop that strategy; we could work with contractors to do that, but a lot of ways to go about doing that, the question will be what we want to get out of it. We will make sure we have engagement strategy so we can be working with partners beyond states and Service. In the next year hoping to work on regional compilation of species of greatest conservation need, which will come with databases and frameworks, not a one-and-done study, it is actually a process by which we go about coming up with regional compilation and it can stay updated as states update their plans. Developing Midwest unifying conservation vision. In the next 2-5 years, depending on funding and continued support, developing habitat assessment tool and taking and identifying more specific or targeted priorities as part of our strategy refinement and figuring out what that looks like and how we go from priorities to pillars. Over next year I will be working on finalizing that draft Midwest conservation strategy with group that has been identified. We want to establish strong engagement and communication presence. Develop RSGCN. I will be

working to engage more broadly with USFWS's other programs. Want to work to develop a strong feedback group with other state and federal programs so that whatever information is derived from MLI, it is helpful to them but also plans that different organizations have, will feed into MLI and prove it, so working on that feedback. Thank Kelly and Craig for leadership on steering committee; also, Dale, Sara, John Rogner from Illinois, Jim Douglas, Ed Boggess in ex-officio capacity, John Thompson for USGS and Noreen from Legacy Region 6 and she recently hired a new science application person, Samantha Brook so she is getting involved, had Craig and Bill; leadership and commitment to this has been stellar from the beginning; appreciate time and attention to this. When I call a meeting people come, everyone is busy but appreciate time and attention given to this. The technical committee is an awesome group of people that every time I meet with them I feel inspired. Turn over to Ed, Bill or Claire who have been involved and instrumental in helping develop this.

Ed Boggess – I don't have a lot to add. Great evolution from monarch work that MAFWA and the Service did and northern long eared bat work five or six years ago. As we did monarch strategy we anticipated monarchs would be part of a larger landscape approach because obviously we can't do one species at a time. We had to keep reminding ourselves it wasn't about monarchs and milkweeds but about landscapes that supported monarchs and other species. Monarchs are great ambassador or flagship for that, and the public engages around monarchs. MLI, even though the landscape it will be tougher from communications and engagement perspective, but the way to try to get ahead of these species. The engagement piece is going to evolve. We have a really good foundation of work and a lot of it is still underway or just starting. Over the next year as we get regional priorities identified and start grouping those species by landscape we will be able to engage more specifically around sub issues we identify through prioritization framework we have for MLI. Whether grasslands or forest areas, big rivers or prairie streams, lakes or whatever the landscape units are that supports the greatest number of priority species will become the focus and will be a great way to engagement with external interests and other agencies. It has been exciting to be a part of this and I am pleased with where we are at and even more excited about where we are going in the next year or so. Kelly – Ed, well said and Kelley, great presentation. The technical committee is a bunch of rock stars and appreciate the work of the steering committee. Craig, thanks for leadership at the USFWS with regional director and support from the director. I think her interest in highlighting working with private landowners, we understand that well in the Midwest. We appreciate you pushing that. This will be coming up in a short amount of time to get approval. That is the vehicle of how we are going to move forward.

Ron Regan – Exceptional presentation, sat through my share of landscape planning presentations over the years and that ranks right up there on how things knit together. Yesterday on call with Northeast directors that Wendy Webber convened with her team and they are having some of that same discussion about species at risk, listing species processes and how they connect back to SWAPs. The AFWA report coming out in September about science priorities and landscape conservation is also going to have some recommendations about the role SWAPs could play, it is all starting to fit together. On the disease presentation, the Service has been a big help in a lot of ways with innovation for the states. Deb Rock and her team with Science apps in DC is helping AFWA with capacity money on fish and wildlife health issues, including CWD, that is new money and new opportunity for Jonathan Mawdsley and others to help advance our work there. Has the Forest Service been involved much with MLI? I ask because there were a bunch of Forest Service folks on the Northeast call and I didn't know to what extent they were invited to these discussions. On the pillar slide, I was a little confused by shading of arrow pointing down and wasn't sure if I was supposed to be reading that graphic from top to bottom or if that really wasn't an arrow but a pillar? *Kelley* – You are highlighting my lack of graphic design abilities. I

went to a meeting recently where a graphic artist actually interpreted the whole meeting and it was phenomenal and I need to take her with me everywhere I go. The idea of the pillar slide, if you take habitat assessment, what we are doing with governance and at-risk work and mix them together they become pillars but move down into the priorities. The arrow is just to show there is movement from notions that these are our priorities now but will become our pillars and frameworks to set new priorities. I will work on that slide. In terms of Forest Service, at this point we have been intentionally staying with states, the Service and USGS as we have built this. However, the work groups are starting to engage with more people and organizations and that is part of where we want to have that strategy around engagement. We are not looking to recreate the LCCs, we want to make sure we are engaging groups in the best ways. If need to talk to Forest Service on a particular issue, we want to do that. There is also a need to be engaging groups, as we are setting and vetting priorities, at multiple touch points. On CWD we reached out to EPA, Forest Service and some of the other agencies and they just didn't have the bandwidth to participate at that point. That is something we will work with our steering committee on in July and partner engagement and how we took some of the work that Jim Douglas did in Omaha a few years ago with a meeting there and follow up at Denver North American where there was workshop about engagement. Take some of those pieces and figure out how we want to be very intentional as we take our forum and expand it. More to come on that. *Craig* – The Forest Service yesterday and day before that it was an NGO, there is a 360 of potential partners that are taking note of MLI and have a thoughtful approach to how and when is going to serve the MLI well because going back to Jim Douglas' meeting a year and a half ago, there are folks that want to join in and the steering committee is going to have to figure out how do we think through that and accommodate broadening our effort. Like Kelley said, early on we wanted to focus with these three primary entities; MAFWA member states, USFWS and USGS from Coop Unit perspective. I think we have our work cut out for us to think through how we are going to approach the next couple of years. *Jim Douglas* – Good that topic was brought up, also brought up briefly at last MLI steering committee meeting. It is a question that has been hanging around for at least a year and a half, since we looked at best practices of landscape conservation, which we turned into a resolution. If you read that AFWA resolution you notice there is special attention paid to relationship between the Service and the states with acknowledgements that there needed to be other engagements. Methodology for those engagements and at what level have not been satisfactorily defined up to this point. It is on the minds of MLI steering committee and the Service. Like Craig said, thoughtful consideration on when and how is what needs to happen. I'm sure it will happen, MLI steering committee is aware of that need. Talked about pre-Covid in engaging other partners in another Nebraska-type meeting to discuss this further with them. It didn't happen but on the minds of MLI steering committee and the Service. *Kelly* – Sara is going to come in as AFWA president in a few months and some of the pieces are coming together around the science task force that Jonathan is working with on multistate grant committee. Jim has been instrumental in that. CWD, we are setting the plate for Sara to be very successful as president; neat stuff. Thank you all of that. *Kelley* – Thank you.

October MAFWA Conference Discussion

Kelly – Planning meeting at Custer State Park, because of Covid, postponed to October but with upswing of Covid across the country, hard to tell where we will be in October. I am feeling more pessimistic of having even a hybrid of a face-to-face. We have time to sit on that with Custer State Park. What is drop dead date? *Rachel Comes* – Have contract in place for October and contract in place for June 2021 date. I need to let them know by July 10 on June 2021 date. *Kelly* – We have 10 days to make a decision. I don't want to poll everyone again, but I have a good

sense of I think where people are. Had same discussion at executive committee meeting about what to do. I think the world is darker than it was then. Directors, should we postpone to next year? Hope to have a normal meeting or some kind of virtual part of our meeting, I don't see that changing and some upside to that. What is your general sense? Keith it is your meeting, so you need to be a major player in this discussion. *Keith Warnke* – Not only is Covid going to be affecting us for a long time, but many of our state budgets are under stress as a result of that. Our state travel is prohibited and imagine future budget cuts. It may last into next year. At this point I would be supportive of shifting the South Dakota meeting to June 2021. *Rachel* – Ollie and I emailed the other day about sponsorship concerns as well and low budget. *Kelly* – That is across the board for our major partners or NGOs and they are going through restrictions and major staff cuts, like NWTF. As of right now, my suggestion is to postpone to next June. (Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Illinois and Indiana agreed.) Ollie, do we need an official vote on this? Seeing consensus of directors. Not officially in business meeting yet. *Ollie* – Bylaws say we are supposed to have the meetings in rotation, and this looks like we are going to skip one year. From Keith and Wisconsin's perspective you are okay with South Dakota hosting in 2021, then you take 2022? Then go down the path like we normally do. I don't think we need a vote; we have a glitch in the world with the virus and it is just causing us to have to skip a year. It is just like World War II; we didn't have a couple of meetings during that time because of the disruption. I don't think it requires a vote. If moving to 2021 go ahead, so far six out of 13 said they want to do it. Keith – I could support a motion of unanimous consent with Kelly to remain president for another year too. *Kelly* – I don't know about the presidency, I was going to make that a qualification, I think I am about presidented-out. Good try though. Ollie, you could officially take roll and go into the business meeting. *Ollie* – Bylaws do say the host state is the president, unless we change the bylaws you could set a record of being MAFWA president for three years. *Kelly* – We will work it out behind the scenes Keith and make it work.

Business Meeting Agenda (copy of Exhibit A)

Call to Order and Roll Call

Ollie – Meeting called to order at 10:14 AM. All states present (*Attendance Sheet – Exhibit F*); no Canadian provinces present.

Keith Warnke, Wisconsin made motion to move meeting to July 2021 at Custer State Park in South Dakota, Brad Loveless, Kansas second. Motion carried.

Kelly – Any additions to agenda? Congresswoman Dingle on the floor a little while ago speaking about Recover America Wildlife Act (RAWA), so historic. Don't know where that debate or vote is. Jen is listening in on both sides so if something good happens she will give us an update.

Approval of 2019 Annual Business Meeting Minutes

Annual meeting minutes (*Exhibit G*) additions or edits? Sheila does an outstanding job so I would be surprised if there was. ***Dale Garner, Iowa moved to accept minutes as printed, Terry Steinwand, North Dakota second. Motion carries.***

Kelly – Jen sent out note, not a vote yet but Dingle and Fortenberry both spoke in support of RAWA. A huge step forward.

Approval of Affiliate Member

Kelly – We had one application, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers (*Exhibit H*). *Ollie* – Met with Land Tawney in Omaha and solicited their membership as an affiliate and also sponsorships. According to our bylaws we need director's vote to approve them as an affiliate member. ***Dale Garner, Iowa moved to accept new affiliate member; Sara Pauley, Missouri second.*** *Kelly* – Talked to Ollie about this, I had interaction with the group at the national level and they are good. We got a little crosswise when we had a discussion going in the state, in Spearfish Canyon we are trying to have stricter schedule with the Forest Service, trade some land it get it over to state ownership because we thought we could run it better. That happened at time when a lot of movement, when President Trump first came into office, in Utah in particular to get some of that logging back into private ownership. That all happened under that framework and context. Even though ours was completely different discussion it got wrapped up in national discussion and they didn't work well with us on a local level. I think they have a good reputation and they engage; we just don't hear much from them and they are not active in our commission process. That is the only interaction I have had on local level. *Terry Steinwand* – New chapter in North Dakota and they have been engaged and helpful for us. They contact us on anything they want and if we disagree we sit down and talk through it and sometimes we go away agreeing to disagree. I would approve this. *Kelly* – That is encouraging to hear that, we should maybe do more outreach; just an offshoot of us, we need to build that relationship. *Dale* – Have chapter in Iowa, engaged at local and legislative level. They don't come in and fight with the DNR, asking how they can support us and what they need to do, so very positive for us. *Sara* – Same experience in Missouri. *Brad* – Same for Kansas. *Colleen Callahan* – Same in Illinois. *Jim* – Have a new chapter in Nebraska and just starting to engage but so far conversations have been promising. *Keith* – Active in Wisconsin, they are engaged in our R3 program and seem to be an up and coming new movement. In talking about relevancy, they are going to be important. *Dave Olfelt* – Echo what Keith said, in Minnesota they are younger more vibrant dynamic and beneficial to us. *Dale* – Any group that holds pint night when they have their meetings has got to be good. *Kelly* – Is that a national thing all the chapters do? I thought that was just unique to South Dakota, must be one of the ways they connect. As long as they are holding it outside and they have a mask on, drinking beer six feet apart that is wonderful. Ollie, encouraging to hear positive comments, so if get opportunity to talk to the national director let him know they have a good reputation in the Midwest. ***Motion carried.***

Small Game Toolkit Grant

Keith Warnke, Wisconsin (Exhibit I) – MAFWA R-3 group put together a small game diversity inclusion marketing tool grant for the multistate conservation grant program. This is a new idea, but dovetails with a lot of other ideas going on out there, including those coming from the Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) on mentoring research and also coming from WMI is a toolkit for video project for recruiting millennials into conservation. A forward-looking thing, targeting younger individuals and trying to get younger individuals involved in small game hunting and on the other end, angling and be conservationists as well. This one is focused on small game diversity and inclusion. One of most important things pointed out in the meeting was the study of America's wildlife values and relevancy road map. They all pointed to the fact that diversity and inclusion are critical to relevancy going forward and if we fail to reach out to next generation or fail to have participation it will reflect what America is going to look like and we will decline in relevancy in MAFWA and our profession of the sports we love to pursue. It is going to be important that we are going to be able to reach into more urban environments and a new generation of folks who do have interest in conservation and participation. Make ourselves more available and marketing too this generation. We were talking earlier about non-lead ammunition and younger folks and the movement at the national level to improve voluntary use

of non-lead ammunition. They used to be called millennials but have been reclassified as GenZ, 19-21 year-olds. They both hunt and it is a completely different messaging system and reaching them and their friends is completely different method of outreach but are also strong proponents of non-lead ammunition. They deeply understand a lot of environmental issues we are all dealing with and trying to get more engagement with on public new participant level. Being able to reach out to bilingual, multiracial, to a greater and diverse audience that lives in our cities is important. Having these toolkits available is going to be valuable for MAFWA and all states across the U.S. We are going to have something that helps us, maybe not so much implement these tools, but find the right people to implement these tools. I know I am not qualified to develop a toolkit to reach out to younger generations or more diverse populous. We have to recognize that having these toolkits available and utilized is what is going to enable us to do that moving forward. This started off as a broader initiative from MAFWA R3 group. We were charged by the directors. In Denver in 2018 MAFWA directors and R3 group sat down and talked about projects R3 could identify going forward and how do we bring MAFWA together as a group. MAFWA R3 identified a number of various projects including this kind of outreach. General outreach was another project and Midwest R3 dashboard, which is being implemented as well as a couple of projects we could partner together on and move forward. We came back to MAFWA directors last June in Toledo and expressed some interest in doing some of these projects working together. This has given MAFWA R3 group a chance to showcase our collaborative nature, how we work together and have a desire to address needs MAFWA directors identified for us. We got back together in Springfield, Illinois; broke up into separate working groups and outlined several of these projects. From that developed the idea of this need for a toolkit to reach out to a new diverse generation. We also developed a project description and position description for a Midwest regional R3 coordinator, but that is a different project. This one is focusing on developing a toolkit for all of us to use. The intent of this is to help to develop a system to reach out to more diverse audience. It is laid out in research-oriented or pilot-oriented process in that we are going to develop initial toolkit, implement some of things and then go back and evaluate the value of those tools. We want to evaluate what worked for getting people engaged in small game hunting, what may not have worked, what new things we need to try to get the word out and people recruited. Then come back in a year and ask for another grant to refine, reimplement and reevaluate the tools. This comes from desire of MAFWA R3 to develop useful tools and in a way that they are effective and applicable across the states in our region and then they can go out to across the nation as a whole to get more people engaged in small game hunting. Small game hunting varies across the U.S., everything from giant jackrabbits in Arizona to ruff grouse hunting in New England, whole different diverse array of things to hunt. How do we get people thinking about that? WMI's recent millennial project also identified that there are certain special motivators and ways that these younger diverse people get engaged and that includes reaching out to the influencers amongst these communities who have great sway over what people do. There is also a huge interest in conservation and environmental management. But also interest in local sustainable food sources, so how do we best capitalize on things and come up with a toolkit that a lot of us can implement in the future. That is what this project is intended to do. It has three goals: 1) provide diversity and inclusion small game marketing toolkit to agencies; 2) vet creative products designed to reach diverse audiences and asking those diverse audiences for feedback on what we might be doing; and 3) create implementation guide that will enable states and partners to efficiently and effectively utilize, evaluate and measure return on investment of this toolkit. Initially requesting \$217,000. We have several co-investigators and partners, including DJ Case and Associates, Back Country Hunters and Anglers, Pheasants Forever and the National Wild Turkey Federation. The project is going to last for a year with intent to submit again in 2021 grant cycle to expand, improve and implement what we learned. The ask here is

for MAFWA to become one of the principle investigators in consultation with these partners who will be implementing most of the research, engagement and customer focus groups to develop outreach that goes along with this project to grow participation in small game hunting. Questions? *Kelly* – Detailed and excellent explanation; forgot that was your background as well as Amanda’s. There is a fiscal responsibility with that also for each state. So, need to get a motion because there is a fiscal commitment. *Ollie* – The money would come to us we would be the banker and Roger would manage the funds. I think it will require a contract with DJ Case that we would have to execute. Estimating 8-10 checks Sara would need to sign. That is the best estimate we have at this point. *Kelly* – No fiscal ask, just support from Ollie and Roger? *Ollie* – No. It is approval that we would submit this under our name, we would become the banker and administrator of the grant. *Kelly* – Submittal is due by Friday. *Jim* – Compliment Keith and people on R3 working group who stepped up, there was modicum of encouragement and challenge given to MAFWA R3 committee to increase communication with MAFWA directors and collaborate additionally to what has been going on. Ways to show the Midwest states could step up to the plate and show a collaborative effort in R3 arena. This is ambitious proposition, well thought out and needed. *Keith* – I am in transitional fury between February and learning I had a new job and working at home the whole time. The other committee members stepped up and carried this forward and all of the states should be proud of their people who worked collaboratively to get this done. *Colleen* – One year ago when I first met all of you and it was an immersion for me. You have been great and gracious to help me learn. It was also at that meeting when I got a call and had to leave the meeting and coming back in to share what the call was about; from our Governor’s office regarding a press release we had sent out regarding an upcoming trap shoot and the phrase used was “shooters of all ages” and the concern from the staffer from the Governor’s office, who does not come from this background, that was alarming to her to see that in print. This has come full circle in a year. When Keith diversity and inclusion was critical to relevancy and it absolutely is. It was the first time you met me a year ago that I shared my mantra, communicate, collaborate and connect and I have lost track of the number of times this morning we used the word “collaboration” during our discussion. My thanks to everyone on all the projects we talked about. This one really hits the core of our future, thanks Keith for taking the lead on this and shepherding it, I know you have given credit to the committee and when it comes time to vote I will vote yes. *Kelly* – Well stated. ***Keith Warnke, Wisconsin moved to submit grant, Kendra Wecker, Ohio second. Motion carried.*** *Kelly* – Well done. We should get note out to members thanking them too. Ollie, send not to at least the chair of the committee.

Resolutions

North American Non-Lead Partnership

Kelly – We need a motion on what we discussed earlier (*Resolution – Exhibit J*). ***Dan Eichinger, Michigan moved to approve the resolution; Dale Garner, Iowa second. Motion carried.*** *Kelly* – Look forward to communication and partnership going forward. A challenging discussion and glad we are showing some leadership in association with that. The proper thing to do.

Kelly – Not on the agenda individually, but there is one health resolution. *Sara* – Happy to speak to it, comes from Fish and Wildlife health committee. Just a reflection of conversations that have been going on with health committee and ExCom and other members. Covid brought it to the forefront, but any of us dealing with CWD and trying to get more prominent role at the table with USDA and other agencies with authority and feeling we are red-headed stepchild, with adding Covid to it now was the time for many of us, including the health committee to say we

needed a more prominent role between human health, wildlife health and environmental health. I wish Jonathan would have been on this call because he could speak to it more eloquently than I can. Jonathan or Paul Johansen would say that sometimes CDC will come to us to ask us to review some guidelines, but we are not considered first and foremost to be part of the discussion in drafting guidelines, or in discussion. This is an opportunity to say we are going to be seeing more issues or nexus of wildlife health, human health and environmental health and how do we ensure, as state fish and wildlife agencies, that we are considered primary partners in conversations at federal and state level about this nexus and interconnection. This resolution (Exhibit K) is a reminder to state fish and wildlife agencies to have these conversations when appropriate. Also, as this resolution passes hopefully other regional associations will pass something similar and for AFWA to consider. It calls to light the importance of fish and wildlife, especially in the health arena, as we are trying to build capacity we want a more prominent seat at the table in these important conversations. *Ron Regan* – Sara has been passionate about this and on the tip of the spear with AFWA executive committee. We have had multiple discussions about how AFWA can step up its' game. I mentioned earlier that we are going to have some capacity funding for AFWA to help us engage at a higher level. Some of that funding is going to go towards reenergizing the fish and wildlife health initiative. We are going to be inviting explicit participation from the CDC, and folks on our team, both Deb Hahn on a national scale and Dr. Mawdsley through the Fish and Wildlife health world, looking for opportunities to engage with the world health organization too. AFWA is fully behind the direction this resolution is pointing to. *Kelly* – This is first association this resolution has been presented to? *Sara* – I believe this is the first. *Ron* – I agree. *Kelly* – WAFWA having a similar resolution? *Sara* – I don't know, I will try to get that information. *Kelly* – Good work and I think we need to share it with other associations and urge them to pass something similar. Ollie, you can reach out to the other executive directors and include the president of the regional associations. ***Sara Pauley, Missouri moved to pass resolution, Dale Garner, Iowa second. Motion carried.***

USFWS NOFO Grant

Kelly – Kelley, highlight what the grant does so the directors know what they are voting on. *Kelley* – This is an extension of work we have been doing with Ed and Claire last year but started a new cooperative agreement because of the federal granting cycle. What we are proposing is continue working with Ed and Claire in same way, also recognizing we haven't made any adjustments for changes in amounts you all can pay to them, so we increased it using consumer price index (CPI) from 2019, a little increase to account for that. We also added some additional funds for communications support. We proposed that agreement to run for two years. In the past brought to you year after year, propose two-year agreement with Ed and Claire. We can come back and talk about what has been going under the cooperative agreement next year, but grant would automatically move forward into the next year without going through MAFWA or federal process. There is another part B to all of this which is some additional monies to MAFWA to pay for some of consultations, like creating unifying vision, helping us work across a couple of committees, providing recommendations for improvement, that would only go for one year until September 30, 2021. There is the two-year portion, the Ed and Claire, coordinator/liaison portion and communications; and one-year portion looking at defined work of vision, committee integration and improvement in governance. *Kelly* – Craig like to support some states on communication side because capacity not in this grant, per say. I said we would provide that, but I didn't ask any directors. We need to be clear when we move on what you are looking for from the states and we can work with Ollie to get it out to the directors. It wasn't like we were trying to commit somebody full time to this but there are times when we are going to need communication shop to help up out. *Kelley* – No match required under this agreement as

currently written. That is a place we would be looking, we built in \$25,000 to \$30,000 a year for communications and that involves improving web presence, developing that strategy, so we weren't very prescriptive on how that happens because we want to be able to have that conversation about how we work with the states and build that network. Is it a person or contractor, or shared resources; we don't have answer to that yet but is part of the conversation we will have as we are putting work plan together around the cooperative agreement. That is something Ed and I will do, and we will make sure we bring it back to who needs to look at that. *Kelly* – That could become topic of steering committee in three weeks. *Kelley* – When we put out a call if you have people who want to be on this network or want to participate. Having opportunity for your communications staff to be working on a regional collaborative, multistate effort that could be awesome growth opportunity for them too, put plug in there now. If you see that request come across it will be a cool opportunity. *Kelly* – Ollie, we should send thank you note to the director for her support. ***Dale Garner, Iowa moved to pass resolution; Jim Douglas, Nebraska second. Motion carried.***

Kendra Wecker – Reflecting on roadmap to relevancy our staff is looking for additional support to help us do some work internally. I wondered if we would be able to contract through MAFWA, like we have before for certain positions, if MAFWA would be able to assist us in paying for an employee or two that we would utilize for specific contract project. The arrangements last time were that we paid 5% overhead to MAFWA to accommodate time spent for cutting checks and auditing process. See if board receptive to assisting with contract in Ohio? *Kelly* – Worked well last time. *Ollie* – Ohio has complicated system of getting money out of their state and have used us several times to get projects done that benefit the state and we have been happy to do that. It gets down to how many checks Sara has to sign, and I don't know what is involved in this project. It is a workload for Roger and for Sara to sign checks. *Kendra* – Don't recall arrangement of how last contractor was paid. If paying monthly would be easier or something like that we are flexible to reduce number of checks and make it easier. *Ollie* – We did it monthly with Anthony and that seemed to work. I don't want to burden Sara. *Sara* – I will make sure all checks are signed, not a problem. *Kelly* – Doesn't need official action of the full board. *Ollie* – No, ExCom can handle at next meeting. *Kendra* – We will develop a proposal. Thank you for support.

Ollie – Circling back to non-lead partnership. Michigan made motion to approve the resolution did that include a motion to join the partnership. That was an agenda item to vote on whether to join the partnership as a supporting partner and that includes a commitment to either in-kind or direct funding. I don't know if that takes a new motion or whether included in resolution motion? *Kelly* – The resolution doesn't say we are joining the partnership. Dan, what do you want to do, you made the motion originally? It encourages directors to join but doesn't say the Association. *Dan* – We should discuss separate motion to whether MAFWA join the partnership because the resolution specifically says MAFWA is going to encourage its member states to participate, if they chose, which is different. A different question than whether the Association itself will join. Good catch, Ollie. *Kelly* – Leland, I think I know what your preference would be but if you have a preference would you let us know. *Leland* – Two parts to resolution, encouragement for MAFWA directors to join as a supporting partner as MAFWA organization, also encouragement for individual states to join at an appropriate level. Two clarification pieces there, and then also clarification at what level MAFWA itself would join at and each individual state would make the decision from there. I don't know if we need to make a motion. More of a process for you as an organization about how you would provide that support and if that needs to be in the motion or not. That is a discussion we can continue to have we generally figure that out in coordination

with the organization that joins and haven't had that detailed conversation. The other piece is that you would have to approve the president to actually sign the partnership resolution as that is the guiding document for partnership itself. Agreeing to abide by that resolution as part of the partnership. *Kelly* – When I read resolution it doesn't say the Association is joining the partnership, it encourages to talk to member states so that is a separate question. Do we want Association to join the partnership? *Dan* – One of the things that may be confusing is in the first "be it further resolved" is the reference to the directors, and in the following one, talking about individual states being encouraged to participate. When we make resolutions to compel Association itself to do it, do we use language where it is the Association's directors or refer to Association joining something? If it is the latter we may need to reconsider the vote and make an amendment to the resolution to remove the word "directors" and that would seem to have the Association join the partnership. *Kelly* – Ollie, you have the history here. *Ollie* – I think it would be cleaner to have a new motion for MAFWA to join the non-lead partnership as a supporting partner. ***Brad Loveless, Kansas moved; Dale Garner, Iowa second. Motion carried.***

Sara – Ron sent us an email, brought up great point that with the passage of RAWA during this particular board meeting we might want to consider having the MAFWA board send a letter to Congresswoman Dingle and Congressman Fortenberry to thank them for their amazing support of RAWA and getting this through the House. *Kelly* – That is a good point. To broaden that out and put my AFWA president hat on, I think that request should go out to every regional association to do that. We can do that from Midwest. Ron, could you draft what a form would look like and we will send it under my signature or Ollie's signature, but also share with other regional associations and urge them to send also. *Ron* – We can help with that. Timing and sequence of that. Still need full passage of the bill, but poignant that two Midwestern members of Congress were leading the charge during the same time MAFWA was meeting. We will help Kelly with that. *Kelly* – We can even personalize that with emphasis that historic moment and we are proud of our representatives.

Dale Garner, Iowa moved to adjourn, Brad Loveless, Kansas second. Adjourned at 11:05



MIDWEST

Association of
Fish & Wildlife
Agencies



TREASURER'S REPORT

January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019

September 22, 2020

MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES

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**MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES
ACCOUNT BALANCE SUMMARY**

	As of December 31		
	2018	Change	2019
MAFWA Accounts			
Banking Services	\$185,546.28	(\$45,080.36)	\$140,465.92
Conference	207,952.23	(118,237.07) *	89,715.16
Southern Wings	24.20	4.12	28.32
Federal Grant	53,176.28	(41,831.38)	11,344.90
Credit Union Share Account	25.73	0.12	25.85
Money Market & Securities Account	435,330.35	261,852.17 *	697,182.52
Total MAFWA Accounts	\$882,055.07	\$56,707.60	\$938,762.67

Conservation Enhancement Fund (CEF) Accounts

CEF Credit Union Checking Account	\$0.01	\$11,013.76	\$11,013.77
CEF Credit Union Share Account	55,081.37	(8,293.56)	46,787.81
CEF Funds Held at the Broker	4,589.32	893.37	5,482.69
Total CEF Accounts	\$59,670.70	\$3,613.57	\$63,284.27

Total MAFWA and CEF Accounts	\$941,725.77	\$60,321.17	\$1,002,046.94
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* \$160,000 was transferred from the Conference Account to the Money Market and Securities Account in calendar year 2019.

Note: See the detail pages of the accounts for designations of the account balances.

**MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES
CALENDAR YEAR 2019 CASH FLOW SUMMARY
BANKING SERVICES ACCOUNT**

Line #

1	Balance as of January 1, 2019		\$185,546.28
	Receipts		
2	Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow (CLfT) Contributions	\$10,526.32	
3	National Pheasant Coordinator Contributions	100,400.00	
4	National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative - OH	10,526.00	
5	SE Cooperative Disease Study - OH	31,579.00	
6	Spatial Habitat & Modeling Support - OH	38,734.12	
7	2019 Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference - OH	20,236.38	
8	Interest	<u>252.38</u>	
9	Total Receipts		212,254.20
	Disbursements		
10	Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow (CLfT)	\$30,000.00	
11	Pheasants Forever - National Pheasant Coordinator	113,236.05	
12	National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative - OH	10,000.00	
13	SE Cooperative Disease Study - OH	30,000.00	
14	Spatial Habitat & Modeling Support - OH	27,857.13	
15	Transfer to Conservation Enhancement Fund - KS	32,471.81	
	Administrative Fee:		
16	Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow (CLfT)	1,578.96	
17	National Pheasant Coordinator	4,770.00	
18	Spatial Habitat, Wildlife Disease, Nat'l Bobwhite Init.- OH	4,291.61	
19	2019 Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference - OH	3,129.00	
20	Total Disbursements		<u>257,334.56</u>
21	Balance as of December 31, 2019		\$140,465.92 *

22	* Note: Designations of the ending balance are:		
23	\$20,357.38	2019 Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference in Ohio	
24	2,375.00	2021 Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference in Minnesota	
25	8,940.38	Spatial Habitat & Modeling Support - OH	
26	44.92	National Wild Pheasant Technical Committee	
27	<u>90,278.51</u>	National Pheasant Plan Coordinator Contributions	
28	<u>\$121,996.19</u>	Total Designations of the Banking Services Account	

**MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES
CALENDAR YEAR 2019 CASH FLOW SUMMARY
CONFERENCE ACCOUNT**

Line #			
1	Balance as of January 1, 2019		\$207,952.23
	Receipts		
	Conference		
2	Sponsors	\$65,000.00	
3	Registrations	26,075.00	
4	Hotel Commissions	1,446.00	
5	Total Conference Receipts	\$92,521.00	
6	Affiliate Dues	1,200.00	
7	Membership Dues	52,053.72	
	Administrative/Banking Fees		
8	Southern Wings	875.00	
9	National Pheasant Coordinator	4,770.00	
	Spatial Habitat, Wildlife Disease, Nat'l Bobwhite Init.- OH	4,291.61	
10	Indirect Cost - USFWS and NFWF	16,821.27	
11	Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow (CLfT)	1,578.96	
12	2019 Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference - OH	3,129.00	
13	Interest	140.07	
14	Total Receipts		177,380.63
	Disbursements		
	Conference		
15	Delaney Meeting and Event Management	\$12,789.66	
16	Room, food, beverages, hospitality, etc.	29,034.68	
17	Credit Card Fees	1,375.09	
18	Prizes and Awards	4,135.04	
19	Total Conference Disbursements	\$47,334.47	
	Executive Secretary		
20	Pay	52,000.00	
21	Travel Reimbursements	9,916.89	
	Treasurer		
22	Pay	17,194.77	
23	Travel Reimbursements	4,137.24	
24	Recording Secretary - Travel Reimbursements	1,785.99	
25	Insurance	663.00	
26	Tax Form Preparation	1,675.00	
27	Web Site Maintenance	590.98	
28	Miscellaneous	319.36	
29	Total Disbursements		135,617.70
30	Transfer to Money Market & Securities Account		160,000.00
31	Balance as of December 31, 2019		\$89,715.16

**MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES
CALENDAR YEAR 2019 CASH FLOW SUMMARY
SOUTHERN WINGS ACCOUNT**

Line #

1	Balance as of January 1, 2019	\$24.20
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Receipts

2	Contributions	\$17,500.00	
3	Interest	<u>4.12</u>	
4	Total Receipts		17,504.12

Disbursements

5	American Bird Conservancy	\$16,625.00	
6	Banking Fee (5%)	<u>875.00</u>	
7	Total Disbursements		<u>17,500.00</u>
8	Balance as of December 31, 2019		\$28.32

**MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES
CALENDAR YEAR 2019 CASH FLOW SUMMARY
FEDERAL GRANT ACCOUNT**

Line #

1	Balance as of January 1, 2019	\$53,176.28
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Receipts

2	State Contributions - Monarch NFWF Project	\$22,672.60
3	Federal Reimbursements - USFWS	93,822.74
4	NFWF Reimbursements	59,193.20
5	Interest	<u>108.13</u>
6	Total Receipts	175,796.67

Disbursements

USFWS State Liaison		
7	Pay	\$67,600.00
8	Travel	9,782.61
Monarch Coordinator		
9	Pay	84,000.00
10	Travel	8,791.74
11	Monarch Planning Travel & Meeting Exp.	9,442.28
12	Monarch Steering Committee Participation	21,190.15
13	Indirect Cost Transfer to Conference Acct	<u>16,821.27</u>
14	Total Disbursements	<u>217,628.05</u>
15	Balance as of December 31, 2019	\$11,344.90 *

* Note: Designations of the ending balance are State Cash Matching Contributions for the NFWF III Monarch Conservation Coordination Project of \$22,150.51. A NFWF reimbursement of \$19,192.46 was received in January, 2020.

**MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES
CALENDAR YEAR 2019 CASH FLOW SUMMARY
CREDIT UNION SHARE ACCOUNT**

Line #

1	Balance as of January 1, 2019	\$25.73
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Receipts

2	Interest	\$0.12
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3	Total Receipts	0.12
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Disbursements

4	Total Disbursements	<u>-</u>
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5	Balance as of December 31, 2019	\$25.85
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**MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES
CALENDAR YEAR 2019 ACCOUNT SUMMARY
MONEY MARKET AND SECURITIES ACCOUNT**

Line #

1	Balance as of January 1, 2019	\$435,330.35
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Receipts

2	Interest	\$13,647.64
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3	Dividends	8,815.07
---	-----------	----------

4	Capital Gains	<u>14,668.39</u>
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5	Total Receipts	37,131.10
---	----------------	-----------

Disbursements

6	Total Disbursements	-
---	---------------------	---

7	Change in Market Value	64,721.07
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8	Transfer from Conference Account	<u>\$160,000.00</u>
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9	Balance as of December 31, 2019	\$697,182.52
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**MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES
CALENDAR YEAR 2018 ACCOUNT SUMMARY
CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT FUND (CEF)
HELD AT THE CREDIT UNION**

CEF - Credit Union Checking Account

Line #

1	Balance as of January 1, 2019		\$0.01
	Receipts		
2	Transfer from CEF Share Account (See Below	\$40,999.99	
3	Interest	13.77	
4	Total Receipts		41,013.76
	Disbursements		
5	2020 Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference - IL	\$16,000.00	
6	2021 Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference - MI	3,000.00	
7	2022 Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference - IA	1,000.00	
8	Kansas Dept of Wildlife & Parks Conference	10,000.00	
9	Total Disbursements		30,000.00
10	Balance as of December 31, 2019		\$11,013.77

CEF - Credit Union Share Account

Line #

11	Balance as of January 1, 2019		\$55,081.37
	Receipts		
12	Transfer from MAFWA Conference Acct - KS	\$32,471.81	
13	Interest	234.62	
14	Total Receipts		32,706.43
	Disbursements		
15	Transfer to CEF Checking Account (See Above)	\$40,999.99	
16	Total Disbursements		40,999.99
17	Balance as of December 31, 2019		\$46,787.81 *

* \$22,471.81 of the ending Credit Union Share Account balance is held for Kansas from the 2012 Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference.

**MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES
CALENDAR YEAR 2019 ACCOUNT SUMMARY
CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT FUND
HELD AT THE BROKER**

Line #

1	Balance as of January 1, 2019	\$4,589.32
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Receipts

2	Dividends	\$76.25
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3	Capital Gains	<u>68.25</u>
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4	Total Receipts	144.50
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Disbursements

	Holding and Reporting Fee	<u>\$50.00</u>
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5	Total Disbursements	50.00
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6	Change in market value	<u>798.87</u>
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7	Balance as of December 31, 2019	\$5,482.69
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MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES

Current Investment Allocation 9/23/2020

	Amount	Int. Rate	Est. Ann. Int.
Money Market	\$ 57,691.16	0.150%	\$ 86.54

Bond Ladder Held at Southwest Securities

Security	Face Value	Int. Rate	Maturity	Mrkt. Value	Annual Interest
JP Morgan Chase	\$ 40,000.00	5.000%	5/1/2068	\$ 40,489.60	\$ 2,000.00
SML Corp	\$ 10,000.00	6.05%	12/15/2026	\$ 8,780.90	\$ 605.00
Safeway	\$ 20,000.00	7.45%	9/15/2027	\$ 22,400.00	\$ 1,490.00
Nations/BOA	\$ 20,000.00	6.800%	3/15/2028	\$ 25,559.60	\$ 1,360.00
SML Corp	\$ 10,000.00	5.50%	6/15/2029	\$ 7,473.00	\$ 550.00
SML Corp	\$ 12,000.00	6.25%	9/15/2029	\$ 9,358.68	\$ 750.00
Safeway	\$ 20,000.00	7.25%	2/1/2031	\$ 22,501.60	\$ 1,450.00
Albertsons	\$ 20,000.00	8.00%	5/1/2031	\$ 23,200.00	\$ 1,600.00
Limited Brands	\$ 20,000.00	6.95%	3/1/2033	\$ 17,800.00	\$ 1,390.00
Citi Group	\$ 10,000.00	6.00%	10/31/2033	\$ 13,568.60	\$ 600.00
Bristol Myers	\$ 10,000.00	5.88%	11/15/2036	\$ 14,470.60	\$ 587.50
YUM Brands	\$ 20,000.00	6.88%	11/15/2037	\$ 24,200.00	\$ 1,375.00
Goldman Sachs	\$ 14,000.00	5.75%	5/15/2039	\$ 17,605.70	\$ 805.00
MDC Holdings	\$ 20,000.00	6.00%	1/15/2043	\$ 24,200.00	\$ 1,200.00
Total Face Value	\$ 246,000.00				\$ 15,762.50

Current Annual Interest Income \$ 15,762.50 \$ 271,608.28
Average Interest Rate 6.41%

Mutual Fund Holdings (American Funds)

Purchased \$50,000.00 A Shares 9/13/2005
Purchased \$25,000.00 A Shares 8/24/2007
Purchased \$20,000.00 A Shares 4/18/2013
Purchased \$10,000.00 A Shares 9/15/2015

Name of Fund	Invested	Curr. Val.	
Growth Fund of America	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 73,637.42	
High Income Trust	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 21,241.16	
Investment Co. of America	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 30,271.04	
Income Fund of America	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 33,089.66	
Capitol Income Builder	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 20,219.03	
Cap. World Grwth & Inc.	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 39,272.00	
American Funds EuroPacific Fund	\$ 12,500.00	\$ 20,609.49	
American Funds Fundamental Investors	\$ 12,500.00	\$ 31,792.40	
Total	\$105,000.00	\$ 270,132.20	157.27%
Lord Abbett Affiliated Fund	\$ 40,000.00	8/16/2019 \$ 36,206.74	
Lord Abbett Midcap Value Fund	\$ 40,000.00	8/16/2019 \$ 34,421.40	
Lord Abbett Value Opportunities Fund	\$ 40,000.00	10/9/2019 \$ 38,347.30	
	\$120,000.00	\$ 108,975.44	
Total Account Market Value		9/23/2020	\$708,407.08

Balance of account 6/22/2006 \$ 220,332.22

Jaschek Fund History

- **Anton Walter Jaschek, Milwaukee, WI, left \$209,534.44 of his estate to MAFWA (similar amounts were left to Audubon and Ducks Unlimited)**
- **CDs were purchased with \$150,000 of these funds and \$53,952 was invested in a Merrill Lynch account**
- **\$4,904.00 of Jaschek Fund spent on CITES work (March 11, 1997)**
- **\$21,934.83 of Jaschek Fund contributed to Teaming With Wildlife (TWW) (April 23, 1998)**
- **\$3,800.00 of Jaschek Fund contributed to Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA) (November 3, 1999)**
- **Guidelines on the purpose and use of the Jaschek Fund approved by the Board (July 18, 2000)—see attachment**
- **\$10,000 of Jaschek Fund contributed to AFWA's AWARE program (August 27, 2003)**
- **MAFWA Board adopts Investments Committee's recommendations to develop an investment policy for the Jaschek funds and turn funds over to an investment management advisor (July 13, 2004)**
- **MAFWA Board approves Shane Hessman of Hampton Consulting Corporation, Pratt, Kansas as the Association's investment advisor (July 13, 2005)**
- **Jaschek Fund Investment policy adopted by Board (July 12, 2006)—see attachment**

Jaschek Guidelines

Association of Midwest Fish and Wildlife Agencies Original Guidelines for the Use of the Anton Walter Jaschek Fund July 18, 2000

The Anton Walter Jaschek inheritance was an unexpected and unique gift given to the Association of Midwest Fish and Wildlife Agencies in 1996. The sum of money was considerable for an organization like the AMFWA. This gift affords the AMFWA the potential for long term financial participation in a variety of issues. The Association can utilize this fund for many activities rather than request contributions from individual states, thus helping to keep annual dues modest, and selected requests for other financial needs limited.

As determined by the Executive Committee, the principle of the Jaschek Fund will be invested in securities to provide long term stable income growth. Only the annual interest earned on the fund will be utilized for funding appropriate projects in a given year. The principle will remain invested and protected from expenditure to assure a steady source of investment income for future project use.

Purpose and Use of the Fund

The purpose and use of the Anton Walter Jaschek fund shall be to support activities of the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies which maintain and enhance the capability of all Midwest Association States to develop and implement comprehensive fish and wildlife programs for game, nongame, endangered species and their habitats.

1.) Activities that shall be given priority consideration are as follows:

- # Supporting the enactment of new national legislation which will increase the funding and/or enhance state authority for the development and implementation of fish and wildlife programs such as: Teaming With Wildlife, CARA (Conservation and Reinvestment Act). Support may take the form of: direct contribution to the IAFWA for information and education efforts, supporting the expenses of state staff who are assigned temporary duty on behalf of the AMFWA to work on these issues; supporting the collection, publication and distribution of information which will have a positive impact on Congressional decision makers.
- # Supporting re-authorization of existing national legislation such as the Farm Bill, Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, for the purposes of maintaining and/or strengthening these types of legislation. Support may include: contributing to IAFWA efforts to dedicate staff to work on re-authorizations, supporting studies and evaluations to provide background information reflective of Midwest states needs; paying the expenses of staff to participate on behalf of the AMFWA on national advisory groups or study groups related to re-authorization of these types of legislation; supporting the collection, publication and distribution of information which will have a positive impact on Congressional decision makers.

- # The President shall forward copies of all grant requests to the full Executive Committee of the AMFWA by April 20.
- # The Executive Committee shall meet, via phone conference call, prior to June 1 and develop a joint recommendation on grant funding priorities, utilizing the Jaschek Fund guidelines.
- # The President shall forward the recommendations of the Executive Committee to all members of the AMFWA no later than 30 days prior to the summer meeting of the AMFWA.
- # The AMFWA shall give final approval or modify the recommendations of the Executive Committee at the Business meeting of the AMFWA.

3.) Distributing and Evaluation of Grants:

- # On behalf of the President, the Secretary/Treasurer shall notify the grant recipients of the AMFWA action within 30 days.
- # The Secretary/Treasurer will arrange for the funds to be sent to the requestor.
- # Successful grants recipients shall be requested to provide a report back to the AMFWA on the use of the funds as requested by the President.

INVESTMENT POLICY STATEMENT MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES

The following will serve as investment guidelines for assets in the Anton Walter Jaschek Fund (Fund) of the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (Association).

INVESTMENT POLICY

The principle of the fund is to remain invested for life. The interest/dividends are to be reinvested or used at the discretion of the Association board of directors to fund projects deemed acceptable by the board. At no time are the funds to be invested in highly volatile or risky investment vehicles.

ALLOCATION

The funds shall be allocated approximately 75% in fixed income investments such as CD's, Bonds, or High Quality preferred stocks. The interest from these investments shall be used to fund current projects. The remaining 25% shall be invested in a well balanced portfolio of mutual funds geared toward consistent growth with some income possibilities. The investment allocation will be reviewed at least semi-annually, and at such other times as the chairman of the investment committee may deem necessary. At any time should this allocation become out of balance, the chairman of the investment committee may request that the accounts be rebalanced to reflect the 75/25 allocation.

INVESTMENT CRITERIA

The fixed income portion of the investment shall be invested in any bond with an investment grade of B or higher. Short-term fluctuations in the economy will have impacts on the quality ratings of bonds. Should an investment grade fall below B level at anytime, the chairman of the investment committee shall have responsibility and authority, in consultation with the current investment advisor, to decide if it should be replaced with a higher quality investment. It will be the discretion of the chairman of the investment committee, in consultation with the investment advisor, to make changes in the day-to-day investment of fixed income investments.

The mutual fund portion of the investment shall be invested for continued growth of assets. Only funds with consistent growth and income shall be used. Special attention shall be paid to dividend rates and expense rates. The portfolio shall remain invested in moderately aggressive, widely diversified funds. Dividends and asset growth will be reinvested unless the Association board of directors elects to use them to fund selected projects or Association operating expenses.

Adopted by the Association Board of Directors on this date: July 12, 2006

INVESTMENT POLICY STATEMENT MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES

The following will serve as investment guidelines for assets in the Anton Walter Jaschek Fund (Fund) of the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (Association).

INVESTMENT POLICY

The principle of the fund is to remain invested for life. The interest/dividends are to be reinvested or used at the discretion of the Association board of directors to fund projects deemed acceptable by the board. At no time are the funds to be invested in highly volatile or risky investment vehicles.

ALLOCATION

The funds shall be allocated at least approximately 50% in fixed income investments such as CD's, Bonds, or High Quality preferred stocks. The interest from these investments may be reinvested or may be used to fund current projects upon approval of the Executive Committee. The remaining up to 50% shall be invested in a well-balanced portfolio of mutual funds geared toward consistent growth with some income possibilities or in other interest-bearing accounts. The investment allocation will be reviewed at least semi-annually, and at such other times as the chairman of the Investment committee may deem necessary. At any time should this allocation become out of balance. The chairman of the investment committee may request that the accounts be rebalanced to reflect the 50/50 allocation.

INVESTMENT CRITERIA

The fixed income portion of the investment shall be invested in any bond with an investment grade of B or higher. Short-term fluctuations in the economy will have impacts on the quality ratings of bonds. Should an investment grade fall below R level at anytime, the chairman of the investment committee shall have responsibility and authority, in consultation with the current investment advisor, to decide if it should be replaced with a higher quality investment. It will be the discretion of the chairman of the investment committee, in consultation with the investment advisor, to make changes in the day-to-day investment of fixed income investments.

The mutual fund portion of the investment shall be invested for continued growth of assets. Only funds with consistent growth and income shall be used. Special attention shall be paid to dividend rates and expense rates. The portfolio shall remain invested in moderately aggressive, widely diversified funds. Dividends and asset growth will be reinvested unless the Association board of directors elects to use them to fund selected projects or Association operating expenses.

Adopted by the Association Board of Directors on this date: _ September 14,
2016 _____

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS



MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF FISH & WILDLIFE AGENCIES

JUNE 19, 2019

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF FISH & WILDLIFE AGENCIES

PREAMBLE

The name of this organization shall be the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (Association). The Association shall be organized and operated as a non-profit professional association as described in 501(c)(6) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code with the purpose of promoting the protection, preservation, restoration and management of fish and wildlife resources.

The Association established a foundation, Conservation Enhancement Fund (Fund), to be organized and operated as a 501 (c) 3 charitable, educational and scientific corporation.

The Association ~~and Fund~~ ~~was~~ ~~were~~ incorporated in the State of Kansas on August 19, 2005. The Association ~~and Fund~~ shall comply with K.S.A. 17-1759, et seq., known as the "Charitable Organizations and Solicitations Act." To the extent these bylaws conflict with a provision of the Act, the Act shall govern.

The objectives of the Association shall be:

- (a) to protect the right of jurisdiction of the Midwestern states over their wildlife resources on public and private lands;
- (b) to scrutinize state and federal wildlife legislation and regulations and to offer support or opposition to legislative proposals or federal regulations in accordance with the best interests of the Midwestern states;
- (c) to serve as a clearinghouse for the exchange of ideas concerning wildlife and fisheries management, research techniques, wildlife law enforcement, hunting and outdoor safety, and information and education;
- (d) and to encourage and assist sportsmen's and conservationists' organizations so that the fullest measure of cooperation may be secured from our citizenry in the protection, preservation, restoration and management of our fish and wildlife resources.

The Association met for the first time on October 28, 1934 in Des Moines, Iowa. At that time the group was known as the Association of Midwest Fish and Game Commissioners. The Association first received its non-profit status in 1968. The Association's name was changed to the Association of Midwest Fish and Wildlife Commissioners in 1972, to the Association of Midwest Fish and Wildlife Agencies in 1977, and to the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in 2001.

ARTICLE I

OFFICERS

Section 1. The Officers of the Association shall be President, First Vice-President, and Second Vice-President. The President and both Vice-Presidents shall be the duly authorized voting representative of their member state or province and shall be selected on an alphabetical rotation basis, with the First Vice-President being from the state or province next in order of rotation following the President and the Second Vice-President being from the state or province next in rotation following the First Vice-President. The term of office shall commence 30 days following adjournment of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' (AFWA) annual meeting and conclude 30 days following adjournment of the succeeding annual AFWA meeting. The First Vice-President shall automatically succeed to President if he/she remains eligible. If the President separates from a member agency (or is replaced by that agency), the First Vice-President shall fulfill the remaining term, followed by their regular term.

Section 2. The Board of Directors shall be composed of the officers identified in Article I, Section 1 and one representative from each state and province except those represented by the officers. Such state or provincial Board member shall be the chief executive officer of the fish and wildlife agency of his/her state or province, or his/her designee. A Board member may, by written notification to the President, designate a voting proxy from the Board member's state or province. However, Executive Committee members may not designate a proxy for the conduct of Executive Committee business. All Board members are required to annually sign a conflict of interest and compensation policy form.

ARTICLE II

OTHER ASSOCIATION POSITIONS

Section 1. The Association shall establish the position of "Treasurer." An Association member agency may provide an individual to serve in this capacity or the Association may contract with a member agency or an individual to fill this position. This is a nonvoting position.

Section 2. The Association shall also establish the position of "Executive Secretary." An Association member agency may provide an individual to serve in this capacity or the Association may contract with a member agency or an individual to fill the position. This is a nonvoting position.

Section 3. The Association may establish the position of "Recording Secretary." This is a nonvoting position.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership shall be by states and provinces and representation of each state and province at meetings shall be by its duly authorized representative or representatives.

Section 2. The area of membership in the Association shall be the states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin, and the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Ontario and such additional states and provinces as may request membership and be elected by majority vote of the member states and provinces in annual meeting.

Section 3. Membership in the Association of an individual shall terminate upon the expiration of the member's term of office as a state fish and wildlife administrator.

Section 4. Other professional organizations may be granted affiliate membership in the Association based upon demonstration that the Constitution and Bylaws of said organizations meet the basic standards of the Association. Application for affiliate membership shall be forwarded to the Executive Secretary at least 90 days prior to a regular meeting of the Association and shall include a current Constitution and Bylaws and a letter stating the organization's justification for affiliate membership. Affiliate membership shall be voted on by the voting representatives and must attain a majority vote of a quorum. Affiliated membership dues shall be \$75.00 per year; however, this fee may be waived by a majority vote of a quorum. The fee is automatically waived for affiliated conservation agencies or organizations that provide annual financial resources to support the Association through the following sponsorships: Major Sponsor (\$5,000 or more); Gold Sponsor (\$3,000-4,999); Silver Sponsor (\$2,000-2,999); Bronze Sponsor (\$1,000-1,999); and Sponsor (\$500-999).

ARTICLE IV

DUTIES OF OFFICERS and OTHER POSITIONS

Section 1. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Association, appoint all special committees, preside at meetings of the Board of Directors, and perform such other duties as are naturally incumbent upon the office to serve the Association and the Fund. Copies of the annual proceedings shall be forwarded to each member in good standing, with the cost of preparation and handling to be paid out of Association funds. All other copies are for distribution at the discretion of the host state or province.

Section 2. The First Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President in the latter's absence, and specific duties may be assigned as deemed necessary by the President.

Section 3. The Board of Directors shall conduct the business of the Association.

Section 4. The Executive Secretary shall perform the following services for the Association:

- (1) Function as the official "Executive Secretary" for the Association carrying out liaison services by keeping in communication via e-mail, mailings, phone contact and personal visits with member Directors, or their designated representatives, to enhance the viability of the Association.
- (2) Work to obtain direct involvement and commitment of member Directors and affiliate leaders to build strength in the Association as a leading force in the Midwest on behalf of fish and wildlife issues.
- (3) Assist the Executive Director of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in coordinating actions and communications relevant to the Midwest Association.
- (4) Respond to inquiries for information regarding the Association and to routine correspondence.
- (5) Develop and maintain a web site for the Association.
- (6) Carry out directives of the President and/or Executive Committee of the Association.
- (7) Assist with the scheduling of meetings and conference calls and notify appropriate members.
- (8) Record minutes in the absence of the Recording Secretary.
- (9) Provide such other services as may be mutually agreed upon by both parties.

Section 5. The Recording Secretary shall perform the following services:

- (1) Record and publish the annual proceedings of the Association.
- (2) Record and retain the minutes of all meetings of the Association and perform such other duties as are naturally incumbent upon the office.
- (3) Assist other officers and positions with correspondence and record keeping.

- (4) Serve as the custodian of all permanent files and records of the Association.
- (5) Other duties as assigned by the President.

Section 6. The Treasurer shall perform the following services for the Association and the Fund:

- (1) Be custodian of all funds of the Association.
- (2) Establish and have access to Association bank accounts.
- (3) Draw all warrants for payment of claims properly presented and expend funds necessary to pay appropriately invoiced bills, provided such warrants are signed by a director selected and approved by the Executive Committee.
- (4) Invoice members and sponsors and collect dues and funds.
- (5) Review monthly account reports and monitor income and expenditures.
- (6) Prepare reports to the Executive Committee detailing income, expenditures and asset values.
- (7) Perform record-keeping, reporting and filing actions to ensure the Association complies with its governing documents and any other relevant laws or regulations, including but not limited to any required filings with the state of Kansas or the Internal Revenue Service to maintain the Association's status as a tax-exempt non-profit organization and legal entity, and provide a report of any such required actions to the Executive Committee at its next meeting.
- (8) Develop, present and oversee budgets, accounts and financial statements and reports and present such records for auditing purposes.
- (9) Ensure that appropriate accounting procedures and controls are in place and comply with the Associations' Internal Controls for Cash Policy.
- (10) Serve as liaison with any staff and volunteers about Association and Fund financial matters.

- (11) Monitor the Association's investment activity and ensure its consistency with the Association's policies and legal responsibilities; liaise with the Investments Committee and review reports submitted thereby.
- (12) Ensure independent examination or audits are executed and any recommendations are implemented; provide report of results at the regular annual meeting.
- (13) Make formal presentation of the accounts at the regular annual meeting and more frequently as requested by the Executive Secretary, the President or the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE V

MEETINGS

One regular meeting shall be held annually. The meeting will be held in and hosted by the state or province in which the President has administrative responsibility, or in such other locations designated by the Association. It is the intent of the Association that the costs of the annual meetings and related business functions may be paid by the Association. When necessary, special meetings may be called by the President or the Executive Secretary. Members shall be given 90 days' notice of regular annual meetings; 60 days' notice for special, in-person meetings; and five days' notice for special, telephonic meetings and telephonic meetings of the Executive Committee.

The Association may authorize members, affiliates and other groups to exhibit at its meetings, subject to the Exhibitor/Sponsor Policy approved by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VI

VOTING

Voting shall be by states and provinces, as units. Each state and province shall have one vote. All voting shall be by voice vote, except that a reasonable request by any member state or province for a secret ballot shall be honored. Any matters of Association business requiring action in the interim between meetings may be handled by the Executive Committee, by majority vote of that committee.

ARTICLE VII

DUES

Annual Dues shall be \$3,800 per member state and \$100 per province, payable in

advance, at, or before each annual meeting; provided that annual dues may be suspended for any given year by a majority vote of a quorum. Dues shall be adjusted annually by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) in the Midwest published by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. Dues shall be adjusted using the annual change in the CPI-U for the month of January of the previous fiscal year. The annual dues for the upcoming year shall be reported at the Association's regular annual meeting by the Treasurer.

ARTICLE VIII

FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Association shall be January 1 through December 31.

ARTICLE IX

QUORUM

A quorum is defined as a simple majority of the states.

ARTICLE X

AMENDMENT

The Constitution and Bylaws (Bylaws) of the Association may be amended at any regular meeting by a majority vote of a quorum; provided, however, a written copy of such proposed amendment shall have been received by the President and the Executive Secretary and sent to members at least 30 days before the regular annual meeting or special meeting called for that purpose; and provided that such changes shall be effective only to the extent they are authorized by applicable law. Proposed Bylaws amendments should be presented to, or generated by, the Bylaws Committee and reviewed by the Executive Committee prior to submitting to voting members of the Association for their consideration. With approval of the First Vice-President, the President may call for voting by mail (including electronic mail) in lieu of a meeting. In this event, the 30-day notice shall still apply, the date of opening ballots shall be previously announced, notice sent to each member within forty-eight hours of vote tabulation by the Executive Secretary and all ballots shall be kept for one year following the vote.

ARTICLE XI

TYPES OF COMMITTEES/BOARDS

Section 1. There shall be three kinds of committees: Standing, President's Ad Hoc, and Technical Working.

Section 2. The following Standing Committees shall be appointed by the incoming President within 30 days after assuming office, they shall serve during the period intervening between annual meetings and at such meetings, or until the purpose of each such committee has been accomplished and it has been discharged by the President.

- A. The Executive Committee shall be composed of six members of the Association: The President, First Vice President, Second Vice-President, ~~immediate~~ Past President, and two other members to be appointed by the President with specific consideration for geographical balance. Any state or province represented on the Executive Committee by more than one individual shall be restricted to a single vote on this committee. The Executive Committee shall have general supervision of the affairs of the Association between its business meetings, make recommendations to the Association as necessary and shall perform such other duties as may be specified in these bylaws. The Executive Committee shall be subject to the orders of the Board of Directors and none of its acts shall conflict with action taken by the Board of Directors. Special meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by the President as necessary. The Executive Committee may also act via conference call or by mail (including electronic mail). In the event that an officer of the Association or the ~~immediate~~ Past President separates from a member agency (or is replaced by that agency), their replacement in a member agency shall serve for the remainder of their term, with the exception of President. If the President separates from a member agency (or is replaced by that agency), their replacement in a member agency will serve in their place on the Executive Committee for the remainder of the term as a Special Board Member with voting rights, and the First Vice-President will succeed to President for the remainder of the term.
- B. The Auditing Committee shall be composed of three members: The First Vice President of the Association, who shall act as chairman, and two other members to be appointed by the President. The Auditing Committee shall audit the financial records of the Association annually and report the result of its audit at the annual regular meeting.
- C. The Resolutions Committee shall be composed of three members, one of which shall be designated as Chairman by the President. Copies of proposed resolutions should be received by the President and the Executive Secretary and sent to members for their consideration at least 30 days before the regular annual meeting. Courtesy resolutions and resolutions of a last-minute nature may be recommended to the Board of Directors at the annual meeting. Furthermore, proposed resolutions for which an urgent need arises between annual meetings may be presented to the Board of Directors for consideration via mail (including electronic mail), provided members are given a 15-day notice. Members shall be notified of the vote outcome by the Executive Secretary within forty-eight hours of vote tabulation.
- D. The Awards Committee shall be composed of five members, one of which shall be designated as Chairman by the President. The Awards Committee shall administer the official annual awards program of the Association.

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- E. The Bylaws Committee shall be composed of at least one member, designated by the President. The Bylaws Committee shall recommend Bylaws changes to the Executive Committee for consideration.
- F. The Investments Committee shall be composed of three members. The President shall designate one of the members as Chairman. The purpose of the committee is to review investments, including the Jaschek portfolio, the Conservation Enhancement Fund, and other permanent assets of the Association and make recommendations to the Association per the investment policy statement. The Investments Committee shall make an annual report to the Board of Directors at the annual meeting.
- G. The Program Committee shall be comprised of four members, one from the host state of the previous annual meeting, one from the host state of the current annual meeting, one from the host state of the next annual meeting, and the Executive Secretary. The purpose of the committee is to assist the host state with developing presentation and discussion topics and suggesting speakers for the non-business portion of meeting.

Section 3. Ad Hoc Committees may be established as deemed necessary by the President of the Association or vote of the Members and shall serve until the purpose of each such committee has been accomplished and it has been discharged by the President or by vote of the Members.

Section 4. The Association may establish Technical Working Committees as deemed necessary to conduct the affairs of the Association. Upon establishment, these committees shall adhere to the following:

- A. Within one year from establishment, each committee shall submit to the Association for approval a Mission Statement, a list of specific responsibilities, and a description of operating procedures that will become part of the official minutes of the Association.
- B. All Technical Working Committees shall submit a written report electronically to the President and the Executive Secretary 30 days in advance of the annual meeting of the Association and may choose to conduct necessary committee business during the period between annual meetings as per their approved operating procedures.
- C. Each Technical Working Committee shall be automatically abolished by the first of August every three years unless reinstated by vote of the Association. As the end of the third-year approaches, the Association shall assess the merits of reinstating the Technical Working Committee.

- D. Resolutions from Technical Working Committees for Association action shall be submitted to the Chair of the Resolutions Committee 30 days in advance of the annual meeting for consideration by the Board of Directors.

The Association recognizes the following Technical Working Committees (year of automatic abolishment in parentheses):

Climate Change (2022)

~~Legal Committee (2020)~~

National Conservation Need (NCN) Committee (2020⁹³)

Midwest Private Lands Wildlife Management Group (2021)

Midwest Public Lands Technical Working Committee (2022)

Midwest Wildlife and Fish Health Committee (2022)

Midwest Deer and Wild Turkey Study Group (2020⁹³)

Association of Midwest Fish and Game Law Enforcement Officers (2020⁹³)

Midwest Furbearer Group (2021)

Wildlife [Diversity Action Plan Technical Working](#) Committee (2021)

Hunter and Angler Recruitment and Retention Technical Working Group (2020⁹³)

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ARTICLE XII

PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Association in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the Association may adopt.

Adopted 1936

Amended 1942

Amended 1944

Amended 1949

Amended 1954

Amended 1960

Amended 1964

Amended 1969

Amended 1971

Amended 1972

Amended 1975

Amended 1976

Amended 1977

Amended 1978

Amended 1980

Amended 1987

Amended 1993
Amended 1995
Amended 1996
Amended 2000
Amended 2001
Amended July 16, 2003
Amended July 13, 2004
Amended July 13, 2005
Amended July 12, 2006
Amended July 18, 2007
Amended July 2, 2008
Amended July 1, 2009
Amended December 23, 2009
Amended June 29, 2011
Amended June 27, 2012
Amended June 26, 2013
Amended June 25, 2014
Amended July 1, 2015
Amended June 29, 2016
Amended June 28, 2017
Amended June 27, 2018
Amended June 26, 2019

Amended ~~July 1~~October 8, 2020

Award Committee Report
Monday, October 8, 2020
(virtual meeting)

Members of the Awards Committee are: Terry Steinwand, North Dakota; Dale Garner, Iowa; Jim Douglas, Nebraska; Brian Clark, Kentucky; and Kendra Wecker, Ohio. I want to thank them for their assistance in choosing the winners. We had 14 nominations for the five main awards and one special recognition nomination.

Award winners are:

The Law Enforcement Officer of the Year award is given to the individual who in the past year has shown superior leadership, initiative, and dedication in their duties. This person should personify achievement, public service, education, and above all natural resource conservation. This award goes to **Jason McCullough, Michigan**.

The Wildlife Biologist of the Year award is given to the individual who has shown an unparalleled initiative towards the better understanding of wildlife and their conservation. This award goes to **Alan Leary, Missouri**.

The Fisheries Biologist of the Year award is given to the individual who has shown an unparalleled initiative towards the better understanding of fishes and their conservation. This award goes to **Jacob Davis, South Dakota**.

The Spirit of the Shack award is given to the individual who exemplifies the ideals of the great conservationist and educator, Aldo Leopold, and who has contributed to conservation in a superior way. This individual should epitomize stewardship and dedication to fish and wildlife conservation. This award goes to **Joe Paul, Wisconsin**.

Excellence in Conservation award is given to the agency that has shown excellence in conservation through a specific project. Each member agency would select one project completed in the awards year that exemplifies the goal of fish and wildlife conservation. This award also has a perpetual plaque. This award goes to **Give Adventure Grant Team, Indiana**.

Special Recognition award goes to the **Kyle Kaskie, South Dakota GIS Specialist**, for all of the work he has done pioneering and creating dashboards for GFP (Game, Fish and Parks) and visualizing, interpreting and analyzing R3 needs.

Sagamore of the Forest, Fields and Streams

“A sagamore is the head of northeastern Native American tribe. The word is generally synonymous with sachem, although sometimes a sachem is considered a chief of the first rank, and a sagamore one of the second rank. Sagamore can also refer to great man among the tribe to whom the chief would look for wisdom and advice.”

This honor is bestowed on any Director or upper level staff member that has contributed significant service to MAFWA. To qualify for this recognition, recipients must provide 4 years of service to MAFWA, have a 75 percent meeting attendance rate and serve on one or more committees.

There are no Sagamore awards this year.



**Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Awards Nomination Form (2020)**

I want to nominate: Jason McCullough, MI

Award (check only one per form)

☐

Spirit of the Shack

☐

Fisheries Biologist of the Year

☐

Wildlife Biologist of the Year

☒

Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

☐

Excellence in Conservation

☐

Special Recognition

Nominator information

Name: Gary Haglar

Organization: Department of Natural Law Enforcement Division

Title: Chief

E-mail: haglerg@michigan.gov

Phone number: 517-284-5992

- 1. Provide a brief (one page or less) overview explaining why the individual/agency meets the criteria for the award:**
- 2. Please list and/or describe specific projects, work or accomplishments relevant to the award. Please limit your information to one page.**

Conservation Officer Jason McCullough has been an officer for 18 years and currently is serving in Calhoun County, Michigan. Gary Hagler, Chief of Law Enforcement Division, Nominator

1. Provide a brief (one page or less) overview explaining why the individual/ agency meets the criteria for the award:

Conservation Officer (CO) Jason McCullough graduated with a dual concentration Bachelor of Science degree in Resource Ecology & Management and Environmental Policy & Behavior from the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor in 1999.

Achievement: CO McCullough always gathers intel and takes basic pieces of information and turns it in to large quality fish and game cases ending with successful prosecutions. Some cases have been made based on information gathered from the prior season. Officer McCullough maintains a patrol plan based on problem areas he hears about throughout the year and has made great cases targeting those areas when the season comes back around.

CO McCullough, on his own initiative, has led his area while serving as an Acting Sergeant. In this role, CO McCullough had several CO's as direct reports and was responsible for the daily operations of his area which included multiple counties. During this time, CO McCullough achieved a highly effective balance between direction and delegation.

Public Service: CO McCullough is often called upon to assist with special assignments within Calhoun County and surrounding areas. These include career days, science fairs, local chiefs' meetings, disabled veteran hunts, township meetings, local city/ village events, Boy Scout and Girl Scout Troops, Neighborhood Watch organizations, classroom presentations ranging from elementary school to the college level, career center programs, various security details, special group patrols targeting specific resource issues (e.g. Tip-up town, Bud Bash, salmon patrols, Operation Guard Hair, Belle Isle efforts) and a never-ending request for a CO to speak to outdoor user groups. One of his favorite presentations was at the City of Clare Police Department's Summer Youth Police Academy in Clare County. CO McCullough has volunteered to assist several times at the annual Coast Guard Festival in Grand Haven. CO McCullough has volunteered several times to work the entire week on Belle Isle with the Grand Prix detail.

Education: CO McCullough worked with another CO to establish a Hunter Education program for the local Amish community. CO McCullough conducted a public presentation on DNR Law Enforcement to the graders at Lakeview middle school. CO McCullough talked to four classes with a total of about 100 kids.

Natural Resource Conservation: Conservation Officer McCullough's job performance and dedicated investigative techniques have produced solid cases for the court(s) to succeed in prosecution time and time again. From the very basic to large complex investigations. CO McCullough has a vested interest in the Department as a trainer and instructor. CO McCullough has assisted recruit school academy staff and has assisted the

Parks & Recreation Division with their Park Ranger Academy. CO McCullough assists in the recruitment and training of officers by serving on pre-screening interview panels, background investigator and a Field Training Officer since 2008. He has been a First Aid Instructor since 2005 and a Tactical Tracking Instructor since 2016. CO McCullough is often called upon when information is needed on trapping, forest fires, nuisance animal control and snowmobiles. This knowledge is why the division has entrusted him in being one of our most highly regarded Field Training Officers the division has to offer. CO McCullough often takes young Probationary Conservation Officers and leads them in such a manner to where they are prepared to take the field on their own and be comfortable in doing so.

2. Please list and/or describe specific projects, work or accomplishments relevant to the award. Please limit your information to one page.

CO McCullough was contacted by the United States Army National Guard stationed at Fort Custer following a hunting incident where a deer was shot from the roadway after dark and after the close of the regular firearm deer season. A suspect was determined through some extraordinary efforts of some civilian employees working on the post. After gathering some suspect information and meeting with some of the base command staff personnel CO McCullough contacted the suspect. CO McCullough was able to obtain a confession from the subject for hunting deer with a firearm during the closed season on the base. A citation was issued for the violation CO McCullough witnessed during the investigation. The suspect was barred from entry onto the post until further notice.

CO McCullough observed an ORV operating at a high rate of speed down a Michigan highway. After turning around CO McCullough was able to catch up to the ORV as it was pulling in a driveway about a mile away. Upon contact the operator was found to have a suspended driver's license in addition to the unregistered ORV, operating the ORV without a helmet and operating on a public roadway. The operator claimed he was just riding the ORV home after leaving it at another family member's home. CO McCullough explained the rules for ORV operation and a citation was issued for the violation observed.

CO McCullough assisted Albion Public Safety with a drowning investigation involving a female subject who was swept through a water control structure along the Kalamazoo River. Unfortunately, the female was trapped underwater for too long and was pronounced deceased at the hospital.

CO McCullough assisted the staff of Dominate Cancer (DC) Strong based out of Plainwell, MI deliver Christmas presents to a boy who was recently diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma. The boy wants to work as a Conservation Officer when he grows up. CO McCullough contacted some National Wild Turkey Federation members to assist with donating items for boy.

CO McCullough served as acting Sergeant for District 8 Area 3 in 2016-2017. CO McCullough received a Certificate of Merit from the Clare County Sheriff's Office in 2015 for actions rendered in apprehending an attempted murder suspect. He was named the Michigan National Wild Turkey Federation Officer of the Year in 2013. CO McCullough was nominated by District 5 for Conservation Officer of the Year in 2011 & 2012.

While the District Sargent was off for several weeks on medical leave, CO McCullough was appointed to work out of class as his replacement as the acting Sargent. CO McCullough did an outstanding job and returned his Area back to him in tip top shape.



**Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Awards Nomination Form (2020)**

I want to nominate: Alan Leary, Missouri

Award (check only one per form)

☐

Spirit of the Shack

☐

Fisheries Biologist of the Year

☒

Wildlife Biologist of the Year

☐

Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

☐

Excellence in Conservation

☐

Special Recognition

Nominator information

Name: Norman Murray

Organization: Missouri Department of Conservation

Title: Species & Habitat Unit Chief

E-mail: Norman.Murray@mdc.mo.gov

Phone number: 573-522-4115 ext. 3353; 417-299-0225 cell

1. Provide a brief (one page or less) overview explaining why the individual/agency meets the criteria for the award:

Alan Leary, Wildlife Management Coordinator, has demonstrated exemplary leadership during the last several years particularly illustrated by the outstanding success of the Feral Hog Eradication and Bear Aware Programs.

Alan re-established the Missouri Feral Hog Partnership with a renewed focus in 2015 with the co-leadership of USDA. The Partnership rapidly gained momentum with its vision of total removal of feral hogs from Missouri. Trapping and elimination efforts escalated as Department regional strike teams became formally coordinated. It soon became apparent that a formal strategic plan was needed to better coordinate the growing intensity of removal efforts and to convey the need for investment in removal and communication efforts. Alan and the USDA led development of the statewide strategic feral hog eradication plan that includes ranked eradication zones, placement of additional full-time USDA trappers, and a budget to fully implement the plan. He also led the budgeting of an additional \$1.8 million to fully fund the implementation of the plan. Simultaneously, Alan drafted a Department regulation prohibiting hunting of feral livestock on lands managed by MDC, which dramatically increased control success. Alan worked with O&E and other staff to implement a highly effective communication campaign that included billboards, radio and other media spots on commercial networks, many magazine and news articles, and has fielded a multitude of interview requests, information for legislators, and citizen inquiries. Many of these included short deadlines and were less than congenial. Through all this, Alan has remained professional, on point with the communication plan, and dedicated to ensuring that the strategic goals moved forward. His leadership was quickly recognized nationally and he was made chair of the Policy Subcommittee of the National Wild Pig Task Force and the Missouri Feral Hog Partnership continues to receive significant attention from USDA headquarters and others watching progress on this issue.

In 2015, several negative community encounters with juvenile bears occurred, one of which resulted in the death of the bear. These occurred in the spring with dispersing sub-adults and were due to lack of awareness by the public of how to respond to the presence of bears. Alan led development of a “Bear Aware” campaign that has been highly successful and has largely prevented similar instances. Most cases involving bears since resulted from bad behavior by bears creating nuisances and not just dispersing sub-adults. Alan worked with O&E and other staff to implement a successful communication plan that included media releases, billboards, magazine articles, and signs at hiking trailheads and campgrounds. He led the formation of an information packet on bears describing how to respond to their presence and worked with Protection staff to annually distribute these to city managers of targeted communities on the fringes of bear range where dispersal might occur. Alan also led staff to develop bear nuisance response guidelines that empower staff respond to different situations. With vision for what might occur, Alan coordinated Wildlife-Human Incident Training (WHIT) and established regional WHIT teams equipped to respond in case of a wildlife-human attack. Alan also worked with Administration to approve use of tasers for adverse conditioning of nuisance bears and coordinated training so staff could use this valuable tool. Except for Alan’s excellent vision, leadership, and work with excellent staff we would certainly have more extensive bear issues each year.

Alan has deployed and built on skills learned at the Kansas Leadership Center through the programs he leads and staff he supervises. His “can do” attitude, professional manner,

organizational skills, willingness to rely on skilled staff, and desire to improve his own skills are commendable and contribute to the tremendous successes of the programs he leads.

2. Please list and/or describe specific projects, work or accomplishments relevant to the award. Please limit your information to one page.

- a. Co-chair Missouri Feral Hog Partnership
- b. Co-led development of Missouri Feral Hog Strategic Plan
- c. Drafted regulation prohibiting take of feral livestock on Department-managed lands; served as model for other public land agencies
- d. Serves as statewide feral hog coordinator
- e. Chair of the Policy Subcommittee of the National Wild Pig Task Force
- f. Developed Missouri's Bear Aware Program with outreach plan and materials to city planners
- g. Coordinate with statewide Wildlife Damage Biologists to maintain programmatic approach
- h. Coordinated Wildlife-Human Incident Trainings for staff to prepare for the possibility of incidents involving large carnivore incidents



**Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Awards Nomination Form (2020)**

I want to nominate: Jacob Davis, South Dakota

Award (check only one per form)

☐

Spirit of the Shack

☒

Fisheries Biologist of the Year

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Wildlife Biologist of the Year

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Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

☐

Excellence in Conservation

☐

Special Recognition

Nominator information

Name: John Lott

Organization: South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks

Title: Aquatics Section Chief

E-mail: john.lott@state.sd.us

Phone number: 605.773.4508 (w) 605.280.9831 (c)

- 1. Provide a brief (one page or less) overview explaining why the individual/agency meets the criteria for the award:**
- 2. Please list and/or describe specific projects, work or accomplishments relevant to the award. Please limit your information to one page.**

Award Nomination: Jake Davis

It is my privilege to nominate Jake Davis for the MAFWA Fisheries Biologist of the Year Award. Jake is currently the Area Fisheries Supervisor for western South Dakota. In this position, he oversees management of the numerous Black Hills coldwater fisheries resources, as well as the large reservoirs, lakes, and ponds of the Western South Dakota prairie. Jake started his career with the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks as a summer intern, and worked as a seasonal for the Department while completing a master's degree from South Dakota State University. He was subsequently hired as a fisheries biologist in 2012 in Rapid City, focusing his research and management efforts on trout in the Black Hills. He made an immediate and positive impact on coldwater fisheries management. After only three years, Jake was promoted to his current position.

As an Area Fisheries Supervisor, Jake has built and continues to maintain strong relationships with other Department staff and a plethora of external partners. This is best exemplified by the highly productive collaborations he has developed with a very influential regional angler group, as well as the staff at South Dakota's two coldwater hatcheries. The positive rapport that he maintains with these groups in particular cannot be underemphasized and have been extremely productive. In his supervisory role, Jake oversees the fish habitat program for western South Dakota and champions its importance to fisheries management efforts. He prepared, and updated, an all-encompassing strategic management plan that clearly and succinctly outlines the questions, strengths, knowledge gaps, and future of the fisheries in his area. Jake has been instrumental in developing well thought-out, refined, and research-based management actions. The positive impact of his actions will be felt in western South Dakota fisheries, and those of the entire state, for years to come.

Jake's extensive knowledge of fisheries research and management, his outstanding interpersonal skills, and his positive, can-do attitude have made him an important part of fisheries research and management activities across the entire state. His sage advice is frequently sought for questions on topics such as statewide management initiatives, aquatic invasive species, fisheries regulation changes, study designs, and statistical analysis. The fruitfulness of his sharing his talents can be easily seen from his research output. Since 2012, Jake has been the lead author on four, and a coauthor on three, peer-reviewed journal publications. These papers were the result of applied research projects involving a wide range of professionals, requiring that Jake maintain positive relationships with hatchery, academic, and fisheries management staff.

Jake has represented South Dakota at state, regional and national levels. He has fulfilled several roles in the Dakota Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, including Student Subunit President, Chapter Secretary/Treasurer, and Chair of the Environmental Concerns Committee. His successful ability to act as an intermediary among public officials, university staff, angler groups, and individuals is well known, and he is sought out as a liaison among these entities.

The three qualities that make Jake such an outstanding fisheries biologist are his ability to really listen, his openness to change, and his willingness to collaborate. Jake has an uncanny knack to focus on individuals across the socio-economic spectrum and is just at home with urban professionals as he is with rural blue-collar workers. He hears what they have to say and takes it, and them, seriously. This ability to listen, when coupled with his openness to change and willingness to collaborate has led to dramatic changes in fisheries management and angler satisfaction, particularly in the Black Hills.

Respectfully submitted: John Lott, SDGFP Aquatics Resources Chief

Supporting Information: Jake Davis

Some of the highest-profile fisheries in South Dakota are Black Hills streams and reservoirs. Black Hills anglers are extremely engaged and expect the best possible fisheries at all times. Because many of these fisheries exist on land not owned by the Department of Game, Fish and Parks, partnering with other management authorities is essential to successful fisheries management. The U.S. Forest Service owns much of the land within the Black Hills and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation manages reservoir releases for some reservoirs. The City of Rapid City is also an important partner. Under Jake's leadership, GFP's relationships and collaboration with these entities is better now than any time over the past 30 years. These partnerships have led to discussions about increasing overwinter flows to increase survival of brown trout in Rapid Creek, cooperation in conducting research projects on Forest Service lands, and financial contributions to stream habitat projects, including increasing stream connectivity and installation of in-stream habitat.

The Black Hills Flyfishers are a sportsman's group singularly focused on enhancing wild trout populations in Black Hills streams. Largely because of Jake's efforts, this relationship has changed from one that was strained, to one where the Flyfishers are a strong supporter of the Department's fish habitat improvement and research efforts. By involving the Flyfishers in the strategic planning process for Black Hills fisheries and his communication efforts, Jake has made this partnership extremely productive.

Jake has engaged the hydraulic engineering faculty and students at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology to help address stream management issues. Graduate students and faculty have evaluated changes in stream hydraulics resulting from habitat improvement projects. They have also modeled how increasing overwinter releases from Pactola reservoir would affect reservoir operations in the coming year for Rapid City and downstream irrigators. This information is being used in discussions with the Bureau of Reclamation and the City to develop support for increasing overwinter releases to benefit trout in Rapid Creek.

Jake has maintained and enhanced the Department's working relationship with South Dakota State University on fisheries projects. He has used the Advanced Fisheries Management Class to help evaluate the effectiveness of an artificial-lures-only, catch-and-release section of Rapid Creek on wild brown trout. Working with the university and its USGS Cooperative Research Unit, Jake has been able to have several research projects completed that were identified in the strategic plan. Jake and his staff have assisted with field work and provided logistic support for graduate projects. He also served as a member on graduate committees and assisted with editing and writing manuscripts. Some of the projects include the influence of fish density on growth of Brown Trout, impacts of mink predation on brown trout survival and size-structure, factors affecting post-stocking survival of catchable size rainbow, and lake trout population status in Pactola reservoir.

The incredibly close and extremely collegial relationship between hatchery staff and fisheries managers is a direct result of Jake's efforts. Managers use hatchery resources to research management issues in the controlled hatchery environment. Through his leadership, collaboration between these entities has reached unprecedented levels, as

evidenced by the numerous peer-reviewed publications co-authored by Jake, his subordinates, and hatchery staff. Recent changes in fish stocking sizes and numbers in the Black Hills that have greatly increased angler satisfaction are due to Jake's willingness to listen to hatchery staff suggestions and make beneficial changes. In short, the decisions made by Jake Davis have dramatically improved fishing in the Black Hills, which should be the measuring stick for any fisheries manager.



**Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Awards Nomination Form (2020)**

I want to nominate: WI DNR Warden Joe Paul

Award (check only one per form)

☒

Spirit of the Shack

☐

Fisheries Biologist of the Year

☐

Wildlife Biologist of the Year

☐

Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

☐

Excellence in Conservation

☐

Special Recognition

Nominator information

Name: Lt. Scott A. Bowe

Organization: WI DNR Bureau of Law Enforcement

Title: Warden Supervisor

E-mail: scott.bowe@wisconsin.gov

Phone number: 715-209-0140

1. Provide a brief (one page or less) overview explaining why the individual/agency meets the criteria for the award:

Wisconsin Conservation Warden Joe Paul is assigned to southern Price County, a very busy fish and game station. Joe has been very successful in his station because of his dedication to protecting our natural resources and his commitment to promoting outdoor opportunities; especially for kids with life threatening illnesses.

Joe's enforcement work emphasizes public safety and protection of fish and game and their habitat. He is a highly skilled and motivated investigator. He is willing to be patient and take the time needed to investigate serious violations. Joe's reputation as a thorough and trusted law enforcement officer has allowed him to develop a community of cooperators who are his eyes and ears in the field. Joe's enforcement efforts are always accompanied by a dose of compassion. If you receive a citation from Joe, it will probably come with some good advice and an understanding ear.

Joe also excels at community involvement and public education. Joe works with a wide variety of people and groups including schools, sportsman clubs, local units of government, and the media in his efforts to promote safety and the wise use of our natural resources.

Joe's real strength is his ability to build relationships. Joe works closely with internal and external partners in all aspects of his program. He understands that protection of our natural resources is more than catching violators. It involves working together with our customers to help them learn about our natural resources and develop an appreciation for them.

Joe is professional, highly motivated, and he takes great pride in his work. He makes customer service a high priority and is very responsive to his customers' concerns. His day to day service to customers is timely, responsive, and informative. Joe follows through with projects and citizen requests using a common sense approach while listening to and taking into account the ideas, opinions, and concerns of others. Joe strives to make himself available to his customers. He monitors his phone even on most days off and sometimes while on vacation.

Joe makes a great effort to pass on his appreciation for our natural resources to other people. Joe not only looks for opportunities to help people discover our natural resources, he finds ways to lead the effort. Joe's work in this area has helped veterans, kids, and their families discover...or rediscover....the wonders of our natural resources in Wisconsin and beyond.

2. Please list and/or describe specific projects, work or accomplishments relevant to the award. Please limit your information to one page.

Joe is involved in a lot of activities promoting the outdoors that most of our wardens are involved in such as youth hunts, safety classes, youth fishing events, and presentations to sportsman's clubs and schools. He even arranged to have an illegally harvested 500lb black bear mounted and donated to the Brillion Nature Center. (The violator paid the taxidermy fee.) However, Joe's career accomplishment is probably his work as a founding member of Oconto River Kids.

Oconto River Kids started in 2012 when Joe received a call from Oconto County landowner Eric Bonatz. While visiting his godson who was receiving treatment for Leukemia, Bonatz saw other kids struggling with serious illnesses as well. Bonatz wanted to see if Joe was willing to help provide outdoor opportunities for these kids. Joe was on board from the start. They started out by providing bear hunts in northern Oconto County. Interest in the group quickly spread. Soon there were donations and offers of help pouring in from all directions. They developed early partnerships with other organizations such as United Special Sportsman Alliance, "Take 'em Outdoors", and Mountain Springs Motel. With the help of several volunteers, soon they were building wheelchair accessible hunting blinds, receiving donated bear tags, and taking kids outdoors across the state of WI.

In 2013 Oconto River Kids became a 501 (3) (c) Wisconsin non-profit organization. Their mission is to provide cost free hunting and fishing adventures to kids with life threatening / critical illnesses. Joe transferred to Price County in the fall of 2013, and quickly started recruiting volunteers in his new station. The group has continued to grow over the years and has expanded to providing almost any outdoor adventure you can think of including fishing bluegills off a pontoon boat, trapping, trips to local parks, salmon fishing on Lake Michigan, and far off adventures like elk hunting in Wyoming and moose hunting in Alaska. Joe's leadership in the ORK program has been extraordinary. The program has given hundreds of kids and their families opportunities to enjoy outdoor activities that would normally be out of reach due to physical impairments. These families are able to enjoy precious time together in the outdoors while battling life threatening and even terminal illnesses.

Joe and ORK have also worked with a variety of partners to purchase adaptive fishing equipment for kids and veterans with disabilities, a tracked chair that allows kids to navigate through tough terrain, and a shooting system that allows disabled hunters to fire a rifle.

I appreciate the opportunity to nominate Conservation Warden Joe Paul for the Spirit of the Shack Award. As you can see throughout the application Warden Paul exemplifies the ideal of being a great conservationist and educator. Much like Aldo Leopold, Warden Paul epitomizes stewardship and dedication to fish and wildlife conservation.





**Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Awards Nomination Form (2020)**

I want to nominate: Give Adventure Grant Team, Indiana

Award (check only one per form)

☐

Spirit of the Shack

☐

Fisheries Biologist of the Year

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Wildlife Biologist of the Year

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Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

☒

Excellence in Conservation

☐

Special Recognition

Nomination of

Nominator information

Name: Angie Haywood

Organization: IN DNR

Title:

E-mail:

Phone number:

Excellence in Conservation Award Nomination

Submitted by: Angie Haywood

Team nominated: Give Adventure grant team

Team lead: Jenn Domenech

Team members: Megan Dillon, Jenn Domenech (lead), Colleen Hartel, Elizabeth Middleton, Morgan Sussman, Rachel Woodworth.

Partners on the team: Julia Kemnitz, USFWS, Phyllis Boyd, Groundwork Indy

Indiana Division of Fish & Wildlife received the first \$10,000 Give Adventure grant from the Indiana Natural Resources Foundation (INRF). The goal of the Give Adventure project is to foster a conservation ethic in an underserved Indianapolis community by installing native plant and wildflower habitat at Wendell Phillips School 63 (WPS 63), a traditionally underserved school in Indianapolis. The project included 4 major components: (1) habitat installation, (2) workforce development, (3) conservation education, and (4) community engagement.

The Give Adventure team, led by Jenn Domenech successfully wrote and was awarded a \$14,000 Reconnecting to Our Waterways (ROW) grant to further project funding. The team had an aggressive deadline to complete the project within 7 months. The team worked closely with project partners, including Wendell Phillips School 63, Groundwork Indy, Indy Parks, Reconnecting to Our Waterways, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to complete all 4 components of the project.

The team led efforts to engage the school and Groundwork Indy in planting approximately 750 plugs in the front pollinator garden, sensory garden, and monarch waystation at the school in May 2019. In addition, the team worked to develop the text and design three bilingual interpretive signs that were installed to highlight the pollinator garden, wetland pond and monarch waystation.

In July 2019, The team led the effort to work across the Division and across the Department to host a workforce development day for Groundwork Indy, a non-profit organization working with underemployed youth ages 15 – 25. Twenty-six Groundwork Indy youth participated in the event. The morning involved outdoor activities for youth including fishing and bird watching, a lunch presentation by DNR Human Resources highlighting DNR staff and their career paths, and networking opportunities. One youth shared, “My favorite part of the day was lunchtime, because I had a chance to get to know two of the women that work for the DNR. They gave me a lot of career ideas, and showed me many colleges I may be interested in.” After lunch, Groundwork Indy youth participated in a property tour during which DNR staff discussed habitat management and their individual DNR career paths. On average, students reported an increased knowledge of the purpose and goals of the DNR and of what types of jobs are available with the DNR after the event compared to prior. The core team worked

with Division and Department staff to coordinate event logistics, program content, as well as an evaluation plan. A shooting that led to the death of a Groundwork Indy member's brother required last minute adjustments to the program. The team worked together to quickly change shooting range activities to fishing and birdwatching instead.

In August 2019, a Project WILD workshop was conducted with 55 teachers at WPS 63 to introduce teachers to the school's habitat installations and provide training on how to incorporate the habitats into curriculum plans. The team worked to develop pre and post workshop surveys to evaluate the workshop.

In September, the team worked together with partners and other DFW staff to conduct a culminating community festival at Reverend Mozel Sanders Park adjacent to the school. The team developed all promotional materials in both English and Spanish to encourage diverse audiences. During the festival, DNR and project partners led activities focused on wildlife, pollinators, native plants, outdoor experiences, and watersheds. Approximately 50 community members attended and many returned to favorite activities. In post-event surveys, attendees indicated that the event helped them learn about outdoor recreation opportunities in Indiana, the importance of native plants for their community, and that it was very informative. The team worked diligently for months to plan this event, including procurement of all materials, developing outreach and promotional materials, coordinating with partners and staff on program content, as well as developing a bilingual event evaluation.

It is hard to put into a few words all that this team accomplished and all of the hard work that went into making this program a success. But this team was a new team that had never worked together before and the majority were brand new staff to the Division. This team showed innovation and commitment to the Division's values as they worked tirelessly with a school and community that was a new audience for us. They worked hard to ensure our materials were relevant and inclusive which represented the Division's commitment to being relevant to broader audiences. They served as bold, creative ambassadors for conservation as they worked with a new school and new partners on this project. Through all their hard work over a 7 month period, they demonstrated that they value the role of citizens in conservation as they worked to engage people in conservation in all 4 aspects of this project.

Although the grant-specific project commitments have ended, this team still plans to stay engaged in ongoing habitat maintenance and partnerships with WPS63 and Groundwork Indy.



**Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Awards Nomination Form (2020)**

I want to nominate: **Kyle Kaskie**
GIS Program Specialist
South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks
523 East Capitol Avenue, Pierre SD 57501

Award (check only one per form)

☐
Spirit of the Shack

☐
Fisheries Biologist of the Year

☐
Wildlife Biologist of the Year

☐
Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

☐
Excellence in Conservation

☒
Special Recognition

Nominator information

Name: Ross Scott

Organization: South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks

Title: Division Staff Specialist – GIS Coordinator

E-mail: ross.scott@state.sd.us

Phone number: 605-773-2868

1. Provide a brief (one page or less) overview explaining why the individual/agency meets the criteria for the award:

I would like to nominate Kyle Kaskie for Special Recognition through MAFWA. He serves as a GIS Program Specialist for the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) based in Pierre, SD. I have had the privilege of working with Kyle since April 2019 and from my perspective, he has made outstanding contributions to sponsored projects and initiatives supported by MAFWA.

Kyle is a dedicated and valued staff member who can visualize, interpret, and analyze the need for R3 strategies in the outdoors and their value to the citizens of South Dakota. He has demonstrated this through his nearly self-taught technical expertise of dashboard creations to track public class attendance of GFP programs and license sales. His use of these data analysis products create powerful and encompassing overviews of trends, progress, and goals that have become the standard for staff use statewide. He is consulted by professional and, often more tenured, GFP field staff for his opinion and input on project ideas. He has become a subject expert in ways to showcase data in a visually appealing way that anyone can understand.

Kyle has additional duties that play a crucial role the creation of wildlife management and public facing maps today's stakeholders crave. He has quickly risen to the position of technical expert for most internal wildlife surveys, including the high priority Pheasant Brood Route Survey. This survey is done annually to document successful pheasant broods detected on predetermined routes in order to give soon-to-be hunters an idea of where the best place to hunt each fall is. He maintains this survey so that accurate observations are taken by field staff and has created an easy-to-use interface that all skill levels can use. He also created and maintains the State Record Fish dashboard. This public-facing product not only shows the location of state record catches, but provides a name, date and photo of the trophy fish reported to the GFP. Other applications within the GFP realm that Kyle provides technical expertise include waterfowl, hunting unit, and research maps.

Kyle demonstrates integrity to remain firmly committed to the GFP mission. He is proud of the product he provides the public and internal staff. He continues to build a high level of ethical trust when coordinating with me and other new staff on unfamiliar projects. During other meetings, he can describe and defend a technical idea into simple, easy-to-follow descriptions that be understood by users who might not be familiar with the work it takes behind the scenes – often this work is overlooked and certainly isn't glamorous. As noted throughout this nomination, he can set and achieve goals at a professional level and reinforces the fact that he is a regular user of the outdoors and recreational opportunities that South Dakota and our agency have to offer.

2. Please list and/or describe specific projects, work or accomplishments relevant to the award. Please limit your information to one page.

Kyle's creation of the Class Attendance dashboard through ESRI applications is a fantastic way for staff to track class participation, timing, and locations throughout South Dakota. Previous attendance records were often handwritten and unorganized, but with the creation of this dashboard and his training for staff on how to use the product, are now streamlined and readily available for review and citation by senior level staff and planners.

Most recently, Kyle created the Recreational Licensing dashboard. This new creation finally allows staff to track recreational license sales in nearly real-time and offers a filterable experience so any user can find exactly what they need. These license sales include waterfowl, small game, and fishing license types, just to name a few. This data come directly from GFP servers and Kyle has mastered the art of organizing and importing this data into a usable format for this platform. Additionally, Kyle was able to import the county location, age, and gender of each license holder. This allows senior staff to be able to create targeted marketing efforts for current or lapsed license holders throughout the country to aid in R3 efforts throughout the United States. Kyle's work was also recently featured by ESRI in their recent case study "South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks Boosts Participation in Outdoor Recreation" which can be viewed at this link: <https://www.esri.com/en-us/landing-page/industry/government/2020/south-dakota-game-fish-and-park-case-study>.

This work is truly pioneering for any agency within South Dakota and Kyle's work should be considered a shining example of how his motivation and a need for data display and visualizations play a part in all facets of MAFWA projects and initiatives. It is for these reasons found throughout this nomination that I fully expect Kyle Kaskie to receive Special Recognition from the MAFWA Award Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Ross Scott
Division Staff Specialist – GIS Coordinator
South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks
523 East Capitol Avenue, Pierre SD 57501
Ross.scott@state.sd.us