



**Annual Report**

Shannon Lott (MI)	<b>Director Liaison</b>	Craig Cutts (IA)/1st Vice Pres.	<b>Committee Vice Chair</b>
Sam Schelhaas (SD)/President	<b>Committee Chair</b>	Bob Thompson (Ex. Sec.)	<b>Committee Recorder</b>

**Meeting Details**

**Meeting Date(s) and Location(s):** *List dates of all meetings held in the past year. \*500 Character Limit*

June 10-11, 2024 in Bemidji, Minnesota

**Executive Summary**

*Information contained in this section provides an overall summary of the committee meeting including a judgment of the meeting's success compared to previous meetings. Photos or other additional documents that help convey the work of the committee in this past year should be noted in the text but added to the end of this document as an attachment to the Annual Report PDF.*

*\*3700 Character Limit*

The focus of the meeting was on recruiting, hiring, and training the next generation of Conservation Law Enforcement Officers. Many of our agencies are developing or have a recruiting team. Recruiting techniques include increased social media presence and agency specific platforms addressing recruitment. Another technique is to hold open house style recruiting events in person and virtually to target diverse audiences as well as traditional career fairs, school visits, and engagement at outdoor related events. Routine conservation officer field contacts are still the most impactful.

Most agencies are going away from the traditional hiring process where skills were a heavy weight factor to be hired. What we are looking for in a good candidate are the core dimensions of a conservation officer which are the foundation/building blocks of who we are. These core dimensions are: integrity and courage; decision-making and judgment; stress tolerance; learning ability; initiative and assertiveness; ability to work independently; ability to build cooperative relationships; and a passion for protecting our natural resources. We can teach the rest! The goal is to create a workforce that reflects the diversity of our provinces or state's population.

Members present at the meeting shared state perspectives regarding officer health and wellness issues and programs. Many agencies have peer support teams where team members assist with calls of crisis, critical incidents, referrals to professionals/resources and most often serve as an ear to bend for individuals going through tough times. In addition to province or state employee provided assistant programs some agencies contract with a company that helps employees work through various life challenges that may adversely affect their job performance, health, and personal wellbeing.

A few agencies have purchased and provide the Cordico Wellness App to their officers and staff. The App was created by clinical and scientific staff experienced in working with first responders. These resources are built for both prevention and treatment. Cordico wellness tools and self-assessments are designed to keep personnel healthy and effective at work. Cordico is a wellness tool for officers, staff, family and retirees.

It was also felt that the way forward was contracting directly with a psychologist that would provide a variety of services to include: annual "from the neck up" checkups; therapy sessions that cover both standard sessions and evidence based practices such as accelerated resolution therapy (ART), eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) and Trauma Focused cognitive behavioral therapy (TF-BBT); wellbeing presentations at District/Area, Region and Division events; peer support consultation and training; peer support consultation 365/24/7 availability with a one-hour call back time frame for any consultation for peer support or critical incidents; quarterly attendance at peer support team (PST) meetings (in-house PST quarterly training, team development and an annual refresher); healthy families/new hire presentations helps spouses/partners of LEOs understand stress response, how these symptoms show up at home or in their relationships, and how to improve resiliency; on the months where there are no peer support or healthy family meetings, they would be available to attend roll call or do a ride along to help with familiarity building with the department; and, in-house debriefings and defusing following a critical incident.



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## Annual Report

### Director Information Items

*Information in this section should highlight the committee's progress to goals and objectives identified in the Technical Working Committee Charter, identify challenges or risks (perceived or realized) and include any other updates from Midwest state's or relative business discussed. \*3600 Character Limit*



**Committee Workgroups**

*Identify workgroups that are associated with this TWC. Provide a brief 2-3 sentence summary of work accomplished in the past year. A workgroup is a smaller team that supports the goals and objectives of the TWC and is necessary and needed to help accomplish the work. It may include additional members not in the TWC but must be lead by a member of the TWC.*  
*\*650 Character Limit*

Workgroup Name (1)

States Member Lead

Workgroup Name (2)

States Member Lead

**Requests for Action**

*List below any accompanying documents attached to the annual report. Note: All formal requests for action by the MAFWA Board of Directors must complete the appropriate forms with approvals by MAFWA Executive Committee prior to the Annual Board Meeting. Ex. Committee Charter, Request and Risk Assessment. See page 12 of the TWC Guidelines Manual for timelines and details.*  
*\*1300 Character Limit*

**Proposed Meeting Dates/Times/Location**

*Dates and times the TWC will meet in the upcoming year.*

June 23-25, Deadwood, South Dakota



Committee Member Name	Organization
Rob Lamont	Alberta Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Services
Ty Petersburg	Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife
Trevor Wyatt	Environment Canada Wildlife Enforcement Directorate
Jed Whitchurch	Illinois DNR/Office of Law Enforcement
Steve Hunter	Indiana DNR/Law Enforcement Division
Craig Cutts	Iowa DNR/Law Enforcement Bureau
Greg Kyser	Kansas Wildlife and Parks/Law Enforcement
Jeremy McQueary	Kentucky Dept. of Fish & Wildlife Resources/Law Enforcement
Corey Meadow	Dept. DNR & Indigenous Futures/Conservation Officer Service
Jason Haines	Michigan DNR/Law Enforcement Division
Rodmen Smith	Minnesota DNR/Law Enforcement Division
Travis McLain	Missouri Dept. of Conservation /Protection Branch
Jeff Clauson	Nebraska Game & Parks Commission/Law Enforcement Div.
Scott Winkelman	North Dakota Game & Fish Dept./Law Enforcement
Jordyn Siurko	Northwest Territories/Compliance and Office Services
Kandy Klosterman	Ohio DNR/Division of Wildlife Law Enforcement
Nathan Erdman	Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Cons./Law Enforcement
Rick Watchorn	Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources/Enforcement Branch
Steve Dobko	Saskatchewan Ministry of Public Safety/Enforcement Services



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