

ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES  
**2012 ANNUAL REPORT**



ASSOCIATION of  
FISH & WILDLIFE  
AGENCIES

# THIS IS A NEW ERA.

A time in which we — tried and true guardians of North America's conservation legacy — find ourselves facing unprecedented challenges in a complicated landscape.

We believe that the outdoors is for the many, not the few. That it is great, and wondrous, and hanging in the balance — ecologically, politically, financially and societally.

But we are resourceful as an Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies. And working together, our collective influence, patience and passion charts the course we must steer toward securing a sustainable future.

Because at day's end, we know that moving backwards is not an option when our nation's fish and wildlife and our profession is at stake. Yes, indeed, it is our time to push onward, rise upward and move forward.





# ONWARD



As I write this, I am struck by the many challenges and opportunities that state wildlife agencies have at this time. At the national level, we are in the throes of a seemingly never-ending debate regarding federal spending – today, it is about a “sequester” that has wrongly (in my opinion) included federal aid program funds – and another, is the gun control debate in the wake of the tragic massacre in Connecticut.

There are continued challenges to state wildlife agency authorities regarding management of resident wildlife species, both in the federal policy arena and in the courts as a result of lawsuits that seem to be filed at an increasingly regular basis. State agency directors continue to be buffeted by the politics of the day. We just lost another strong leader because he worked hard to keep the policy discussion focused on wildlife and less on outside political interests.

In South Dakota recently, we barely defeated a proposed law that would have privatized what have always been considered public waters – thereby maintaining, for now at least, recreational access to hundreds of water bodies that potentially would have been closed to the public. The fact that the legislation went as far as it did in the process, in a state like South Dakota, adds emphasis to the need to keep our sportsmen and women engaged and educated concerning these many efforts to restrict hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreational activities that we have always taken for granted.

On the other hand, the opportunities are also abundant. We have a collection of agency leaders who are as experienced and talented as any in history. Our work has never been more relevant and important as it is today. Planning for and adapting to the changes we see on the landscape due to a range of issues from increased row cropping in the northern plains to the impacts of climate change requires visionary leadership – leadership that I see in abundance among our ranks.

We are beginning to see positive results from our efforts to work even more closely with our federal partners in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service and, most recently, the Forest Service. Our expanded partnership with industry is creating better understanding from all parties with regard to the important roles in conservation we all play, and is assisting us greatly as we move to address the challenges mentioned above. We are already seeing results from these efforts with a beginning resurgence in the number of hunters across the nation. At the end of the day, the wildlife resources we steward on behalf of all Americans depend on all of us working together to be successful in the long term.

Finally, as we continue onward, I am heartened by the collective dedication and wisdom I see in our agency directors and staff. We are all stronger because we have an organization that brings the focus and the talents of the many to deal with the complex issues of the day. In AFWA, we have assembled a world-class team of professionals that keep us “on point” in addressing the most pressing needs of the moment. It is a privilege and honor to serve this year as your President and I thank all of you for your selfless dedication to the resource and our publics.

And as always... Good Hunting and Good Fishing. Take time to enjoy the fruits of your labor!

Jeff Vonk

*President of the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies*

*Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks*



# UPWARD

In 2012, the Association completed a new Strategic Plan, one with direct and substantive engagement by state fish and wildlife agency directors. It is remarkable for its balance, the depth of its commitment to core competencies and its vision for new engagement. The challenge, of course, will be to make it abundantly real or impactful over the next three years.

I often speak about fingerprints or the important touch of the Association on a multiplicity of national fish and wildlife conservation issues. And now our fingerprints will reach higher, reach upward, as we stretch to elevate our work with new priorities and new challenges. Some of the upward stretches include the legal and wildlife funding dimensions of our collective world.

Fish and wildlife management decisions or outcomes all too often land in the federal judicial system, especially regarding federal land management and endangered species issues. Even though the Association has an admirable record of collaboration and advocacy with federal natural resources agencies and the Congress, that is, the executive and legislative branches of government, we have not necessarily applied like effort on the third rail of federal engagement, the judiciary.

In the coming years, we will explore and develop tools, resources and strategies for staying current with legal briefs, decisions and appeals and impacts to the management authority of state and federal agencies to better inform how the Association can play a thoughtful role. This is a true capacity stretch for us and we hope state agency legal expertise will be able to assist us unto that end.

Broader, sustainable funding for fish and wildlife conservation is not a new leadership issue for the Association. We have been at the forefront of that work through the Teaming With Wildlife initiative and State Wildlife Grants program for at least two decades. The Association's new strategic plan, coupled with a 2011 Wildlife Diversity Funding Report, renews our dedication to this issue. Therefore we will, in turn, see elevated attention to this vital issue and the Association's leadership is already involved in substantive discussions about next steps.

We will continue, of course, to address coordination, advocacy and partnership opportunities on the full suite of conservation issues of our day – everything from relationships with industry to fish and wildlife management policy. These are the mainstays and the hallmarks of the Association's work.

We truly appreciate your support and active participation in the full breadth of the Association's work during 2012, and our upward course demands no less for the coming year.



Ron Regan  
*Executive Director of the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies*



A close-up photograph of a snowy winter scene. In the foreground, the wing of a bird is visible, showing detailed feather structure. The background is filled with snow-covered branches and evergreen trees, creating a soft, textured backdrop. The overall tone is serene and natural.

# FORWARD

**WE BELIEVE** that it takes one step to begin a journey, and yet many more to reach the destination. 2012 marked the start of an intensive, yearlong strategic planning effort to envision the path forward for the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies over the next three years.

As reflected in this annual report, four goals surfaced from multiple meetings and listening sessions with state agency directors, stakeholders and staff: (1) secure and sustain conservation funding; (2) advocate for sound conservation policies and legislation; (3) coordinate conservation partnerships; and (4) support members' engagement within the Association.

We have our direction — and thanks to you — we have companions to help the future of conservation take flight.



# FISH & WILDLIFE FUNDING



## WE BELIEVE

that people care when fish and wildlife are plentiful and habitats healthy, and that there are wild places to roam and recreate.

AFWA Strategic Goal: Secure and sustain comprehensive and dedicated funding for fish and wildlife conservation.

## FARM BILL

### 2012 FARM BILL REAUTHORIZATION

The Farm Bill white papers and 2012 Farm Bill Policy Priorities developed by AFWA's Agricultural Conservation Committee and its working groups guided the Association's advocacy outreach for "Farm Bill Now" during bill negotiations throughout the year. The full Senate passed a Farm Bill in June and the House Agriculture Committee passed its version of the Farm Bill in July.

The framework of the Conservation Title was similar in both versions — combining the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) with the Environmental Quality Incentives Program; combining wetland, grassland and farm easements under one umbrella easement program; creating a Regional Conservation Partnership Initiative; and reducing the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage cap from 32 to 25 million acres.

Despite action in the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate, a Farm Bill was never brought to the House floor, and the 2008 Farm Bill was allowed to expire in October. The expiration resulted in a shut down of enrollment in CRP, WRP and the Grassland Reserve Program, among other programs. Farm Bill authority was restored through a one-year extension attached to the year-end tax law passed to avert what became known as the federal deficit "fiscal cliff."

### ACRES & GRANTS

In March 2012, Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, announced a million-acre CRP initiative to restore grasslands, wetlands and wildlife. The initiative increased the overall allocation for State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) from 850,000 to 1.25 million acres. With these additional acres, new SAFE projects were launched in Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, Nevada and Washington. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) also held a general signup in 2012, enrolling 4.5 million acres.

Funding for the Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentives Program (VPA-HIP) was unfortunately zeroed out in the FY12

appropriations process. Over the course of the year, the participating 26 states and one tribe continued to obligate and spend their 2011 allocations, but did not receive the remainder of the funds in their VPA-HIP agreements. The Association worked closely with FSA to provide guidance to participating states, and will work to restore VPA-HIP in the coming Farm Bill reauthorization.

### LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) continued to deliver its 15 landscape-level, special initiatives, several of which target fish and wildlife issues. In FY12, NRCS partnered with landowners under the Lesser Prairie Chicken and Sage Grouse Initiatives to enhance more than 700,000 acres of lesser prairie chicken habitat and implement beneficial grazing systems on more than two million acres in the greater sage-grouse range.

NRCS also unveiled the Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW) Initiative in 2012. Following funding cuts to the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), NRCS redirected WHIP financial assistance to geographically targeted practices to reverse the decline of seven specific wildlife species — lesser prairie chicken, New England cottontail, southwestern willow flycatcher, greater sage-grouse, gopher tortoise, bog turtle and golden-winged warbler — whose recovery will also benefit other species with similar habitat needs.

In September 2012, NRCS and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) announced an agreement to provide WLFW-participating landowners with the option of a long-term predictability agreement. The agreement allows the landowner to continue the working lands practices in the WLFW conservation plan without additional requirements if the species' Endangered Species Act status changed. The Association and the states currently included in WLFW have worked closely with NRCS in the development phase of WLFW, and will continue to engage as the initiative develops.

In FY12, NRCS partnered with landowners under the Lesser Prairie Chicken and Sage Grouse Initiatives to enhance more than 700,000 acres of lesser prairie chicken habitat.



prairie chicken  
acres of lesser  
than 700,000

## STATE WILDLIFE GRANTS

Once again, the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program got caught in the crossfire of federal deficit reduction. Despite taking a 30% cut in FY11, last year the program was targeted for an additional 75% cut in the House. However, through the support of Senate champions, funding was ultimately restored to level funding (\$61.4 million). The House has proposed a 50% cut for FY13, but the Association is working with the Senate to restore funding to current levels.

One of the reasons the House has targeted the program for cuts is that it lacks congressional authorization. The Association and the USFWS collaborated on a white paper "Improving Funding Reliability for State & Tribal Wildlife Grants" that outlined the benefits of moving State and Tribal Wildlife Grants to the authorized Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program to help states fund the implementation of their congressionally mandated State Wildlife Action Plans for managing nongame fish and wildlife.

### DEDICATED FUNDING

The possibility of continued cuts to the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program is resulting in renewed interest to identify more sustainable funding sources to conserve at-risk species. Last year, state agency directors approved the formation of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Wildlife Diversity Funding. The group will bring together leaders in the outdoor recreation industry, conservation community and others to discuss how best to pay for fish and wildlife conservation.

### TEAMING WITH WILDLIFE FLY-IN

Seventy advocates from across the country participated in the annual Teaming With Wildlife Fly-in — held February 28-29 on Capitol Hill — to raise awareness of the importance of the State Wildlife Grants program. Thanks to their outreach, and the work of AFWA and the greater Teaming With Wildlife Coalition, 33 Senators and 110 members of the House signed a bipartisan letter urging support for the most robust program funding possible.

At the Fly-In's "Celebrating Champions of Wildlife" reception, AFWA and the Coalition presented Congressional awards to Senators Jon Tester (MT) and Lisa Murkowski (AK) and Congressmen Don Young (AK) and José Serrano (NY) for their support of the grant program. The Teaming With Wildlife Coalition member achievement award was presented to Connecticut Audubon and the State Wildlife

Action Plan Partnership award was given to the Idaho Department of Fish and Game and South Fork Snake River Partnership.

### STATE WILDLIFE ACTION PLANS

The Association made strides in increasing the use and support of State Wildlife Action Plans by federal agencies. Ongoing efforts are helping to ensure that the plans are incorporated into the National Wildlife Refuge System vision implementation; the State Forest Action Plans; the Integrated Natural Resource Management Plans on military installations; and priority setting in the Landscape Conservation Cooperatives. The Association continues to promote plan successes with Congress and the Office of Management and Budget as well as the USFWS to enhance their appreciation of the role of the states in the America's Great Outdoors Initiative and the endangered species program.

In September 2012, a working group under AFWA's Teaming With Wildlife Committee completed a report on best practices for State Wildlife Action Plans (Best Practices for State Wildlife Action Plans: Voluntary Guidance to States for Revision and Implementation). The guide provides an inventory of innovations and shares lessons learned from State Wildlife Action Plan Coordinators and the broader conservation community to help states undertaking revisions to their plans. Implementation of the report's voluntary recommendations could lead to improved consistency across plans, fostering increased collaboration between states and with conservation partners. The project was funded through the Doris Duke Charitable Trust.

The Association contracted with Southwick and Associates to conduct a funding needs assessment for State Wildlife Action Plans. All 50 states and the District of Columbia completed the survey. Results from the survey will be used to inform policy makers of the level of funding needed to more fully implement State Wildlife Action Plans and thus achieve the goal of preventing endangered species listings.

### EFFECTIVENESS MEASURES

AFWA staff worked with the USFWS to incorporate AFWA's effectiveness measures framework for State and Tribal Wildlife Grants into the Service's new Wildlife TRACS reporting and management tool. This new system will be used to track all Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Projects beginning in 2013.



The possibility of continued cuts to the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program is resulting in renewed interest to identify more sustainable funding sources to conserve at-risk species.



The Multistate Conservation Grant Program has made a difference in the recruitment and retention of anglers, boaters, hunters and shooting sports enthusiasts.

## MULTISTATE CONSERVATION GRANT PROGRAM

Through the Multistate Conservation Grant Program (MSCGP), more than \$80 million has been invested in 125 projects that address the regional- or national-level conservation priorities of state agencies over the last 12 years. These projects have benefited sport fish, wild birds and wild mammals and have helped make a difference in the recruitment and retention of anglers, boaters, hunters and shooting sports enthusiasts. Funding for the MSCGP – cooperatively administered by AFWA and the USFWS – comes from the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program, which is funded through federal excise taxes



levied on bows/arrows; guns/ammunition; fishing tackle/equipment; and motorboat fuel.

Highlights of projects completed in 2012 include Coordination of Farm Bill Implementation to Optimize Fish and Wildlife Benefits to State Agencies (AFWA); Organizational Development Training for Fish Habitat Partnerships (NFHAP); and Longitudinal Evaluation of Hunting, Fishing, and Shooting Recruitment and Retention Programs (NWTF). For the upcoming 2013 MSCGP cycle, AFWA members selected 17 projects for funding.

# POLICY & LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY



**WE BELIEVE** that forward momentum happens when AFWA membership mobilizes behind proactive conservation policies, even in today's ever-changing political and legislative climate.

Strategic Goal: Promote policies, legislation, laws, regulations and legal strategies that enhance and protect member agencies' ability to conserve and manage fish and wildlife resources and their habitats, consistent with the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation.

## CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS

### TRANSPORTATION LEGISLATION AND THE RESTORE ACT

After a tough slog with bipartisan support, Congress passed a comprehensive, two-year reauthorization of the Surface Transportation programs. While the angling and boating community had developed and supported a few reforms to the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Safety Trust Fund (Wallop-Breaux), the legislative temperature on the Hill necessitated a straight-up reauthorization of the Trust Fund authority with no changes to either policy or distribution of funds, which is a position the Association supported. State fish and wildlife agencies and the community continued to engage Congressional members until the bill was signed into law.

The Transportation bill included a provision known as the RESTORE Act that dedicated 80% of the fines collected under the Clean Water Act from the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill to environmental remediation and economic recovery in the Gulf Coast states. In November 2012, BP agreed to a multibillion-dollar plea agreement of which \$2.4 billion will be distributed over five years for administration of natural resource restoration projects in the five Gulf states — Louisiana, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi and Texas.

### FISCAL CLIFF AND BUDGET SEQUESTRATION

The pressures of looming budget cuts — outlined in the Budget Control Act of 2011 and due to have taken effect on January 1, 2013 — were not enough for Congress to come together and resolve the nation's budgetary and deficit problems. Continuing resolutions kept and will keep federal agencies functioning at/near FY12 levels through the end of 2012 until March 27, 2013. However, the growing deficit and the threat of indiscriminate budget cuts, coupled with a quickly approaching debt ceiling, could push America's economy over the edge of the "fiscal cliff" and back into a recession.

In September 2012, the Office of Management and Budget released a report pursuant to the Sequestration Transparency Act of 2012 that provided estimates of sequestrable accounts and potential reductions in each federal budget line item. The Wildlife, Sport Fish and Boating Safety Trust Funds (collectively the Trust Funds) were included on the list of sequestrable funds, which could be reduced by 7.6% each or an estimated \$31 million, \$34 million and \$9 million, respectively if withheld in 2013.

The Association and its member states took immediate action to understand the authority under which sequestration of the Trust Funds could occur; developed materials to facilitate common understanding of our concerns and its effects; and engaged the Administration and members of Congress to build support for permanently exempting the Trust Funds from sequestration.

State agencies and the conservation community swiftly rallied to build urgency and momentum behind "Keep the Trust" Trust Fund exemption by contacting their Congressional delegations, boards, commissions, governors, constituents and local media and raising awareness of all of the direct, adverse impacts budget sequestration cuts would have on the agencies and the resources they manage.

Although budget sequestration was in effect for less than a day, Congress extended the effective date of budget sequestration until March 1, 2013, essentially delaying the fiscal cliff. Concern over budget sequestration continues and so does AFWA's pursuit of a permanent exemption for the Trust Funds into 2013 with a new Congress.

### SPORTSMEN'S LEGISLATION

During the summer of 2012, a comprehensive package of angling, hunting and sportsmen's bills were introduced as an amendment to the Senate Farm Bill. It was ruled a non-germane amendment and prohibited from being brought to the floor for a vote.

But, thanks to broad support and advocacy outreach from the hunting, angling, conservation and sportsmen's communities, the amendment was introduced as a stand-alone bill known as the Sportsmen's Act of 2012. The Act was proclaimed to be the most significant piece of sportsmen's legislation in a generation, since Wallop-Breaux passed in 1985. The House had previously passed a much-paraded down bill, which did not include many of the authorizations and other desirable provisions included in the Senate bill.



The Association and its partners will capitalize on the momentum built for the Sportsmen's Act during 2012 for an anticipated reintroduction of a similar package in the 113th Congress.

The Association and partners worked to garner Senators' support for passage of the bill, while laying the groundwork with House members to do the same. Unfortunately, the bill became entangled in election-year politics, concerns were raised about various provisions and, consequently, the bill's passage became increasingly complicated and repeatedly delayed.

Ultimately, a Budget Point of Order was raised and the bill did not muster the 60-vote threshold necessary to move to passage. Even though a negotiated agreement was reached by mid-December, there was little floor time available to reconsider the bill, and it stalled. The Association and its partners will capitalize on the momentum built for the Sportsmen's Act during 2012 for anticipated reintroduction of a similar package in the 113th Congress.

## AFWA ABROAD

In addition to its presence at CITES and the Joint Management Committee on International Humane Trapping Standards, AFWA holds a seat on the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network's Hemispheric Council and represented the states on the U.S. delegation to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands' 11th Conference of the Parties in 2012.

The Association also represents state agencies' interests in the Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative; the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group; the Convention on Migratory Species; the Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management; and the Convention for Biological Diversity.



## LEGAL AFFAIRS

The Association has had in-house legal counsel since 2005 to provide guidance on nonprofit governance issues; analyze litigation that may affect member agencies; and advance recommendations through AFWA's Legal Committee for participation in legal disputes that jeopardize the primacy of state wildlife management authority.

AFWA's counsel also supervises the Multistate Conservation Grant Program, serves as the staff liaison for the Industry/Agency partnership work and is counsel for the International Hunter Education Association and AFWA's A.W.A.R.E. foundation. In addition, the legal office provides legal advice to AFWA's Executive Committee, the Joint Task Force on Federal Aid, regional associations and state-agency-related entities.

In 2012, counsel worked with the federal land-managing agencies, particularly the USFWS, under the direction of AFWA's Task Force on State Authority. The Association also began developing a new, state/federal training module with the Service to be mutually used by line managers to train employees on state/federal jurisdiction issues affecting management of wildlife on federal property.

In addition, the Association participated in several important legal matters protecting state authority on the method of harvesting game and fish including the use of lead in ammunition and fishing tackle, trapping issues, regulatory takings and issues surrounding the Endangered Species Act.

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

### CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FLORA AND FAUNA (CITES)

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) is only one of many international forums monitored by the Association that can significantly impact state agency programs because of their legally binding decisions made regarding wildlife management and conservation.

The 177 parties to CITES ensure that international trade in wild animals and plants is not detrimental to their survival. CITES listings, which regulate U.S. trade, impact hunting, the import and export of harvested wildlife and other sustainable use practices.

At the Animals and Standing Committee meetings in 2012, AFWA's CITES Technical Work Group advocated states' interests on numerous issues. Most importantly, the group advanced the states' recommendations on climate change as it relates to CITES, which were upheld.

Moreover, after much involvement from the work group and AFWA's Furbearer Conservation Technical Work Group, the USFWS announced its nationwide finding for CITES compliance of river otter that greatly streamlines the export process, thus reducing the burden on state agencies.

### JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING ON INTERNATIONAL HUMANE TRAPPING STANDARDS

State agencies rely on traps and trappers for wildlife management; reintroduction of species to historical ranges; habitat protection and management; property protection and damage control; public health and safety; and a wide range of research that requires wildlife capture. The nearly 150,000 state-licensed trappers and 250,000 employees in the pest and nuisance control industries save state agencies potentially millions of dollars in furbearer management costs. But,

many trappers would stop, if they couldn't sell the fur abroad.

To maintain the present U.S. fur trade agreement with the European Union (EU), a U.S. delegation attended the Fourth Annual Joint Management Committee for the Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards in December 2012. Three delegates from the Association and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) attended the meeting to share research on trapping furbearers. Over the last five years, states and the federal government have invested \$9.5 million to test more than 175 traps and develop 21 Best Management Practices to successfully uphold the present Agreed Minute with the EU.

#### INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT CONGRESS

In July 2012, AFWA hosted a full-day workshop "Wildlife Trapping Techniques for Researchers and Managers" at the IVth International Wildlife Management Congress in Durban, South Africa. Nearly 100 researchers and managers from around the globe attended the workshop to learn more about U.S. and Canadian trap research and trapping techniques.

## CLIMATE ADAPTATION

It's been two years since Congress called for a government-wide strategy to help resource managers, legislators and other decision-makers prepare for and reduce the impacts of climate change on fish, wildlife and plants, ecosystems and the people and economies that depend on them.



In 2012, the draft National Fish, Wildlife and Plants Climate Adaptation Strategy was released for public review. It was the culmination of the work of AFWA members — most notably, the New York Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources — and AFWA staff in collaboration with the USFWS and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Agency representatives from California, Washington, Wisconsin and North Carolina served on the Strategy's steering committee to promote the states' policy interests.

The Strategy is a blueprint of shared principles and science-based practices for common action in a changing climate. Through its seven goals, the Strategy aims to safeguard species and their habitats while also considering the important benefits they provide such as jobs, food, clean water, clean air, building material, storm protection and recreation.

The final Strategy will be released in early 2013. More information is available at [www.wildlifeadaptationstrategy.gov](http://www.wildlifeadaptationstrategy.gov).

## ENERGY

Managing wildlife resources and balancing the nation's growing energy requirements isn't an easy task. While the Association has worked steadily within the wind energy and transmission sector for a number of years, state agencies continue to be bombarded by emerging energy development concerns surrounding hydropower, oil and gas, shale, coal, biofuels and more. Such issues challenge

states' ability to effectively engage with these industries and manage their fish and wildlife resources for the public trust.

As a result, the Association membership agreed to hire a full-time, two-year wildlife and energy liaison starting in 2013. This individual will represent states' collective interests in discussions with the energy industries and the federal government to improve energy development outcomes for fish, wildlife and their habitats.

#### WIND

While some believe that wind energy is environmentally benign, it may entail significant impacts to natural resources. That's why the Association has served on the board of the American Wind Wildlife Institute and participated in the National Wildlife Coordinating Collaborative for several years now. AFWA members also have worked with federal partners to facilitate timely and responsible wind energy production while protecting wildlife and wildlife habitat.

In 2012, the Department of the Interior released its final voluntary guidelines designed to help wind energy project developers avoid and minimize impacts of land-based wind projects on wildlife and their habitats. The guidelines were written over the past five years with the Wind Turbine Guidelines Federal Advisory Committee, whose members include four state agencies. AFWA continues to work with the USFWS on developing training and coordinating protocols pertaining to the guidelines.

## INVASIVE SPECIES

Be it animal or plant, invasive species directly and indirectly threaten hunting, fishing and wildlife-viewing opportunities in all states and greatly affect agencies' management actions and options. And, the terrestrial and economic damages caused by these invaders far outweigh the funding states receive to combat them.

AFWA's Invasive Species Committee continues to focus on invasive species issues through our ongoing collaborations with federal and NGO partners. In 2012, committee members assisted in the planning of the National Invasive Species Awareness Week and worked closely with the USFWS on Asian Carp and other aquatic nuisance species concerns.

The committee also continues to track invasive species legislation and partner with AFWA's Biofuels Working Group on relevant provisions in the Farm Bill as well as coordinate with the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) to address ecological risk screening and non-regulatory approaches to invasive species management.

AFWA members work to facilitate timely and responsible wind energy production.

# PARTNERSHIP

**WE BELIEVE** that people and partnerships are key to how the Association accomplishes our mission.

Strategic Goal: Coordinate and facilitate fish and wildlife conservation initiatives among state, provincial, territorial and federal agencies and other partners, enabling conservation delivery on a national and international scale.



## AMPHIBIAN & REPTILE CONSERVATION

### SPECIES AT RISK

Unsustainable use and emerging diseases are two of the dire factors contributing to the decline in amphibians and reptiles throughout the world and in several areas of the United States. To help address these issues and others of concern, AFWA's Amphibian & Reptile Subcommittee and state partners released our national report, *State of the Union: Legal Authority over the Use of Native Amphibians and Reptiles in the United States* in early 2012.

The report is the first-ever, comprehensive compendium of laws and regulations pertaining to the use of native amphibians and reptiles. The feedback has been extremely positive since its distribution to all state wildlife agency directors, law enforcement staff and wildlife diversity/herpetologist staff and federal and NGO partners. Several states are already using it to help inform updates and modifications to their existing regulatory structures. The subcommittee intends to update the document annually.

In addition, the Endangered Species Act was a hot-button issue for the subcommittee throughout the year, especially concerning several amphibian and reptile species petitioned for listing. Subcommittee members continued to focus on providing proactive conservation resources and facilitating partnerships to assist state agencies as they address candidate and petitioned species, with the ultimate goal of keeping species off of the Endangered Species Act list.



### PARTNERS IN AMPHIBIAN & REPTILE CONSERVATION

2012 was the Year of the Dragon on the Chinese calendar, but for the Association, conservation groups and PARC, it was the Year of the Lizard. The "2012-Year of the Lizard" campaign raised awareness for lizard conservation through bi-monthly newsletters, including features on the work of state agencies, the [www.yearofthelizard.org](http://www.yearofthelizard.org) website and other outreach activities and materials. The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation joined as partners in the celebration.

The Association commits direct staff support to PARC to coordinate the priorities of state agencies in national and regional herpetofaunal conservation that is habitat-focused and includes all amphibians and reptiles. Last year, with AFWA support, PARC produced *Habitat Management Guidelines for Amphibians and Reptiles of the Midwestern United States*, endorsed by all Midwestern state fish and wildlife agencies as well as the Priority Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Areas (PARCAs) criteria and implementation plan, co-authored by state agency staff from Maine, Iowa and Oregon. To download these documents and other PARC publications, go to [www.parcplace.org/publications](http://www.parcplace.org/publications).

PARC presented its second annual Allison Haskell Excellence in Herpetofaunal Conservation award to Deanna H. Olson, U.S. Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region, and second annual Visionary Leader Award to former PARC Federal Agencies Coordinator, Ernesto Garcia, Executive Director of the Amphibian and Reptile Conservancy.

## BIRD CONSERVATION

### NORTH AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVATION INITIATIVE

The Association continues to play a key leadership and coordination role in the U.S. North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) Committee, which coordinates the bird conservation efforts of 23 state, federal and private bird conservation organizations as well as a link to continental bird conservation efforts with Mexico and Canada.

In 2012, NABCI brought partners together around conserving sage brush habitats; applying a business planning approach to bird conservation; and integrating the science of human dimensions into bird conservation programs and policies.



### North American Waterfowl Management Plan

#### NORTH AMERICAN WATERFOWL MANAGEMENT PLAN

The North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) was launched in 1986 to rebuild waterfowl populations to 1970s levels. Since then, it has become the most successful international conservation partnership for government agencies, nonprofit organizations, private landowners and others to work together, leverage resources and put even more habitat on the ground. NAWMP partners have invested more than \$4 billion in the protection and restoration of 15.7 million acres of wetlands and associated habitats in the U.S., Canada and Mexico.



State funding of waterfowl breeding ground projects is an important element in AFWA's strategy for contributing to the NAWMP goals. State funding provides start-up, non-federal monies, which are matched by Ducks Unlimited and the federal government through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA); and then, in turn, by Canadian partners. In 2012, contributions from state agencies reached an all-time high — totaling \$3.254 million with 36 states contributing to Canadian projects.

While the Plan has achieved great success in wetlands and waterfowl conservation, NAWMP partners recognized the need to take a fresh look at their way of doing business. Based on extensive consultation in the U.S., Canada and Mexico, the *2012 North American Waterfowl Management Plan – People Conserving Waterfowl and Wetlands* presents a bold, renewed vision for the future.

The 2012 Plan fundamentally re-examined NAWMP's goals to include (1) abundant and resilient waterfowl populations to support hunting and other uses without imperiling habitat; (2) wetlands and related habitats sufficient to sustain waterfowl populations at desired levels, while providing places to recreate and ecological services that benefit society; and (3) growing the numbers of waterfowl hunters, other conservationists, and citizens who enjoy and actively support waterfowl and wetlands conservation.

The revised NAWMP advocates that people should be a focus of management actions and not simply recipients of waterfowl management outcomes. Moving forward, the revised NAWMP will help motivate the waterfowl management community to expand its understanding of hunters, wildlife watchers and the public.

To guide stakeholders, the Plan's steering committee released the NAWMP Action Plan, a companion document on how to implement the 2012 NAWMP. The Action Plan provides seven recommendations vital to the future of waterfowl management, especially in terms of engaging a broader public community of users and supporters. To download the 2012 North American Waterfowl Management Plan and the NAWMP Action Plan, go to [www.nawmprevision.org](http://www.nawmprevision.org).

#### SOUTHERN WINGS

2012 marked the third year of the Southern Wings Program, a partnership for enabling state agencies to support migratory bird conservation projects for shared priority species with partners in Mexico, Central America, South America and the Caribbean. Since its launch, state agencies have contributed more than \$300,000 USD and provided over \$557,000 of in-kind contributions with an additional \$226,000 in state-level, U.S. partner contributions.

Nearly \$800,000 was contributed as match funding to state agency dollars and additional partner contributions for life-cycle bird conservation projects by non-state partners, including host-country governments and NGOs, totaled more than \$1.1 million. This ratio far exceeds the program's goal of at least 1:1 matches for all state contributions.

Through Southern Wings, state funds have been strategically invested in areas critical for the conservation of state agencies' high-priority migratory birds on their wintering grounds such as the Golden-winged Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Bicknell's Thrush and a suite of highly imperiled grassland birds. Amazing conservation success stories from across the hemisphere are documented in a report published by AFWA last year, *Taking Flight 2009-2012*. Download a copy of the report at [www.fishwildlife.org/files/SouthernWingsSuccessStory.pdf](http://www.fishwildlife.org/files/SouthernWingsSuccessStory.pdf).

The program also released *Southern Wings Ten Year Vision 2012-2022*, which encourages state agencies to maximize their voluntary contributions to help achieve the goal of \$2 million per year in support of priority species conservation south of the U.S. border. AFWA's membership endorsed the 10-year vision for the program through a resolution that passed in September 2012.



The revised North American Waterfowl Management Plan will help motivate the waterfowl management community to expand its understanding of hunters, wildlife watchers and the public.



## FURBEARER CONSERVATION

### BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Trapping is a strictly regulated, law-enforced activity that helps state agencies collect important information about wildlife and sustain healthy and diverse populations. To improve the welfare of animals captured in traps and modernize trapping technology, AFWA's furbearer resources program has developed 21 Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Trapping in the U.S. documents over the past nine years.

These BMPs for furbearers such as American Badger, Canada Lynx, Raccoon, Bobcat and Weasels are widely used among state agency trapper education programs and are recognized in international assemblies. In 2012, the Association released a new BMP for trapping Ringtail. Over the past few years, research projects have been conducted for capturing Gray Wolf. AFWA plans to publish a BMP for this species in 2013.

### NATIONAL FURBEARER HARVEST STATISTICS DATABASE

Coordinated by the Association, the U.S. Furbearer Conservation Technical Work Group continued to enhance its National Furbearer Harvest Statistics Database, which reports statistics for furbearer species harvested via trapping in the U.S. from 1970 to present. Updated annually, AFWA continued planning to expand the resource to capture more data, including harvest statistics from Canada. The database is available at [www.fishwildlife.org](http://www.fishwildlife.org).



Over the past few years, research projects have been conducted for capturing Gray Wolf. AFWA plans to publish a BMP for this species in 2013.

## FISH HABITAT CONSERVATION



### NATIONAL FISH HABITAT PARTNERSHIP

The National Fish Habitat Board released the National Fish Habitat Action Plan, 2nd Edition, in August 2012. The revised Action Plan continues to foster a national approach to conserving aquatic resources and builds upon the original plan's objectives, which were all successfully met.

The second edition advances the conservation practices of the individual Fish Habitat Partnerships and identifies five new objectives:

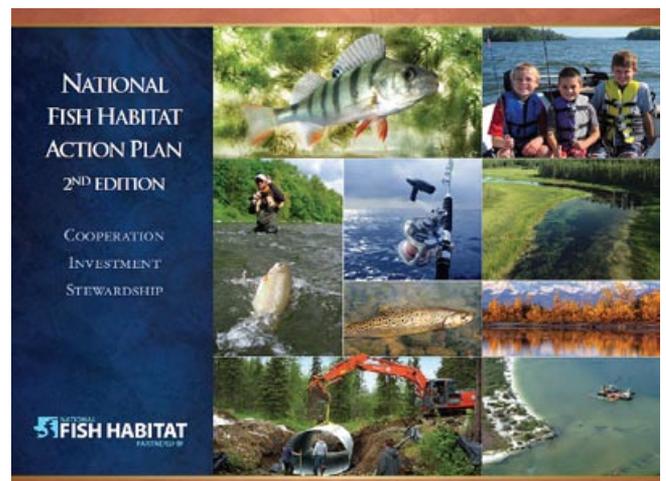
- Achieve measurable habitat conservation results through strategic actions of Fish Habitat Partnerships.
- Establish a consensus set of national conservation strategies as a framework to guide future actions and investment by the Fish Habitat Partnerships by 2013.
- Broaden community support for fish habitat conservation by increasing fishing opportunities, fostering local participation and raising public awareness of the role healthy fish habitats play in the quality of life and economic well-being of local communities.
- Fill gaps in the National Fish Habitat Assessment and its associated database, and integrate socio-economic data in the analysis.
- Communicate the conservation outcomes produced collectively by Fish Habitat Partnerships.

Download the full Action Plan at [http://fishhabitat.org/sites/default/files/www/NFHP\\_AP\\_Final.pdf](http://fishhabitat.org/sites/default/files/www/NFHP_AP_Final.pdf).

### NATIONAL FISH HABITAT BOARD

The National Fish Habitat Board has set an aggressive agenda for the next several years, including completion of the 2015 national assessment of fish habitats. The assessment, conducted by the Board's Science and Data Committee and federal and state partners every five years, highlights human impacts on fish habitats in both inland and coastal waters.

The Board also continues to advocate for the National Fish Habitat Conservation Act, which was included in the "Sportsmen's Act of 2012." National fish habitat legislation remains a strong priority among conservation groups in the 113th Congress.



NATIONAL FISH HABITAT ACTION PLAN FEDERAL MOU

The Board and the Association have strongly advocated for Administration-level support for the National Fish Habitat Partnership. In March 2012, that objective was met when Secretaries Ken Salazar (Interior), Tom Vilsack (Agriculture) and John Bryson (Commerce) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to promote collaborative, science-based conservation of the nation's waterways and fisheries through the National Fish Habitat Partnership. The agreement ensures that federal resources are effectively focused on locally supported conservation strategies developed by the individual fish habitat partnerships. The announcement was made at the White House Conference on Conservation, Growing America's Outdoor Heritage and Economy.

10 WATERS TO WATCH IN 2012

The National Fish Habitat Partnership's 10 "Waters to Watch" are rivers, streams and estuaries that are cleaner and healthier as a result of voluntary habitat conservation.

- White River, VT
- Weber River, UT
- Table Rock Lake, MO
- Rio Grande River Tributaries, TX
- Harpeth River, TN
- Conner Creek, CA
- Boone River Watershed, IA
- Bear Creek, WI
- Anchor River, Kenai Peninsula, AK
- ACE Basin, SC

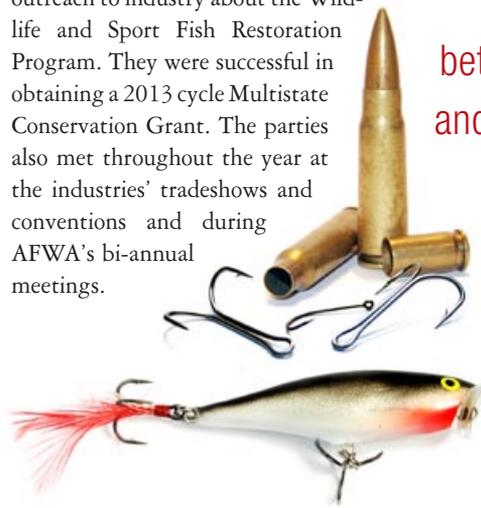


INDUSTRY/AGENCY COALITION

The Association continued our commitment to strengthening agency partnership with the hunting, shooting sports, archery, boating and sport fishing industries in 2012. AFWA's Industry/Agency work began six years ago with the formation of an alliance with the four major industry trade groups — the American Sport-fishing Association, Archery Trade Association, National Marine Manufacturers Association and the National Shooting Sports Foundation — to help bridge lines of communication between the states and the businesses that pay excise taxes on their sporting products, which in turn, fund conservation in states.

However, the partnership between state agencies and industry is not only crucial because of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation (the funding cycle); but also in terms of recruiting and retaining our shared customers, America's sportsmen and women.

To chart a course for moving forward, AFWA and industry representatives convened a Summit in Denver, Colorado in April 2012 at the headquarters of Eagle Claw, a tackle manufacturer. Of note, the group agreed to seek grant funding to support increased outreach to industry about the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program. They were successful in obtaining a 2013 cycle Multistate Conservation Grant. The parties also met throughout the year at the industries' tradeshow and conventions and during AFWA's bi-annual meetings.



The Industry/Agency Coalition is working to bridge lines of communication between the states and the businesses that pay excise taxes on their sporting products.

CELEBRATING THE WSFR 75TH ANNIVERSARY

In 2012, federal and state natural resource agencies, the excise-tax paying industries and the greater conservation community proudly observed the anniversary of the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program and the partnership success that has led to more than 75 years of quality hunting, fishing, shooting, boating and wildlife-related recreation.

Highlights from the WSFR 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary include major industry events at the angling, archery and firearms trade shows; public outreach by nearly every state agency; in-store promotions by Bass Pro Shops and a full-page letter to customers from Johnny Morris about WSFR in the retailer's fall catalog; a Geico print ad; and a landmark publication, *Celebrating the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program, 75 Years of Conservation Success*, produced by the USFWS with assistance from AFWA. National Hunting and Fishing Day also celebrated the anniversary in a TV public service announcement featuring NASCAR driver, Tony Stewart. WSFR 75 and Beyond continues on Facebook and YouTube at /WSFR75 and Twitter @WSFR75, #BeyondWSFR75.

## CONSERVATION EDUCATION STRATEGY

Outreach, outreach, outreach was the action of the year for AFWA's North American Conservation Education (CE) Strategy in order to elevate its value to state and federal agencies and NGOs in the education, conservation and outdoor recreation sectors.

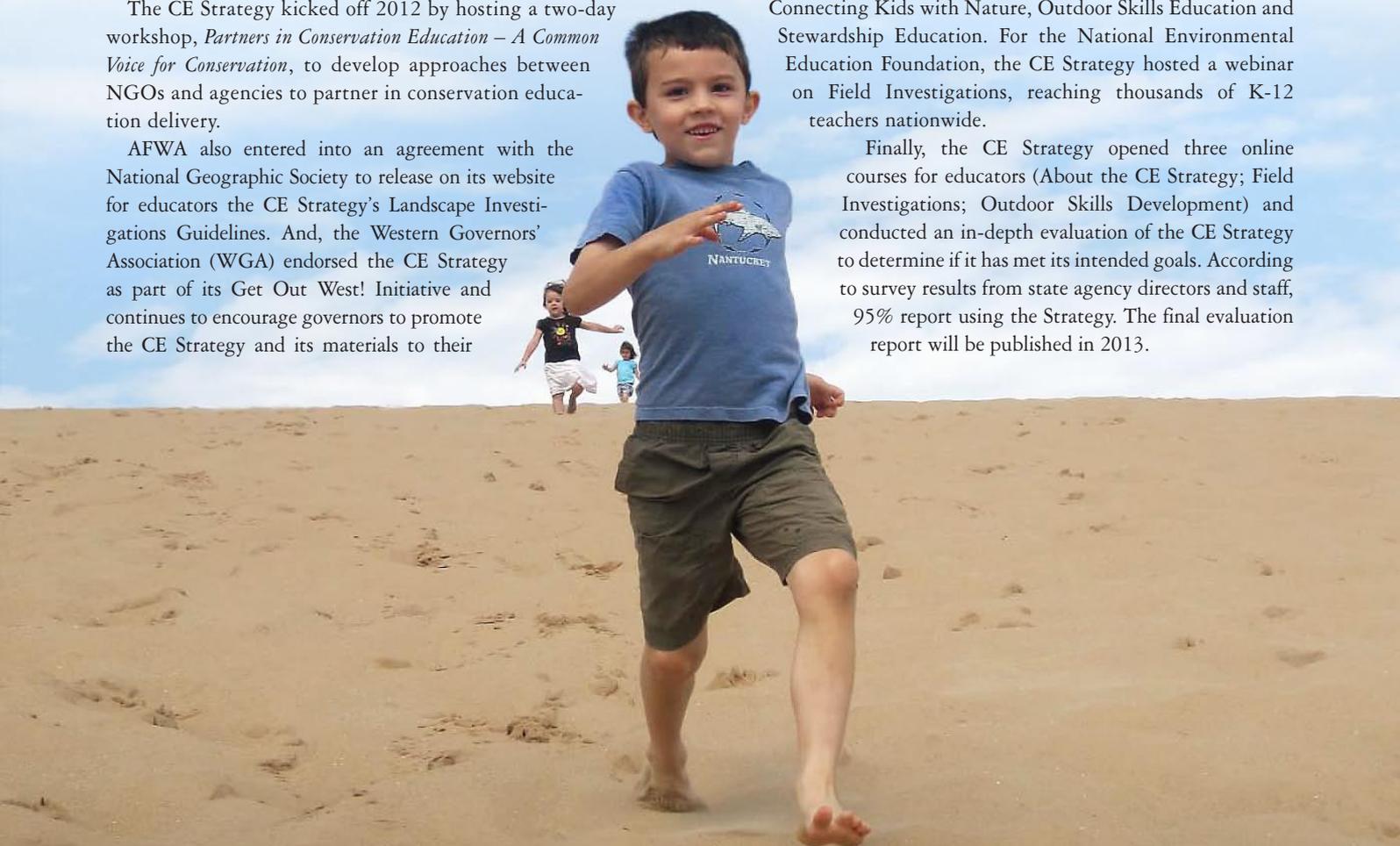
The CE Strategy kicked off 2012 by hosting a two-day workshop, *Partners in Conservation Education – A Common Voice for Conservation*, to develop approaches between NGOs and agencies to partner in conservation education delivery.

AFWA also entered into an agreement with the National Geographic Society to release on its website for educators the CE Strategy's Landscape Investigations Guidelines. And, the Western Governors' Association (WGA) endorsed the CE Strategy as part of its Get Out West! Initiative and continues to encourage governors to promote the CE Strategy and its materials to their

state natural resource, education and health agencies.

The CE Strategy also hosted a monthly webinar series to discuss CE issues and provide online training on Strategy tools. Regularly reaching maximum participation capacity, webinar topics included Connecting Kids with Nature, Outdoor Skills Education and Stewardship Education. For the National Environmental Education Foundation, the CE Strategy hosted a webinar on Field Investigations, reaching thousands of K-12 teachers nationwide.

Finally, the CE Strategy opened three online courses for educators (About the CE Strategy; Field Investigations; Outdoor Skills Development) and conducted an in-depth evaluation of the CE Strategy to determine if it has met its intended goals. According to survey results from state agency directors and staff, 95% report using the Strategy. The final evaluation report will be published in 2013.



The Association published numerous reports, guidelines, white papers and articles throughout 2012 on a variety of subjects including migratory bird conservation, trapping and Farm Bill provisions. All AFWA resources are available for download at [www.fishwildlife.org](http://www.fishwildlife.org).

- 2011-2016 Action Plan for State Contributions to Canadian NAWMP/NAWCA Projects
- Assessing the Economic Benefit of the Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program (VPA-HIP)
- Assessment of the Bioenergy Provisions in the 2008 Farm Bill
- Best Practices for State Wildlife Action Plans: Voluntary Guidance to States for Revision and Implementation
- Best Management Practices for Trapping Canada Lynx in the United States
- Future of America's Forests and Rangelands: Forest Service 2010 Resources Planning Act Assessment
- National Fish Habitat Action Plan. 2nd Edition.
- National Fish Habitat Partnership - 2012 Update
- "Rethinking Strategic Planning" (a MAT white paper)
- Southern Wings 10-year Vision
- Southern Wings: Taking Flight 2009-2012

State of the Union: Legal Authority over the Use of Native Amphibians and Reptiles in the United States

Success Stories: Implementing the North American Conservation Education Strategy

The Wildlife Techniques Manual. Vol. 2, Chapter 3, "Capturing and Handling Wild Animals". 7th Edition.

2012 Annual Meeting Resolutions:

- (1) Requesting USDA to Remove Provision for Preemption from the Final Interim Rule
- (2) Recognizing the 20th Anniversary of the Wetland Reserve Program
- (3) Recognizing the 25th Anniversary of the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program
- (4) Urging Participation in the Southern Wings Program
- (5) Recognizing the 75th Anniversary of the Wildlife and Sport Restoration Program
- (6) In appreciation of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources



# MEMBERSHIP



**WE BELIEVE** that it is a powerful voice for conservation when the Association's membership speaks collectively as one.

Strategic Goal: Support and facilitate education, participation, communication and leadership capacity for and among AFWA members.

## PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

AFWA's Management Assistance Team (MAT) strives to meet its mission of "helping state fish and wildlife agencies to achieve excellence" by providing training, consulting, tools and resources on organizational effectiveness and leadership development to AFWA member agencies. MAT products and services are readily available through a variety of delivery means including online, face-to-face or by phone. MAT also staffs and manages the National Conservation Leadership Institute (NCLI).

Last year, MAT conducted 26 online courses, including two new courses — Leader as Communicator and Applied Adaptive Leadership; and presented seven webinars with two unique sessions entitled Perseverance and Leading through Change and Leading Through Chaos without Creating More Chaos. These electronic offerings reached 399 conservation professionals nationwide.

MAT also hosted a national workshop on historical leadership turning points entitled "Back to the Future in Fish and Wildlife;" conducted 11 face-to-face workshops with a total of 269 participants; and advised five participants on their final projects in MAT's Conservation Leadership Program of Study (CLPS), the Team's challenging leadership certification.

Finally, for 15 state agencies and eight other entities including regional associations, committees, AFWA, NGOs and others, MAT staff consulted for 378 hours on subjects ranging from budget reduction processes, personnel challenges, leadership development programs, strategic planning, management processes and setting agency goals and strategies.

MAT publishes a quarterly newsletter MATters and posts its latest professional development opportunities on its two web sites at [www.conservationleadership.org](http://www.conservationleadership.org) and [www.matteam.org](http://www.matteam.org).



## NATIONAL CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Staffed by AFWA's Management Assistance Team, the National Conservation Leadership Institute (NCLI) has rightly earned its reputation as conservation's premier, world-class experience for developing tomorrow's natural resource management leaders.

In May 2012, 36 professionals from state fish and wildlife agencies and other related organizations graduated from the NCLI's Cohort 6.

Concurrently, the Fellows of Cohort 7 were selected from the competitive nomination process held annually February through April. They completed their 10-day residency "boot camp" training in October 2012 and began seven months of peer consulting to help implement their individual adaptive leadership projects derived from challenges facing their respective organizations. Internationally acclaimed instructors from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and other renowned leadership experts helped provide an incomparable program.

The Fellows of Cohorts 6 and 7 join a growing community of NCLI alumni who are creating a nationwide leadership force.

The NCLI welcomes direct donations (fully tax-deductible) to help prepare the next generation of conservation leaders. Agencies are encouraged to add the Institute to their state charitable giving campaign lists. Visit [www.conservationleadership.org](http://www.conservationleadership.org) for more information about the NCLI and how to become a Fellow or supporter.



The Fellows of Cohort 7 completed their 10-day residency "boot camp" training in October 2012 and began seven months of peer consulting to help implement their individual adaptive leadership projects.

## 2012 Annual Meeting

The Association held our 102nd Annual Meeting, September 9-12, in Hilton Head, South Carolina. The 2012 plenary provided an unprecedented occasion for industry leaders to discuss how together we can enhance our industry-agency relationships to carry forward the most successful conservation program in our nation's history — the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program.

AFWA thanks speakers Jay McAninch, President and CEO, Archery Trade Association; Thom Dammrich, President, National Marine Manufacturers Association; John Doert, President and CEO, Pure Fishing; Steve Sanetti, President and CEO, National Shooting Sports Foundation; and John L. Morris, Founder, Bass Pro Shops for their insights.

Also at the Annual Meeting, the Association bestowed the inaugural John L. Morris Award to its namesake, in recognition of his lifetime of service to the cause of fish and wildlife conservation. The new award will be conferred annually to a citizen conservationist who exemplifies Mr. Morris' extraordinary leadership and steadfast commitment to solving large-scale natural resource challenges.

## 2012 Annual Awards

The Association honored eight individuals and one state agency for their outstanding and longstanding commitment to conservation stewardship at our Annual Awards Ceremony.

### SETH GORDON AWARD

*Recognizing lifetime achievement, the Association's highest honor*

**Wayne MacCallum**, Director, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

### JOHN L. MORRIS AWARD (INAUGURAL)

*Recognizing lifetime commitment to fish and wildlife stewardship by a citizen conservationist*

**John L. Morris**, Founder, Bass Pro Shops

### ERNEST THOMPSON SETON AWARD

*Honoring an agency and team leader for leadership in scientific wildlife management*

Group: **Alaska Department of Fish and Game**

Individual: **Tom Paragi**, Wildlife Biologist

### NATIONAL PRIVATE LANDS FISH AND WILDLIFE STEWARDSHIP AWARD

*Honoring an individual- or family-run farm, ranch or forest operation that has incorporated proactive conservation and environmental protection measures*

**Jim O'Haco**, O'Haco Cattle Company, Arizona

### CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT AWARD

*Recognizing exceptional achievement in fish and wildlife resource enforcement*

**Jeffrey Milner**, Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources

### SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARDS

*Recognizing individuals who distinguished themselves with an outstanding commitment to the work of the Association*

**Steve Sharon**, Fish Culture Supervisor, Wyoming Game and Fish Dept.

**Hannibal Bolton**, Assistant Director, Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**Rocky Beach**, Wildlife Diversity Division Manager, Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife

### Annual Meeting Sponsors

AFWA extends our appreciation to the 102nd Annual Meeting sponsors, exhibitors and, most especially, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources.

**Platinum:** Bass Pro Shops, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, USDA-APHIS-Veterinary Services

**Gold:** BLM, Ducks Unlimited, Inc., National Park Service, National Shooting Sports Foundation, National Wild Turkey Federation, Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services

**Silver:** DuPont Land Management, Kalkomey, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Western Chemical, Inc.

**Bronze:** American Public University, D.J. Case & Associates, J.F. Griffin Publishing, LLC, Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation, Systems Consultants, The Nature Conservancy, USDA Forest Service, Voss Signs

**Hospitality:** Wildlife Management Institute



photo L-R: Jon Gassett (KY), Wayne MacCallum (MA), Curtis Taylor (WV)

I can't think of anything more meaningful than to receive this award from my peers and the Association. Thank you very much. I'm honored, humbled and surprised.

~Wayne MacCallum, 2012 Seth Gordon Award Recipient



photo L-R: Jon Gassett, Johnny Morris, Ron Regan, Bob Ziehmer (MO)

I proudly share this recognition with all of my fellow team members at Bass Pro Shops. They fully recognize the future of our outdoor industry and the sports we love depends, more than anything else, on how we manage our natural resources and conservation.

~ Johnny Morris, inaugural John L. Morris Award Recipient

## Committees, Subcommittees & Working Groups

The Association's committees, subcommittees, working groups and task forces are the crucial vehicles by which more than 1,000 conservation professionals collaborate on policy and coordinate partnerships and other opportunities that further a North American fish and wildlife conservation agenda.

### AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION

- Biofuels Working Group
- Conservation Compliance Working Group
- Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP) Working Group
- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Working Group
- Conservation Stewardship Program Working Group
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Working Group
- Forestry Working Group
- Grasslands Reserve Program Working Group
- Public Access Working Group
- Strategy Working Group
- Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) Working Group
- Wildlife Habitats Incentive Program (WHIP) Working Group

### ANGLER & BOATING PARTICIPATION

### ANNUAL MEETING/AWARDS/NOMINATING

### ASSOCIATION BUDGET

### AUDIT

### BIRD CONSERVATION

- Migratory Shore & Upland Game Bird Working Group
- Partners in Flight/Shorebird/Waterbird Working Group
- Resident Game Bird Working Group
- Waterfowl Working Group

### CLIMATE CHANGE

### EDUCATION, OUTREACH & DIVERSITY

- Diversity Working Group
- Education Working Group
- Outreach Working Group
- Wildlife Viewing & Nature Tourism Working Group

### ENERGY & WILDLIFE POLICY

- Coal Energy Subcommittee
- Onshore Oil & Gas and Oil Shale & Tar Sands Subcommittee
- Wind Energy & Transmission Subcommittee

### EXECUTIVE

### FEDERAL & TRIBAL RELATIONS

### FISH & WILDLIFE HEALTH

- Lead & Fish and Wildlife Health Working Group
- White Nose Syndrome in Bats Working Group

### FISH & WILDLIFE TRUST FUNDS

- Federal Assistance Working Group

### FISHERIES & WATER RESOURCES POLICY

- Drug Approval Working Group
- Natural Resource Damages Working Group

### HUNTING & SHOOTING SPORTS PARTICIPATION

### INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- Federal/State CITES Working Group

### INVASIVE SPECIES

### LAW ENFORCEMENT

- Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact

### LEADERSHIP & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### LEGAL

### LEGISLATIVE & FEDERAL BUDGET

### NATIONAL GRANTS

- 2011 National Survey Working Group

### OCEAN RESOURCES POLICY

### RESOLUTIONS

### SCIENCE & RESEARCH

### SUSTAINABLE USE OF WILDLIFE

- Furbearer Conservation Technical Working Group

### TEAMING WITH WILDLIFE

- Effectiveness Measures Working Group

### TECHNOLOGY (APPROVED IN 2012)

### THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES POLICY

- ESA & Climate Change Working Group

### WILDLIFE RESOURCE POLICY

- Amphibian & Reptile Subcommittee
- Human/Wildlife Conflict Working Group
- Federal Lands Access Working Group

### TASK FORCES

- President's Task Force on Wildlife Diversity Funding



## Officers & Executive Committee\*

### President

Jeff Vonk, South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks Dept.

### Vice President

Dan Forster, Georgia Wildlife Resources Division

### Secretary/Treasurer

Dave Chanda, New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife

### Past President

Dr. Jonathon Gassett, Kentucky Dept. of Fish & Wildlife Resources

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### Chair

Larry Voyles, Arizona Game & Fish Dept.

#### Vice Chair

Carter Smith, Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept.

#### Members

- John Arway, Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission
- Wayne MacCallum, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife
- Virgil Moore, Idaho Dept. of Fish & Game
- Nick Wiley, Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission
- Bob Ziehmer, Missouri Dept. of Conservation
- (1) Vacant

### EX-OFFICIO MEMBER

#### Canada

Mike Sullivan, New Brunswick Dept. of Natural Resources

### REGIONAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

#### Midwest

Keith Creagh, Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources

#### Northeast

Glenn Normandeau, New Hampshire Fish & Game Dept.

#### Southeast

Ed Carter, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency

#### Western

Jim Douglas, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission

\*Current slate of 2012/2013 Officers & Executive Committee members

## Members of the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies

The Association is the voice of its members. We move forward as one, representing our assembly of agencies and organizations, to address and overcome today's most pressing conservation challenges.

### U.S. STATE & TERRITORIAL AGENCY MEMBERS

Alabama Division of Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries  
 Alaska Department of Fish & Game  
 Arizona Game & Fish Department  
 Arkansas Game & Fish Commission  
 California Department of Fish & Wildlife  
 Colorado Division of Parks & Wildlife  
 Connecticut Bureau of Natural Resources  
 Delaware Division of Fish & Wildlife  
 DC Environmental Health Administration  
 Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission  
 Georgia Wildlife Resources Division  
 Guam Division of Aquatic & Wildlife Resources  
 Hawaii Department of Land & Natural Resources  
 Idaho Department of Fish & Game  
 Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
 Indiana Division of Fish & Wildlife  
 Iowa Department of Natural Resources  
 Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks & Tourism  
 Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources  
 Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries  
 Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife  
 Maryland Wildlife & Heritage Service  
 Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife  
 Michigan Department of Natural Resources  
 Minnesota Division of Fish & Wildlife  
 Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries & Parks  
 Missouri Department of Conservation  
 Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
 Nebraska Game & Parks Commission  
 Nevada Department of Wildlife  
 New Hampshire Fish & Game Department  
 New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife  
 New Mexico Game & Fish Department  
 New York Division of Fish, Wildlife & Marine Resources  
 North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission  
 North Dakota Game & Fish Department  
 Ohio Division of Wildlife  
 Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation  
 Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife  
 Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission  
 Pennsylvania Game Commission  
 Rhode Island Division of Fish & Wildlife  
 South Carolina Department of Natural Resources  
 South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks Department  
 Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency  
 Texas Parks & Wildlife Department  
 Utah Division of Wildlife Resources  
 Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife

Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries  
 Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife  
 West Virginia Division of Natural Resources  
 Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
 Wyoming Game & Fish Department

### U.S. FEDERAL AGENCY MEMBERS

Bureau of Land Management  
 NOAA Fisheries Services  
 National Park Service  
 U.S. Department of Agriculture - APHIS/Veterinary Services  
 U.S. Department of Agriculture - APHIS/Wildlife Services  
 U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service  
 U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
 U.S. Geological Survey

### CANADIAN GOVERNMENT MEMBERS

Alberta Fish & Wildlife Division  
 Canadian Wildlife Service  
 New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources & Energy  
 Northwest Territories Department of Environment & Natural Resources  
 Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources  
 Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources  
 Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment

### INTERNATIONAL MEMBER

Forestry Bureau, Council of Agriculture, Republic of China

### AFFILIATE MEMBERS

Association for Conservation Information  
 Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission  
 College of Natural Resources (Univ. of Wisconsin-Stevens Pt.)  
 The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes  
 Great Lakes Fishery Commission  
 Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission  
 International Hunter Education Association-USA  
 National Association of State Boating Law Administrators  
 North American Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association  
 Organization of Fish & Wildlife Information Managers  
 Organization of Wildlife Land & Realty Specialists  
 Organization of Wildlife Planners  
 Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission  
 Society for Wildlife Forensic Science  
 States Organization for Boating Access  
 Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council  
 Wildlife Disease Association

### CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS

American Eagle Foundation  
 American Sportfishing Association  
 Archery Trade Association  
 B.A.S.S. LLC  
 Bat Conservation International  
 Boone & Crockett Club  
 Canadian Wildlife Federation  
 Council for Environmental Education  
 Delta Waterfowl Foundation  
 Ducks Unlimited Canada  
 Ducks Unlimited, Inc.  
 FishAmerica Foundation  
 Forest Preserve District of DuPage County  
 Fur Institute of Canada  
 Fur Takers of America, Inc.  
 Hunting Heritage Trust  
 Izaak Walton League of America  
 Kalkomey Enterprises, Inc.  
 Mule Deer Foundation  
 National Audubon Society  
 National Bowhunter Education Foundation  
 National Marine Manufacturers Association  
 National Rifle Association - Conservation, Wildlife & Natural Resources Division  
 National Shooting Sports Foundation, Inc.  
 National Trappers Association  
 National Wild Turkey Federation  
 National Wildlife Federation  
 The Nature Conservancy  
 NatureServe  
 North American Bear Foundation  
 North American Falconers Association  
 North American Grouse Partnership  
 North American Wetlands Conservation Council  
 North Dakota Natural Resources Trust  
 Northwest Marine Technology, Inc.  
 Outdoor Roadmap  
 The Peregrine Fund  
 Pheasants Forever  
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 Resource Management Service, LLC  
 Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation  
 The Ruffed Grouse Society  
 Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership  
 U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance  
 Weatherby Foundation International  
 Wild Sheep Foundation  
 Wildlife Management Institute  
 The Wildlife Society

## PHOTOGRAPHERS

*Thank you to these talented photographers for sharing their incredible images with AFWA:*

**George Andrejko, Arizona Game & Fish Dept.:** *Front and Back Cover Photo; Inside Cover; President's Choice photo "Pronghorn" page 15; pages 7, 10, 16, 19, 21*

**Jesse Lee Varnado, Montana Dept. of Fish, Wildlife & Parks:** *pages 3-4, 5-6*

**Officer Dina Barta, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission:** *page 11*

### **Additional images provided by:**

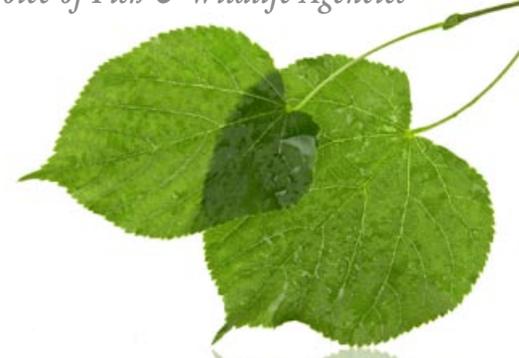
Keith Anderson (pg. 17); Chad Coppess, South Dakota Tourism & State Development (pg. 8); Rebecca DeCaboooter (pg. 20); National Conservation Leadership Institute (pg. 22); South Carolina Dept. of Natural Resources (pg. 23); Dreamstime.com (pp. 9, 12, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 24, 26)

### **Graphic Design:**

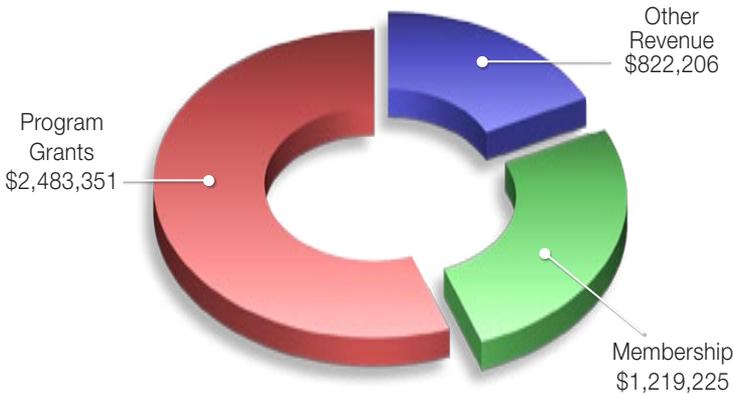
Victor Young

## 2012 Financials

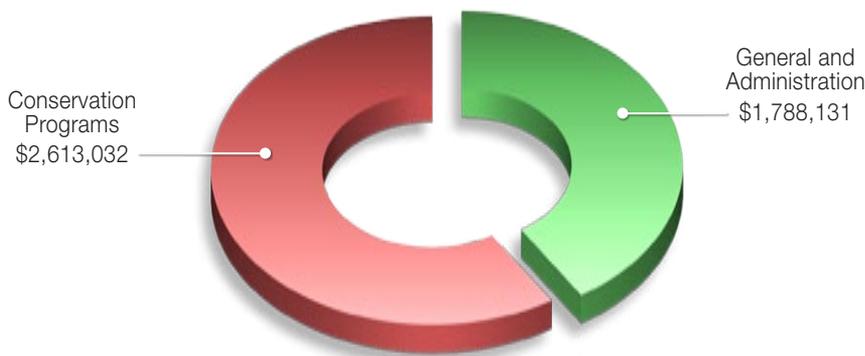
The Association holds itself to the same high fiscal standards as our members. We are committed to the efficient and effective use of the funds entrusted to us to advance science-based fish and wildlife conservation in the public interest.



### 2012 REVENUE



### 2012 EXPENSES



### MEMBERSHIP DUES

State	25.2%
Federal	<1%
Provincial	<1%
Associate	<1%
Affiliate	<1%
Contributing	<1%

### GRANT REVENUE

Federal	20.3%
Multistate	29.3%
Foundation	<1%
International	4.5%

### OTHER REVENUE

Annual Meeting	8.4%
Misc. State Contributions	<1%
Overhead	8.7%
Miscellaneous	1%

**TOTAL REVENUE** \$4,524,782

**TOTAL EXPENSES** \$4,401,163

The Association's independently audited financial statements and IRS Form 990 are available upon request.

## STAFF

Ron Regan, *Executive Director*

Carol Bamberg, *General Counsel*

John Bloom, *Accounting Manager*

Dr. Arpita Choudhury, *Science & Research Liaison*

Bridget Collins, *Agriculture Conservation Policy Analyst*

Estelle Green, *Administrative Assistant*

Dr. Dwight Guynn, *Management Assistance Team (MAT) Project Leader (USFWS)*

Dr. Sally Guynn, *MAT Team Leader*

Deb Hahn, *International Resource Director*

Mark Humpert, *Wildlife Diversity Director*

Laura MacLean, *Communications & Marketing Director*

Gina Main, *MAT Project Leader*

Chardé Martinez, *MAT Administrative Assistant*

Matt Menashes, *Operations Director*

Amanda Myers, *MAT Training & Information Services Administrator*

Priya Nanjappa, *Amphibian & Reptile Coordinator*

Angela Rivas Nelson, *Executive Assistant*

Mary Pfaffko, *Wildlife Diversity Associate*

Ryan Roberts, *National Fish Habitat Partnership Communications Coordinator*

Ashley Salo, *MSCGP/Industry-Agency Coordinator*

Jen Mock Schaeffer, *Legislative Director*

Liz Skipper, *Administrative Assistant*

Dean Smith, *NAWMP Coordinator / Wildlife Liaison, Canada*

Amy Thompson, *Communications Assistant*

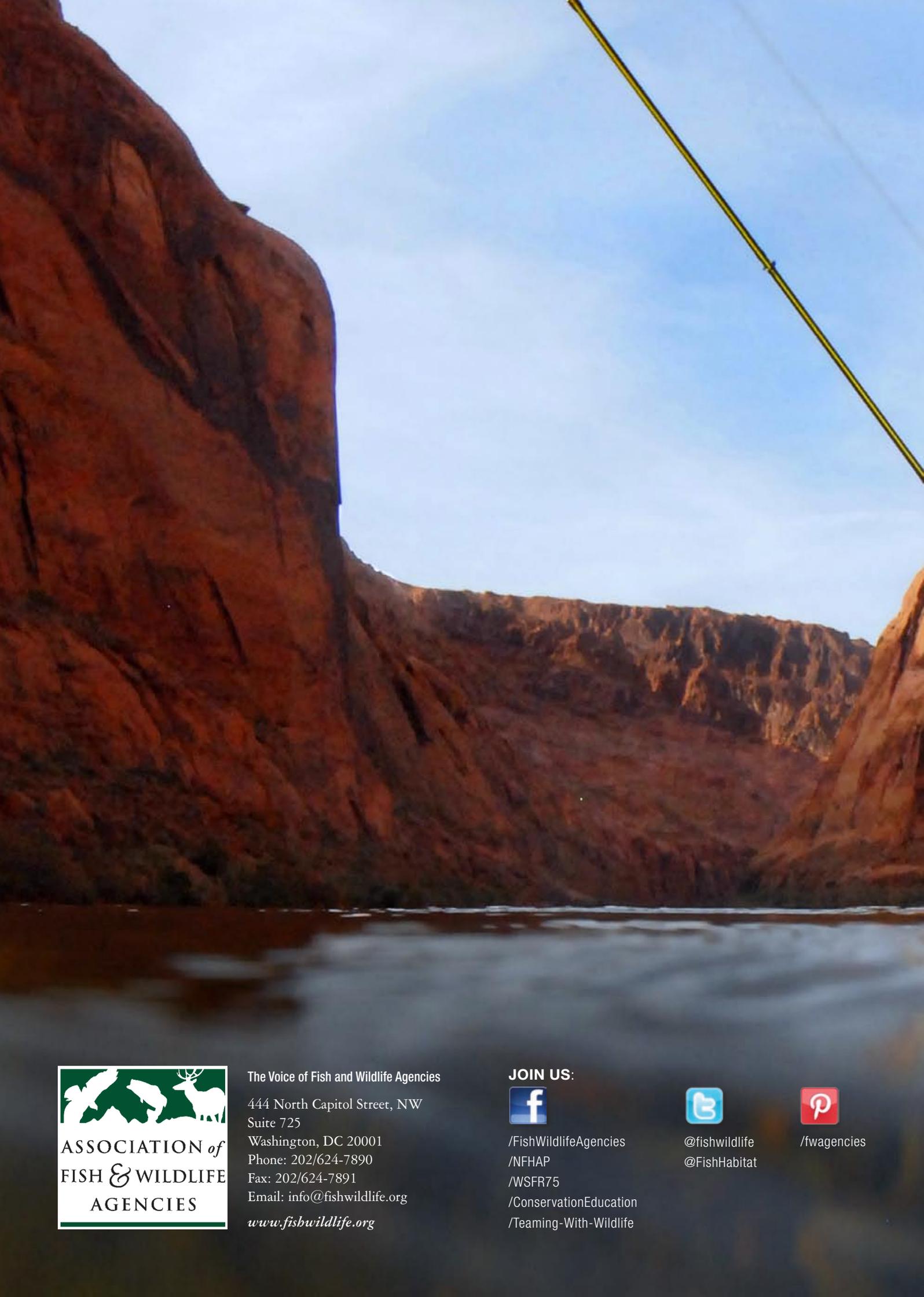
Allison Vogt, *Migratory Bird/NABCI Initiative/Wind Energy Coordinator*

Bryant White, *Furbearer Research Coordinator*

*AFWA's hard-working 2012 Interns:*

Jonathan Celmer, Sam Finnerty, Frank Fogarty, Phillip Keller, Jillian Mock and Tim Olson

The Association greatly appreciates Julie Henning (Washington Dept. of Fish & Wildlife.), Don Larsen (Washington Dept. of Fish & Wildlife), Doug Nusbaum (Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources), Lisa Potter (Missouri Dept. of Conservation) and Tim Schaeffer (Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission) for joining us in 2012 on DC detail from their agencies to support AFWA's Farm Bill and legislative outreach.



The Voice of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

444 North Capitol Street, NW  
Suite 725

Washington, DC 20001

Phone: 202/624-7890

Fax: 202/624-7891

Email: [info@fishwildlife.org](mailto:info@fishwildlife.org)

[www.fishwildlife.org](http://www.fishwildlife.org)

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