

**COMPILATION OF RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED AT THE 114TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES (MADISON, WISCONSIN)**

2024-01-10	Use of the Hunter Education Core Curriculum and Continued Support for Regulated Hunting in North America
2024-02-10	Supporting the Creation of an Interdisciplinary Training, Research, and Development Center to Support Instream Flow and Water Level Conservation
2024-03-10	Supporting the AFWA-ACP-EWAC Communications Framework for Solar Energy Project Proponents and State Fish and Wildlife Agencies
2024-04-10	Support for the Climate Adaptation Strategy for America's Fish, Wildlife, and Plants
2024-05-10	Support for the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA)
2024-06-10	Recognizing the 25th Anniversary of Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (PARC)
2024-07-10	Recognizing the 25th Anniversary of the North American Bird Conservation Initiative
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2024-10-10	Appreciation to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for a Successful 114th Annual Meeting



RESOLUTION 2024-01-10

USE OF THE HUNTER EDUCATION CORE CURRICULUM AND CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR REGULATED HUNTING IN NORTH AMERICA

WHEREAS, the sustainable use of fish and wildlife is a foundational element of natural resource conservation and management in the United States and Canada; and

WHEREAS, regulated hunting in North America is consistent with the wildlife conservation and management models of all 50 State fish and wildlife agencies as well as the provinces and territories of Canada (hereinafter "jurisdictions"); and

WHEREAS, hunting as licensed and regulated by the State, provincial, and territorial wildlife management agencies is a necessary and beneficial conservation activity and is used to effectively manage sustainable wildlife populations and reduce human-wildlife conflicts; and

WHEREAS, hunting and utilization of harvested game provides tangible benefits to people and communities; and

WHEREAS, hunters have directly and indirectly funded the majority of core State and Federal programs in wildlife conservation, benefitting both game and non-game species; and

WHEREAS, the training of new hunters to maintain excellence in hunting safety and keep hunting-related injuries low; to promote responsible hunter behavior, including compliance with hunting laws and regulations; and to instill an ethic of fair chase, will help sustain and support regulated hunting; and

WHEREAS, successful completion of hunter education is used by all jurisdictions as a qualification for licensing and/or hunting; and

WHEREAS, jurisdictions have established a system of reciprocity, including the recognition of each other's certificates, and sustaining this system is mutually beneficial and critical to the continued success of regulated hunting in North America; and

WHEREAS, the International Hunter Education Association USA (IHEA-USA) Standards Committee, composed primarily of State agency experts appointed on a regional basis, is charged with developing and maintaining universal core standards for hunter education that 1) are substantive, defensible, and effective, 2) can be embraced by all jurisdictions and measured in a consistent manner across jurisdictions, and 3) are usable as a template to assist jurisdictions in refining their own hunter education programs; and

WHEREAS, IHEA-USA has developed comprehensive hunter education standards outlining the core curriculum to meet the goal of training safe, responsible, and law-abiding hunters, and developed measurable student-learning objectives to promote hunter safety and fair chase ethics; and

WHEREAS, student learning objectives are essential to focusing and directing instructional choices in the development of a course curriculum, including the materials used to teach and evaluate a student's learning comprehension; and

WHEREAS, these objectives were written to offer individual jurisdictions the flexibility to determine course delivery, student performance expectations, and means of assessment;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies advocates for the use of the hunter education core curriculum standards by all jurisdictions, including student learning objectives as developed by the IHEA-USA Standards Committee or equivalent standards developed by IHEA Committees in other jurisdictions, to meet hunter education certification requirements; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association encourages the continued reciprocal acceptance of any certificate demonstrating completion of courses that meet the standards of IHEA-USA.

Submitted by the Hunting and Shooting Sports Participation Committee.



RESOLUTION 2024-02-10

SUPPORTING THE CREATION OF AN INTERDISCIPLINARY TRAINING, RESEARCH, AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER TO SUPPORT INSTREAM FLOW AND WATER LEVEL CONSERVATION

WHEREAS, since 1998 the Instream Flow Council ("Council") has pursued the conservation of aquatic ecosystems by enhancing state, provincial, and territorial fish and wildlife agency instream flow and water level conservation programs and providing support to other water stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, the conservation of adequate amounts of instream flows and water levels is required to sustain fish and wildlife productivity and other ecological functions in freshwater and estuarine habitats; and

WHEREAS, such ecological processes and functions include, but are not limited to connectivity, flood mitigation, groundwater recharge, navigation, biological productivity, nutrient transport and cycling, pollution attenuation, energy generation, water supply, and recreational, commercial, and subsistence opportunities such as fishing, hunting, boating, and wildlife-viewing; and

WHEREAS, the Council is governed by, and directly serves, professionals employed by fish and wildlife agencies in fulfillment of public trust responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, from 1974 to 2000 the U.S. Department of Interior's Cooperative Instream Flow Service Group served as a clearinghouse and provided leadership, training, scientific, and technical support to agency professionals and a variety of other water use stakeholders involved in instream flow and water level conservation and other water management uses, and these training and support services ended in 2000; and

WHEREAS, there has been no alternative established to replace these critical instream flow and water level conservation support services, especially to train current and future generations of fish and wildlife agency professionals and other stakeholders in water management and uses; and

WHEREAS, in 2020 the Council, in cooperation with the American Fisheries Society ("AFS"), established a Steering Committee of experts who completed a [Feasibility Assessment](#) demonstrating the need and pathway to establish a new training, research, and development center ("Center") to provide these critical and state-of-the-art instream flow and water level conservation services and recommended several options to achieve this goal; and

WHEREAS, the Feasibility Assessment outlined a range of concepts and recommendations for organizing, managing, and establishing such a Center, including guidance to the Council's and AFS's leadership and water stakeholder community in determining a path forward based on integration of eight interdisciplinary elements: hydrology, geomorphology, biology, connectivity, water quality, legal, institutional, and public involvement; and

WHEREAS, the Steering Committee determined that a centralized, distributed network with a core staff housed at a central location, and perhaps several trainers operating on a regional basis, would best serve the various needs of fish and wildlife agencies and other water use stakeholders to ensure conservation of adequate amounts of instream flows and water levels would be integrated into all water management practices; and

WHEREAS, the Council and AFS are presently taking steps to establish a Center in this format;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies supports the Council's and AFS' [Feasibility Assessment](#) and efforts to establish an interdisciplinary instream flow and water level conservation

training, research, and development center and shall offer subject-matter expertise and technical assistance via its staff and its committees as appropriate and practicable.

Resolution submitted by the Fisheries and Water Resources Policy Committee.



RESOLUTION 2024-03-10

SUPPORTING THE AFWA-ACP-EWAC COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORK FOR SOLAR ENERGY PROJECT PROPONENTS AND STATE FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES

WHEREAS, renewable energy is an important tool to minimize the effects of climate change and protect wildlife and ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, solar energy is a critical component of the renewable energy strategy and buildout across North America; and

WHEREAS, the siting, operation, and eventual decommissioning of solar energy projects can potentially pose negative effects to wildlife species and their habitats; and

WHEREAS, state fish and wildlife agencies and the solar energy industry jointly recognize the need to consider the impact of solar energy on wildlife and habitat; and

WHEREAS, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (Association) recognizes the need to open and maintain lines of communication specifically between state agencies and the solar industry; and

WHEREAS, the American Clean Power Association (ACP) and Energy Wildlife Action Coalition (EWAC), trade organizations for solar energy project proponents in the United States, recognize the need to open and maintain lines of communication specifically between state agencies and the solar industry; and

WHEREAS, the Association and ACP developed and published the Communications Framework for Wind Energy Project Proponents and State Fish and Wildlife Agencies in 2023 to establish a recommended process to encourage early and often communications and serves as an example for solar energy; and

WHEREAS, the Association, ACP, and EWAC assembled a collaborative working group consisting of state agency and industry representatives for the purpose of better understanding the challenges and limitations each faces, as well as to identify common ground shared by each party; and

WHEREAS, the Association, ACP, and EWAC developed a voluntary communications protocol to serve as a guide for early and iterative communications between project proponents and state agencies that establishes expectations for the frequency and style of engagement and the recommended communications triggers;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association endorses and supports the “AFWA-ACP-EWAC Communications Framework for Solar Energy Proponents and State Fish and Wildlife Agencies” and shall provide guidance to its member agencies in implementing the framework; it shall collaborate with state, provincial, territorial, tribal, federal, private, and international entities in sharing information across sectors and disciplines; and it shall continually evaluate the efficacy of and need for the framework, as well as assess opportunities for improving the framework.

Submitted by the Energy & Wildlife Policy Committee.



RESOLUTION 2024-04-10

SUPPORT FOR THE CLIMATE ADAPTATION STRATEGY FOR AMERICA'S FISH, WILDLIFE, AND PLANTS

WHEREAS, a changing climate continues to impact populations of fish, wildlife, marine species and the habitats upon which they depend, including through climate-driven range shifts, population changes, and even species extinctions, and exacerbates other stressors, both directly and indirectly, including habitat fragmentation and loss, invasive species, and wildfires; and

WHEREAS, as stewards of the nation's natural resources, it is essential that state fish and wildlife agencies continue to address the impacts of climate change through adaptation actions appropriate for their jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies ("Association") led the development, along with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, of the first National Fish, Wildlife, and Plant Climate Adaptation Strategy in 2012; and

WHEREAS, the Association resolved to recognize the importance of the National Fish, Wildlife, and Plant Climate Adaptation Strategy in enabling state fish and wildlife agencies to adapt to climate change (Resolution 2013-05-06); and

WHEREAS, the Association recognizes the extraordinary efforts of state fish and wildlife agencies over the past decade to address the impacts of climate change, still the Fifth National Climate Assessment (2023) identified the need to accelerate climate adaptation to keep pace with the rate of climate change; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Association recognized the need to update the first National Fish, Wildlife, and Plant Climate Adaptation Strategy to reflect advancements in climate science, the response of fish, wildlife, and plants to climate change, and the measures that can be taken to address climate change in fish and wildlife management; and

WHEREAS, the Association, in collaboration with the National Fish, Wildlife, and Plant Climate Adaptation Network, led the update to the National Fish, Wildlife, and Plant Climate Adaptation Strategy, resulting in a new Climate Adaptation Strategy for America's Fish, Wildlife, and Plants ("Strategy"); and

WHEREAS, state fish and wildlife agencies were well represented on the teams that directed and drafted the Strategy and helped make the Strategy a truly inclusive and collaborative national approach; and **WHEREAS**, the Strategy lays out a framework connecting adaptation actions to the major landscapes and seascapes of the nation; and

WHEREAS, the Strategy provides useful information and voluntary guidance to assist state fish and wildlife agencies with increasing their capacity to adapt to climate change and incorporate climate change considerations into management decisions and actions;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, in adopting this Resolution, recognizes the Climate Adaptation Strategy for America's Fish, Wildlife, and Plants as an important resource that will support state fish and wildlife agencies in their efforts to better understand and determine how they can contribute to helping our natural resources adapt to a changing climate; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED; that the Association encourages its members to use the Strategy to enhance their capacity to address climate change and inform efforts to address climate change impacts to fish and wildlife.

Submitted by the Climate Adaptation Committee.



RESOLUTION 2024-05-10

SUPPORT FOR THE NORTH AMERICAN WETLANDS CONSERVATION ACT (NAWCA)

WHEREAS, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) signed into law in December 1989, and most recently reauthorized at \$60 million in 2020, provides a significant source of funding for wetland and waterfowl projects in the United States, Canada, and Mexico; and

WHEREAS, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP), has been the most successful continental wildlife conservation effort in history through critical funding from NAWCA, benefiting recreationally and economically important waterfowl and other wetland-related species throughout the United States, Canada, and Mexico; and

WHEREAS, NAWCA grants totaling \$2.24 billion have leveraged \$4.43 billion in contributions from non-federal partners, and has facilitated the conservation of 32.5 million acres of wetlands and associated habitats in all 50 states, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands and involving more than 6,900 partners and 3,375 conservation projects, representing a federal/non-federal partnership at its best; and

WHEREAS, these 32.5 million acres provide habitat not only for waterfowl and other wetland-dependent wildlife species, but also attenuate floods, purify water, recharge groundwater, store carbon, and buffer storm surges, thus providing benefits of incalculable value to our citizens; and

WHEREAS, in 2022 hunters in the United States spent \$45.2 billion (27% in trip expenses and 43% in equipment expenses), and 2.8 million individuals (20% of hunters) participated in the hunting of migratory birds, including 20 million hunting trips and 23 million days afield; and

WHEREAS, in total, hunting in the U.S. provides 541,000 jobs, \$13.9 billion in local, state, and federal tax receipts, and total economic activity of \$107.9 billion, while wildlife viewing provides 2.74 million jobs, \$60.1 billion in local, state, and federal tax receipts and total economic activity of \$590.3 billion, and

WHEREAS, funding for wetland habitat conservation through NAWCA currently is derived from federal appropriations and interest generated from unobligated Pittman-Robertson funds; and

WHEREAS, since Fiscal Year 2020 Congressional appropriations for NAWCA have ranged between \$46 and \$50 million, however the President's Budget for 2025 recommended a reduction to \$33 million, thus reducing the funds available to states to conserve high-priority wetland habitats; and

WHEREAS, Title 16, Chapter 5B, Subsection 669(b)(1), of the United States Code, provides authorization for the interest on unobligated Pittman-Robertson funds to be appropriated for carrying out the provisions of the Migratory Bird Conservation Act, including NAWCA, which continues to provide a vital and stable source of funding for NAWCA and which provision expires on September 30, 2025; and

WHEREAS, since the purpose of the Pittman-Robertson program is to finance wildlife restoration, the use of interest earned by investment of unapportioned Pittman-Robertson funds is in keeping with the spirit of the Pittman-Robertson Act because it expedites wetlands conservation projects that are in accord with State interests and responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the support for NAWCA and the wetland conservation benefits it provides is demonstrated by the constant submission of high-quality projects that outpace current funding levels;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies reaffirms its support for the reauthorization of NAWCA and encourages Congress to reauthorize this important piece of bipartisan legislation as soon as possible; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association supports continuation of the current funding sources for NAWCA from federal appropriations; and the dedication of interest derived from the Wildlife Restoration account to the end of fiscal year 2035.

Submitted by the Legislative & Federal Budget Committee and Bird Conservation Committees.



RESOLUTION 2024-06-10

RECOGNIZING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF PARTNERS IN AMPHIBIAN AND REPTILE CONSERVATION (PARC)

WHEREAS, since 1999 a broad coalition of State and federal agencies, conservation organizations, museums, pet trade representatives, zoos and aquaria, universities, and other non-governmental stakeholders joined together as Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation ("PARC") to advance a mission of conserving amphibians, reptiles, and their habitats; and

WHEREAS, PARC's focus on keeping common species common and protecting habitats is more essential than ever, with habitat loss and degradation, disease, invasive species, climate change, overexploitation, and illegal trade posing substantial threats to quickly-declining populations of native amphibians and reptiles; and

WHEREAS, through its Department of Defense, Southeast, Northeast, Midwest, Northwest, and Southwest regional working groups established between 1999 and 2008, PARC has issued best practices and guidelines for agencies; provided numerous trainings and symposia; and conducted species risk assessments and contributed to the development of State Wildlife Action Plans, which cumulatively include over 400 species of amphibians and reptiles; and

WHEREAS, in recognition that illegal and unsustainable trade are some of the top threats facing North American turtle species, PARC and its conservation partners have made notable progress in addressing these threats through partnership initiatives such as the Collaborative to Combat the Illegal Trade in Turtles; and

WHEREAS, to support the work of management and conservation practitioners to address significant threats of extinction of North America's amphibian species, PARC has worked tirelessly over the past 25 years to provide a variety of products ranging from disinfection protocols to Habitat Management Guidelines, increasing public awareness of herpetofauna and their conservation, and worked closely with the North American Bsal Task Force to prevent introduction of *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans* (Bsal) into native North American populations; and

WHEREAS, State fish and wildlife agencies, as public trust managers of most species of herpetofauna, have supported and benefited from collaborative conservation approaches including PARC since its inception, and the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies ("Association") established the forerunner of its Amphibian and Reptile Conservation ("A&RC") Committee in close connection with PARC's activities; and

WHEREAS, the leadership of the A&RC Committee serves on PARC's Joint National Steering Committee, which guides PARC's activities and helps to maintain the longstanding and successful linkage established between agency professionals and the broader field of herpetofauna conservation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association celebrates the substantial accomplishments of Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation in growing unique, purpose-built conservation networks at the regional, national, and transnational levels to address a wide range of threats to North America's herpetofauna.

Resolution submitted by the Amphibian & Reptile Conservation Committee.



RESOLUTION 2024-07-10

RECOGNIZING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NORTH AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVATION INITIATIVE (NABCI)

WHEREAS, populations of both migratory and resident birds across taxa have been experiencing significant declines for decades, and a 2019 report prompted concern within the conservation communities of Canada, the United States, and Mexico by estimating that 1 in 4 breeding birds have been lost since 1970, amounting to a reduction of 3 billion birds; and

WHEREAS, in 1996 the trilateral Commission for Environmental Cooperation, established under the North American Free Trade Agreement, passed a resolution to create a working group to develop a North American strategy for the conservation of birds; and

WHEREAS, that working group approved a strategy and action plan which culminated in the trilateral development of three national committees dedicated to the conservation of all birds in North America, known as the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI); and

WHEREAS, the successful recovery of North American avifauna requires significant coordination and cooperation among state and federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, and other conservation initiatives working together on shared priorities and common intents; and

WHEREAS, over 96 million Americans participate in birdwatching annually, directly contributing over \$250 billion to the economy, recognizing that the presence of vibrant and diverse birdlife creates connections with the natural world, improves human well-being, and provides myriad ecosystem services that directly benefit humans; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. NABCI Committee acts as a national convener bringing together leaders in the bird conservation community under unified voice and shared purpose, guided by a comprehensive five-year Strategic Plan adopted in 2022; and

WHEREAS, prominent accomplishments of the U.S. NABCI Committee include the production of eight State of the Birds Reports since 2009, the development of the Five Game Changing Paradigms resource, the creation and adoption of Bird Conservation Regions, the identification and dissemination of National Bird Conservation Priorities, and more; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. NABCI Committee will achieve its 25th anniversary in the autumn of 2024;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (“Association”) recognizes the unique and impactful accomplishments of the U.S. NABCI Committee over the past twenty-five years since its inception, in collaboration with and because of a diversity of partnerships, including federal and state agencies, non-governmental organizations, and conservation initiatives, raising the awareness of and promoting successful solutions for addressing the recovery of all North American birds; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association reaffirms its commitment to support the U.S. NABCI Committee by continuing to engage state fish and wildlife agencies in the work of the Committee, acting as a willing partner for the benefit of migratory and resident birds, coordinating priorities across shared committees and initiatives, and helping to achieve the goals of the Committee as stated in the Strategic Plan.

Submitted by the Bird Conservation Committee.



RESOLUTION 2024-08-10

RECOGNIZING THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF SOUTHERN WINGS

WHEREAS, the United States and Canada have lost 1 in 4 breeding birds since 1970, with populations of native migratory species estimated to have declined by 2.5 billion individual birds; and

WHEREAS, over half of the bird species breeding in the United States and Canada are Neotropical migrants, spending up to eight months of the boreal autumn, winter, and spring in Latin America and the Caribbean; and

WHEREAS, it is essential that threats to migratory birds be addressed throughout their full annual cycle and across their entire distribution in order to successfully recover declining species and maintain robust population levels of abundant species; and

WHEREAS, state fish and wildlife agencies play a critical role in the conservation of migratory birds as a public trust resource for the benefit of over 96 million birdwatchers spending \$250 billion annually watching wildlife; and

WHEREAS, State Wildlife Action Plans and associated funding can facilitate regional collaboration to benefit shared species of greatest conservation need, many of which are migratory birds vulnerable to habitat loss in stopover and non-breeding areas; and

WHEREAS, Southern Wings, a partnership of state fish and wildlife agencies, was created to provide a mechanism for state agencies to collaborate in the development of conservation projects for shared priority species in Mexico, Central America, South America, and the Caribbean, where conservation investments are cost-effective and implemented by capable partners with proven histories of conservation success; and

WHEREAS, Southern Wings has facilitated over \$4.2 million in contributions from 41 state agencies, in combination with over \$9 million in leveraged partner funding, to conserve, restore, or manage over 1.5 million acres of migratory bird habitat via the implementation of 26 projects in 12 countries directly impacting at least 81 species of greatest conservation need; and

WHEREAS, Southern Wings celebrates its 15th anniversary in September 2024;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (“Association”) recognizes the substantial and visionary accomplishments of Southern Wings over the past fifteen years for the conservation of priority migratory bird species throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, complementing the existing work of state fish and wildlife agencies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association reaffirms its commitment to expand and grow Southern Wings by encouraging participation in the program by state fish and wildlife agencies for the benefit of migratory birds via the contribution of maximal voluntary funding for full annual life cycle conservation.

Submitted by the Bird Conservation Committee.



RESOLUTION 2024-09-10

IN OPPOSITION TO THE RELEASE OF CAPTIVE-BRED CERVIDS INTO FREE-RANGING WHITE-TAILED DEER POPULATIONS

WHEREAS, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies ("Association") recognizes that free-ranging cervids, including white-tailed deer, are a valuable and important wildlife resource; and

WHEREAS, the primary authority and capacity to protect and manage cervid species in trust for the public rests with state, provincial, and territorial governments, which have a paramount interest in protecting the health of their native resources; and

WHEREAS, chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a fatal degenerative disease of species within the family Cervidae and is arguably the most important disease threatening North American cervids, and

WHEREAS, while some genotypes have been identified in the prion protein gene that influence susceptibility to infection and rate of progression of clinical signs associated with CWD and prion shedding in individual cervids, none of these genotypes result in complete protection from or resistance to CWD, meaning infected cervids eventually will develop and succumb to the disease and, in some instances, may have prolonged incubation and prion shedding periods; and

WHEREAS, recently, the captive cervid industry and their partners have supported and promoted selective breeding and the release of selectively-bred captive white-tailed deer into the wild, aspiring to alter free-ranging white-tailed deer genetics to enhance the durability of free-ranging populations against CWD as a management approach; and

WHEREAS, the intentional release of captive cervids into free-ranging cervid populations undermines the authority of state, provincial, and territorial fish and wildlife agencies and neighboring jurisdictions that oppose such releases and undermines the public trust tenet of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation; and

WHEREAS, the effort to release selectively-bred captive white-tailed deer into the wild relies on assumptions that have not been adequately researched and is not based on the best available, peer-reviewed science and indeed poses a disease transmission risk to susceptible free-ranging deer, in addition to other unknown risks for which, states, provinces, and territories lack appropriate management tools, ; and

WHEREAS, it has not been demonstrated that the release of captive-bred deer is capable of altering the genetics of free-ranging deer populations to enhance the durability of free-ranging populations against CWD, because the genotypes associated with susceptibility to infection and rate of progression are recessive, and random removal due to harvest and natural selection will maintain the observed rarity of these genotypes in light of the vast distribution and abundance of white-tailed deer; and

WHEREAS, the release of captive cervids poses risks to the health and genetics of free-ranging cervid populations through the potential to carry unknown deleterious traits, may lead to new CWD-prion strains, and may inadvertently release CWD-positive animals into susceptible herds;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association recognizes the severe threat of CWD in captive and free-ranging cervid populations, supports the need for further scientific research of this threat, and endorses management practices based on the best available scientific information; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association reaffirms and supports the authority of state, provincial, and territorial governments to protect and manage cervid species held in public trust; and

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Association opposes the release of any captive cervids into the wild to influence free-ranging cervid population genetics for the purpose of controlling or managing CWD, based on the current best scientific information, and encourages its members in their own jurisdictions to promote and implement the best scientific management practices for CWD.

Submitted by the Fish and Wildlife Health Committee.



RESOLUTION 2024-10-10

APPRECIATION TO THE WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FOR A SUCCESSFUL 114TH ANNUAL MEETING

WHEREAS, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (“Association”) convened its 114th Annual Meeting on Sept. 22-25, 2024 in Madison, Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS the Association has done its business this week at Monona Terrace, a facility designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, who pioneered a vision of architecture centered on harmony between people and nature; and

WHEREAS, since 1967 (under laws dating back to 1867), the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WI DNR) has provided for the conservation of all wild animals within the State of Wisconsin, including for recreational purposes; and

WHEREAS, in 1924, during a period of significant organizational change within WI DNR’s predecessor agencies, Dr. Aldo Leopold came to Wisconsin and until his death in 1948 worked to enhance public participation in conservation decisionmaking within his adoptive home state; and

WHEREAS, state, provincial, and territorial directors began this Meeting with a trip to the Aldo Leopold Shack and Farm, touring its rich expanse of grassland, marsh, floodplain forest, and farmland while reflecting on Dr. Leopold’s achievements in communicating the demands of conservation and the indispensable role of nature in our individual and communal lives; and

WHEREAS, this year’s Plenary Session, “The 75th Anniversary of *A Sand County Almanac*: Fullness of Nature and Wellness in Our Time,” engaged with Leopold’s literary legacy and enduring insights, and the essential role of fish and wildlife agencies in ensuring public access to the restorative benefits of nature; and

WHEREAS, Diane Brusoe, Administrator of WI DNR’s Division of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, and her excellent staff have ensured a successful Meeting through their steadfast hospitality and coordination;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Association offers its deep gratitude to WI DNR and to all Association members for a productive, reflective, and successful Annual Meeting.

Adopted by the Association on September 25, 2024 in Madison, Wisconsin.