

International Relations Committee - Report

Meeting of September 10, 2018

Bob Broscheid (Colorado), Co-Chair

Travis Ripley (Alberta), Co-Chair

Meeting convened from 10:00 am to 11:45 pm, chaired by Travis Ripley. Of the 23 participants in attendance, 9 were current Committee members or their proxies.

SCHEDULED DISCUSSION ITEMS:

2018/2019 Committee Work Plan

Deb Hahn

The International Relations Committee charge is as follows.

- Develop Association positions on all appropriate international matters including agreements, treaties, conventions, regulations and initiatives such as IUCN and its specialists groups and especially on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Fauna and Flora (CITES).
- Further Canadian and Mexican involvement, develop relations with Central and South American and Caribbean nations, and explore contact with other nations across the globe.
- Monitor and participate as needed in the relevant Conventions, agreements and treaties such as the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, The Convention on Biological Diversity, The Ramsar Convention, Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network, etc.
- Serves as AFWA's source, sounding board and integrator of information and discussion about international issues.

The Committee reviewed the Charge and the Work Plan. The Work Plan will be sent to the Committee members for final comments before the October 1 deadline.

Canadian Wildlife Directors Committee

Travis Ripley

The Canadian Wildlife Directors Committee (CWDC) report highlighted the topics of relevancy, the Value of Nature survey, and species at risk. The last CWDC meeting was held early this year in Saskatchewan.

The Provinces and Territories discussed relevancy. This included a proposal to initiate a more robust Value of Nature survey every 5 years. It is possible that this survey could be done the same year as the National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-associated Recreation in the US. In conjunction with Environment and Climate Change Canada, they discussed a pathway to increase land protection to meet the Aichi Targets. They received updates on Chronic Wasting Disease. They are looking at ways to increase testing and better inform the hunting public; and are exploring ways to partner more closely with state wildlife agencies on this issue. Species at risk acts (provincial, territorial and federal acts) and their implementation and coordination are always a major topic of discussion. At the last meeting, caribou and bats were the focus.

Canadian Wildlife Service Report

Basile van Havre

Basile van Havre shared information about CITES, CBD, IUCN, the Trilateral, and in general about sustainable use activities in Canada. The hope is that a new CITES Director General will be in place by the Standing Committee meeting. CWS is interested in working with partners to meet the CBD Aichi targets for land conservation and protection. They are excited about collaboration opportunities with the newly created IUCN US National Committee. The next Trilateral Wildlife Committee meeting will be hosted by Canada and held in Victoria, British Columbia. CWS will participate in the Illegal Wildlife Trade Conference in London in a few weeks and would like to see Canada and the US bring a strong message supporting sustainable trade for conservation and livelihoods. They also informed the Committee about a bill in the United Kingdom to ban all ivory trade that includes narwhal and beluga ivory. There are no look-a-like issues so they are unsure what the reasoning is behind including those two species.

CITES Technical Work Group Update

Rick Jacobson, Jim deVos, Carolyn Caldwell, Buddy Baker

Buddy Baker, (Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries), Carolyn Caldwell (MAFWA CITES Technical Work Group Representative), Jim deVos (Arizona Game and Fish Department), Rick Jacobson (Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection) and Deb Hahn (Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies) represented the state fish and wildlife agencies and where applicable the provinces and territories at the 30th Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Animals Committee (AC) meeting from 16-20 July, 2018 and the Joint Meeting held with the 23rd Plants Committee (PC) on July 21st. The US Fish and Wildlife Service started soliciting input on species proposals, and resolutions and decisions for the 2019 CITES Conference of the Parties (CoP) via federal register notices. The Technical Work Group will be reaching out to ask for information and input to inform positions. Currently the Technical Work Group is engaging on American eel conservation, development of an updated CITES vision, Appendix III species conservation, and traceability of trade specimens. The Work Group report from the AC and join AC/PC meetings can be found [here](#).

Update on Activities of the USFWS Office of International Affairs

Eric Alvarez, USFWS Acting Assistant Director International Affairs

International Wildlife Conservation Council: In November 2017, the Department of Interior published a notice in the Federal Register announcing establishment of the International Wildlife Conservation Council (Council or IWCC). Per the notice and the Council's charter, the Council will provide advice to the Federal Government, through the Secretary of the Interior, on increasing public awareness domestically regarding conservation, wildlife law enforcement, and economic benefits that result from U.S. citizens traveling to foreign nations to engage in hunting. Additionally, the Council shall advise the Secretary on the benefits international hunting has on foreign wildlife and habitat conservation, anti-poaching and illegal wildlife trafficking programs, and other ways in which international hunting benefits human populations in these areas. A third meeting of the Council will be in Arlington, Virginia on September 26th and 27th.

International Wildlife Conservation Framework: The Service recently launched an effort to develop a holistic international wildlife conservation framework that will lead to an enduring vision that defines the Service's niche in international conservation; strengthens cooperation with partners and stakeholders; and leverages additional support for international wildlife conservation priorities. They hope to finalize this strategy in the fall of 2018.

Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management: The Committee

was created by the wildlife agencies of Canada and the United States, and by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Mexico (SEMARNAT) in 1995 to address priorities of continental significance and enhance concerted efforts towards the conservation and management of the unique biological resources shared by the three countries. This year, the annual meeting of the Trilateral Committee was in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, at the Service's National Conservation Training Center from April 9-12. Next year it will be in Victoria, British Columbia.

CITES CoP18: The Service has already initiated its preparations for the 18th Meeting of the CITES Conference of Parties, which is scheduled for May 2019 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The Service's first Federal Register notice, calling on the public to provide recommendations regarding species proposals, had a public comment period that closed on March 26. Its second notice, calling on the public to provide recommendations on resolutions, decisions and other agenda items, was published in March. The next notice will provide an opportunity to provide input on the tentative U.S. negotiating positions for entire agenda.

Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) Project: The CEC funded a project titled, "Supporting Sustainable Trade of CITES Species" (<http://www.cec.org/our-work/projects/supporting-sustainable-trade-cites-species>). This is a tri-national initiative to support sustainable trade of CITES species in the North American region. In August 2017, the CEC Council approved funding for a second phase of this project that will implement actions identified in the Action Plans for turtles, sharks, tarantulas, and timber. The first three-day tri-national workshop, focused on trade and identification of CITES-listed tarantulas, was held during Feb. 26 – Mar. 2, 2018, in Guadalajara, Mexico. The US will host a workshop on freshwater turtle and tortoise workshop in Miami, Florida October 24-26.

Cross Border and International Discussion Topics

All

Participants discussed the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) and our shared porcupine caribou populations. Porcupine caribou are a shared wildlife resource that are managed at different times of year in the US and Canada. Since the US recently announced consideration of opening the calving grounds for exploration it is important that we continue to communicate on shared management and engage our international boards to provide science to guide our decision making.

Participants also touched on the issue of incidental take and migratory birds. With a difference of opinion on implementing incidental take in Canada and the US, it is important to keep dialogue going and work together to continue implementing the Migratory Bird Treaty.

There was a brief discussion about whether Canada and the US can bring a strong, unified message of sustainable use and sustainable trade to international forums. We continue to see actions that erode support for the principles of sustainable use and sustainable trade in international forums. The US and Canada can be a powerful force to address these threats. We also touched on the importance of collaboration and communication between our 2 countries on shared issues and species.

Action Items / Resolutions / Motions

N/A

THREATS AND EMERGING ISSUES IDENTIFIED:

N/A

NEW OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED:

Submitted by Travis Ripley

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