

## International Relations Committee - Report

Meeting of September 13, 2017

Bob Broscheid (Colorado), Co-Chair

Travis Ripley (Alberta), Co-Chair

Meeting convened from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm, chaired by Bob Broscheid. Of the 13 participants in attendance, 7 were current Committee members or their proxies.

### **SCHEDULED DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

#### **2017/2018 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 draft Work Plan. They provided comments. The Work Plan will be emailed out to the full Committee for additional comment before the final Work Plan is due on October 1.

#### **Canadian Wildlife Directors Committee**

**Travis Ripley**

The Canadian Wildlife Directors Committee (CWDC) met in July 2017. The information that follows discusses what happened at that meeting and also provides updates on the CWDC priorities. They conducted a workshop called Managing Wildlife through Co-Management: A Northern Perspective using Caribou as a Model.

- The workshop highlighted the importance of com-management boards when addressing wildlife harvest and sustainability rates in Nunavut, NWT, and Yukon
- Co-Management (integrating science and traditional knowledge) is enshrined in legislation (in northern Canada) and not only considered a policy objective
- While co-management is an important process, it was noted to be long and cumbersome and not suited to rapid wildlife management decisions.
- Co-Management boards are accountable to each territorial legislature, where the Minister has the authority to accept, reject or alter co-management board recommendation(s)
- Alberta (Travis Ripley) presented the southern perspective of caribou management and the complexities of a working landscape. The presentation stimulated ongoing conversation related to northern Canada approaches to managing tundra and boreal caribou herds

They had a panel discussion - Future of Biodiversity and Wildlife Management in Canada – that discussed the following.

- International trade in wildlife and (positive) Canadian reputation highlighting decreasing trends in biodiversity and ecosystem protection, stability with CITES noting increased focus on marine species, and suggesting the next targets based on Aichi Targets at international level will be more aggressive
- Central focus on declining biodiversity resulting in cascading effects to other wildlife species; increases in invasive species and stressing a need for more harvest reporting to better manage all wildlife
- Northern focus with challenges stemming from low biodiversity coupled with a vast area of responsibility; impacts of climate change and increased concern with wildlife disease
- U.S perspective highlighting the continued challenge of relevancy when populations are predominately urban; funding models to help support all wildlife species and the global era of wildlife management

#### Wildlife Health

- A draft Wildlife Health Strategy was circulated for review. Ongoing support to develop this strategy was highlighted at the meeting

#### Species at Risk – strengthening collaboration

- The discussion focused on continued involvement and support for federal SARA policies. These policies were improved through a federal provincial territorial working group (RENEW – Recovery of National Endangered Wildlife)

#### Boreal Caribou update

- A brief overview of the process to date was provided. The focus of this topic largely centered on the establishment of a separate FPT caribou committee to coordinate, at a national level, the implementation, protective actions and science-policy integration for caribou recovery

#### Placed-Based habitat and population conservation

- This topic highlighted the successful placed-based conservation programs (e.g. Habitat Joint Ventures, Marine Protected Areas, North American Waterfowl Management Plan) and provided a progress update. This initiative has been ongoing and focused on addressing and recovering ecosystems and all the species within them (rather than a species by species approach)

#### Data Knowledge and Sharing

- The intent was to stimulate conversation and explore additional methods to collect and report data among partners in conservation and wildlife management. A jurisdictional scan was completed that highlights the current inconsistency in harvest reporting.

#### Canadian Fisheries Update:

##### Aquaculture

- Focus on aquaculture and evaluating the applicability of a federal Aquaculture Act and Regulations. The intent is to support growing the Canadian aquaculture program in support of international fish and seafood markets. The provinces and territories have reserve their support for federal legislation, opting to collect additional information over the next year

## Market Access

- A market access task force provides strategic advice on market development for fish and seafood products. A recent \$30M (CDN) fund was created to assist provincial and territorial business develop and market their products

## Federal Fisheries Act review

- After changes were made in 2012, the current Canadian government is focused on restoring the lost protections and incorporating modern safeguards back into the Fisheries (Canada) Act. A Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) committee was tasked to provide recommendations to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. The modernizing of this act is underway and the focus has shifted to FPT support for policy development

## Marine Conservation

- Focus is for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to consult with provinces and territories on marine protected areas. The current approach focuses on socio-economic and cultural considerations to meet protection targets

## Aquatic Invasive Species

- The Department of Fisheries and Oceans enacted a national aquatic invasive species regulation. The current focus is to evaluate funding options to support monitoring and control efforts in P/T's, in addition to improving science, evaluating P/T legislative and regulatory options and development of required risk assessments

## **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 at the 29th Animals Committee meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland from 18-21 July, 2017 and the Joint Meeting held with the 23<sup>rd</sup> Plants Committee on July 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Animals Committee discussed 31 substantive agenda items, including but not limited to: non-detriment findings; the review of significant trade in Appendix II species; the periodic review of animal species included in the Appendices; snake trade and traceability; Appendix III listings; sturgeons and paddlefish; and formation of an intersessionsal working group on American eel. Fifty-four countries were represented with nearly 300 participants at the meeting.

### Key outcomes:

1. No North American species were proposed for inclusion in the Review of Significant Trade; therefore, interventions by the CITES Technical Work Group were not needed.
2. A change in the definition of "country of origin" for caviar was not accepted but discussions will continue.
3. No additional wildlife traceability requirements were imposed.
4. Captive breeding discussions were monitored to ensure they don't negatively impact captive bred species in the U.S. such as the American Alligator.
5. Three U.S. species were chosen for Periodic Review. They are the short-tailed albatross (*Phoebastria albatrus*), Guadalupe fur seal (*Arctocephalus townsendi*), and the Aleutian cackling goose (*Branta Canadensis leucoparei*). Periodic review could potentially lead to a

recommendation from the Animals Committee for a downlisting or removal of these species from CITES Appendices at the next Conference of the Parties

6. No list of candidate species for Appendix III was generated and the determination of species to be listed in Appendix III remains the discretion of the range country.

For more information, click [here](#).

#### **Update on Activities of the USFWS Office of International Affairs**

**Gloria Bell, USFWS Acting Assistant Director International Affairs (provided a written update)**

##### **American Ginseng**

USFWS hosted a State-Tribe American Ginseng Program Coordination Meeting, July 11, 2017, in Morgantown, West Virginia. Due to the high volume of international trade of wild ginseng, the species is included in Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). The meeting brought together the State and Tribe ginseng program coordinators to discuss pressing current issues facing wild ginseng, management efforts, and necessary steps to improve the long-term sustainability of ginseng. Immediately after the 1-day coordination meeting, was a 2-day (July 12-13, 2017) symposium on the “The Future of American Ginseng and Forest Botanicals.” The symposium, coordinated by the United Plant Savers and in collaboration with the Service, and supported by several herbal product companies, presented new biological and management information on the conservation and trade of American ginseng and other economically important forest plants that provide revenue to local economies, particularly the Appalachian Region.

##### **South Africa Lions**

On August 31st, USFWS approved the import of lion trophies taken in South Africa during permitted hunts from wild and wild-managed lion populations through the 2019 hunting seasons, unless information is received that would cause us to reconsider. U.S. hunters that hunt lions from these populations will be participating in a hunting program that provides a clear conservation benefit. This decision meets our obligation under the Endangered Species Act while building and sustaining community support for lion conservation and helping combat poaching and illegal trade in South Africa. USFWS anticipates making additional findings for other countries over the next several weeks.

##### **Wildlife Trafficking**

The Eliminate, Neutralize and Disrupt (END) Wildlife Trafficking Act passed Congress with unanimous bipartisan support and was signed into law on October 7, 2016. The Act is intended to “support global anti-poaching efforts, strengthen the capacity of partner countries to counter wildlife trafficking, designate major wildlife trafficking countries, and for other purposes.” To better organize U.S. efforts to disrupt and combat wildlife trafficking, the Task Force on Wildlife Trafficking was created on July 1, 2013. Co-chaired by the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Attorney General, the Task Force brings together 17 federal departments and agencies to implement the National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking (the National Strategy). The Task Force and National Strategy were then codified into law by the END Act in 2016. The END Act directs the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Commerce, to submit to Congress, within one year of enactment of the legislation, a report that lists focus countries and countries of concern. USFWS is working closely with the other co-chair agencies to implement the END Act.

##### **CITES CoP17 Outcomes**

USFWS continues to work to implement the outcomes of the 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES. The listing of thresher and silky sharks was delayed until October 4, and USFWS has been working with NOAA and the affected industry to ensure that the listing will be implemented with as little disruption as possible. The most significant implementation challenge has been

implementation of the listing of all rosewood species in CITES Appendix II. The Service has issued more than 10,000 more permits this year than at this point last year, primarily due to the large number of items, particularly musical instruments, covered by these new listings. USFWS is actively working with the industry to streamline permitting and consider other ways to alleviate the burdens associated with these listings, while still ensuring the global conservation of rosewood species.

### **Proposal to Promote Sustainable Use in the Western Hemisphere**

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (Proposal presented by Deb Hahn)

Deb Hahn presented the proposal that was submitted by Texas Parks and Wildlife. The attendees were supportive of the concept. They made recommendations for a few changes to the proposal which include also considering sending state agency personnel south and including examples from Arizona and Texas that could encourage other states to host colleagues. Deb Hahn and Maria Araujo (TXPWD) take their feedback, update the proposal, and send it back out to the Committee for further comment.

### **Sustainable Use of Wildlife (SUW) Committee Report**

**Mike O'Brien**

The European Union (EU) is unable to host the 2017 Joint Management Committee (JMC) meeting. The EU may be willing to host in 2018. If they do not host, Russia would stand next in the rotation to host.

The Presidential Task Force on Trapping Policy recently completed a report that has been approved by AFWA's Executive Committee and will go before the business meeting for a vote. The report captures institutional memory of the development of the Agreed Minute with the EU, defines the commitments and how they have been met, and lays the groundwork for the continuation of the Best Management Practices program.

The WildEarth Guardians lawsuit regarding the CITES Appendix II Furbearer Export Program continues. Wild Earth Guardians has filed suit against USFWS claiming the program violates NEPA. This suit has been consolidated with another filed by Center for Biological Diversity. The USFWS has filed an answer to these consolidated cases. USFWS now must file a proposed case management plan by September 25.

Mike O'Brien is retiring so there will be a change of Committee leadership. They would like to maintain a Canadian Vice Chair the Sustainable Use of Wildlife Committee and also Human Wildlife Conflict Working Group.

### **Action Items / Resolutions / Motions**

**N/A**

### **THREATS AND EMERGING ISSUES IDENTIFIED:**

**N/A**

### **NEW OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED:**

The attendees had a roundtable discussion about a variety of issues including improving state agency participation in international conventions and treaties and ideas on how to enhance collaboration with Canadian colleagues with regards to IUCN and CBD.

*Submitted by Bob Broscheid and Travis Ripley*

Committee Member Attendees:

Bob Broscheid, bob.broscheid@state.co.us

Travis Ripley, travis.ripley@gov.ab.ca

Jim deVos, jdevos@azgfd.gov

Matt Eckert, matthew.eckert@state.co.us

Don MacLauchlan, maclauchland@gmail.com

Rick Jacobson, [rick.jacobson@ct.gov](mailto:rick.jacobson@ct.gov)

Sara Schweitzer, sara.schweitzer@ncwildlife.org

Non-Committee Members Attendees:

Mike O'Brien, obrienms@gov.ns.ca

Basile VanHavre, basile.vanhavre@canada.ca

Deanne Drouillard, d\_drouillard@ducks.ca

Dave Kustersky, d\_kustersky@ducks.ca

Dean Smith, dsmith@fishwildlife.org