



## **Sustainable Use of Wildlife Committee**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Chair: Doug Vincent-Lang (Alaska)**

**Vice-Chair: Dave Kay (Alberta)**

**Thursday, September 9<sup>th</sup> 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM (EDT)**

**111<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting**

#### **Committee Charge:**

Advocate the North American Model of Fish and Wildlife Conservation and promote the sustainable use of fish and wildlife resources at the international level.

#### **Subcommittees and Working Groups:**

U.S. Furbearer Conservation Technical Working Group

#### **Agenda**

- Agenda review, adjustments, and opening comments (Doug Vincent-Lang))
- Introductions (Doug)
- Approval of Minutes from the previous meeting (Doug)
- Current /Competitive Multi-State Grants (Tom Decker, Bryant White)
- Future Multi-State Grant Opportunities (TBD)
- Updates on the FurMark Program (MacLauchlan)
- Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow Program (Dave Windsor)
- Joint Management Committee Meeting 2022 (Dave Kay, Tom Deliberto)
- AIHTS Implementation and Trap Testing in Canada (Dave Kay)
- US FWS Partner with a Payer Program (Tom Decker)
- Best Management Practices for Trapping: Progress, Plans and Outreach (Bryant White)
- Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation – (Ellary Tucker-Williams)
- Sportsmen's Alliance (Jacob Hupp)
- Safari Club International (Jeremy Clare)
- Roundtable
- Other topics potentially affecting Sustainable Wildlife Use

## Minutes

- Agenda review, adjustments, and opening comments (Doug Vincent-Lang)
  - Chairman Lang opened the meeting. There were no adjustments.
- Introductions (Doug)
  - In lieu of virtual introductions, attendees were asked to enter name and email address in the chat. At one point there were 58 attendees.
- Approval of Minutes from the previous meeting (Doug)
  - Chairman Lang presented a motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. The motion was moved and seconded. There was no discussion. The minutes were unanimously approved.
  -
- Current /Competitive Multi-State Grants (Tom Decker, Bryant White)
  - Current Grants
    - “Maintaining the relevancy of the AFWA North American Trapper Education Program”
      - This program is maintained by AFWA at no cost to agencies and available for use by all agencies. A MSCG was awarded to create trapper education videos and update the manual based on the updated national trapper education standards created by AFWA and IHEA in 2019.
        - Fifteen of the sixteen videos have been shot and are in a first draft.
        - Manual and online update are in progress
        - Completion is expected by January 1, 2022.
    - “Modernizing Trapping Matters Professional Development Workshops and Wild Fur Schools Delivery Through Updated Messaging and the Creation of Distance Learning modules”
      - This grant will allow for creation of distance learning modules for virtual delivery of professional development workshops regarding trapping
      - Delivery of some workshops will take place in person (4 have already been delivered and 9 more will be delivered in person through April of 2022, unless this is stalled by the pandemic.
      - Focus group testing of messages, including some testing with traditionally underrepresented groups. A contract has been signed and work will begin on this project soon. Six national focus groups will be conducted. We anticipate completion of this project by end of calendar year 2021.
    - “Trapping Matters - Communication Message Training”

- This grant will allow for creation of additional distance learning modules for virtual delivery of professional development workshops regarding trapping
  - In person delivery of Trapping Matters Workshops wild fur schools
- Future Multi-State Grant Opportunities (TBD)
  - **\*The committee discussed potentially resubmitting the Value of Harvest proposal which was not accepted for the 2022 MSCG cycle.**
  - **\*Discussion will continue, and a partnership may be sought with other groups.**
- Updates on the FurMark Program (MacLauchlan)
  - FurMark is a program developed by the fur industry to provide traceability and ensure humane and sustainable harvests of furbearers.
  - Mr. Don MacLauchlan discussed the progress on implementation of FurMark. Mr. Buddy Baker and Mr. Mike O'Brien added to the discussion. Please see the Appendix for a flyer on FurMark which explains the goals of the program and provides details on implementation.
  - In 2021 a letter was developed by the Committee and sent to Fur Harvesters Auction House regarding the FurMark program and its implementation.
  - **\*It was determined that a similar letter should be developed which updates the U.S. perspective.**
- Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow Program (Dave Windsor)
  - Report attached in appendix
- Joint Management Committee Meeting 2022 (Dave Kay, Tom Deliberto)
  - The Joint Management Committee Meeting for the Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards (JMC) was not held in 2020. It was scheduled to be hosted by the Russian Federation. Typically, the signatory parties (Canada, European Union, Russian Federation) and the US as a permanent observer, meet every other year to discuss progress on the various trap testing programs. Dr. Tom DeLiberto (US Head of Delegation to the JMC) indicated that the US has offered to host the next JMC meeting in the late fall of 2022. Invitations will be forthcoming to the parties.
- AIHTS Implementation and Trap Testing in Canada (Dave Kay)
  - Director Travis Ripley reported that the Canadian trap testing program, relative to the Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standard (AIHTS), continues to make great strides in testing traps and improving the welfare of captured animals.
  - Current work involves testing of lethal snares on coyotes. The first phase of this work will be completed soon, and a report will be forth coming.
- US FWS Partner with a Payer Program (Tom Decker)
  - This is an outreach of the US-FWS Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) program
  - See <https://partnerwithapayer.org/>

- Best Management Practices for Trapping: Progress, Plans and Outreach (Bryant White)
  - 22 Species Specific BMPs have been developed
  - 7 BMP documents are being updated in 2021
  - Trap testing projects were conducted in 9 states during the 2020-2021 season with many projects focusing on the use of cable restraint devices.
  - Trap testing projects will be conducted again in 9 states during the 2021-22 trapping season and will again focus primarily on cable devices for the capture of bobcat, gray fox and swift fox. The Collarum trap will be tested on coyotes. Colony cage traps will be tested on muskrats.
  - New outreach materials have been developed including
    - Science Briefs:
      - [Animal Welfare in Trapping](#)
      - [Animal Selectivity in Trapping](#)
      - [Sustainable Wildlife Use](#)
      - *Massachusetts Beaver Trapping Ban (in development)*
    - Conservation Briefs (in progress)
      - Trapping and Safety (in layout)
      - Trapping and North American Model of Wildlife Conservation (in review)
  - Wildlife Monograph on BMPs has been published
    - <https://wildlife.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/wmon.1057>
- Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation – (Ellary Tucker-Williams)
  - Please see the Appendix for the full report
  - **\*Some discussion was held about the MOU signed and the partnership formed between CSF, the National Trappers Association, and the Fur Takers of America. The committee will have further discussion about how AFWA might also participate in this MOU.**
- Sportsmen’s Alliance (Jacob Hupp)
  - Awaiting updated report. Previous 2021 report provided in Appendix
- Safari Club International (Jeremy Clare)
  - Please see the Appendix for the full report
- Lack of time precluded discussion of the additional agenda items
- Meeting was adjourned by Chairman Lang
- Roundtable
- Other topics potentially affecting Sustainable Wildlife Use

**\*These items need additional discussion. AFWA staff will follow-up**

## Appendix

- FurMark Program Flyer
- Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow Report
- Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation Report
- Sportsmen's Alliance Report
- Safari Club International Report

Furmark® and Fur Harvesters Auction Inc.



FURMARK  
SUSTAINABLE NATURAL FUR



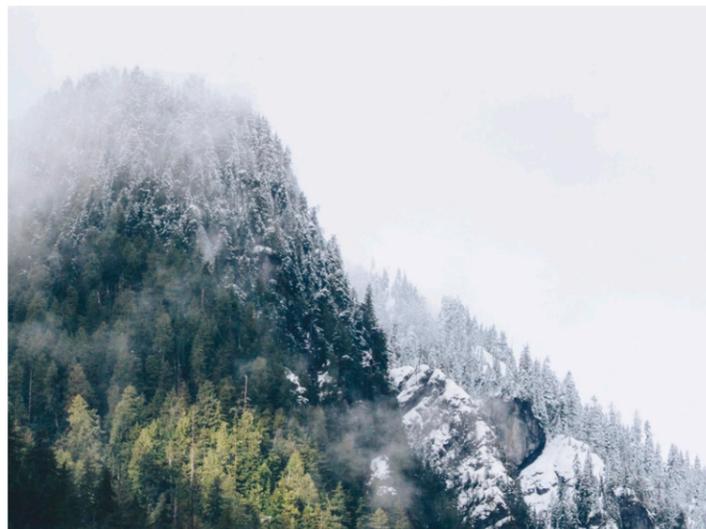
# Guaranteed animal welfare and environmental standards

Furmark® is a comprehensive global certification and traceability system for natural fur that guarantees animal welfare and environmental standards.

Applying across the supply chain and with certified, traceable products available to consumers from Autumn 2021, Furmark® is a simple, recognisable mark of quality, assurance, and confidence.

Developed in consultation with conscientious consumers and contemporary fashion groups and brands, the certification system ensures that every step of production meets strict, globally-recognised standards. Natural fur is highly regulated at international, national, regional, and local levels.

To ensure consumers, retailers, and brands have complete assurance and confidence when buying fur, Furmark® draws together independently-verified certification programmes under one system.



## Furmark® is based on three key principles

**Science:** certification programmes and their individual protocols are science-based and approved by independent experts.

**Independent inspection:** certification programmes are verified by third parties and publicly available.

**Transparency:** certification programmes are sustainable, relevant, accessible, and traceable.

Fur Harvesters Auction Inc. (FHA) is the largest wild fur auction house in the world. As the only auction that is owned and operated equally by indigenous and non-indigenous trappers, their primary role is to promote and support Canada's oldest sustainable, land-based industry.

All wild furs sold by FHA are the byproduct of government-mandated wildlife conservation programmes and they work with government agencies to promote the important role trapping plays in these programs.

FHA sells fur from two of the certification programmes included in the Furmark® system.

# Furmark® summarised

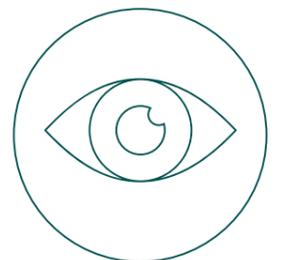
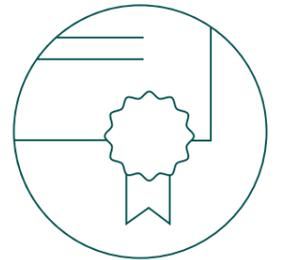
1. Furmark® is the global certification and traceability system for natural fur that guarantees animal welfare and environmental standards

2. Furmark® is a simple, recognisable mark of quality, assurance, and confidence

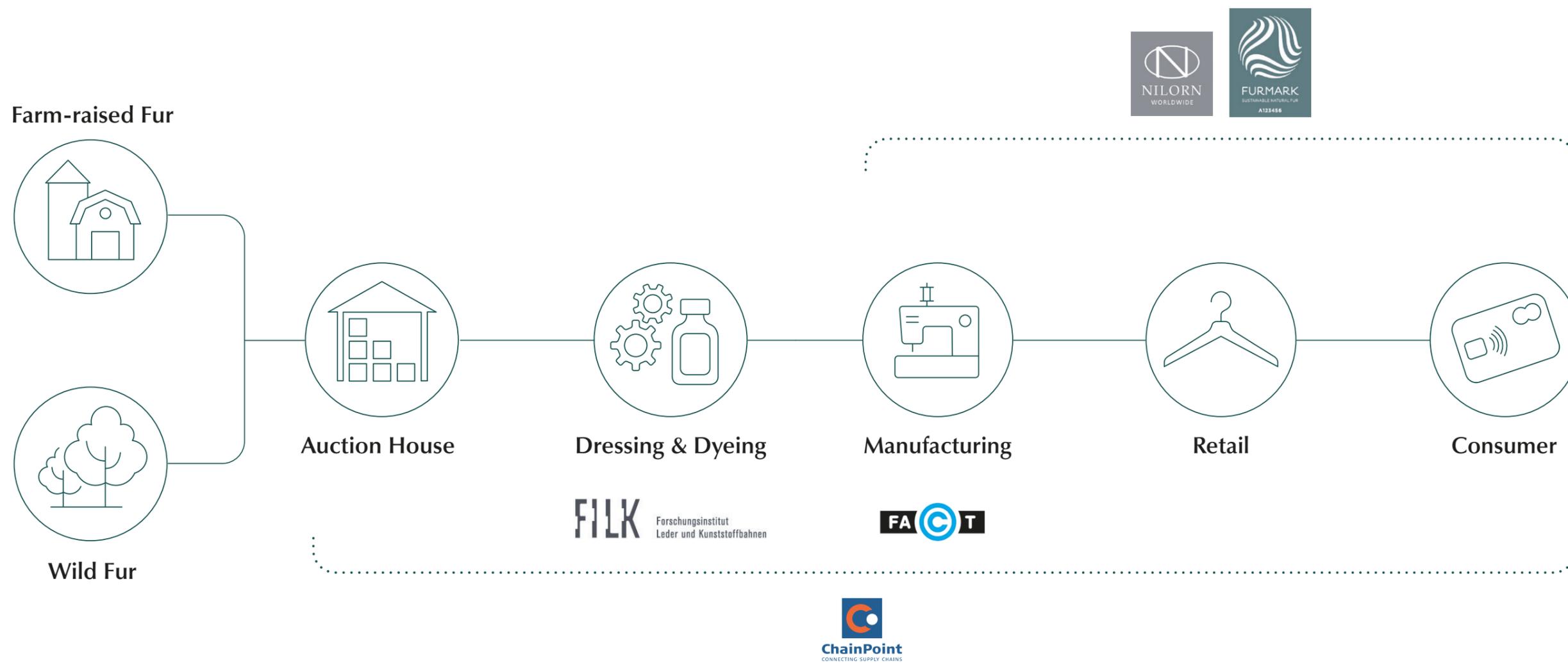
3. Furmark® animal welfare and environmental programmes are science-based, third-party certified, and transparent

4. Furmark® products are traceable, verified, and guaranteed to have met the highest standards

5. Furmark® launches in Autumn 2021



# Furmark® supply chain



Natural fur from specific farm-raised and wild fur certification programmes that are sold at auction.

The **Chain Point** traceability system captures movements through each stage of the supply chain.

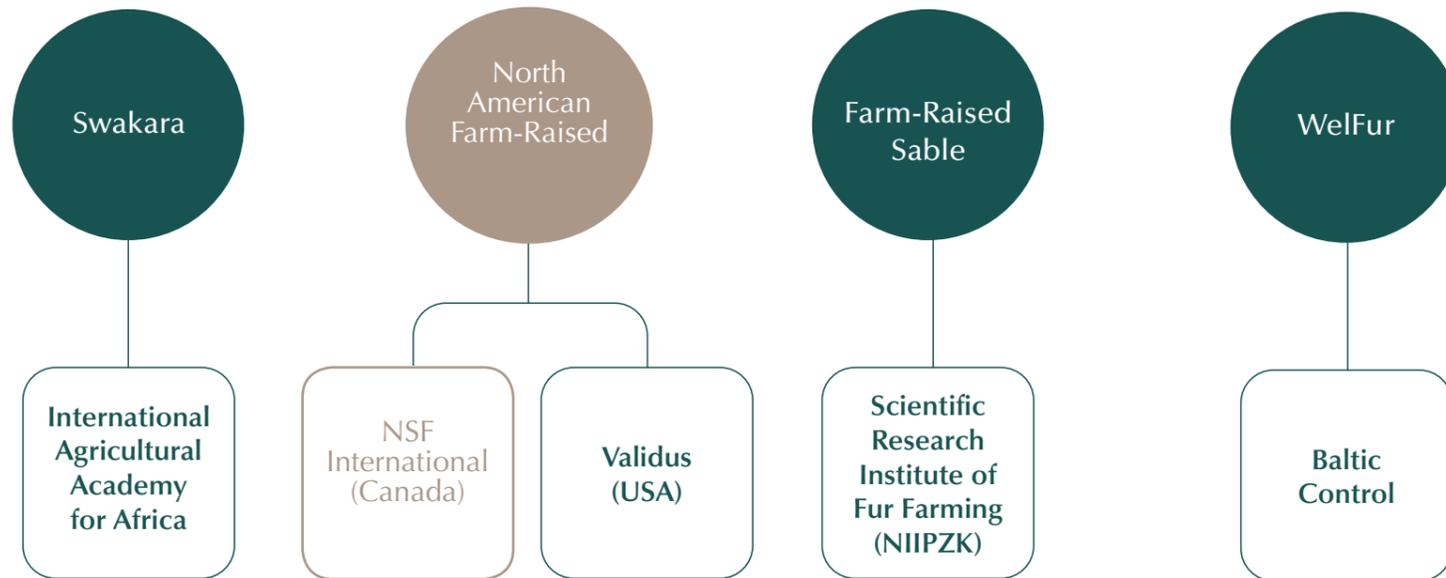
Manufacturers record receipt of certified pelts. Manufacturers are able to order labels inside the Chain Point system: each label carries a **unique traceability code**.

Independent experts **FILK** and **FACT** are tasked to ensure compliance and assurance through the value chain.

# Furmark® certification programmes



## Furmark® Farm-Raised Certification Programmes

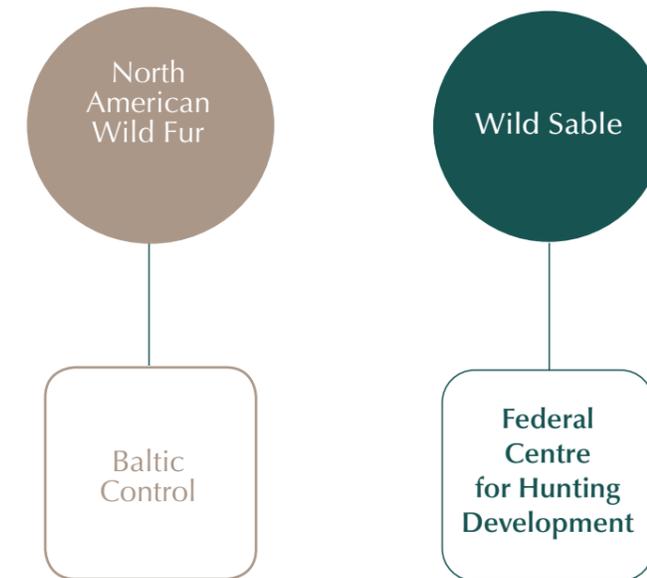


## Furmark® Farm-Raised Certification Bodies

FHA sells fur from the two of the certification programmes included in the Furmark® system — North American Wild Fur and North American Farm-Raised Fur from Canada.



## Furmark® Wild Fur Certification Programmes



## Furmark® Wild Fur Certification Bodies

# Evidence-based, independently inspected, and sustainable

Furmark® responds to consumer desires for a simple, recognisable mark of quality, assurance, and confidence and brings together the leading species-specific, science-based, and independently-assessed certification programmes.

Additionally, Furmark® requires that fur be dressed and dyed according to a dedicated chemical standard for the fur industry, created with the International Fur Dressers and Dyers Association (IFDDA)<sup>1</sup> and the independent testing and research institute FILK<sup>2</sup>. The certification process involves declarations, samples, and on-site visits.

Adding another level of certification, manufacturers - in order to create Furmark®-certified products - must have undergone a dedicated Furmark® due diligence exercise. Conducted by FACT<sup>3</sup>, this due diligence covers business, reputation, disclosure, associations, and company registration.



1) <http://www.ifdda.info/home.html>  
2) <https://www.filkfreiberg.de/>  
3) <https://www.fact-uk.org.uk/>  
4) <https://www.sustainablefur.com/animal-welfare/>

## Farm-raised: The Mink Care Assessment Program

The Canadian Mink Breeders Association (CMBA), founded in 1952, promotes the interests of the fur farming sector nationally and internationally and provides leadership in research, best practice, and marketing.

Farmers in Canada abide by industry standards—outlined in the National Codes of Practice for the Care and Handling of Mink—that ensure animals are well cared for and harvested humanely. The code was developed under the auspices of the National Farm Animal Care Council and represents a collaboration between producers, government departments, animal welfare agencies, and veterinarians and scientists. Scientific research findings are the basis for these standards and remain central.

The code addresses animal health and welfare concerns, namely accommodation, food and water, care and supervision, health care, hygiene and sanitation, transportation of live mink, and euthanasia. The code contains both mandatory and recommended guidelines and is recognised under provincial animal protection laws.

The Mink Care Assessment Program (MCAP) was developed in collaboration with veterinarians, animal welfare representatives, researchers, government representatives and producers. An independent auditor visits all farms participating in the program to perform an annual farm audit. The role of the third-party auditor is to verify that MCAP criteria are met on the farm and to identify any gaps. Evidence that MCAP requirements are met includes observation of animals and pens, walkabout on farm, written procedures, records, and interviews with the farm manager and workers. The goal of MCAP is to strive for continuous improvement.

Third-party verification for the Canadian mink sector is conducted by an internationally recognised, professional auditing company—NSF International.

## Wild fur case study: North American Wild Fur

Wild fur sold through Fur Harvesters Inc is now certified under Furmark®.

Already subject to a wide range of laws, regulations, checks, and controls, wild fur is synonymous with North America. Ensuring population and environmental sustainability is central to how wild fur is harvested in North America. The new Wild Fur Certification Protocol and its associated audit sit at the very heart of that work and adds to the range of pre-existing standards.

The Protocol itself covers animal welfare, sustainability, and traceability requirements associated with the harvest and trade of wild fur in North America. It also sets out additional requirements for increasing standards to ensure a sustainable sector fit for the future.

The new certification has been possible by extended collaboration and cooperation between the developers, Baltic Academy (independent animal welfare experts), a dedicated technical advisory committee (comprised of leading wild fur experts), and USA and Canada and trapping organisations. It has also been shaped by influential fashion groups such as LVMH and Kering and rightly recognises wild fur's importance to the current and future fashion sector.

The Protocol ultimately provides the wider trade with the assurance and confidence that there is a robust management system in place at Fur Harvesters. With the Protocol finalised in February 2021, the Fur Harvesters auction was successfully audited in March 2021: the Protocol includes an extensive set of requirements for the trading body, some of which will be phased in. The Protocol itself will evolve over time with Fur Harvesters at its core. Annual audits, to reaffirm the certification status will be put in place.

# Providing the transparency consumers deserve

What does Furmark® certification mean to the everyday consumer? Only a final product that has followed all of the Furmark® processes - from start to finish - can be described as Furmark®-certified. This is one of the unique achievements of Furmark® and means that consumers can buy Furmark®-certified products with the highest level of confidence.

Furmark®, from start to finish, means that the fur used must come from the constituent animal welfare and environmental programmes (such as WelFur®) before being sold at auction.

From the auction, the certified fur must only be dressed and dyed according to the dedicated Furmark® standard by an approved IFDDA organisation.

The ChainPoint traceability system captures fur movements through each stage of the supply chain from auction to retail.

Manufacturers must undergo a dedicated due diligence check, conducted by FACT, before accessing the ChainPoint traceability system.

Once inside, manufacturers can also link the supply chain management system with product labels (ordered from Nilorn) that carry a unique serial number. Based on this framework the manufacturer can output products - garments, accessories or trims that carry the Furmark® label as a sign of certification and traceability.

Retailers are an essential source of fur information for the consumers and retailers will be on hand to proactively and reactively inform, advise, and assist consumers considering sustainable natural fur with literature, guidance, and support on Furmark®.



# Communicating certification: Furmark® label options

Furmark® incorporates a range of leading animal welfare certification programmes for farm-raised and wild fur. While Furmark® offers “end-to-end” certification, the sector recognises that important certification claims can be made for the animal welfare certification programmes that come under the Furmark® certification system.

## Label option 1: end-to-end certification

All end-to-end certified Furmark® products carry labels complete with a unique alpha-numeric code. Supplied by independent labelling specialists Nilorn, these labels and codes connect to the bespoke traceability feature hosted on the Furmark® website.

When the consumer inspects the label and enters the code, consumers have access information regarding the fur type; fur origin; certification programme of that fur; manufacturer; and place of manufacturing.

There is flexibility in what can be displayed via the data transfer. Ultimately, this alpha-numeric code not only gives access to traceability information, it also confirms that product has gone through end-to-end certification and is a verified Furmark® product.

## Label option 2: certified auction collections

The IFF is working with auctions, including Fur Harvester, in order to ensure that a form of Furmark® claim can be made solely on the certified auction collections.

This will include a specific label offer. Our aim is to provide those who use pelts from the leading animal welfare programmes that come under Furmark® but whose product does not follow the end-to-end certification process. This ensures that the leading animal welfare and environment sustainability benefits of the relevant certification programmes are communicated to and recognised by the consumer.

### Furmark® brings together expertise across the 21st century supply chain:



The organisation overseeing the entire Furmark® system



FILK, the third-party testing institute for the dressing and dyeing chemical standard



Leading on due diligence and anti-counterfeit measures



Developing the labelling solution



Providing the traceability solution



Independent animal welfare certification experts

The International Fur Federation (IFF) was established in 1949 and is the only organisation to represent the international fur industry and regulate its practices and trade. The IFF promotes the business of fur, establishing certification and traceability programmes on welfare and the environment. It is also committed to supporting young designers and retailers who intend to go into fur and fashion. Notable, the IFF represents 56 members associations in over 40 countries around the world, and membership encompasses all parts of the fur trade and supply chain.

# Exacting animal welfare standards

Scientific, evidence-based standards that begin with the animals themselves.

Furmark® provides a clear, understandable indication of animal welfare standards. Behind that mark is an industry at the forefront of modern animal welfare — something that, rightly, starts with the animals themselves.

Natural fur is subject to a wide-ranging system of international, national, regional, and local requirements, regulation, and legislation. These interconnected and overlapping checks and controls are rightly in place: they set a high bar, but the fur sector believes in even higher standards, based on scientific knowledge.

Furmark® means going above and beyond the standards set out by international, national, and local laws and regulations that govern the fur sector.

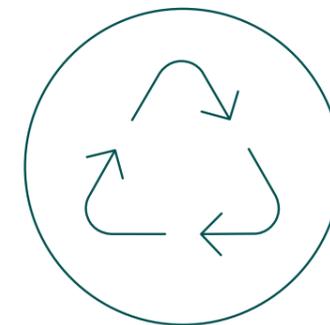
WelFur certification, North American Farm-Raised certification, North American Wild Fur certification, Swakara certification, Farm-Raised Sable certification, and Sable certification are all included in the Furmark® system because of focus on exacting animal welfare standards.

Given the responsibility that society rightly expects businesses to demonstrate, and the rights of consumers to confidently buy natural sustainable fashion, the fur sector's focus is on science-based animal welfare: something that can be objectively assessed and continually improved.



# Integrated environmental standards

Environmental stewardship is one of the foundations of the contemporary fur trade and fur is part of the solution to the 'fast fashion' problem.



At the centre of Furmark® is a natural material which represents 'slow fashion', quality, and individuality. As a biodegradable, renewable alternative to synthetic textiles (such as fossil fuel-derived fibres), natural fur accords with the environmental concern. It can last decades and, when necessary, be repaired, reworked, reused, and remodelled, extending the lifetime of the product.

Fashion designers are increasingly turning to natural materials for inspiration: crucially, environmental standards are integrated into the Furmark® certification system.

Sustainability is not confined to the materials or the processes involved: it is found in the communities that make up the sector. People in the fur sector's supply chain are located in every corner of the world, reflecting the nature of this long-established trade. As a deep-rooted, sustainable sector, fur allows many indigenous communities to carry out their traditional way of life while providing for their families in some of the harshest climates on Earth. The sector is committed to defending and promoting the communities that depend on natural fur.

At the heart of Furmark® is a natural, sustainable, biodegradable, and long-last material recognised for its unique qualities.





# Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow

## Program Update, Progress, and Projections, 2021



**The vision of early programs like the Wisconsin Student Hunting Project and later Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow (CLfT), was simply to ensure that hunting was considered as a relevant and important component of wildlife conservation management; not by creating more hunters but by creating a conservation workforce aware of the history and role of hunting in conservation.**

Since 2010, CLfT has been focused on delivering highly effective professional development programs to those agencies charged with the management of our natural resource and wildlife. CLfT provides the only professionally designed and delivered curriculum that emphasis hunting and the consumptive use of wildlife as an important part of wildlife conservation and an integral piece of the North America model for sustaining wildlife resources.

CLfT has been offered for over 15-years to university and professional participants, primarily through 5-day, in-person, intensive workshops. Survey data, anecdotal feedback, and comments by agency administrators strongly suggests that CLfT is accomplishing program goals. However, the 5-day workshop format is expensive, time consuming, and does not have the capacity to reach the numbers of agency employees who would benefit from the program experience.

**To date CLfT has conducted 148 Workshops and 20 online cohorts for over 2,600 Individuals.**

In **2019-2020** (the last year in-person workshops were offered due to COVID-19) the program honored 189 new graduates who attended 1 of 10 Workshops (2 University and 8 Professional). Participation rates among agencies and organizations continued to evolve with employees from 32 states agencies, 4 federal agencies, and 3 NGO organizations participating in workshops.

In **2020-2021**, with COVID-19 restrictions CLfT staff was forced, as were many organizations and businesses, to make some extremely hard decisions. Close operations or find a way to fulfil our intended mission. Like most learning institutions, CLfT had a highly successful in-person classroom-based program. This placed us in a position to create a **new** online program, based on the highly successful workshop material that could still be presented by seasoned CLfT instructors. As an immediate need for a program suitable for university use the CLfT staff created *Hunting for Conservation* (HfC) Online intended for university students. This program was designed to be used in a variety of ways that includes as a virtual textbook in a traditional classroom setting, as a stand-alone self-paced program, or as a bridge to an on-campus R3 program.

Purdue University's Forestry and Natural Resources Department was the first university to pick up the course and use it as a virtual textbook. Two additional groups of students were selected to serve as self-paced learning pilots through a partnership with The Wildlife Society. These students were selected through a national offering by awarding scholarships to students who applied. 89 students completed the HfC online program in May and June 2021.

When it became clear that COVID-19's impact was going to be long term, the CLfT staff made the decision to build on the HfC Online program to create yet another **new** program titled *Conservation & Hunting in America* (C&HA). Recognizing that the program outcomes and experiences would be different than the traditional in-person workshops, it was important to call both online programs something different than CLfT.

26 states, the USFWS, and BLM opted to participate in 16 two-week cohorts between February and May 2021. 172 participants completed the program.

The impact of the program was monitored through a detailed pre and post survey. The results clearly support the impact of C&HA Online, and the achievement of the program's stated objectives. Among many detailed analyses of the program's quality and impact, we received the following ratings:

**When asked on our Post Program Survey:**

"How informative was the course material overall?" received a 4.42 out of 5

"Please rate the quality of instruction" received a 4.79 out of 5

"Please rate your overall program experience" received a 4.35 out of 5

**Quotes from participants:**

"I went from against hunting earlier in my life to supportive during my current post at DNR. Through this program, I am now strongly supportive."

"I have a completely different perspective on hunting now"

"Overall great course. Impressed with how you were able to make this course so successful in a virtual environment."

"I definitely have a better understanding of our regulated public after this course which was my goal for taking it. Thank you!"

"This course was exceptional in both its content and delivery."

"I am glad that this program is available, and I think that it will change some people's minds about hunting for the better and just give them a better understanding of hunting overall."

"Wish I could have done it in person but think the conversion to online was done very well."

# The Fight Against the Anti-Consumptive Use Constituency

Ellary TuckerWilliams

Rocky Mountain States Senior Coordinator, Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation



# Who is CSF?

- Nonpartisan 501 c(3) organization whose mission is to work with Congress, governors, and state legislatures to protect and advance hunting, angling, recreational shooting, and trapping.
  - Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus
  - Governor's Sportsmen's Caucus
  - National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses
- States Program Team
  - Legislation
  - Regulations
  - Education and Outreach



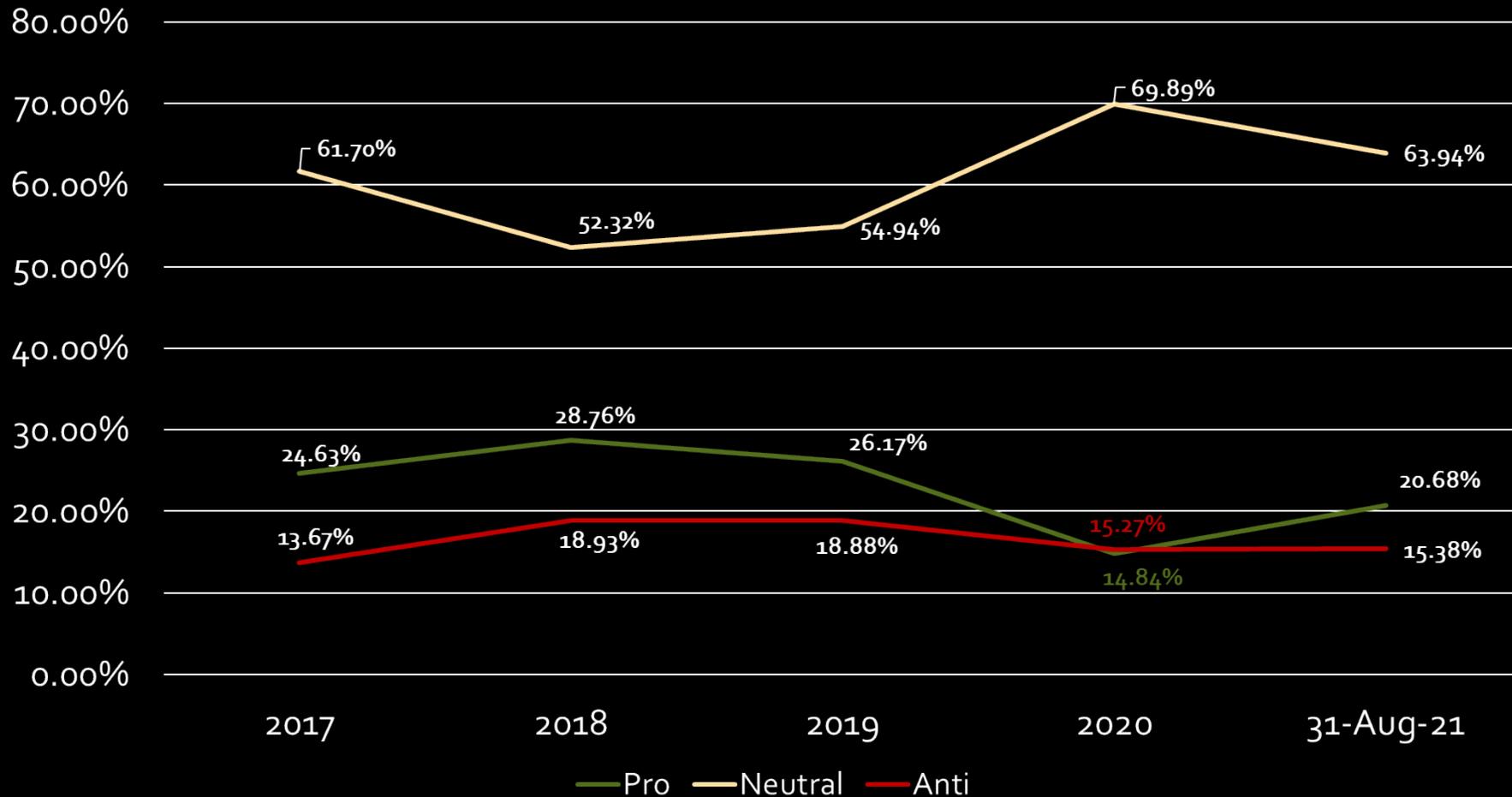
# Current Lay of the Land

- Preservation vs conservation
- Rural urban divide
  - Limited exposure
- Lack of conservation literacy
- Anti controlled messaging
  - Anthropomorphizing of wildlife
  - Misinformation
  - Deception
- Shifting sportsperson motivations
- Decreasing number of sportspeople
- Playing the long game



# Trends

## Pro/Anti Through Time



# Trends

- Anti-trapping
  - New Mexico
    - Regulation changes in 2019, implemented in 2020.
    - SB 32 – Public land trapping ban in 2021
  - Colorado
    - Ballot Initiative - Constitutional Amendment 14, 1996
    - Failed Commission Petition – Cage trap ban on public and private land – 2021
    - Ongoing
  - Montana
    - Failed Ballot Initiative –Public land trapping ban, 2016
    - Ongoing
  - California
    - Total trapping ban, 2019
  - Arizona
    - Ballot Initiative - Public land trapping ban, 1994
  - Vermont
    - HB 172 - Total recreational trapping ban – Failed, 2021



# Trends

- Anti - Hound Hunting and Predator Hunting
  - Oregon – Ballot initiative - Ban the use of hounds for hunting bears and cougars, 1994
  - Washington - Ballot initiative - Ban the use of hounds for hunting bears and cougars, 1996
  - Nevada – Commission – Failed petition to ban use of hounds for bear hunting, 2021
  - Vermont – HB 172 – Ban use of bear hounds – Failed 2021
  - California - Ban on the use of dog to pursue a bear or bobcat, 2012
  - Maine – LD 1265 - Ban the use of dogs in all forms of hunting, Failed 2021
- Wolves
  - Catch-22
- No Kill Sanctuary State
  - Oregon IP 13
    - Ballot initiative to prohibit the injuring or killing of all mammals, fish, reptiles, and amphibians, unless it occurs as an act of self-defense and prohibit common animal breeding practices, research, and education, 2021



# Not All Doom and Gloom

## Pro/Anti Passage Rates Through Time

	2018		2019		2020		8/31/2021	
	Anti	Pro	Anti	Pro	Anti	Pro	Anti	Pro
National	7.27%	24.27%	6.22%	22.85%	7.62%	18.46%	6.35%	21.68%
Midwest	2.70%	22.12%	3.47%	17.17%	2.31%	13.45%	4.40%	20.08%
Northeast	8.97%	19.01%	3.10%	16.32%	6.36%	11.61%	4.40%	11.59%
Southeast	4.83%	28.96%	0.86%	25.12%	14.51%	22.41%	5.67%	25.53%
West	10.91%	27.27%	27.22%	35.25%	4.76%	23.70%	16.24%	33.18%

- Pro passage rate is 3.4 times greater than anti so far this year
- 3-year average: pro passage rate 3.13 times greater
  - 2020: 2.4
  - 2019: 3.7
  - 2018: 3.3

# Case and Point

- Montana
  - HB 224 – Allows for use of snares during trapping season, 2021
  - HB 468 – Establishes hound hunting and chase seasons for black bears, 2021
  - SB 60 – Mandatory trapper education course, 2021
- Utah
  - HB 125 - Directs the Division of Wildlife Resources to take immediate action to reduce the number of predators within a management unit, if it is determined that the big game population is under the established herd size management objective, due to an overpopulation of predators, 2020
  - Right to Hunt and Fish Constitutional Amendment, 2020
- Idaho
  - HB 91 – Allows for the use of inedible game bird, game animal or game fish for bait in trapping, 2021



# Let's Do Better Together

- Collaboration is key!
  - CSF, NTA and FTA MOU
- Better to be ahead of the curve than behind it
  - Relationship building
  - Education
    - AFWA Science Briefs
    - Firsthand experience
    - Wildlife Councils
  - Proper messaging
- Supporting organizations that are fighting for your interests
- VOTE!



Thank you!





Since January of 2021, the Sportsmen's Alliance has reviewed over 3,000 bills in all 50 states and at a federal level that could impact hunting, fishing and trapping. Of those, the Alliance has engaged on or closely monitored over 400 bills this year alone. Four themes emerged that would most directly impact the sustainable use of wildlife.

### **Trapping Themes**

In Colorado and New Mexico efforts to end trapping are still ongoing. The Alliance has pushed back against these efforts as a means to uphold the seven tenets of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. In Colorado, a petition has been filed with the Colorado Department of Parks and Wildlife to end all recreational trapping, which at this juncture only allows box traps. This is the third time in recent memory a rulemaking petition has been filed to end Colorado trapping, a hearing will be held on March 17<sup>th</sup> to consider the petition. In New Mexico, legislation to end recreational trapping on public lands was moved out of its first committee even after major opposition from the sportsmen, trapping, agriculture and landowner communities. The bill is awaiting a hearing in its second committee but what is most concerning about this effort is the proponents of a ban claim that trapping stands in opposition to the second tenet of the North American Model but it is clear that regulated markets are supported. The skewing of the tenets of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation to allow for the emotional discharge of wildlife policy is the greatest threat to the future of the sustainable use of wildlife.

Legislation in Oregon would prohibit beaver trapping on federally managed forest lands. Similar organizations pushed this agenda through rulemaking twice in 2020 and were ultimately defeated. This legislation raises substantial questions about who should manage wildlife. Legislative activism is likely the second biggest threat to the future of the sustainable use of wildlife. Wildlife decisions must be left to professional wildlife biologists at state and federal wildlife agencies.

Legislation to prohibit the use of traps that are clearly supported by AFWA's Best Management Practices have been introduced in Connecticut, New Jersey and New York. These methods have been thoroughly vetted by AFWA and the use of these traps such as snares, footholds and body gripping traps are proven to be effective and humane methods for harvesting furbearers. The methods by which wildlife is harvested has long been a contentious issue but when scientific data supports the use of certain management tools they must be protected.

Legislation to prohibit the trade or sale of animal furs has been introduced in Connecticut, Hawaii, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island and Washington. Going back to the second tenant of the North American Model regulated fur markets have been proven to be sustainable. These bills would not only apply to new animal furs but some would even prohibit the sale and trade of existing animal furs in the form of garments, fishing tackle and taxidermy.

## **Bans on African Taxidermy**

Prohibitions on the importation of African big game taxidermy has been introduced in New York and Connecticut in 2021. New Jersey was the first state to enact laws prohibiting the import of African Species but a district court ruled the law was unenforceable because state law does not preempt federal permits issued by the USFWS. This has nonetheless not prevented continued state legislative efforts to prohibit the practice.

These efforts threaten the protection of African species, African people and international wildlife conservation efforts. Once again emotional appeals from celebrities across the world have brought increased negative attention to African Big Game hunting. Threatened and endangered species in Africa rely on American hunting dollars and provide African people incentive to deal with wildlife conflict. Without incentive from American hunters to go to Africa to hunt the sustainability of these populations is in question.

## **Game Commission Makeup**

An alarming trend to upend the makeup of fish and game commissions and/or to place further oversight on fish and game commissions has been introduced in New Hampshire, Arizona, New Mexico, Michigan and Vermont. Game commissions are often some of the strongest allies in defense of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation and serve as the stewards of science-based wildlife management. Changing the qualifications for appointment to these commissions, providing unnecessary or nefarious oversight on these commissions or repealing the commissions entirely is a serious threat to the sustainable use of wildlife.

## **California Bear Hunting Legislation**

For many years California has been ground zero for the dismantling of sustainable science-based management. In early 2021 legislation was introduced in the California Senate to end the California bear hunt. This effort came on the back of a 1990 effort that ended cougar hunting and a 2018 effort to end bobcat hunting. California's obsession with ending all major predator hunting in the state threatens people, livestock and other wildlife and provides a dangerous blueprint for other states to follow in an attempt to end common predator management practices. This legislation would have directly undermined the role of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife plays in deciding how wildlife should be managed in the state. Bear populations have been steadily increasing in California since the 1980s when the population was between 10,000 and 15,000. Presently, the CDFW conservatively estimates between 30,000 and 40,000 black bears statewide. These population estimates clearly demonstrate a need for continued bear management to minimize human-wildlife conflict, which can include dangerous encounters. Anti-hunting legislation has become more frequent in California and advances much more overreaching.

Jeremy Clare's, Safari Club International, update regarding a few cases that impact state management and sustainable use of wildlife:

- **Gray Wolves:** In late 2020, the Trump administration announced the delisting of gray wolves throughout the lower-48, except for Mexican gray wolves found in New Mexico and Arizona. In January, three lawsuits were filed in federal district court in California challenging the wolf delisting. Wolves have long been a contentious issue for wildlife advocates on both sides of the debate. SCI and the NRA intervened in the litigation to defend the delisting in all three lawsuits. The State of Utah also intervened to defend the delisting. Michigan and Oregon filed a joint amicus brief in opposition to the delisting (although Michigan agreed its wolves should be delisted, just not others' wolves). Other groups, including tribes, filed other amici briefs on both sides of the issue. Summary judgment (merits) briefing is ongoing, with a hearing scheduled for mid-November.

Meanwhile, Wisconsin plans to open another wolf season in November. That plan was recently challenged in state court.

- **Louisiana Black Bear:** In early 2020, a federal district court in D.C. dismissed a challenge to the removal of Louisiana black bear from the Endangered Species Act. The Court held—based on SCI's arguments—that the plaintiffs lacked standing to challenge the delisting. In late 2020, the groups sued again, this time in Louisiana federal district court. SCI has moved to intervene to again defend the delisting; that motion is pending. The State of Louisiana intervened to defend the delisting. Merits briefing is ongoing and expected to conclude before the end of the year. The court will then likely schedule oral argument for some time in 2022.

Louisiana has not authorized any take (hunting or trapping) of black bear, but the objective is to maintain state authority for management of the subspecies so that the state is able to authorize such take when scientifically advisable.

- **Lead Ammunition in Kaibab National Forest:** In 2012, Center for Biological Diversity and others challenged the U.S. Forest Service's authorization of lead ammunition use in the Kaibab National Forest under the premise that the use of lead ammunition violates the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), which governs disposal of hazardous waste. After an early dismissal by the Arizona federal district court and a long appeal, the Ninth Circuit reinstated the case, and the parties were again before the district court. SCI, in coordination with the NRA, intervened to defend hunting in the National Forest after the case was reinstated, as did NSSF separately. The defendants then moved to dismiss the case for a second time. In March 2017, the district court granted these motions for a second time on different grounds. At the end of May 2019, the Ninth Circuit again reversed the dismissal and remanded the matter to the district court. The defendants submitted a third round of motions to dismiss the plaintiffs' claims. On March 31, 2021, the district court entered an order dismissing the plaintiffs' complaint and finding the Forest Service is not a "contributor" under RCRA. The court also denied the plaintiffs' request to add Arizona as a defendant, holding that the plaintiffs failed to overcome the state's sovereign immunity.

For a third time, the plaintiffs appealed to the Ninth Circuit court. However, this time, they also suggested that their claims can be settled through mediation. The parties are currently discussing the possibility of settlement via mediation calls about once every month. The State of Arizona, although not a party to the litigation, joined the previous mediation call. It seems likely that Arizona will have to agree to any mediated settlement, as the state regulates use of lead ammunition in the forest.