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# Minutes of the Sustainable Use of Wildlife Committee Meeting

90th North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference
Galt House Hotel – Louisville, Kentucky
Wednesday, March 12, 2025
1:15 PM – 3:15 PM (EDT)

Chair: Vacant
Vice-Chair: Dave Kay (Alberta)
Acting Chair for this meeting: Gordon Batcheller

## 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.

## Agenda and Minutes

### Agenda review, adjustments, and opening comments (Gordon Batcheller, Acting Chair)

* Gordon Batcheller opened the meeting at 1:15 PM, welcomed attendees, and thanked members for their participation.
- Highlighted the importance of the committee’s mission to advocate for the North American Model of Fish and Wildlife Conservation and promote sustainable use on an international level.
- Noted the absence of a permanent chair and thanked Vice-Chair Dave Kay for his continued support.
- Emphasized the significance of the upcoming discussions given current challenges in wildlife policy, international trade, and public perception of sustainable use.

### Approval of Minutes from the previous meeting (Gordon Batcheller, Acting Chair)

* The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed.
- A motion to approve the minutes was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.
- No corrections or amendments were requested.

### Office of Conservation Investment; update on National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife Associated Recreation Addendum Reports (Tom Decker, USFWS)

* Tom provided an update on the National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation Addendum Reports.
- Reports will offer deeper insights into trends related to participation in hunting, fishing, and wildlife recreation.
- These data will help inform agency decisions and funding allocations under the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program.
- A timeline for release of the addendum reports was provided, with expected publication later in 2025.
- Committee members discussed ways to integrate these data into ongoing multistate grant projects and communications initiatives.
Key Outcome: Committee members will receive draft reports for review once available.

### Update on CITES (Deb Hahn, AFWA)

* Deb provided an overview of CITES-related issues relevant to North American wildlife management.
- Discussed recent actions at the CITES Standing Committee and preparations for the next Conference of the Parties (CoP).
- Noted ongoing discussions about species listings that could impact state and provincial wildlife management authorities, including those related to furbearers and large carnivores.
- Highlighted AFWA’s role in coordinating with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and Canadian and Mexican partners to ensure science-based decisions.
Action Item: AFWA will distribute a briefing document summarizing CITES priorities to committee members.

### Update from Conservation Visions (Shane Mahoney)

* Shane shared updates from Conservation Visions, focusing on global initiatives promoting sustainable use as a conservation tool.
- Reviewed recent public engagement campaigns emphasizing the cultural and economic value of hunting and trapping.
- Discussed partnerships with AFWA and international organizations to combat misinformation about sustainable use.
- Provided updates on the Wild Harvest Initiative, including new data on the food contributions of recreational hunting and trapping in North America.

### Safari Club International (Chris Tymeson, Regina Lennox, Bee Frederick)

* Safari Club International (SCI) representatives discussed their current efforts to support sustainable wildlife use.
- Legislative updates at both federal and state levels were reviewed, with an emphasis on defending regulated hunting and trapping.
- Shared outreach strategies to educate policymakers and the public about the benefits of sustainable use.
- Outlined SCI’s collaboration with AFWA and other conservation groups on shared priorities.

### The Louisiana Black Bear Story (Regina Lennox, Maria Davidson)

* Regina Lennox shared the history of Louisiana black bear conservation, from population decline to recovery and delisting from the Endangered Species Act.
- Regina highlighted legal and policy aspects of the species’ recovery, including ongoing efforts to ensure habitat protection and population monitoring.
- Committee members discussed how the Louisiana black bear case could serve as a model for other species recovery efforts.

### The sustainable use of black bear fur in international trade (Bryant)

* Bryant discussed the role of black bear fur in international trade, emphasizing sustainable practices and regulatory frameworks.
- Outlined current demand in global markets and the importance of ensuring legal, traceable, and sustainable trade.
- Highlighted the role of CITES tagging requirements in maintaining transparency and preventing illegal trade.
- Emphasized the benefits to local economies and conservation programs funded by regulated harvest.

### Current and Future Multistate Grants/Best Management Practices for Trapping Program (Bryant)

* Bryant provided an update on current and future Multistate Conservation Grants related to trapping and furbearer management.
- Reported on progress of the Best Management Practices (BMP) for Trapping Program, including ongoing fieldwork across multiple states and recent necropsy evaluations.
- Shared details on upcoming grant proposals to expand BMP testing to additional species and improve public communications about humane trapping practices.
- Committee discussed potential opportunities for collaboration and additional funding sources.
Key Outcome: Members expressed strong support for continuing the BMP program and agreed to explore co-funding opportunities.

### Update: Canadian Trap Testing and Certification Program (Mike O’Brien, Fur Institute of Canada)

* Mike reported on advancements in Canada’s trap testing and certification process.
- Reviewed updates to trap performance standards and testing protocols aligned with international humane trapping standards.
- Discussed cross-border collaboration with U.S. agencies and organizations to harmonize trapping standards.
- Highlighted new research initiatives aimed at improving trap selectivity and reducing non-target captures.
Action Item: AFWA and the Fur Institute of Canada will coordinate to share trap testing data and best practices.

## Adjournment

* Acting Chair Gordon Batcheller thanked all presenters and participants for their contributions.
- The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM.
- Gordon encouraged members to continue collaboration through the Sustainable Use of Wildlife Committee and associated working groups, particularly on issues impacting the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation.