



RESOLUTION #2018-01-07

FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCY RELEVANCY

WHEREAS, healthy fish and wildlife and their habitats are essential to the quality of our lives and provide food, fiber, recreation, pollination, water purification and other ecosystem services; and

WHEREAS, for more than a century, state, provincial and territorial fish and wildlife agencies have been guided by the principles of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation to conserve fish and wildlife and their habitats for current and future generations; and

WHEREAS, sportsmen and women have long been recognized as strong partners and have made significant contributions to fish and wildlife conservation; and

WHEREAS, hunting and angling have been and will continue to be important avenues to participate in the outdoors and connect people with nature; and

WHEREAS, society is becoming more diverse and wildlife value orientations are changing; and

WHEREAS, society is becoming more urbanized, use of electronics is increasing, people are spending less time outdoors, participation in traditional outdoor pursuits is declining and people are acquiring information through new and different means; and

WHEREAS, over twenty-five peer reviewed or peer edited papers have been published in natural resources journals on relevancy or related topics and the subject has been a frequent topic of plenary and special sessions at major fish and wildlife meetings; and

WHEREAS, to meet the needs of changing societies, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies recognizes the need to engage and serve diverse constituencies to help more people connect with nature; and

WHEREAS, every state, provincial, and territorial fish and wildlife agency has its own unique circumstances, challenges and constituencies; and

WHEREAS, the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources made two recommendations including "examine the impact of societal changes on the relevancy of fish and wildlife conservation and make recommendations on how programs and agencies can transform to engage and serve broader constituencies"; and

WHEREAS, the Blue Ribbon Panel Relevancy Working Group was formed in 2016 and is working on recommendations on how to engage and serve broader constituencies.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies requests, and fully supports, the Blue Ribbon Panel Relevancy Working Group assembling a diverse team of individuals to develop a draft road map by March 2019 that would help member organizations share successful strategies and help identify and break down barriers to engaging and serving all constituents.

*Resolution jointly submitted by the Wildlife Diversity Conservation and Funding
and Education, Outreach and Diversity Committees with a recommendation that it be passed.*

Adopted September 12, 2018, Tampa, FL



RESOLUTION #2018-02-07

IN SUPPORT OF THE AFWA BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR THE PREVENTION, SURVEILLANCE, AND MANAGEMENT OF CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE

WHEREAS, the primary authority and capacity to protect and manage species of the family Cervidae resides in the states, provinces, and territories, which consequently have a significant interest in protecting their native wildlife resources from the transmission of wildlife diseases; and

WHEREAS, chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a fatal degenerative disease of deer, elk, moose, and other species of the family Cervidae and is arguably the most important disease threatening North American cervid resources; and

WHEREAS, over the past 50 years CWD has continued to spread across North America and has currently been detected in captive and wild cervids in 25 states and 3 provinces; and

WHEREAS, many North American cervid species, including mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), moose (*Alces alces*), and caribou (*Rangifer tarandus*), currently are exhibiting population declines; and

WHEREAS, introduction of CWD into these herds threatens the sustainability of the populations, impacts harvest levels, and affects food security for indigenous and other human populations; and

WHEREAS, the susceptibility of all native, North American cervid species to CWD, long incubation period before clinical disease appears, and long-term environmental persistence of the CWD agent mean that state, federal, provincial, territorial, and tribal agencies have relatively few options to mitigate the continued spread of this disease across North America; and

WHEREAS, the Fish and Wildlife Health Committee of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies has developed the first-ever set of Best Management Practices for Prevention, Surveillance, and Management of Chronic Wasting Disease (BMPs) that have been jointly developed by more than 30 wildlife biologists, wildlife veterinarians, and wildlife disease experts from 22 states and 2 provinces, as well as federal wildlife and natural resource management agencies in the United States and Canada; and

WHEREAS, these BMPs are firmly grounded in the best available peer-reviewed science, as well as the direct management experience of the state, federal, provincial, and territorial wildlife biologists and wildlife veterinarians who have first-hand knowledge regarding the detection and management of CWD; and

WHEREAS, the BMPs provide specific and detailed recommendations regarding the development of CWD response plans and risk assessments, surveillance strategies, options for reducing disease transmission risk from human-associated movements of live animals and cervid carcasses, management strategies, communications to hunters about CWD and CWD management, and priorities for further research on CWD; and

WHEREAS, the BMPs are not meant to be prescriptive or to mandate programs at the local, state, federal, tribal, or territorial level; and

WHEREAS, the BMPs are scientific guidance documents and cannot by themselves affect or alter any state's laws regarding public ownership of wildlife; and

WHEREAS, the BMPs should be regarded as a set of recommendations for agencies to consider as they develop or revise their CWD prevention, surveillance, and management programs;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association extends its appreciation to the members and leadership of the Fish and Wildlife Health Committee in drafting the first-ever set of Best Management Practices for CWD in North American cervid populations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association affirms and endorses these Best Practices as representing the best-available current scientific information regarding the management of CWD in North America; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association encourages its members to adopt those practices contained in this document that are deemed appropriate for implementation by its individual members in their own jurisdictions in order to promote the scientific management of CWD and reduce the risk of further spread of the disease; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association hereby requests that the Fish and Wildlife Health Committee initiate the development of further science-based recommendations regarding the implementation of certain practices described in the BMP document, to include, but not limited to: a coordinated strategy to address concerns arising from the interstate and intrastate movement of live cervids; a coordinated strategy to help agencies address potential risks from hunter-harvested carcass movements (and other tissues of cervid origin); a strategy for reducing CWD transmission risk from the baiting and feeding of wild cervids, as recommended by the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies; and recommendations for minimizing the risk of CWD transmission in natural cervid urine products.

Submitted by the Fish and Wildlife Health Committee

Adopted September 12, 2018, Tampa, FL



RESOLUTION #2018-03-07

CONTINUED FUNDING FOR THE COUNCIL TO ADVANCE HUNTING AND THE SHOOTING SPORTS THROUGH 2020

The Hunting and Shooting Sports Participation Committee presents a resolution for consideration for the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies encouraging state fish and wildlife agencies to continue to fund the Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports through 2020 so that it may continue to address the national needs of the movement to recruit, retain, and reactivate hunters and target shooters in the United States.

WHEREAS, state fish and wildlife agencies rely on hunters and recreational target shooters to fund the management and use of fish and wildlife resources; and

WHEREAS, state fish and wildlife agencies recognize the recent decline in hunter and recreational target shooter participation rates and as such, have continued to prioritize the focus on the recruitment, retention, and reactivation of hunter and recreational target shooters; and

WHEREAS, state fish and wildlife agencies have a history of effectively collaborating with the Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports to successfully address declining participation rates in hunting and recreational target shooting at the national level, oftentimes with the Council providing support and resources to enhance state R3 programs in which state fish and wildlife agencies are unable to do so themselves; and

WHEREAS, the Council has achieved recent successes in facilitating the advancement of R3 at the national level, such as the creation of the National Hunting and Shooting Sports Action Plan, the curation of the National R3 Community, and most recently the execution of the first-ever National R3 Symposium; and

WHEREAS, the Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports has historically been funded by state fish and wildlife agencies contributions; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies supports the Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports to permit it to continue the necessary work to effectively address R3 efforts at the national level by encouraging state fish and wildlife agencies to fund the Council through 2020.

Submitted by the Hunting and Shooting Sports Participation Committee

Adopted September 12, 2018, Tampa, FL



RESOLUTION #2018-04-07

PARTNERSHIP RESOLUTION BETWEEN THE ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES AND THE DIVERSITY JOINT VENTURE

WHEREAS, the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation provides an important framework for managing and conserving fish and wildlife populations and their habitats; and

WHEREAS, our ability to educate a diverse and growing demographic on the value of wildlife conservation and habitat management is essential to ensuring our agencies and natural resource management organizations are relevant both now and in the future; and

WHEREAS, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (Association), values the diversity, equity and inclusion of a broad spectrum of people, across race, gender, ethnicity, age, religion and sexual orientation to stay relevant in our mission, workforce and our service to our constituencies; and

WHEREAS, the Association values diverse personal characteristics such as knowledge, ideas, communication styles, languages, life experiences and cultural backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, the Association recognizes that diversity and inclusion are central tenets of good governance and believes that a diverse workforce benefits the Association, all of its members, and is critical to conserving fish, wildlife and all their associated habitats; and

WHEREAS, the Diversity Joint Venture is a partnership of federal and state agencies, universities, non-governmental organizations, foundations and professional societies; and

WHEREAS, the Diversity Joint Venture has a shared desire of increasing the spectrum of people, across race, gender, ethnicity, age, religion, and sexual orientation in the workforce of professionals who conserve, manage, and protect natural resources; and

WHEREAS, such a diverse and inclusive workforce, including diverse thoughts and experiences, will enhance our ability to preserve and protect natural resources; and

WHEREAS, past efforts have had limited success in meeting this challenge, and recognizing that the Diversity Joint Venture partnership can be successful in enhancing diversity, equity and inclusion in the conservation workforce; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies becomes a partner in the Diversity Joint Venture and serves as a strategic supporter of this effort.

Submitted by the Education, Outreach and Diversity Committee

Adopted September 12, 2018, Tampa, FL



RESOLUTION #2018-05-07

TO ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION BY AFWA MEMBERS IN THE 2019 JOINT CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY AND THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies recognizes and appreciates the importance of ensuring that state, provincial, and federal fisheries and wildlife management agency staff and their partners have access to the best available scientific information to manage and conserve our public trust resources. Accordingly, AFWA encourages its member agencies and organizations to participate in the 2019 joint conference of The American Fisheries Society and The Wildlife Society, to be held in Reno, Nevada, September 29-October 3, 2019.

WHEREAS, state, provincial, and federal fish and wildlife agencies are charged with safeguarding public trust fish and wildlife resources, and do so by employing professional biologists and managers to guide the stewardship of these resources; and

WHEREAS, the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation recognizes that science is the proper tool for the discharge of fish and wildlife management; and

WHEREAS, dissemination and discussion of new and innovative advances in fish and wildlife science can empower the fish and wildlife professionals at state, provincial, and federal fish and wildlife agencies to enhance management and conservation efforts; and

WHEREAS, the American Fisheries Society was founded in 1870 and is the world's oldest and largest fisheries science society, and works to improve the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems by advancing fisheries and aquatic science and promoting the development of fisheries professionals; and

WHEREAS, The Wildlife Society was founded in 1937 and works to inspire, empower, and enable wildlife professionals to sustain wildlife populations and habitats through science-based management and conservation; and

WHEREAS, the American Fisheries Society and The Wildlife Society both provide scientific peer-reviewed journals, professional development opportunities, and other services that benefit the fish and wildlife professionals employed by state, provincial, and federal fish and wildlife agencies; and

WHEREAS, the American Fisheries Society and The Wildlife Society will host the first-ever joint conference of these two professional societies on September 29 – October 3, 2019, in Reno, Nevada; and

WHEREAS, the joint conference will be the largest-ever gathering of fish and wildlife professionals and will provide professional development opportunities and scientific information which is pertinent to the conservation and management of public trust species.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies recognizes and appreciates the importance of this first-ever joint conference of the American Fisheries Society and The Wildlife Society; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies encourages the staff of its member agencies and partner organizations to participate in this joint conference, in order to continue the dissemination of fisheries and wildlife science and thereby ensure the success of science-based management and conservation across North America.

Submitted by the Science and Research Committee

Adopted September 12, 2018, Tampa, FL



RESOLUTION #2018-06-07

FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AT LANDSCAPE SCALES

WHEREAS, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (Association) recognizes the important role and unique responsibility of state, provincial and territorial fish and wildlife agencies in conserving fish and wildlife and their habitats; and

WHEREAS, many fish and wildlife species occur and complete their life requirements within ecological systems that cross state, provincial and/or territorial boundaries; and

WHEREAS, landscape-scale conservation efforts are characterized by conservation of connected and healthy ecological systems, use of science-based and culturally sensitive conservation planning, collaborative network structure and meaningful multi-sector stakeholder engagement; and

WHEREAS, the Association recognizes the need for state, provincial and territorial fish and wildlife agencies, federal agencies, tribes, private landowners and conservation groups to collaborate at landscape scales; and

WHEREAS, existing landscape-scale conservation efforts like National Fish Habitat Partnerships, Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Ventures, Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, Climate Adaptation Science Centers, Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessments and others were established to address the challenges of managing certain suites of fish and wildlife over large landscapes; and

WHEREAS, working at landscape scales can promote system-wide regional, national and international collaboration on fish and wildlife conservation, aid in the recovery or avoidance of federal Endangered Species Act listings, help reduce conflicts, mitigate key stressors and improve regulatory certainty; and

WHEREAS, landscape-scale conservation should when possible include collaboration with Provincial, Territorial and Mexican governments; and

WHEREAS, agreement on a vision, boundaries, science and coordination, sustainable funding, efficient and effective meetings, strategic communication, involvement of partners including private landowners and strong personal relationships are important elements of landscape-scale collaboration.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Association acknowledges the importance of collaborating at landscape scales to help fish and wildlife agencies meet their statutory and regulatory responsibilities to conserve fish and wildlife and their habitats. Furthermore, when collaborating at landscape scales, the Association recognizes the need to establish durable partnerships with strong governance structures that include relevant, engaged and contributing governmental members, private

conservation organizations, private landowners, academic institutions and other partners who recognize the role and authority of state fish and wildlife agencies and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and the special relationship between state fish and wildlife agencies and the Service; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Association supports using the following guiding principles when developing or participating in landscape scale conservation partnerships intended to conserve fish and wildlife:

1. State and federal agencies with management responsibility for fish and wildlife should be considered as peers and integral to development of an initial framework, boundaries and priorities for landscape-scale conservation partnerships.
2. Landscape-scale conservation partnerships should consider a governance model that includes a steering committee or board of directors made up of state fish and wildlife agency directors and leaders of federal agencies or their designees that can set policy and when appropriate include private landowners, private conservation organizations, tribes, academic institutions and other diverse stakeholders to optimize conservation outcomes.
3. Landscape-scale conservation partnerships should seek to conserve ecological integrity that supports healthy and functioning natural communities and working landscapes that conserve fish and wildlife, particularly species of greatest conservation need.
4. Landscape-scale conservation partnerships are complex and require trust, a dedicated coordinator, technical and science development staff and communication expertise. Regular communication from top-to-bottom and bottom-to-top should be a priority.
5. Landscape-scale conservation partnerships should agree on a long-term vision and goals and clear, specific, practical and measurable objectives, performance measures and outcomes to guide work and ensure accountability.
6. Landscape-scale conservation partnerships should seek to address the population status, key threats and habitat and management needs of all fish and wildlife but special consideration should be given to co-developed and shared priorities between State Fish and Wildlife Agencies and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, including species of greatest conservation need identified in State Wildlife Action Plans, threatened and endangered species and other priority at-risk species and their habitats.
7. Landscape-scale conservation partnerships should undertake work in the context of the longer term goal of sustaining healthy, connected, and resilient cross-border ecosystems that provide essential ecosystem and societal values for current and future generations
8. Planning, funding and implementing on-the-ground conservation is important to the success of landscape-scale conservation partnerships and should recognize the important role of private landowners, nonprofit organizations and other stakeholders in achieving collaborative and cost-effective outcomes. Technical and management staff from governmental and non-

governmental organizations should help direct and deploy implementation.

9. Landscape-scale conservation partnerships should develop and use the best available applied science that is shared, transparent and collaboratively obtained.
10. When possible, landscape-scale conservation partnerships should build upon existing landscape conservation planning and management initiatives undertaken by Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Ventures, Landscape Conservation Cooperatives, watershed organizations and similar partnerships.
11. Landscape-scale conservation partnerships should periodically undergo an evaluation to assess priorities, effectiveness and adaptability so they can be refocused as needed to achieve intended outcomes.

Submitted by the Wildlife Resource Policy Committee with a recommendation that it be passed.

Adopted September 12, 2018, Tampa, FL



RESOLUTION #2018-07-07

IN APPRECIATION OF THE FLORIDA FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMISSION FOR HOSTING THE AFWA ANNUAL MEETING AT THE TAMPA MARRIOTT WATERSIDE HOTEL IN TAMPA, FLORIDA SEPTEMBER 9 – 12, 2018

WHEREAS, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies held its 108th Annual Meeting in Tampa located on the beautiful west coast of Florida on Tampa Bay, near the Gulf of Mexico; and,

WHEREAS, during the plenary session we talked about customers, millennials and others and how fish and wildlife agencies can best reach them and engage them with products and services. We talked about state and provincial agencies of the future including things such as institutional capacity and constructs for thoughtful engagement with customers and a proactive policy culture; and,

WHEREAS, some of us were able to observe and participate in FWC's Alligator Management Program, where Florida's alligator population is managed for its long-term well-being and the benefit of users; and

WHEREAS, others enjoyed learning about Tampa's Cat Rescue, one of the largest accredited sanctuaries in the world dedicated entirely to abused and abandoned big cats, and home to about 80 lions, tigers, bobcats, cougars and other species or visiting the Florida Aquarium located in the Channel District hosting over 20,000 species of aquatic plants and animals; and

WHEREAS, some of more adventurous of us had an opportunity to visit the 335-acre Busch Gardens, Tampa's Africa-themed park located near the University of South Florida, featuring roller coasters and the opportunity to interact with a number of African wildlife; and,

WHEREAS, the state fish and wildlife agency directors had the opportunity to visit the Suncoast Youth Conservation Center, where we paddled along the Noonan Branch Creek Paddling Trail enjoying the newly created Florida Conservation and Technology Center in Apollo Beach while keeping an eye out for mudflats with sting rays, snook and red fish; and

WHEREAS, we all enjoyed the quadrennial Canada Night 2018, whose menu included lobster bisque, fish cakes, perogies, bison roast, and elk roast and was hosted by the Canadian partners of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan evening of Canadian food; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Director, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Eric Sutton, and his staff gave AFWA's Annual Meeting an environment of professionalism, collegiality and friendship to hold its 108th AFWA Annual Meeting;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies extends its deep appreciation to Executive Director Sutton, and his staff, for hosting the 108th Annual Meeting.

Submitted by the Executive Committee

Adopted September 12, 2018, Tampa, FL