

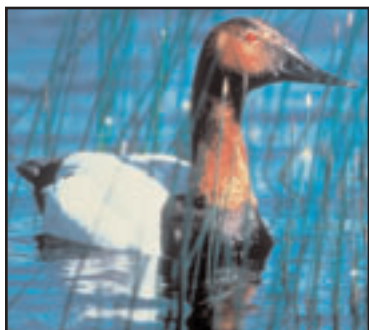
SHOT Show Press Credentials

Press credentials for the 2005 Shooting, Hunting and Outdoor Trade (SHOT) Show in Las Vegas, Nev., will be issued to any active members of Western Outdoor Writers who request them.

The SHOT Show will be held Jan. 28-31, 2005, at the Las Vegas Convention Center. The SHOT Show is the largest and most comprehensive marketplace for all professionals serving the shooting sports and hunting industries. It is not open to the public.

Previously, only members of the Outdoor Writers Association of America were granted press credentials at the gun and shooting industry's showcase event, according to Steve Wagner, communications director of the National Shooting Sports Foundation. The NSSF changed its credentials policy after resigning from OWAA earlier this year.

For more information about the SHOT Show, contact NSSF online at <http://www.shotshow.org/>. To register your press credentials, scroll down to "Media Registration" to obtain press credentials. ✍



Canvasback photo by William Vinge, USFWS Image Library

U.S. Reauthorizes Waterfowl Management Plan

Interior Secretary Gale Norton has reaffirmed the United States' commitment to international waterfowl conservation efforts by signing an update to the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.

The plan is a public-private approach to manage waterfowl in Canada, Mexico and the United States. Partners have invested more than \$2.2 billion to protect, restore or enhance more than 8 million acres of habitat in the plan's history.

"The plan put in place an innovative science-based, partnership driven approach to international bird conservation," Norton said. "Partners updated some of the scientific processes and priority analysis but the landmark approach they developed only 20 years ago to manage continental waterfowl is just as vital today. Wildlife managers use the plan's design to launch a new era in wildlife conservation, one based on partnerships to conserve shared natural resources."

With final approval from the Canadian and Mexican environmental ministries, the 2004 plan, named the North American Waterfowl Management Plan — Strengthening the Biological Foundations, will guide the three countries in waterfowl conservation. The plan calls on the partners to manage sustainable landscapes, consult and cooperate with partners and use strong biological foundations to make decisions.

Partners' conservation projects not only advance waterfowl conservation but also make substantial contributions toward the conservation of all wetland-associated species.

The original plan established an international committee

from each of the three countries. The committee provides a forum for discussion of major, long-term international waterfowl issues and makes recommendations to directors of the three countries' national wildlife agencies.

The specific goals of the plan are to establish continental waterfowl conservation objectives and priorities (for example, in the surveyed area, the breeding bird population objective is 8.2 million for mallards); to increase stakeholder confidence in the direction of waterfowl conservation; and to guide partners in strengthening the biological foundation of North American waterfowl conservation.

Media contact: Nicholas Throckmorton, 202-208-5636 or visit <http://www.fws.gov>. ✍

WOW Conference Highlights

Don't miss all of the highlights of our first-ever WOW conference at the Silver Legacy Resort Casino in Reno, Nev. Turn to Page 6! ✍

Steve Williams, director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, delivers the keynote address in front of WOW members and guests Oct. 22. Photo by JR Absher



Words Matter

By Burt Carey

President, Western Outdoor Writers

Writing is hard work.

How many times have you heard it said that writing is hard work? Your answer to that question may indicate just how long in the tooth you might be, or if you're like me, it might also suggest that our skills improve with age and experience. At 43, I am neither willing nor qualified to claim curmudgeon status, and so I commiserate with those wordsmiths who find this journey to be a pleasurable vocation.

Truth be told, I've used the "hard work" phrase far more than any other to partially explain the difference between good writing and quality writing to neophyte writers. The other half of the explanation goes like this: Good stories are written; great stories are re-written. (Spoken like a true editor!)

Words matter. It's just that simple. And how we string them together — one after another, sentence by sentence, and paragraph after paragraph — gives us an opportunity to parade our talents before a variety of audiences. Those who exhibit care and thought in such a task are usually rewarded with steady career development, as editors and others recognize their dedication to quality work.

Words define who we are and what we stand for. They can be used for encouragement (although that practice in today's society seems to be waning) or for blasting the socks off another person. Words can bring tears of joy and sadness, sorrow and glee. Regardless of the venue or how we use our language, words define a person's passions as well as their temperament. They tell stories — good or bad, short or long, detailed or not — that affect people. Words deployed at the hand of a skilled craftsman (or craftswoman, if you please) carry the potential of changing lives, giving our fellow humans hope or dragging them into a pit of despair. The best wordsmiths are able to evoke such response from their readers every time they write.

Whether you're a broadcaster, e-zine editor, video scriptwriter, playwright, newspaper reporter, book author, or freelance magazine writer, tomorrow you will spend time at the keyboard composing a performance that others will hear or read. Hopefully you'll do it at a profit. Whatever your station, I encourage you to continually hone your writing skills, and perhaps more importantly, your editing skills. Your aptitude for doing both will determine your success.

How will you make words work for your career? How you answer that question determines your future. ✍



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WESTERN
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\$2,500 Prize Offered

Entry Deadline, December 13

The National Marine Manufacturers Association is accepting submissions for its 47th annual Directors' Award, which recognizes an individual who best communicates the pleasures of recreational boating to audiences through newspaper or magazine articles, radio or television programming, films, or widespread electronic methods.

The Directors' Award will be presented at NMMA's Miami International Boat Show and Strictly Sail Miami taking place Feb. 17-21, 2005. The work of a journalist, artist, photographer, editor, or broadcaster during the period from Jan. 1, 2004 through Dec. 1, 2004 will be considered.

The NMMA board of directors will choose the award recipient, who will receive a certificate and \$2,500, airfare to Miami to receive the award, and a one-night hotel stay in Miami.

Submissions for the award will be accepted until December 13, 2004. The winner will receive the award at the Miami Boat Show press breakfast on Feb. 17, 2005. ✍

Send submissions to:

NMMA - Directors' Award Entry

c/o Dan Green

200 E. Randolph Drive, Suite 5100

Chicago, IL 60601

Phone: 312-946-6269

Looking for a Few Good Men & Women

The WOW Nominations Committee is searching for a few good members to help make Western Outdoor Writers the best it can be.

Candidates are needed for all officer positions and two directors seats on the Board of Directors. Chairman Tony Mandile is asking for volunteers, but says he will start "twisting arms" if too few step forward.

Elections for these open positions will be held at the 2005 annual conference. Candidates are needed for president, vice president, secretary and treasurer, plus two seats on the Board. WOW officers serve for two years; board member terms are three years. Current officers and board members may opt to run for re-election.

Members interested in any of the above should contact Mandile by e-mail as soon as possible at tony10@outdoors.net to discuss options or preferences. Only active members in good standing are eligible to hold elective office. Candidates will be announced in the March 2005 issue of *WOW Wired*. ✍

...Notes from the Webmaster

In just a few days membership renewal notices will be sent to all WOW members. This will be your cue to talk up WOW to your colleagues who are not members and show them how they can benefit from becoming a WOW member.

Leading someone through the process of joining WOW is simple. Here's how:

First send them to the "Members Benefit" page (www.westernoutdoorwriters.org/benefits.htm) and "About WOW" (www.westernoutdoorwriters.org/about-wow.htm) so they can see what WOW is about.

Also be sure to tell them about "Behind the Camera" feature, which promotes WOW's professional photographers by displaying their photos throughout the WOW Web site for several weeks at a time. Those promotional photos are then archived as slideshow notebooks.

Perhaps your prospective member might be interested in the "Speakers Bureau." If they make money lecturing, giving demonstration seminars, or have the verve to be an emcee, they can be listed at www.westernoutdoorwriters.org/speakers.htm.

And if that isn't enough, tell them the Membership Services Committee is working with photography service providers to find a preferred service provider for

camera equipment sales and rentals for WOW members. We're also on the prowl for a preferred discount film and photo supplies provider. And we're looking to find group insurance policies, hotel discounts and media rates for books, computers, software and more.

Now that you have their attention hit 'em with this: Writers' guidelines. The "Members Only" section of the WOW Web site carries editorial guidelines for more than 300 publications. Tell them that they are a password and a click away from learning who's buying what, from Alaska magazine to Yale Angler's Journal.

Of special interest to a good number of prospective members is work, so tell them about the "JOBS" feature. This member-only service carries calls for photos and copy from editors, art directors and others. One assignment via JOBS could easily offset the cost of dues for several years.

By now your colleague won't be able to resist the opportunity to be a WOW member. So have them scroll to the "Join WOW" menu selection, and then click "New Members."

...tight lines, ✍

Phil Springer

Last-Minute Thanksgiving Tips

Are your Thanksgiving meal plans still up in the air? Stop worrying. The members of the National Wild Turkey Federation have come to the rescue. Folks from across the country share their favorite recipes to make a complete Thanksgiving feast, available from the NWTf on its CD, Thanksgiving Idea Kit 2004.

Turkey Waldorf Salad: Recipe from Shelia Clark, Greensboro, N.C.

2/3 cup mayonnaise
2 tablespoons of lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon of salt
1/4 teaspoon of ground pepper
2 cups of cooked turkey, diced
2 red apples, cored and diced
2/3 cup of celery, sliced
1/2 cup of walnuts, chopped

In a large bowl combine mayonnaise, lemon juice, salt and pepper. Add turkey, apples and celery; toss to coat well. Cover; chill. Just before serving, sprinkle with walnuts.



Photo courtesy of National Wild Turkey Federation

Stuffed Midwestern Wild Turkey: Recipe from A.M. Glombowski, Lake Forest, Ill.

14 slices of bacon, divided
1 cup of onion, chopped
1/4 cup of celery, chopped
1/2 cup of water

1 (8-ounce) package of cornmeal stuffing mix
1 chicken bouillon cube
1/2 cup of hot water
1 cup of dry red wine, divided
1 (10- to 12-pound) wild or domestic turkey

Fry eight slices of bacon until crisp. Drain bacon, crumble and set aside. Saute onion and celery in bacon drippings. When vegetables are tender, add 1/2 cup water and simmer for five minutes. Stir in stuffing mix and crumbled bacon. Dissolve bouillon cube in 1/2 cup hot water. Add 1/2 cup red wine to bouillon. Add bouillon-wine liquid to stuffing mixture and stuff turkey.

Transfer turkey to roasting pan. Lay four slices of bacon across the breast, and wrap a slice of bacon around each leg. Cover pan with foil; then place lid on pan. Bake in 300-degree oven for 4 1/2 hours. Remove cover and foil. Pour remaining wine over turkey. Baste every 10 minutes while cooking an additional 40 minutes. Yield: 12 to 15 servings

For more recipes and other Thanksgiving ideas, contact James Powell jpowell@nwtf.net or Jonathan Harling jharling@nwtf.net at the NWTf.

BRC, Snowmobilers Defend Yellowstone Access

The BlueRibbon Coalition and its partners have renewed their pledge to defend snowmobile access to Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks.

This statement follows the Nov. 4, 2004, filing of a lawsuit by the Fund for Animals over Yellowstone winter access. The Fund's latest suit was filed mere days after the National Park Service released its formal decision to authorize limited snowmobile access to the parks, and continues the Fund's familiar argument that the agency has, now for at least the third time, failed to adequately analyze the environmental effects of winter grooming of snow on selected park roads.

It is along these roads that virtually all winter recreationists access Yellowstone, whether to appreciate the wildlife and natural beauty via snowmobile or snowcoach, or to use such mechanized transport to access desirable skiing or snowshoeing destinations.

"This latest suit surprises no one," said BRC President Jack Welch. "Our opponents envision a Yellowstone without humans in the winter, and will never cease their efforts to substitute their vision for the reasonable view of the Park Service. BlueRibbon and its partners in the snowmobile community are reviewing the Fund's legal challenge and will take appropriate legal action, as we have since the beginning of this controversy." ✍

Federal Judge Strikes Down Yellowstone Snowmobile Ban

A federal judge in Wyoming has agreed with pro-access interests, snowmobile manufacturers, local business owners and the states of Wyoming and Montana in striking down a rule that would have banned snowmobiles from Yellowstone National Park.

On Oct. 14, 2004, U.S. District Judge Clarence Brimmer penned the latest chapter in the ongoing dispute over winter access to Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks, in the case initially brought in the year 2000 by the BlueRibbon Coalition, the International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association and other snowmobile supporters. The states of Wyoming and Montana joined in these efforts to overturn a rule finalized on the final day of the outgoing Clinton administration.

The Clinton rule restricted motorized winter access to the parks to mass-transit "snowcoaches." Brimmer concluded that the National Park Service violated federal law "in its rush to push through the politically predetermined ban on snowmobiles in the Parks."

Brimmer further noted: "In a case as important as this, where the agency action was driven by political haste, poor judgment, and only pro forma compliance with

[required procedures], it is the province of the Court to vacate the 2001 Snowcoach Rule."

"This is a great victory for those who believe that active and well-reasoned management can best address Yellowstone's winter access issues," said Jack Welch, president of the BlueRibbon Coalition. "This decision to ban snowmobiles was a political reward for aggressive and well-funded special interests, but those looking closely at that decision realize it was built on flawed science and was implemented through illegal shortcuts. Reasonable people agree: The Park Service should allow regulated snowmobile access to these special destinations."

Brimmer's order vacates the 2000 planning effort and resulting 2001 final rule, and remands those actions to the Park Service for further proceedings. The Park Service is analyzing an interim snowmobile assessment and administrative rule. The agency anticipates concluding these analyses by mid-November, in anticipation of the traditional mid-December opening of Yellowstone's winter recreation season.

Media contact: Jack Welch, president of the BlueRibbon Coalition, 303-279-8436. For information on the BRC, call 800-258-3742, or go online to www.sharetrails.org. For information about access to Yellowstone: www.saveyellowstonepark.com. ✍

Leaders Prepare for Historic Summit

More than 50 executives from the outdoor industry and conservation organizations and scores of state legislative leaders are preparing to participate in the first meeting of the new National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses in Lake Whitney, Texas, Dec. 4-6.

The historic gathering will be hosted by the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, with major funding support from the National Shooting Sports Foundation. It will feature three days of focused discussions aimed at enhancing the important partnership between industry, conservation organizations and pro-sportsmen legislators.

The first day of meetings will be limited to state legislative leaders, who will discuss opportunities to expand successful pro-sportsmen initiatives between the states. Topics scheduled for discussion include legislative initiatives to ensure no net loss of hunting lands, Constitutional protection for hunting and fishing, sportsmen voter registration and other topics.

With CSF guidance and encouragement, the number of state sportsmen's caucuses in the nation has rapidly increased from six in early 2003 to 21 in late 2004.

Following a meeting earlier this year, leaders of several state caucuses outlined the concept of the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses to enhance information and idea exchange between state sportsmen's caucuses. This new organization will be launched on the second day of the meeting.

Scheduled to join the legislative leaders for two days of idea exchange and partnership development are representatives of the National Shooting Sports Foundation, National Wild Turkey Federation, American Sportfishing Association, National Rifle Association, Safari Club International, Ducks Unlimited, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and other national groups. In addition, Texas sportsmen's groups, including the Dallas Safari Club, Coastal Conservation Association and Texas Wildlife Association, are scheduled to attend.

Attendance is limited but interested industry or conservation representatives may still register, according to the CSF. For more information, contact Nicole Nelson at 202-543-6850 ext. 14, or Casey Condra at 202-543-6850 ext. 22.

Media contact: Brad Rowse, 202-543-6850 extension 13. ✍

WOW Everybody Won in Reno

By Lee Allen

Despite meeting in a gambling town where slot machines stay constantly busy and neon burns 24/7, there were no losers at the first-ever Western Outdoor Writers conference, as you will see with the following photographs.

Everybody won — from writers and photographers seeking story ideas and photo ops to government and industry spokesmen who supplied those concepts and contacts. Members got to meet and mingle for mutual benefit.

There were lots of highlights over the four-day event, including a full day of professional seminar topics from wingshooting to webzines to wildfires. Those indoor classes were followed by in-the-field forums on Lahontan cutthroat trout recovery and riverine riparian restoration along the Truckee River.

National Wild Turkey Federation and the California Waterfowl Association hosted banquets. The keynote speaker, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Steve Williams, told attendees: "Western Outdoor Writers has quickly become the second largest regional writer's group in the country and is poised to play a vital role in putting the message of our outdoor heritage into the liv-



WOW members and guests gather at the Silver Legacy to listen to U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Director Steve Williams at the Friday night banquet. The evening was capped off with a silent auction that included donated items from several WOW Corporate Members. Photo by Jim Foster.

ing rooms of America to keep our hunting and angling traditions alive" To read the entire speech, go online to: <http://news.fws.gov/speeches/director2004oct22.htm>.

For those who were not able to visit "the Biggest Little City in the World" and WOW's first conference, we missed the opportunity to include you in that excitement. The good news is that planning is already under way for next year's event. ✍



Bob Pittman of the 100th Meridian Initiative educated WOW members about invasive aquatic species. Photo by JR Absher.



Steve Schultz, the newly appointed Corporate Member board representative, presented the seminar, "Improving Your Wingshooting." He represents Gander Mountain. Photo by Jim Foster.



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Director Steve Williams (left) takes a moment to speak with Steve Thompson, the USFWS California-Nevada administrator. Thompson helped present a comprehensive workshop on recovery efforts in the Lahontan cutthroat trout program in the Truckee River watershed. Photo by Jim Foster.

WOW CONFERENCE



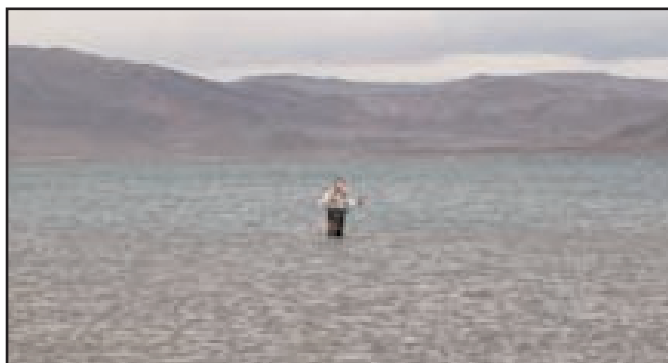
While JR Absher (right), WOW's chairman of the board, gave tips to freelance writers on how to create and host their own Webzines, online editor and WOW member Brett Pauly of ESPNOutdoors.com shared information on marketing and working for Webzines. Photo by Phil Springer.



Newly elected WOW board member Del Albright was caught in the act of working during the conference. Photo by Jim Foster.



Jiffy Pop anyone? While Patrick Mc Hugh of MPI Outdoors may look like an old-fashioned stovetop popcorn recipe, he's actually donning an emergency poncho. Its reflective coating not only helps people maintain body heat and provides protection from rain and wind it also is highly visible to aid search teams. Photo by Jim Foster



Way, way out there! That's Don Amador of the BlueRibbon Coalition trying his hand at fly-fishing for Lahontan cutthroat trout at Pyramid Lake. With leaking waders, the only thing Don caught that day was cold. Photo by Del Albright.



Left to right — Rick Copeland of Wilderness Unlimited talked with Gander Mountain's Steve Schultz and WOW member Harold Gunn of Texas during a break between seminars at the Silver Legacy. Photo by Jim Foster.

WOW CONFERENCE



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service personnel escorted WOW members for a field day along the Truckee River and Pyramid Lake, where fly-fishing and photo ops were the order of the day. Photo by Del Albright.



Chad Gourley (right), river landscape specialist working with the USFWS, provided an in-the-field overview of ongoing Truckee River restoration work. WOW board member Lee Allen helps with the presentation. Photo by Del Albright.



WOW member Art Merrill takes a stab at fishing in the Truckee River for Lahontan cutthroat trout. Photo by Del Albright.



Prior to Saturday night's banquet, many a WOW member was even remotely aware of the work done by the California Waterfowl Association to protect hunters, rights and freedoms in California. That's the mission of Bill Gaines, CWA's director of Government Affairs. Photo by JR Absher.



Dr. Bill Morrill, science coordinator for the Eastern Nevada Landscape Coalition, presented a seminar on developing wildlife habitat and using prescribed burns in Nevada. Photo by JR Absher.

Why Attend a Writer's Conference?

By Patricia Stockdill

Watching city lights disappear into infinity, I thought to myself, "I hope this is worth it."

I was en route to a writer's conference with mixed emotions. It was a relatively new journalism conference, a group of people that I had never met. But perusing the agenda and speaker credentials, the conference seemed to have exactly what I was looking for to improve my writing abilities. It fit into my time frame that I felt I could spare from the day-to-day routine.

The trepidation was not about venturing into a new world of unknown people or venue. It was those perky ears, a wiggly tail flashing at what seems like 100 miles an hour and eyes piercing through my heart that gave me pause. I was leaving my hunting dog during hunting season to attend a writer's conference. As the plane turned and headed west, I hoped she would forgive me.

I hoped it would be worth it.

It takes time, money and sacrifice to attend writers' conferences. This was my second within three months and not one that I had planned to attend long in advance. But it was an opportunity that will pay off throughout my writing career. It hit a home run, and for the duration I forgot about those piercing eyes and wiggly tail.

Not all conferences are what they are perceived. But by doing research and making some telephone calls, a first-time conference attendee can get a sense of whether the agenda of such an event really meets one's needs.

Several writing publications provide conference listings. Information is available on the Internet. Decide what you want to glean from a conference, whether it is making business contacts, improved writing or editing skills, or visiting with like minds.

There are what seems like an endless number of writing conferences available. Talk to fellow writers and editors. Find out what they attend. Get their opinions. Do your research to pick the conferences that fit your needs, and then go.

Never assume that you will not be able to get anything out of a conference. Be selective when choosing a conference to make certain it meets your needs.

But always strive to learn more, meet more people and broaden your horizons.

You may meet someone who becomes a mentor, or



Don Amador of the BlueRibbon Coalition discusses public lands access issues at the WOW conference in Reno, Nev. Such newsmaker events are prime for newspaper and magazine writers looking to gain assignments from conferences. Photo by JR Absher

you may be able to mentor someone else.

All was forgiven as we loaded shotgun, shells and vest. The tail was wiggly again and those piercing eyes warmed my heart.

And so much was learned. ✍️

How to Spot a Productive Conference

Not all writers' conferences are created equally. Here's a checklist to help you decide whether a specific conference meets your current professional development.

- Does the conference meet your professional priorities for attending?
- Does the conference offer potential story ideas to generate sales from the trip?
- What networking possibilities will be available?
- What is the potential return on your investment?
- Who will be hosting seminars?
- Are the seminars based on craft improvement, newsmaker events, or a mix of both?
- What genres of writing or communicating will be covered?
- Where and when will the conference be held?
- Will there be ancillary functions for networking? ✍️

NRA Targets Hunger Across America

Hunters encouraged to help our nation's hungry

Hunters who wish to share their game with those less privileged may take advantage of NRA's Hunters for the Hungry Clearinghouse, a list of more than 120 game-sharing programs and networks throughout the country.

Game-sharing programs may be known by different names, but they do basically the same thing — link hunters, meat processors and food banks or charitable organizations that channel meat to the hungry. NRA's clearinghouse makes it easy for hunters to find places to drop all or part of their meat and ensure it is distributed to those who need it.

NRA has been involved with Hunters for the Hungry programs since 1991, providing logistical guidance, volunteer recruitment and financial support. Further, The NRA Foundation has distributed 56 grants for Hunters for the Hungry programs, totaling \$151,455 since 1990.

"Whatever we can do to help eliminate even one single person going hungry is a victory," said Bob Davis, manager of NRA's Hunter Services Department. "Our goal is

to see that as many hunters as possible take advantage of this program. It's one of the best ways that you as a hunter can give back to your community."

Sportsmen can not only donate game meat in their local area but make financial contributions as well. Donations given to a game-sharing program are used to offset the costs of processing and delivery of game meat in the sportsman's area. To find a game-sharing program in your community, or learn how you can start a program in your area, call NRA's Hunter Services Information Clearinghouse at 800-492-HUNT, or log on to www.nrahq.org/hunting/hunterhungry.asp. To learn more about The NRA Foundation, visit www.nrafoundation.org or call 800-423-6894.

Media contact: Jorge Amselle, 703-267-1595 ✉

How would you help Arizona's wildlife?

Online survey prefaces 10-year conservation plan

If you were in charge of taking care of Arizona's wildlife, how would you run things? Now you have a chance to give the Arizona Game and Fish Department your opinions on everything from conserving native and endangered species to supporting outdoor recreation to educating Arizonans about our state's wildlife.

"We want to hear from everyone who's interested in conserving Arizona's wildlife for generations to come," says Jeff Sorensen, resource planner for the department. "That's why we're offering an online survey through our Web site, where Arizonans can give us their input for a new 10-year comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy."

All 50 states, the U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia are putting together similar conservation plans in a coordinated effort. Congress requires a comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy from each state wildlife agency for it to remain eligible for state wildlife grant funding.

Hunting, fishing, wildlife watching, and off-highway vehicle and watercraft recreation invest billions of dollars into Arizona's economy. This conservation strategy will help ensure dedicated federal funding for wildlife and habitat management activities in Arizona. Last year, the state received \$1.4 million in State Wildlife Grant Program funding.

For more information about the comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy, go to the department's Web site www.azgfd.gov/cwcs or provide your opinions at the survey site. The survey will be available until Nov. 30. The department plans to submit Arizona's strategy to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in July 2005. ✉



WOW member Mike Schoby, online editor of Cabelas.com, didn't make it to the WOW conference in Reno this year, but he had a pretty good excuse: hunting. Of course we refuse to do Mike's bragging for him. You will need to contact him for all of the details! Photo courtesy of Mike Schoby. ✉

Insurance For Hunting & Fishing Trips

As summer gave way to crisp autumn days, sportsmen and women cleaned and oiled their favorite hunting rifles and wound fresh fishing line onto their reels, thinking ahead to that Alaskan hunt or a dream fishing trip to South America.

One thing they may not be thinking about is protecting their dream sporting trip from the potential pitfalls that can spoil even the most carefully planned trip. Come to think of it, why would they? There has never before been a simple way to ensure smooth, hassle-free hunting and fishing trips until now, as Travel Guard International declares open season on sportsman's travel headaches with the launch of Sportsman's Travel Insurance.

Sportsman's Travel Insurance customizes Travel Guard's travel insurance coverage — including trip cancellation, interruption and delay; high-limit medical expense and emergency medical transportation; and travel agent services — with a wide array of protection and services specially designed for hunting and fishing trips.

The plan, available at www.sportsmanstravelinsurance.com, covers loss, theft, damage or delay of hunting

and fishing equipment during a trip, and comes with a dedicated sportsman's hotline. The hotline provides up-to-the-minute weather, hunting and fishing reports; local hunting regulations and locations of game registration stations; locations of nearby bait, tackle and sporting goods stores; construction and detour information and 24-hour roadside assistance services, including towing, fuel, flat tire service, fluid delivery, jump-start and lock-out. The plan also reimburses for lost hunting licenses.

"In my more than 25 years of enjoying hunting and fishing trips, I've just about seen it all," says Babe Winkelman, noted outdoorsman and host of television's Good Fishing and Outdoor Secrets shows. "Most of us only get a few chances a year for a hunting or fishing trip, and we don't really want to think about the things that can go wrong, but those are just the things that can quickly ruin a trip. The Sportsman's Travel Insurance plan takes the worry out of trip planning, and lets sportsmen focus on the thrill of the hunt or the hope of landing that monster lunger."

The Sportsman's Travel Insurance plan is available online at www.sportsmanstravelinsurance.com and by calling 866-877-3241.

Media contact: David Biss, senior account executive, Spring, O'Brien & Co., 50 W. 23rd Street, 11th Fl., New York, NY 10010; 212-620-7100 extension 234. ✉

NWTF HONORS HUNTERS WITH NAME CHANGE

The National Wild Turkey Federation is honoring hunters, North America's greatest conservationists, by renaming NWTF banquets and the NWTF Super Fund. NWTF banquets are now known as Hunting Heritage Banquets, and the Super Fund is now the Hunting Heritage Super Fund.

Although the names have been changed in honor of hunters everywhere, there will be no changes in the way the Super Fund and banquets work.

"The NWTF is proud to have a new name for the Super Fund and our banquets that will truly reflect the NWTF membership," said Carl Brown, NWTF chief operating officer. "Hunting Heritage Super Fund and Hunting Heritage Banquets are names that exemplify the NWTF's mission, to conserve the wild turkey and preserve our hunting heritage. The NWTF is America's leading hunting heritage organization. Although we focus primarily on wild turkey, we fight for all hunters' rights, thus the name change from Wild Turkey Super Fund to Hunting Heritage Super Fund. The names are also a strong indicator of where the NWTF is heading in the future."

Hunting Heritage Super Fund banquets combine fun, fellowship, fundraising and dedication to the wild turkey. NWTF chapters and volunteers raise money through ticket sales, silent auctions, live auctions and raffles. The money is combined with donations from corporate sponsors and individuals concerned about wildlife conservation. Partnerships with these corporations, individuals and wildlife agencies result in a 3-to-1 match for every dollar a state chapter puts in its Super Fund.

Since the beginning of the Super Fund in 1985, more than \$186 million NWTF and cooperator dollars have been spent on more than 27,000 projects benefiting wild turkeys throughout North America. Hunting Heritage Super Fund money is used to restore wild turkey habitat and wild turkey populations throughout North America. Hunting Heritage Super Fund dollars are also spent on NWTF outreach programs, including JAKES (Juniors Acquiring Knowledge Ethics and Sportsmanship), *Women in the Outdoors* and *Wheelin' Sportsmen*.

Media contact: James Powell or Jonathan Harling, 803-637-3106 ✉

Utah Conservation Story:

Colorado River Cutthroat Trout Reclaim Reader Creek

As Garn Birchell reached down and gently placed a net full of fingerlings into the water, a smile spread across his face. This was the crowning moment of two years of hard work. Birchell had just released a rare, native trout.

Birchell, a biologist for the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, has devoted much of his time on a special project to restore Colorado River cutthroat trout in Reader Creek, a tributary of the Whiterocks River on the south slope of the Uinta Mountains in northeastern Utah.

"Reader Creek was chosen because we found a remnant population of Colorado River cutthroat trout in this small stream," Birchell explained. "This species is the only trout native to the Uinta Mountains. We also found an over-abundant population of brook trout, which is native to the northeastern United States."

In the early and mid-1900s, brook trout were introduced into many Western lakes and streams because they were a popular sport fish capable of surviving in small, high mountain lakes and streams. "Brook trout, which are more aggressive than the native cutthroat, had displaced them in this small stream," Birchell said. "To save the cutthroat, we first had to remove the brook trout."

Fish removal is always an interesting challenge, and the biologists wanted to know if a fish population could be removed without the use of chemicals. "We decided to run an experimental procedure," said Kirk Mullins, UDWR fisheries biologist. "Could repeated electro-shocking along the entire length of the stream remove the brook trout?"

Teams of volunteers used backpack electro-shockers to



Photo courtesy of the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources

stun trout in the creek during the summers of 2003 and 2004. The stunned fish were sorted; the brook trout were removed while the Colorado River cutthroats were returned to the stream.

"We cleared almost all of the brook trout out so the Colorado River cutthroat trout can thrive without the competition," Birchell said. The biologists also found that there were fewer cutthroat from the time they discovered them in the stream to the time Birchell started his project.

"We only found a couple of hundred cutthroat trout in the entire seven miles of stream," Birchell said. "We decided to help jumpstart the recovery program and stock additional Colorado River cutthroat trout into the stream.

"Roughly 8,500 fingerlings were transported from the Logan hatchery to Reader Creek by truck," Birchell said. "From there we loaded them into panniers and took them upstream by horseback."

Birchell says it will take a couple of years for the fingerlings to reach catchable size, but it won't be long before anglers and others will be able to see and catch the true native Uinta Mountain cutthroat in Reader Creek.

About 60 lakes on the south slope of the Uinta Mountains have been stocked with fingerlings raised from the eggs taken from brood stock raised in Sheep Creek Lake. This includes Horseshoe and Sharlee lakes, both in the Reader Creek drainage, which were stocked in early October.

Media contact: Ron Stewart, Utah DWR Northeastern Region conservation outreach manager, 435-781-9453.

100 Outdoor Stewardship Toolkits Awarded

Mountain bike groups coast to coast will soon receive an unprecedented boost for their volunteer trailwork projects as a result of a financial and gear grant from Recreational Equipment, Inc., announced by the International Mountain Bicycling Association.

For the second consecutive year, IMBA and REI will award outdoor stewardship toolkits to select mountain bike clubs nationally for the purpose of building and maintaining trails. This year's \$45,000 REI grant nearly doubles the amount of last year's award, and increases the number of toolkits from 50 to 100. Each toolkit contains eight components to enhance on-the-trail volunteer efforts, including:

- 1 McLeod trail-building tool
- 1 Pulaski trail-building tool
- 1 Brunton clinometer surveying instrument
- 1 IMBA "Trail Solutions" Book
- 10 pairs of REI/IMBA trailwork gloves
- 10 REI/IMBA trailhead education signs
- 12 REI stewardship volunteer t-shirts
- 300 REI/IMBA Responsible Riding flyers

IMBA's network of 500 affiliated clubs and 32,000 individual members perform an estimated 1 million hours of volunteer trailwork every year. IMBA creates, enhances and preserves trail opportunities for mountain bikers worldwide. These new outdoor stewardship toolkits will motivate clubs to organize even more volunteer projects.

REI President and CEO Dennis Madsen said, "IMBA recognizes the need for educating mountain bikers about the responsible use of our trails and natural areas, and joins REI in our efforts to promote environmental stewardship to protect these resources for future generations."

Toolkit recipients were selected based on need and merit. To view the full list of grant recipients, program information and a toolkit photo, visit <http://www.imba.com>.

Media contacts: Please contact brandon@imba if you are interested in scheduling an interview with a local program coordinator or learning more about trail building or maintenance projects. Other contacts: Pete Burhop, IMBA, peteburhop@imba.com, 303-545-9011; or Randy Hurlow, REI, rhurlow@rei.com, 253-395-5877. ✉

Bass Pro Helps NWTF Race For Conservation

NASCAR fans cheered as National Wild Turkey Federation CEO Rob Keck joined Bass Pro Shops founder Johnny L. Morris, legendary fisherman Bill Dance and executive vice president of the National Rifle Association Wayne LaPierre to start off the Bass Pro Shops/MBNA 500 in Atlanta Oct. 31.

As the four grand marshals took the spotlight, they gave the "start your engines" command on behalf of the nation's hunters and fishermen. Keck followed the command with a few turkey calls. The salute brought wild cheers from those gathered in the stands for the race.

"This event was more than just a race," said Keck. "It was an entire weekend dedicated to hunters, America's first and foremost conservationists, to fishermen and to the Armed Forces."

Bass Pro Shops donated space on the No. 1 race car, driven by Martin Truex Jr., for the NWTF's flying turkey logo. The donation was just one more example of Bass Pro Shops' dedication to the NWTF's mission. This past summer at the NWTF's "One Team, One Voice" Leadership Conference, Morris surprised Keck and nearly 1,000 NWTF volunteers with an IOU of \$1.1 million to help pay for the NWTF's new building expansion.

"We recognize the major role that the NWTF and its remarkable volunteers play in the outdoor industry, so we felt that our commitment to the federation's building fund was important to support the future of conservation and our nation's proud hunting heritage," said Morris.

As a thank you, during the Bass Pro Shops reception on Saturday night, before the race, Keck announced that the NWTF is naming the building after Morris.

"Bass Pro Shops is one of the federation's greatest partners, it's the least we can do to tell them how much we appreciate their support," said Keck.

Media contact: James Powell or Jonathan Harling, 803-637-3106. To view or download photo, go to: http://www.nwtf.org/nwtf_newsroom/press_releases.php?id=11297 ✉



Left to right, Wayne LaPierre, Rob Keck, Bill Dance, and Johnny L. Morris kick off the Bass Pro Shops/MBNA 500 NASCAR race in Atlanta. Photo courtesy of NWTF

USFWS News Briefs

First DVD Tour of America's National Wildlife Refuges

The National Wildlife Refuge System may have just marked its 100th anniversary, but the sights and sounds of the world's largest system of public lands for wildlife are as fresh as today's latest technology with the release of the first DVD armchair tour of our nation's refuges.

"America's Wildest Places" presents nearly two hours from eight of the most stunning refuges in the refuge system, complemented by narration and musical scores, in handy DVD format.

In the new Wildest Places collection, you'll fly among the stately white whooping cranes of Aransas and Matagorda Island national wildlife refuges in Texas. You'll track the stealthy endangered red wolf in the gloomy backwaters of North Carolina's Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge. You'll tumble alongside rollicking Alaska brown bears at Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. Your video tour continues at five other of America's finest windows on wildlife: Caribbean Islands refuge, Eufaula in the marsh country of Alabama and Georgia, Horicon's duck and goose haven in Wisconsin; the bottomland woods of Muscatatuck refuge in Indiana; and the John Heinz/Tinicum urban oasis with the Philadelphia skyline as wildlife's backdrop.

"America's Wildest Places commemorates the centennial celebration of President Theodore Roosevelt's designation of Florida's Pelican Island as the nation's first refuge," said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Steve Williams.

"Here, in this first volume in what we hope will become an occasional series of video tours of the National Wildlife Refuge System, we've packed more color, action, and scenic beauty than you'll find in any other commercially available wildlife video for the money."

Volume 1 of America's Wildest

Places incorporates presentations on each of eight refuges that were previously issued individually in traditional VHS video format, but never before available to the public in DVD compilation. The DVD sells for \$6 each, plus \$2.50 shipping and handling, regardless of quantity ordered. A copy of the National Wildlife Refuge System Visitor Guide is enclosed with each order, providing a map of all 540 refuges in the system and a listing of public-use activities available at each station.

To order "America's Wildest Places," visit www.fws.gov or call 304-876-7692.

Media contact: Mitch Snow in Washington, D.C. 202-219-9807; or Steve Hillebrand in Shepherdstown, WV, 304-876-7673 ✉

First Flight of a Wild Condor Chick in California

A wild-born condor chick has taken flight — the first wild chick to fly in California in 22 years.

The chick slowly began the process of fledging by leaving the nest in early September and perching 20 to 50 feet below the nest cave where it hatched April 9, near the Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge in Ventura County. Only very short hopping flights were observed until mid-October, at which time the young condor flew 30 feet. Two weeks later, a longer flight of 150 feet was observed, leaving no doubt that the chick had officially fledged.

The last time a wild condor chick fledged in the wild was in 1982.

The parents are captive-released birds from two release sites. The 10-year-old male, the dominant male of the Southern California flock, had two previous unsuccessful nesting attempts. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge in Ventura County released him in 1995.

The Ventana Wilderness Society released the 7-year-old female in central California at Big Sur in 1998. She is one of two Big Sur females that relocated to Southern California about three years ago. This was her first nesting attempt. The parents will continue caring for the chick until it is about 18 months old.

"This wild condor chick taking its first flight is a big step to getting back to a truly wild population," said

(Continued on page 15)



WILD CONDOR . . . *Continued*

Steve Thompson, manager of the Fish and Wildlife Service's California-Nevada Operations Office. "The condors we have released to the wild are now actively reproducing and we hope to see more wild chicks fledge in the future."

Kelly Sorenson, executive director of the Ventana Wilderness Society, confirmed that the California Condor Recovery Program is increasingly successful with each passing year. "This milestone paves the way toward our ultimate goal of fully recovering this species to the wild," he said. Ventana Wilderness Society has been releasing condors in Monterey

County's Big Sur region since 1997.

Two other wild chicks were hatched in California this year. One died and the other fell from the nest and broke its wing. The wing is healing and the chick may be released next spring. The first wild chick to survive past fledging was hatched last year in Arizona. That chick, at 17 months, is still with its parents and doing fine. Two wild condor chicks hatched this year in Arizona and are expected to fledge by December.

Media contacts: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge Complex — Denise Stockton or Marc Weitzel, 805-644-5185; Ventana Wilderness Society — Kelly Sorenson, 831-455-9514. ✉

Northern Spotted Owl Still Threatened

After completing a formal 5-year status review of the northern spotted owl, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has concluded that the species continues to warrant the protection of the Endangered Species Act as a threatened species.

The service's review uncovered both good news and bad news related to the species. On the positive side, the risks faced by the species when it was first listed, such as habitat loss on federal lands, have been reduced due to the success of the Northwest Forest Plan and other management actions.

On the negative side, the species' overall population in Washington, Oregon and California continues to decline and new potential threats have emerged that need to be studied further, including fire, competition from barred owls, and West Nile disease.

"We can celebrate the success we've had in reducing habitat loss on federal lands, but at the same time we must recognize that there are new risks out there that could present an even greater threat to the species," said Dave Allen, director of the service's Pacific Region. "Our conclusion is that while the species is still threatened it does not

need to be elevated to endangered status."

The 5-year review considered all information that has become available since the original listing of the northern spotted owl, such as: population and demographic trend data; genetics; species competition; habitat condition; adequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; and management and conservation planning information. The review assessed: (a) whether new information suggests that the species' population is increasing, declining or stable; (b) whether existing threats are increasing, stable, reduced or eliminated; (c) if there are any new threats; and (d) if new information or analysis calls into question any of the conclusions in the original listing determination as to the species' status.

The 5-year review can be found on the Pacific Region's website at <http://pacific.fws.gov/ecoservices/endangered/recovery/5yearcomplete.html>. The service conducted the 5-year review of the northern spotted owl following a lawsuit filed by the Western Council of Industrial Workers.



Northern spotted owl photo by John and Karen Hollingsworth

Media contact: Joan Jewett, 503-231-6121. ✉

Nesting Success Increases For Snowy Plovers

For the second year in a row, the nesting success of western snowy plovers on Oregon beaches set a record, according to state and federal agencies.

This year 107 young birds survived long enough to learn to fly and become independent of their parents. This number is almost three times the average of 37 young produced annually since monitoring began in 1990, and nearly twice last year's then-record results of 60.

Washington's beaches enjoyed similar increases, with 45 successful nests this year producing 27 fledglings. At Leadbetter Spit, the only area where protection from predators was provided, a fourfold increase in nest success was observed.

Snowy plovers are small, pale-colored shorebirds with dark patches on either side of the upper breast. The coastal population breeds along the Pacific Coast from southern Washington to southern Baja, California in Mexico. This population was listed as threatened by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1993 under the federal Endangered Species Act. The inland and coastal populations are listed collectively by the state of Oregon as a threatened species. They are considered a species of concern by the state of California, and a threatened species by the state of Washington.

Biologists attribute the higher number of fledglings this year to a combination of factors, including:

- increased habitat quality from long-term restoration projects;
- increased chick survival from selective predator management;
- more separation of beach users from plover nesting areas through beach management techniques;
- general cooperation from beach users in avoiding plover nesting areas, and
- good weather, without much rain during the plover's nesting season.

"As is almost always the case, it takes a number of factors working together to improve something as complex as nesting success for a shorebird," said Kerrie Palermo, a Bureau of Land Management senior wildlife biologist in Coos Bay. "There's rarely one single thing you could point to in a given year, just as it took a combination of factors to reduce plover numbers historically."

Habitat restoration projects include sites at Leadbetter Spit in Washington, Sutton Beach, Siltcoos Estuary, Oregon Dunes Overlook; Tenmile Estuary (northern Coos County), the North Spit of Coos Bay; Bandon Beach State Natural Area and New River area beaches in Oregon.

Media contacts: Dave Lauten, Oregon Natural Heritage Information Center, 541-290-8912; Kerrie Palermo, Bureau of Land Management, 541-751-4489; Fred Seavey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Oregon, 541-867-4558; and Martha Jensen, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Washington, 360-753-9440. ✉

WASHINGTON GETS \$2.8M IN WETLANDS GRANTS

Pacific Regional Director Dave Allen announced that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is providing grants totaling \$2,775,000 to conserve, restore and protect coastal wetlands in the State of Washington. The grants are among a total of \$13 million awarded nationally to help fund projects in 10 states.

In Washington, the three projects chosen to receive the grants are: the Davis Bay Acquisition and Restoration Project, the Willapa Bay/Seal Slough Acquisition Project, and the Lower Tarboo Creek Wetland Acquisition and Floodplain Restoration Project.

Other states receiving national coastal wetlands conservation grants for 2005 are Alaska, Georgia, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Nationally, the grants provide federal funding for 16 projects and will be supplemented with nearly \$13 million from state and private partners. The grants will be used to acquire, restore or enhance coastal wetlands for long-term conservation benefits to wildlife and habitat. Partners in this year's projects include state and local governments, private landowners and conservation groups such as Ducks Unlimited, the Trust for Public Land and the Wildlife Forever Foundation.

To date, the service has awarded almost \$152 million in grants to states and a U.S. territory under the program. When the 2005 grants projects are completed, they will have protected and/or restored almost 22,000 acres. Nearly 189,000 acres will have been protected or restored since the wetlands grant program began in 1990.

For more information about the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, contact the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203; or Division of Federal Aid, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203; or check online at <http://www.fws.gov/cep/cwgcover.html>.

Media contact: Joan Jewett, 503-231-6211. ✉