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## WMI Outdoor News Bulletin \* June 2006, Volume 60, No. 6

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## WMI Outdoor News Bulletin

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*Issued monthly by the*

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**Volume 60**

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### **WMI value substantially increased by a Ruble:**

Pat Ruble, for 21 years the Executive Administrator for the Wildlife Management and Research Section of the Ohio Division of Wildlife, will join the Wildlife Management Institute in July, as the Institute's Midwest Field Representative.

Since his retirement from the Ohio Division of Wildlife in 2002, Pat served as program coordinator for the Terrestrial Wildlife Ecology Lab, Ohio State University School of Natural Resources until 2004, and then until present as director of government relations for the Bowhunting Preservation Alliance and Arrowsport foundations.

Pat earned both B.S. and M.S. degrees in wildlife management from Ohio State University. Over the years, in addition to his management and administrative work for the Ohio Division of Wildlife, he has served at different times on 10 committees of the Association

of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, worked extensively with the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and such initiatives as the Mourning Dove Eastern Management Unit, Southern James Bay Canada Goose Committee and Lower Great Lakes Management Board.

Pat brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the Midwest field representative role for WMI. He will be involved in a variety of matters, ranging from the region's Cooperative Wildlife Research Units, to CWD, to waterfowl and wetlands issues, and, primarily for the immediate future, the 2007 Farm Bill. He is a welcome addition to the now-complete WMI field contingent, which includes Scot Williamson (Northeast, and Vice President), Don McKenzie (Southeast, and Northern Bobwhite Conservation Initiative coordinator), Len Carpenter (Southwest) and Bob Davison (Northwest).

"We are very pleased to welcome Pat aboard," said Steve Williams, President of WMI. "His professional credentials and contacts in the Midwest and at the national level are impressive. With the addition of Pat, we look forward to strengthening our partnerships with state fish and wildlife agencies and conservation organizations in the Midwest."

### **72nd Conference Special Sessions announced and prospective presenters invited:**

The steering committee of the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference announces the Special Session program for the 72nd North American, which will be held next March, in Portland, Oregon. Below are the session topics and abstracts, along with the names and contact information of the chairs of each session.

Persons who wish to be considered as a presenter in any Special Session, should query the appropriate chair or cochair to determine if that session agenda isn't complete and, if not, to provide a presentation/paper abstract

[\[http://www.wildlifemanagementinstitute.org/transactions/abstractguidelines.pdf\]](http://www.wildlifemanagementinstitute.org/transactions/abstractguidelines.pdf). The deadline for requests and abstracts submissions is September 1.

#### *Conservation and the Fuels Game*

Chair: Thomas M. Franklin, The Izaak Walton League of America (302-548-0150; <mailto:tfranklin@iwla.org>)

Two of conservation's worst-kept secrets are that energy demand is increasing globally, particularly in North America and especially in the United States, and that all forms of energy development can negatively affect fish and wildlife resources. Most attention has been on the acceleration and proliferation of oil and gas developments, especially in western states. However, the various forms of "green" renewable energy production can also impact fish and wildlife. Given current, and likely continuing, national policy to maximize domestic energy production, it is important for wildlife managers to understand the impacts and the trade offs for wildlife among the various forms of production. This Special Session will compare the nature and scale of impacts of the major sources of en-

ergy, including oil and gas, coal, wind, solar, biofuels and nuclear. Presentations and discussion will focus on the role of fish, wildlife and land management agencies to mitigate or minimize energy-related landscape alterations that portend drastic compromise of natural resource values in North America.

*Casting a Broader Net for Fisheries Management*

Chair: Virgil Moore, Idaho Department of Fish and Game (208-334-3791; <mailto:vmoore@idfg.state.id.us>)

This Special Session will focus on the economic importance and contributions of both regional and national sport and commercial fisheries, and the challenges of maintaining healthy fish populations. Topics of discussion will include an update of the National Fish Habitat Plan, solutions for imperiled West Coast salmon, the serious matter of fish interrupted—impacts of discarded and discharged medications and other compounds, and examinations of California Delta and Columbia River water and fishery resource management issues.

*The Future of Wildlife on Private Forest Land: Going Out on a Limb*

Chair: Susan Stein, USDA Forest Service (202-205-0837; <mailto:sstein@fs.fed.us>)

Numerous "species of greatest conservation need" inhabit private forest lands, and their well-being is faced with three predominant threats—development, unsustainable management and no management. This Special Session will identify trends of changing forest land use and the nature and location of probable development impacts on wildlife in U.S. private forests. It also will explore the role that the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and State Wildlife Action Plans play in providing incentives for landowners to improve wildlife habitat through certification of forest management standards.

*Targets of Opportunity: State Wildlife Action Plans*

Chair: John Cooper, South Dakota Department of Fish, Game and Parks (605-773-3387; <mailto:John.Cooper@state.sd.us>)

At a time of scarce and declining resources, State Wildlife Action Plans offer an unparalleled opportunity to focus attention on priority conservation issues. This Special Session will summarize key elements of the Plans and identify priority issues. Emphasis will be on the need to coordinate the Plans with existing wildlife initiatives, such as the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, Partners in Flight, North American Woodcock Plan, Northern Bobwhite Conservation Initiative, Black-tailed Prairie Dog Plan and the National Fish Habitat Initiative, for reasons of efficiency, economy and effectiveness.

***Thinking Like a Manager—A new WMI book:***

The Wildlife Management Institute is very pleased to announce the release of its latest book—*Thinking Like a Manager: Reflections on Wildlife Management*, by John Organ, Dan Decker, Len Carpenter, Bill Siemer and Shawn Riley.

The 120-page book, with original illustrations by Dan Metz, is a fictional account of six wildlifers, brought together under unusual circumstance, who find common confusion, interest and opportunity in the increasingly important human element in each of their different professional roles and geographies.

The narrative is an entertaining means of exploring the interrelationships of Aldo Leopold's ecological tenets, the public trust doctrine and sociological considerations that, to be professionally effective, every wildlifer must recognize and adopt to some significant degree.

Advance reviewers agree that this book will appeal and be informative to veteran wildlif-ers as well as wildlife students. For more information about the book and how to order it (only \$10.00 U.S. + \$2.00 shipping), go to <http://www.wildlifemanagementinstitute.org/pages/bookbros.html>.

#### **A louder, clearer come-back call for bobwhites:**

Implementation of the Northern Bobwhite Conservation Initiative (NBCI) continues to accelerate on numerous fronts, reports the Wildlife Management Institute.

- The NBCI coordinator position has been extended and funded for another three years. The position started early in 2003 with combined funding from a Multi-state Conservation Grant, southeastern state assessments and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). As of May 2006, the position is funded through 2009 by increased contributions from all 16 states of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies plus a major partnership contribution by Quail Unlimited. Don McKenzie, on long-term assignment from the Wildlife Management Institute, continues as NBCI coordinator.
- A new NBCI position has been created and filled. Ray Evans, retired from the Missouri Department of Conservation, has been contracted as national advocate, with the charge from the Southeast Quail Study Group (SEQSG) to represent the NBCI and quail habitat interests at the national level, with an emphasis on the 2007 Farm Bill. Evans is a quarter-century veteran of federal farm program conservation policy.
- The NBCI revision process has been officially launched. Some 55 quail conservationists attended the first official input forum on May 31 at the Gamebird 2006 conference in Athens, Georgia. The NBCI is more than four years old, and its creators planned from the beginning to update the plan regularly to ensure its continued relevance and power to drive progress. Many lessons have been learned as conservationists across some 20 states have striven to turn the national plan into additional habitat on the ground. Tall Timbers Research Station, with Bill Palmer as coordinator, has accepted the NBCI revision as a contracted project, in collaboration with the SEQSG. The next major public input forum for the NBCI revision

will be during the annual meeting of the SEQSG, August 6-9, in Auburn, Alabama.

- The Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP) practice "CP33 Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds," has enrolled 99,324 acres in 25 states as of April 2006. This practice was launched in late 2004 on behalf of the NBCI, to establish native-vegetation field borders around cultivated cropland.
- The largest standardized monitoring effort ever attempted for bobwhites is underway on CP33 CRP contracts. Mississippi State University is coordinating the spring and fall bobwhite and songbird counts pursuant to a monitoring requirement by the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA). Funding is provided by FSA, NRCS, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and numerous state wildlife agencies. Ten states already are conducting counts this spring and another five states are expected to begin this fall. It is anticipated that, eventually, as many as 18 states may participate in this standardized effort

### **Nominations open for WMI's Touchstone and Presidents awards:**

Nominations may be submitted now for the Wildlife Management Institute's 2007 *Touchstone and Presidents awards*. These awards recognize exceptional professional creativity, ingenuity and tenacity in developing programs that have advanced sound resource management and conservation in North America. Nominations can be for programs in any natural resource discipline.

The *Presidents Award* honors the division, department, office or program of a state, federal, provincial or other natural resource agency or institution. The California Wildlife Conservation Board received the 2006 Presidents Award for its determined efforts and leadership to protect hundreds of thousands of acres in the Golden Bear State.

The *Touchstone Award* recognizes the achievement of a natural resource management program, professional or group of professionals in the public or private sector. The 2006 Touchstone Award went to the Mule Deer Working Group of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies for its work to improve the status and management of mule deer populations.

Nominations for either award must be received *by December 1, 2006*. Nominations must include a letter that specifies (1) the name and mailing and email addresses of the prospective nominee(s), (2) the name and mailing and email addresses of the nominator(s), (3) a brief synopsis of the accomplishment, including its origin and dates, and (4) the names and phone numbers of three individuals who can give independent testimony about the value, scope and other merits of the achievement.

The awards will be announced and presented at the 72nd North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference, which will be held in March 2007, at the Hilton Portland

and Executive Towers Hotel in Portland, Oregon. Award winners will be profiled in the 72nd Conference *Transactions*.

Nominations should be sent to: WMI Awards, 1146 19th Street, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20036, or by email to <mailto:bmckown@wildlifemgt.org>. Again, they must be received *by December 1, 2006*. For other information about the awards, including other previous awardees, go to <http://www.wildlifemanagementinstitute.org/pages-/awards.html>.

### **Mapping the Platte River management plan:**

After nearly 10 years of discussion, debate and negotiation, the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Platte River has been released by the Bureau of Reclamation. According to the Wildlife Management Institute, the FEIS reveals future management plans for the famed river, which originates in Colorado and Wyoming and ultimately flows into the Missouri River, which serves as the eastern boundary of Nebraska.

It features four water management alternatives that were considered and focuses on the protection of habitat for four endangered species—whooping crane, interior least tern, piping plover and the pallid sturgeon—and protecting the water rights of landowners, water users and cities along the river. To help ensure compliance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA) for certain historic and future water uses in each state, the FEIS analyzed the impacts of the first 13 years of implementation of the proposed Recovery Implementation Program for the targeted species and their habitats in the Platte River Basin.

The analysis explored ways to restore the broad, sandy channels that once characterized the Platte and provided high-quality habitat for numerous migratory bird species that used the river as a resting site during annual migrations. Over the years, dams and water diversions for agriculture, hydroelectric power and other human uses have narrowed the river's channels and greatly reduced sediments that formed the sandbars extensively used by the migrating wildlife.

The management plan involves a cooperative effort by the many interested and impacted parties in the three states to develop a plan that meets the requirements of the ESA. Such an arrangement enables the states to avoid dealing with the same issues, but independently and potentially inconsistent with one another and relatively ineffectual as a result. A key element of the plan will be directed at increasing river flows by 130,000 to 150,000 acre-feet during spring and summer, when the birds and fish need it most. Another key element is acquisition of 10,000 acres of wildlife habitat in Nebraska.

Sources for the additional water are existing reservoirs within the basin. However, changing water rights that have been in place for decades will not sit well with existing users, and the plan is sure to create more controversy.

The FEIS is a large and complex document that provides much information on the ecology, hydrology, and economics on an important natural resource. The four alternative water management scenarios are described in seven chapters and three separate volumes.

For more on the Platte River Implementation Program, go to the Platte River Endangered Species Partnership web site at <http://www.platteriver.org/>. To obtain a hard copy or CD of the FEIS, contact the Platte River EIS Office at: PO Box 25007, Mail Code PL-100, Denver, Colorado 80225-0007, or by e-mail (<mailto:jknipps@prs.usbr.gov>) or phone 303-445-2096. (lhc)

### **New publication reports on effectiveness of Farm Bill conservation programs:**

The Wildlife Management Institute has released *Regional Wildlife Habitat Needs Assessment for the 2007 Farm Bill: A Summary of Successes and Needs of Farm Bill Conservation Programs*. This 24-page booklet was produced to assist in the development of proposals to refine and otherwise improve conservation provisions for the upcoming 2007 Farm Bill. The assessment utilized published data and information from state Wildlife Action Plans to create regional summaries of current program impacts.

The new booklet is more focused and succinct than its prior two editions (1995 and 2001), both entitled *How Much Is Enough?*. It provides an overview of regional landscapes, the impacts of stressed habitats on wildlife and regional economies and recreation, program successes, and goals for the upcoming legislation.

The booklet's objective is to emphasize and help ensure the priorities of wildlife habitat and wildlife conservation in the grand design for a productive and stable agricultural community and economy. "Wildlife populations, private landowners and the American public all will continue to benefit if resources are available to maximize results."

Copies of *Regional Wildlife Habitat Needs Assessment for the 2007 Farm Bill* are available for \$6.00 each, postpaid (check or money order) from the Wildlife Management Institute Publications, Suite 700, 1146 19th Street NW, Washington, DC 20036. The publication also can be viewed on-line, and downloaded, at <http://www.wildlifemanagementinstitute.org/PDF/RegionalWildlife.pdf>.

### **Recovering black-footed ferrets may get the shaft:**

It appears that even the endangered black-footed ferret will feel the impacts of accelerated energy developments on public land, reports the Wildlife Management Institute.

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management (Bureau) recently sold leases on several parcels of land within the Wolf Creek Management Area in northwestern Colorado. This manage-

ment area is where black-footed ferrets—considered by many to be one of the most imperiled mammal species in North America—were reintroduced. Nine of 20 parcels offered for lease in the reintroduction area were sold. The remaining parcels remain open for bid.

Since 2001, nearly 190 ferrets have been released in the area. Just last fall, a juvenile ferret was found, providing at least some evidence of breeding in the population. Plans call for release of another 40 ferrets this year by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The reintroduction program has been a considerable investment of human and fiscal resources by federal and state wildlife and land management agencies. Ferrets are highly dependent on prairie dogs for food, and the Wolf Creek reintroduction site was considered ideal for ferret relocation because of its abundance of prairie dogs.

Because there are so few of them, little is known about black-footed ferrets in the wild; even less is known about the species' ability to adapt to increased human activity. Given that the Wolf Creek ferret population is new, small and has demonstrated only minimal recruitment, the potential impacts of energy development are considered more likely than not to hinder seriously the five years of species-recovery work.

The Bureau has announced that it will require energy companies that develop the leases to minimize impacts on ferret habitat. Both Bureau and energy companies assert that all parties knew from the reintroduction outset that the area was open to leasing and that additional energy development could occur. The Bureau also has noted that, when an area is designated as open for leasing in Bureau land management plans, the Bureau is required to process any parcels that are nominated by energy companies. The various agencies, at least, did not expect or anticipate the short timeline and extent of western energy development.

Supposing that, in some circumstances and areas, the preemption of energy need, miscalculation and profit is not in the public interest, protests about the Wolf Creek Wildlife Management leases have been filed by environmental and recreational groups. They are not hopeful, which isn't news at all.

The Bureau news release on the lease sale can be found at <http://www.co.blm.gov/news/2006/MayLeaseTotals.htm>. (lhc)

**Worth reading:**

You will really like this one if you qualify as a hunter/gatherer, possess a sense of adventure, don't have a fear of gherkins, and aren't inclined to form some sort of reverse Stockholm Syndrome attachment to captive pigeons prior to their conversion to *pigeonneaux crapaudine*. Steven Rinella's *The Scavenger's Guide to Haute Cuisine* locked me in a grin

for 317 pages. Except for the fact that it sports the most delusive title for a book since *Canning Moose*, it is wonderfully entertaining.

The book is about Rinella's yearlong quest to assemble and create a three-day, 45-course, Thanksgiving feast for his struggling vegetarian girl friend and a group of mostly open-minded friends and relatives. It isn't your usual three-day, 45-course, Thanksgiving feast. For recipes and inspiration, Rinella turned to *Le Guide Culinaire*—the 1903, 5,012-recipe "pretty weird cookbook" by French master chef Auguste Escoffier.

Not too surprisingly, Escoffier, an epicurean genius and snob, featured foodstuffs that were decidedly French or at least European. Rinella, though widely traveled in his quest for the feast menu, hunted and gathered exclusively from New World waters, forests, bridge ledges, roadsides and eccentrics. His pre-feast larder included stingray from Florida, eel from New York, Michigan snapping turtle, Alaskan halibut, elk from Montana, clams and mussels from Washington, northern California wild pig, English sparrows from Iowa, deer from the fender of his *sous chef's* truck and, count 'em, 38 or so other "delicacies." Not bad for a guy who grew up eating the breaded products of a garage-dwelling, industrial-size deep fryer that his father believed "was suitable for any item that died by way of a hook or a bullet."

It seems that Escoffier—"King of Chefs and Chef of Kings"—readily substituted within many of his own recipes, but one gains the impression that he didn't want his readers drifting too far from his ingredients and directions. One can imagine, for example, Escoffier's unabashed Francocentric clucking at Rinella's unrepentant use of adult rather than young rabbits for forcemeat. Quelle idée....

On the other hand, Escoffier surely would have been delighted to know that a century, culture, language and ocean away, someone was recreating and experimenting from his magnum opus, which Rinella likened to the "*Kama Sutra* of food." Likewise, he undoubtedly would have been pleased that, in this day and age, someone, a devotee, selected foods taken joyfully from nature.

You might think that the Thanksgiving feast was anticlimactic. You might be wrong. Among the gathered ingredients were 18 kinds of fish, 8 species of shellfish, 10 different kinds of fowl, 11 different red meats, and a medley of innards, such as bladders, caul fat, head, hearts, intestines, kidneys, sweetbreads, tongues and livers. You might think that a feast energetically gathered and meticulously prepared would have been an unqualified success. You might be wrong. But it certainly is worth finding out.

Steve Rinella is a young guy. He is a correspondent for *Outside* magazine, which accounts for the free-spirited, uninhibited approach to the epic and for the occasional, smart-ass commentary, all of which I found delightful. I was so tickled at something on page 266 that I inadvertently and permanently marked the passage by the smudge of a careless forkful of Swanson's Salisbury steak.

*The Scavenger's Guide to Haute Cuisine* was published in 2005 by Miramax Books. It retails for \$23.95, and can be found in most bookstores.

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