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Trapping Weasels

James E. Forbes, Past President

I don't know who "they" are, but "they" say that time goes by fast when you are having fun. I've had a lot of fun but I can't believe it has already been two years since I took over as President of NADCA. Now it's time for me to pass on the NADCA gavel to our new President, Eugene LeBoeuf. I've worked with Gene for years. He is an extremely competent biologist and a great personal friend. I am sure he'll do an excellent job as President. He will need your help and support, and I am sure you will provide it to him.

I would like to take a moment to look at what we have accomplished over the past two years and give you my thoughts for the years ahead. When I took over as President, my goal was to move NADCA in the direction of providing new services to our members. I am forever grateful to the NADCA Regional Directors, Officers, and most of all Committee members who helped and supported me in this endeavor. I feel we have made some real accomplishments: the NADCA Employment Service, the Information/Techniques Clearinghouse, and Inservice Training-- I hope you will all take advantage of these new services. In addition, our Spokesperson Committee has developed a draft set of position papers on issues important to NADCA (see the enclosure in this issue of The Probe). The Ways and Means Committee has developed new ways to increase income and ideas on how to spend it more effectively. I also wish to thank the three Membership Subcommittees, the Awards Committee, the Nomination Committee, and especially the new Publication Committee for all of their efforts.

Looking ahead, it is obvious that we are going to need experienced leadership in the coming years. Now is the time to start developing that leadership. You members who have never served on a NADCA committee should volunteer. You committee members should think about volunteering to chair a committee or maybe serve on a new and different committee. Two years from now, at election time, present committee chairpersons and members should consider running for Regional Director. Finally, Regional Directors should have longtime plans to run for office as President, Vice President, Secretary, or Treasurer. That is the way for NADCA to build an experienced Board of Directors and Officers. Anyone serving as an officer or committee member will find that it is an extremely good experience, where you learn things you can apply to your everyday job. The insight you get into human behavior from working and dealing with others is amazing.

Well, that is about it from the "Old Past President." I do intend to continue writing a "Trapping Weasels" column for The Probe from time to time. As for President LeBoeuf-- let him figure out his own title for his "Message from the President" column. Good luck to you all and goodbye for now.

From the Incoming President

Eugene A. LeBoeuf

Although I realize I "won" the NADCA presidential election as an unopposed candidate, I remain very much flattered. Believe it or not, after working exclusively in the field of Animal Damage Control over the last 17 years for one state and four federal agencies, I still feel very fortunate. I have been on the receiving end of one of the best jobs in wildlife biology today, and I am honored to be able to give something back to the profession. Animal Damage Control work is something I believe in and feel very strongly about. I have some fairly large shoes to fill, from George Rost to Jim Forbes, but having been in this field for awhile, it just so happens that I consider both of these fellows good friends and won't hesitate to consult with them, if they don't mind.

As president of NADCA I will do my best to see that we remain an informed and involved organization. I am aware of the challenges that our critics are all too willing to provide, and will meet these challenges with the best available information we have. I invite all NADCA members to get to know me better and to become more involved with our organization. After all, NADCA supports a very old, and very honorable profession that is tasked with real life problems that demand creative and effective solutions. As the human population grows and interfaces wild populations, our field will be called upon to provide much needed assistance that is not only effective, but acceptable to the general population as well. I am proud to serve you through NADCA, the voice of those professionals who regularly meet these needs with an *esprit de corps* that has long been an integral part of our association.

Sincerely,

Eugene A. LeBoeuf
Headquarters Air Force Safety Agency
Department of the Air Force
Kirtland AFB, New Mexico 87117-5670
e-mail: leboeufe@smtps.saia.af.mil

In this issue of The Probe

- NADCA Membership Directory
- Draft NADCA Position Statements on
 - Wildlife Reintroduction
 - Aquaculture
 - Regulated Hunting
 - Trapping
 - Wildlife Damage Management



Election Results: NADCA Officers and Directors for 1996-1998

President - **Eugene A. LeBoeuf**

Vice President, East - **Jim Miller**

Vice President, West - **Alan Foster**

Secretary - **Abigail Duke**

Treasurer - **Wes Jones**

Regional Director 1 - **Tom Hall**

Regional Director 2 - **Russ Mason**

Regional Director 3 - **Mark Collinge**

Regional Director 4 - **Grant Huggins**

Regional Director 5 - **Scott Hygnstrom**

Regional Director 6 - **Kirk Gustad**

Regional Director 7 - **Laura Henze**

Regional Director 8 - **Bill Hickling**

Regional Director 9 - **Pete Butchko**

A total of 189 ballots were received. A hearty "Thanks" to each member who voted. Congratulations to the successful candidates, and a big "Thank You" to all individuals who consented to have your name placed in nomination.

Wes Jones
Nominating Committee Chairperson

Upcoming Events

February 26-28, 1996: Livestock/Big Game: Sharing Common Ground on Western Rangelands, John Ascuaga's Nugget, Sparks, Nevada. Contact Nevada Cattlemen's Association, P. O. Box 310, Elko, NV 89803-0310, phone (702) 738-9214, FAX (702) 738-5208.

February 28-March 1, 1996: Fifth Mountain Lion Workshop, Bahia Hotel, San Diego, California. Sponsored by the Southern California chapter of the Wildlife Society, and the California Department of Fish and Game. Contact: W. Douglas Padley, P. O. Box 41306, San Jose, CA 95160, phone (408) 265-2607 ext. 2725, or e-mail 72164.142@compuserve.com.

March 4-7, 1996: 17th Vertebrate Pest Conference, Sonoma County Red Lion Hotel, Rohnert Park, California. Contact: North Region-DANR, UC Davis, Davis, CA 95616, phone (916) 754-8491.

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Editor: Robert M. Timm, Hopland Research and Extension Center, 4070 University Road, Hopland, CA 95449

Editorial Assistant: Pamela J. Tinnin, 160 Mulford Hall, UC-Berkeley, Berkeley, CA 94720

Your contributions to the Probe are welcome. Please send news clippings, new techniques, publications, and meeting notices to *The Probe*, c/o Hopland Research and Extension Center, 4070 University Road, Hopland, CA 95449. Articles and notes can also be sent by e-mail to rtimm@ucdavis.edu. If you prefer to FAX material, our FAX number is (707) 744-1040. The deadline for submitting material is the 15th of each month. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of NADCA.

NADCA POSITION STATEMENT COMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORT

Dennis Slate, Chairman, Position Statement Committee

Five draft position statements were submitted to the NADCA leadership and meeting attendees at the November 7th NADCA meeting in Jackson, MS. The draft position statements (Wildlife Damage Management, Regulated Hunting, Trapping, Aquaculture, and Wildlife Reintroduction) were developed with an emphasis on: concision, consistency of format and appearance, and the NADCA mission. The NADCA leadership agreed with the Position Statement Committee recommendation to publish draft statements in *The Probe* for review by the entire NADCA membership before they are finalized. Each final statement will be dated and include the NADCA logo and the organization's mailing address.

If you have any substantive comments on these draft statements, please submit them to: *Dennis Slate, 194 Peaverly Road, Northfield, NH 03276* by February 29, 1996. Our committee goal is to continue to develop statements on subjects of importance to our membership to enable us to more effectively communicate a consistent message on a wide range wildlife damage management topics. Five additional statements (Wildlife Translocation, Exotic Wildlife, Public Land Use, Urban Wildlife, and Wildlife Damage Management Research) are near draft status and will appear in future issues of *The Probe* for your review. Also, I am developing a draft on oral vaccine against rabies in wildlife. I wish to thank the authors of the draft statements published in this issue of the PROBE and Guy Connolly, ADC Research and Gordon Batcheller, NYDEC Furbearer Project Leader for their assistance in editing these drafts. Lastly, if you have suggestions for additional position topics, please let me know at the above address.

WILDLIFE REINTRODUCTION: DRAFT NADCA POSITION

Some wildlife species have disappeared from parts of their former range due to habitat loss, diminished prey base, commercial exploitation or eradication campaigns. Loss of species result in vacant ecological niches and lowered biodiversity. Where suitable habitat exists and human attitudes are favorable, some wildlife species can be restored to portions of their former range. Wildlife species can be reestablished in areas they formerly occupied by encouraging natural recolonization or through reintroduction. Reintroduction may be the only viable alternative when distance and dispersal barriers hinder or preclude natural recolonization. Successful reintroduction requires that sufficient amounts of suitable habitat be available and that contingency plans be in place to address potential conflicts with other land uses after reintroduction efforts begin.

The position of NADCA regarding reintroduction is to:

- 1) Recognize that reintroduction may be necessary to restore native wildlife species to their former ranges.
- 2) Recognize the conflicting social values that affect proposed reintroductions and promote a comprehensive evaluation by all concern parties of the legal issues, socioeconomic ramifications and potential conflicts likely to result from such efforts.
- 3) Promote establishment of professionally administered programs to effectively address damage and conflicts that may occur as a result of reintroductions.
- 4) Support efforts to reestablish self-sustaining populations into portions of their former range where ecological and socioeconomic conditions are suitable.
- 5) Encourage cooperation among public agencies, organizations and individuals involved in or affected by reintroduction.
- 6) Encourage dissemination of accurate information to the public on the ecology and management of reintroduced species.
- 7) Support research and monitoring programs that measure the progress of reintroductions.

WILDLIFE DAMAGE MANAGEMENT: DRAFT NADCA POSITION

People share their environment with other animals and interact with them in many ways. Some wild animals provide food for humans; others compete with humans for food or shelter. Some species are objects of admiration and enjoyment. Many species are capable of transmitting diseases or posing other life-threatening hazards. Human perceptions of many wildlife species are positive in some contexts and negative in others. These perceptions are an intrinsic part of our cultural heritage.

People today generally consider most wild animals to be valuable components of their environment, but conflicts with wild animals have increased as additional land is diverted for human development. Most of North America is currently managed to provide food, living space, shelter, energy or recreational spaces for humans. In areas where wildlife or other natural resources receive priority, these priorities are established and maintained only through effective management.

During the past century, attempts to enhance the positive and reduce the negative values of wildlife have coalesced into a body of knowledge and expertise called wildlife management. Wildlife damage management (WDM), also commonly referred to as animal damage or wildlife damage control, is an integral part of wildlife management that focuses on the resolution of human-wildlife conflicts.

In NADCA's view, the ideal WDM program would entail: (1) avoidance of human-wildlife conflicts by proactive management actions that anticipate problems rather than react to them; (2) no wildlife-caused damage, loss or injury to humans, their property and resources; (3) no injury or adverse effects on wild animals due to damage management actions; and (4) no expenditures of private or public funds to manage human-wildlife conflicts.

This ideal may not be achievable, but wildlife damage professionals should strive toward the ideal by anticipating conflict situations and taking steps to avoid them, and by using and recommending the most cost-effective control actions that have the least possible adverse impacts on wildlife while providing maximum damage resolution. The interested public, in turn, should recognize that, for some kinds of human-wildlife conflicts, there are no environmentally benign, cost effective control methods.

The position of NADCA is that the national needs for WDM are best met by:

- 1) Public and private support for wildlife damage prevention and control activities that are cost effective and socially acceptable. Acceptable activities are those for which the control or damage prevention benefits outweigh the risks and adverse impacts of management actions.
- 2) A professional approach to management, which includes accurate identification and assessment of damage, consideration of all available control measures, formulation of the most socially acceptable and effective control measures into an integrated WDM strategy tailored to each conflict or damage situation, and monitoring to assure that the strategy is appropriate and effective.
- 3) Use of nonlethal, non-capture wildlife management methods whenever such methods are practical and adequate to resolve the conflict or damage.
- 4) Judicious use of lethal or capture methods, restricted to persons competent to use such methods. In conflict situations where no reasonable alternative exists, NADCA supports the use of efficient, safe, humane and economical methods to manage wildlife populations responsible for damage.
- 5) Practical, reasonable and biologically sound laws and regulations governing the management of human-wildlife conflicts, coupled with vigorous and just application of such laws and regulations.
- 6) Strong research programs to (a) improve methods for identifying and quantifying wildlife damage, including conflicts associated with health and safety hazards; (b) determine the biology and ecology of damage situations; (c) develop and improve methods to prevent, reduce or control wildlife damage; (d) determine the effectiveness of control methods and programs in reducing damage; and (e) determine the environmental impacts of control actions.
- 7) Effective educational programs in WDM prevention and control.

AQUACULTURE: DRAFT NADCA POSITION

Aquaculture is one of the fastest growing forms of agriculture in North America. Aquaculture produces valuable commodities for human consumption and the growth in aquaculture has resulted in increased availability of man-made wetland habitat for many species of wildlife. Unfortunately, some wildlife species can be incompatible with aquaculture. Use of aquaculture facilities by some species of fish eating birds and burrowing mammals can result in significant damage and economic loss.

The position of NADCA regarding aquaculture is to:

- 1) Promote management strategies that resolve wildlife damage to aquaculture effectively, while minimizing adverse effects on wildlife.
- 2) Encourage wildlife agencies, universities, conservation groups and aquaculturists to support and conduct research that monitors and evaluates the distribution and magnitude of damage and leads to the development of effective, socially acceptable methods for resolving damage to aquaculture.

REGULATED HUNTING: DRAFT NADCA POSITION

Historically, hunting was conducted mostly for subsistence purposes. Although hunting is no longer a major means of subsistence in developed countries, hunting continues to provide for varied individual, cultural and economic benefits in modern society. Regulated hunting is an important management strategy for maintaining some wildlife populations at social and biological carrying capacities thereby helping to keep human-wildlife conflicts nearer acceptable levels.

The position of NADCA regarding regulated hunting is to:

- 1) Recognize and support regulated hunting as a biologically sound tool for achieving wildlife damage management objectives, while providing many other benefits to society.
- 2) Support and advance efforts to educate the public on the importance of regulated hunting in assisting wildlife managers reduce human-wildlife conflicts as well as meet many other wildlife management objectives.
- 3) Support research and monitoring on the effects of hunting on species and ecosystems to ensure that the most environmentally appropriate hunting strategies are used to meet management objectives.

TRAPPING: DRAFT NADCA POSITION

Humans have trapped wild animals for a variety of purposes throughout history. Currently, trapping occurs in nearly all countries of the world. Trapping for fur played a major role in settlement of the New World and remains as an important activity there today. Trapping is also essential to research efforts on the dynamics of wild animal populations and plays an important role in some forms of disease surveillance. Today, with lowered fur harvests in North America, trapping has grown in importance as a means to reduce damage and competition from furbearers with other less abundant wildlife species, as well as resolve other types of human-wildlife conflicts.

The position of NADCA regarding trapping is to:

- 1) Support trapping as an important management activity to resolve human-wildlife conflicts and address ecological concerns of overabundance of some furbearers, while providing many other benefits to society.
- 2) Support the continued technical improvement of traps and trapping systems to maximize the effectiveness and social acceptability of trapping.
- 3) Support training programs to assure that trapping is conducted in a safe, effective and responsible manner.
- 4) Support efforts to educate the public on the importance of trapping as a tool to meet multiple wildlife management objectives.

Scott Hygnstrom
Forestry, Fisheries & Wildlife
202 Nat. Resources Hall
University of Nebraska
Lincoln, NE 68583-0819

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NADCA Committees

These are the current NADCA committees, with the chairpersons and their phone numbers listed.

Awards - Jim Miller (202) 401-6602	<i>New Member Subcomm.</i> -
Certification - Larry Brown (518) 785-1036	Russ Mason (801) 797-1348
Employment - Jim Forbes (518) 431-4190	<i>Records Subcomm.</i> -
Information/Techniques -	Wes Jones (715) 468-2038
Dallas Virchow (308) 632-1337	Publications -
Inservice Training -	Richard Chipman (802) 828-4467
Scott Craven (608) 263-6325	Spokesperson -
Membership -	Dennis Slate (603) 225-1416
Rosemary Heinen (915) 837-3184	Urban Wildlife -
<i>Expired Member Subcomm.</i> -	Clarence Faulkner (304) 728-2178
Andy Montoney (708) 252-9934	Ways and Means -
	Tom Tomsa (717) 238-4127