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Wildlife Damage Management: Innovative Programs

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Wildlife Damage Management: Innovative Programs

STATE AGENCY OVERSIGHT OF THE NUISANCE WILDLIFE CONTROL INDUSTRY

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Abstract: Growth and privatization of the nuisance wildlife control field has been rapid. States should encourage the further growth, development, and privatization of the area of wildlife management but must maintain agency oversight. A model is proposed that would guide state wildlife agencies in their efforts to maintain oversight by: 1) providing educational opportunities for NWCOs prior to obtaining a license; 2) mandating continuing education to maintain a license; 3) requiring liability insurance for NWCOs. States should also require annual reports describing the species and number of animals captured, disposition of animals, condition of animals, release sites, and numbers of animals released at each site. The cost of developing and administering the program would be self-sufficient by fees submitted by NWCOs.

VERTEBRATE PEST MANAGEMENT AND ENDANGERED SPECIES IN CALIFORNIA

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Abstract: In the San Joaquin Valley, California, an increasingly large number of species have been listed as "endangered" or "of special concern," mostly as a result of habitat destruction for agricultural use. As rodenticides pose further hazards to some endangered species, severe restrictions are being placed on their use within endangered species habitat. Cooperative Extension, in association with the California Department of Food and Agriculture and the California Department of Fish and Game, is currently investigating ways of minimizing hazards to endangered species while still allowing farmers and ranchers to control depredating animals. Research has shown that simple measures such as modifying existing ground squirrel bait stations can reduce hazards to endangered kangaroo rats and kit fox. This paper will present an overview of the problem and results of current research.

TACKLING FUTURE ISSUES—THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY'S WILDLIFE DAMAGE MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

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Abstract: The Wildlife Damage Management Working Group is one of 16 assemblages of Wildlife Society members with similar interests and goals. Its purpose is to promote better understanding of the complexities of managing human-wildlife conflicts and to enhance future capabilities to respond to these challenges. To identify future issues and activities of the Working Group, we conducted two 1-hour "Futuring Sessions." One was held at the Eastern Wildlife Damage Management Conference in Jackson, Mississippi (November 1995) and one at the 17th Vertebrate Pest Conference at Rohnert Park, California (March 1996). Key issues that were identified include: translocation, NWCO certification, wildlife vaccination, refereed publications, conferences, symposia sponsorship, information and education, Working Group-NADCA relationships, association with non-professionals, and school curriculum development. The next Working Group meeting will be held in conjunction with the third annual meeting of The Wildlife Society in Cincinnati, Ohio (October 1996). Members will work together to expand the list and prioritize activities.

USING REMOTE DELIVERY IN EXTENSION WILDLIFE PROGRAMS

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Abstract: Satellite video programming has the potential to reach large audiences over wide areas with efficient use of specialists' time and resources. This session will examine the mechanics and logistics of presenting wildlife programs using this technology. We will describe the production of a 2-hour national broadcast on "Backyard Wildlife Habitat Management," including the use of the original broadcast for subsequent use. The session will include segments from the original broadcast, information on the use of the technology, and discussion of the pros and cons of the technique.

COLORADO TRAPPING REGULATIONS: CAUGHT BETWEEN THE STEEL JAWS OF TRADITION AND PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS

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Abstract: Trapping, primarily with foothold traps, has been controversial in Colorado for at least the last decade. Anti-trapping advocates argue that trapping is inhumane, unselective, and unnecessary, whereas trapping advocates argue that trapping is humane, selective, a part of our heritage, and necessary to reduce conflicts with wildlife. To resolve the controversy, the Colorado Division of Wildlife formed a furbearer analyst team, hired a conflict resolution group, and initiated an 8-month stakeholder input, review, and regulations building process. After the stakeholders could not reach agreement on a set of compromise regulations, the furbearer analyst team crafted regulatory recommendations, which primarily were approved by the Colorado Division of Wildlife and the Colorado Wildlife Commission. The regulations, based upon several of the moderate stakeholder recommendations and an extensive review of the biological and social dimensions of trapping, required the use of padded traps in land sets, pan tension devices, restraining instead of killing snares, eliminated trapping seasons on eight species, and shortened seasons on the other species. Moderate stakeholders appeared satisfied with the regulations but neither of the extremes was satisfied. Agricultural interests encouraged the Colorado Legislature to pass Senate Bill 167, which transferred authority for the taking of depredating animals to the Colorado Department of Agriculture. Anti-trapping and some environmental groups are responding by gathering signatures for a Constitutional ballot initiative, which, if passed, will eliminate all recreational trapping and greatly limit animal damage trapping in Colorado.