

2015 Annual Report



Native American Fish & Wildlife Society



OUR PURPOSE

The mission of the Native American Fish & Wildlife Society is to assist Native American and Alaska Native tribes with the conservation, protection, and enhancement of their fish, wildlife, habitat, and cultural resources. As a 501 (c) (3) public charitable, non-profit Colorado Corporation, all contributions are tax-deductible in accordance with Internal Revenue Service regulations.

Membership

The Society, as a membership organization includes professionals and technical personnel that are engaged in tribal natural resources management. The Society also includes Tribal membership, affiliate organizations, families and students. Anyone interested in becoming a member may contact the Society at (303) 466-1725 or toll free: 866-890-7258.

Goals

The Society's purposes are charitable, educational, scientific and cultural, as well as the following:

To assist in the facilitation and coordination of inter-tribal communication in regards to fish and wildlife matters, including treaty rights issues, court cases related to fish and wildlife, hunting, or fishing regulations.

To protect, preserve and conserve the wise use and management of tribal fish, wildlife, and recreational resources.

To educate Native Americans involved in fish and wildlife management, policy, decision-makers, community members and others similarly dedicated to tribal natural resource management of the best

natural resource management practices.

To provide administrative support, expertise and advice to tribal governments, relating to tribal fish, wildlife enhancement activities.

To improve the general welfare of tribal people through educational, charitable, as well as fish and wildlife enhancement activities.

To provide professional publications and promotional activities for disseminating pertinent information regarding Native American fish and wildlife resources to Society members, Indian and non-Indian organizations, public officials, and the general public.

To become a member of the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society, please visit our website and view more information at: <http://www.nafws.org/about/membership>.



CONFERENCES

The Native American Fish Wildlife Society (NAFWS) assists to facilitate and coordinate intertribal communication among tribes regarding fish and wildlife matters. Each year, the NAFWS hosts a national conference that is held in one of the six NAFWS Regional locations each year.

2015 National Conference- Juneau, Alaska. The NAFWS held its 33rd annual national Conference in the Alaska Region on May 20-22, 2015 in Juneau, AK. The conference theme, *"Natives Without Borders: Bringing Our Next Generation Into The Future To Continue Our Traditional Ways of Life,"* drew at least 120 tribal wildlife and fishery managers/technicians, tribal conservation law enforcement officers (TCLEO), students, and government and non-government agencies to network, collaborate, and promote opportunities for tribal natural resource programs development. Partnerships were formed with the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (CCTHITA), Douglas Indian Association, Sealaska, the U.S. Forest Service, and the University of Alaska.

The agenda featured panels and sessions focused on tribes and natural resources. The Southeast Alaska tribes presented their concerns with fishing rights, limited entry permits for commercial fishing which affects their way of life in not being able to afford the high cost of permits needed for fishing. A keynote address was given by the Alaska Department of Fish & Game Deputy Commissioner for the State of Alaska, an Athabaskan

Native who addressed, *"The Tribal Role in Arctic Policy"*. Other sessions addressed some of the key Natural Resources Management Issues in Alaska such as: Federal Duck Stamp Exemption; Limited Entry Permits; Mining issues in British Columbia in which the NAFWS passed a resolution to support The Joint International Commission Involvement in Southeast Alaska/British Columbia Transboundary Region. The USDA Tribal Programs discussed ways to strengthen working relationships with Tribes and with the Alaska Natives. The USFWS working group that developed the new Native American Policy (NAP) gave an update on the process of the policy. The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) representative presented legislation affecting Indian Country. A youth segment included a session and outdoor activity and sharing with elders. Conference sessions addressed wildlife management, fisheries management, sacred sites, climate change, youth, and traditional knowledge. An 8-Hour Clandestine Meth Lab Awareness class was hosted by the Central Council Tlingit and Haida Tribes of Alaska and taught by the Alabama Fire College Workplace Safety Training Program.

A conference roundtable wrapped-up the 33rd



annual conference with feedback from the members who had comments, concerns, and helpful suggestions to assist the organization. Topics that were raised, included the following: Alaska - hunting and fishing rights on the Outer Continental Shelf; re-open limited entry permit system; Alaska NAFWS Regional Conferences; States Rights vs. Native Rights; Workshop to focus on Indigenous Fishing Rights; improve relationships between state, federal and tribal governments; set-up an International Transboundary meeting between NAFWS members and Canadian First Nations regarding similar concerns; and provide support and technical assistance to Alaska tribes. Other issues brought forth included: Revive the National NAFWS Summer Youth Practicum and include elders from each region; employ a youth education exchange between tribes; outreach to tribal youth; build upon the NAFWS scholarship program; and expand upon liability issues with the national summer youth practicum. The third area included was to improve the communication regarding NAFWS conferences.

REGIONAL CONFERENCES

The regional conferences are where the tribes in the NAFWS regions gather to share information, present findings, and cutting-edge research and technical information about their work. The regional conferences are also venues where tribal managers gather and are presented with opportunities to network and share information with other tribes. Five NAFWS regions had regional conferences in 2015, and they are the following:



SOUTHWEST REGION - August 11-13, 2015 in Reno, NV and was co-hosted by the Walker River Paiute Tribe. It was attended by at least 100 tribal representatives representing tribes within the southwest. The conference theme was *"One Voice, One Vision, Engaging Our Youth in This Changing Environment to Strengthen Our Traditional Values"*.

The agenda featured more than 36 concurrent sessions in the areas of: Climate Change; Traditional Ecological Knowledge; Threatened and Endangered Species; Fisheries Management; Wildlife Management; Pollinators and Insects; Tribal Youth Programs; Renewable Energy Development; and Traditional Ecological Knowledge. A highlight at this event was the youth involvement throughout the conference. Student interns gave presentations, a youth practicum with 12 students, youth panel sessions, college student mentoring, and scholarships. The youth participated in hands-on classes in fish identification, tagging, and water quality.

PACIFIC REGION - October 13-15, 2015 in Polson, Montana and held at the Kwa-Taq-Nuk Casino Resort on the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes' Reservation. The attendance was at least 20-25. The agenda included topics on the following: Shoshone-Bannock on the Yankee Fork Restoration; Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation on Global Effects of Climate Change on Fish Populations; Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of Duck Valley Indian Tribe on the Owyhee River Salmon Reintroduction; and a representative from the Oregon Zoo presented on Non-Lead Ammunition. A highlight of the conference included a field trip to the Youth Hunting Camp where at least 70 youth learned the ways of carrying



on the hunting tradition.

GREAT PLAINS REGION - April 6-9, 2015 in Fort Yates, North Dakota. It was co-hosted by the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and was attended by 75 tribal representatives and others including government agencies and non-profits. The conference agenda included sessions on the following: Funding Issues Update from BIA Fish, Wildlife, and Recreation; Update on the USFWS Tribal Wildlife Grant Program; Cheyenne River Tribe Eagle Aviary Project Update; GIS Mapping for Law Enforcement Officers' Use In the Field; USFWS Fisheries and Wildlife Projects at Wind River Indian Reservation; Update on Missouri River Issues; Update on the Black-footed Ferret Release on Fort Belknap Reservation; Mapping Ecological Stewardship Opportunities in Northern Great Plains Communities by First Nations Development Institute.

GREAT LAKES REGION - September 13-17, 2015 held in Acme, Michigan and was hosted by the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians. The region had 76 registered participants at the conference. The conference included the following sessions: Conservation Law Enforcement Training; Wildlife Management; Fisheries Management; Environmental Protection; Tribal Trust Issues; Climate Change, Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Projects and Circle of Flight Projects.

SOUTHEAST AND NORTHEAST REGIONS - October 27, 2015 in Choctaw, Mississippi. It was a joint meeting in conjunction with the annual United South and Eastern Tribes (USET) meeting. The meeting's goal was to increase awareness about ongoing NAF-



WS initiatives and to provide information related to wildlife disease mitigation, non-native nuisance wildlife management issues, and youth outreach initiatives. Attendees included 20 participants representing 5 tribes. Wildlife training was conducted by Mississippi State University Cooperative Extension Services, USDA Wildlife Services, and USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) that focused on invasive wild hog management and damage control and damage and avian influenza. USDA, APHIS also presented an overview of their programs and capacity to partner with tribes at both the regional and national level.

ALASKA REGION - The Alaska Region hosted the 2015 NAFWS National Conference in Juneau, AK.

AWARDS

The NAFWS awards individuals who are doing exceptional work in Indian country. These persons are nominated by their colleagues and there are three categories that include the following: Chief Sealth Award- tribal natural manager of the Year; Biologist of the Year, and Conservation Law Officer of the Year.

In 2015, a long-time member who is one of the first NAFWS staff persons of the NAFWS in the early years was nominated and selected by the NAFWS Board of Directors to receive the Chief Sealth Award. Patty Brown-Schwalenberg is originally from the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa of Wisconsin and has lived and worked in Alaska for many years. She has volunteered much of her time to assist during the an-



nual NAFWS national conferences and has served on the national conference planning committees. Patty's work with tribes in Alaska in the Chugach Region of Alaska is significant. She is currently the Executive Director of the Chugach Regional Resources Commission in Anchorage, AK which promotes "Tribal sovereignty and the protection of our subsistence lifestyle through the development and implementation of Tribal natural resource management programs to assure the conservation, sustainable economic development, and stewardship of the natural resources in the traditional-use areas of the Chugach Region."

The **Conservation Law Officer of the Year** Award was awarded to Eddie Benally, a tribal conservation law officer from the Navajo Nation who is doing tribal conservation work with the Navajo Nation Department of Fish and Wildlife. He has spent many years saving eagles and working to investigate and prosecute non-law abiding persons. He has been a member of the NAFWS for more than 20 years.

SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAMS

One of tribes' greatest resources for sustaining the future and their natural resources are the youth. For years, the NAFWS has had national and regional summer youth programs/practicums.

In 2015 the Southwest Region held their 19th annual **Natural Resources Youth Practicum**, June 22-25 at the White Mountain Apache Tribe's Camp Maverick. Attending the camp were 18 high school students representing tribes of the Southwest region.

With a strong program, the Southwest team developed a comprehensive agenda for the students and



partnered with federal entities. The program activities included the following topics: big game population/habitat evaluation; fish population/habitat assessment; rangeland inventory; forest inventory; soil analysis; native plant identification; herpetology; water quality analysis; benthic surveys; avian identification; stream restoration; bat monitoring/identification; and, an introduction to environmental policy. There were also field trips, group learning activities, and a talent sharing activity. The SW Region instructors believe in the safety of youth and it is a high priority.

In conjunction with the Southwest Region's Conference, a one-day youth seminar was held and attended by 10 high school and college students representing tribes in the Reno, NV area. In a hands-on session taught by a representative from the USFWS Lahontan National Fish Hatchery and the Great Basin Bird Observatory, students learned how to identify fish, do measurements, test water quality, and identify birds through listening to the bird sounds and through picture identification. Another learning class was a session with the college interns. The interns discussed the importance of school and a talk given by the NAFWS' former Education Coordinator who developed the 7 R's learning model. The students also were given the opportunity to present their one-day experience to the conference audience during the evening banquet. A consultant who worked and is now retired from the American Indian College Fund shared stories and experiences with the students on the importance of education.



SCHOLARSHIPS

NAFWS Regional scholarships were awarded to Native American college students attending colleges and are majoring in environmental, natural resources and science careers. Three NAFWS Regions awarded eight students in 2015: Southwest Region (4), North-east Region (2), and Southeast Region (2).

TRAINING

Training for tribal conservation law enforcement officers supports tribes in protecting their natural resources.

Each year, the NAFWS works with entities getting tribal conservation law officers trained. In 2015, four training events were held in the following locations: Juneau, Alaska; Billings, Montana; Albuquerque, New Mexico; and Traverse City, Michigan.

At least 120 tribal conservation law enforcement officers representing tribes in the regional areas of the country were trained by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and for the annual qualification training, tribal officers served as trainers.

Training sessions include: defensive tactics; fire-arms qualification; investigations; simunitions; ethics; and identification of feathers.

The NAFWS continued its partnership with the **Alabama Fire College, Workplace Safety Training** Program in 2015. The training of tribes in First Responder Hazardous Materials Awareness was held in Alaska during the 2015 NAFWS National Conference. It was hosted by the Central Council Tlingit and Haida Tribes of Alaska and attended by 10 tribal people from the CCTHTA.

The NAFWS Great Lakes Region worked with the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point, Wisconsin to host a training on Chemical Immobilization of Animals Training Course. The methods of humane capture and handling of animals to minimize stress and mortality in capture situations was a focus of the training.

The Great Lakes Region sponsored a BIA Blasters Re-certification Course in 2015. The training included methods on how safely handle, use, store, and transport explosive material for beaver dams and general blasting. Federal and State regulations were also covered. At least 13 tribes were represented and 20 individuals took part in the session.

PARTNERSHIPS

Eagle Summit IV was held in Denver, CO, March 2015. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Region IV worked as a partner with the NAFWS Education Coordinator in planning, coordinating, and assisting with the event. The event was attended by more than 50 tribal representatives and others in the US-FWS Great Plains Region. A report of the event and a news article was provided to the USFWS as a request and assistance with a working lunch for the Summit attendees. The purposes of the Eagle Summit are: To develop collaborative activities to benefit eagles. To improve communication and understanding of eagles by discussing topics of mutual interest.

Also in partnership with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), the NAFWS assisted with coordinating a panel, "Native American Policy Update" during the 2015 NAFWS National Conference in Juneau, AK.



The NAP working group served as panelists and presented on the process of the NAP including a question and answer session. The NAFWS disseminated information via its website when drafts of the policy was available for tribal input. The NAP working group is comprised of a few key NAFWS members.

Partnership opportunities are created when any of the NAFWS Regions co-host a conference with a tribe or organization. Such as the Southwest Region, that co-hosted their annual regional conference with the Southwest Tribal Fisheries Commission. The SWTFC includes several commissioners who are also members of the NAFWS.

RESOLUTIONS

In 2015, the NAFWS accepted four resolutions that were passed by the membership during the NAFWS conference business meetings. The following resolutions were presented to the NAFWS:

International Joint Commission (IJC) Involvement in the Southeast Alaska/British Columbia Transboundary Region - Presented at the NAFWS National Conference in Juneau, AK by Salmon Without Borders. It asks for support to halt the mining that affects the transboundary rivers flowing from British Columbia and Southeast Alaska



where tribes have fished for years by impacting water quality, habitat, and potential salmon.

Supporting Tribal Efforts to Reduce, Prohibit or Seek Alternatives to Lead-Based Ammunition for the Taking of Wildlife on Tribal Lands - Presented at the NAFWS National Conference in Juneau, AK by the Humane Society of the United States.

Requests the USFWS Law Enforcement Division to Collaborate with Tribes to Identify a Means to Secure Federal Conservation Law Enforcement Cross-Commissioning of Tribal Conservation Officers - Presented at the NAFWS Southwest Region Conference in August 2015. It includes the Special Law Enforcement Commission which authorizes tribal law enforcement officers to enforce federal wildlife laws including but not limited to misdemeanor/felony crimes committed on tribal lands.

Resolution on the USFWS Native American Policy as Revised - Presented at the NAFWS Southwest Region Conference is a request to the USFWS from the NAFWS Southwest Region to continue its work with Tribes and Tribal organizations to improve the working relationships, communication, and policies to better manage natural resources, fish and wildlife related issues for future generations. It also requests the USFWS to assist Tribal governments to secure funding through the USFWS budget process as Tribes are faced with budget constraints yearly.



PUBLIC INFORMATION

Public information and outreach in 2015 involved getting information out to the NAFWS members, tribes, and others in the following ways:

The NAFWS website (www.nafws.org) disburses information about fish and wildlife management issues with tribes as a focus. This may include tribal success stories and efforts by tribal fish and wildlife programs. This information is gleaned by mining multiple websites throughout the nation and placing them prominently on the site. This aggregation of natural resource related information assists tribal, federal and other organizations when gathering critical data most important to fish and wildlife management. The website also includes government agency information such as USFWS, USGS, USDA, and Climate Change and Traditional Ecological Knowledge information.

The NAFWS newsletter, *"From the Eagle's Nest"*, is produced three times a year. It is disseminated through email and then posted to the website.

The NAFWS Annual Report highlights the organizations work and a 2014 NAFWS annual report was produced and posted as a link to the NAFWS website.

A social media account is used to reach students and those who may not be aware of the NAFWS. Much of the information included on social media includes announcing important events, op-



portunities, scholarships, internships, sharing photos, and newsworthy developments relating to tribes and their natural resources. Those with an interest about the NAFWS including staff are included to share information to the social media portal.

Information gathering and member profiles and the tribes they work with are included in NAFWS Newsletter. These profiles are one way to share information about the Regional conferences and those who attend these events. This has been a focus in 2015.

Media releases are included as a link on the NAFWS website. The news releases are sent out via a syndicated news site that disseminates the information through its national and international service.

Native American Fish and Wildlife
Society

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<http://www.nafws.org>



NAFWS STAFF

A staff change occurred in 2015 when the Education Coordinator resigned/retired from the NAFWS in September 2015. The Education Coordinator, Sally had been with the NAFWS for more than 25 years and her vast knowledge of the organization and numerous contacts and relationships were a highly visible aspect of the NAFWS.

Following the resignation/retirement of the Education Coordinator the NAFWS recruited to fill the Education Coordinator position through online and social media advertisements, Colorado environmental news websites, and various Native American websites. Qualified candidates were interviewed and in December 2015 the position was filled by a member of the Navajo Nation and a Denver resident with experience in teaching and working with Native American youth.

D. Fred Matt, Executive Director
 Ronald D. Rodgers, Deputy Director, Accountant
 Sally Carufel-Williams, Education Coordinator
 Karen Lynch, Technical Editor
 Diana Prosser, Bookkeeping, CLEO Training
 Sasha Hoskie, Education Coordinator as of 12/15.

NAFWS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ALASKA REGION

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| Albert Howard Angoon, AK | Vacant |
|-----------------------------|--------|

GREAT LAKES REGION

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|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Don Reiter Keshana, WI | Bill Bailey Honor, MI |
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GREAT PLAINS REGION

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|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Ron Skates Helena, MT | Emerson Bullchief St. Xavier, MT |
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NORTHEAST REGION

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|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Dinalyn Spears Charlestown, RI | Susan Young Littleton, ME |
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PACIFIC REGION

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| David Wolf Adams, OR | Ted Lamebull, Jr. Hood River, OR |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|

SOUTHEAST REGION

| | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Michael LaVoie Green Cherokee, NC | George "Chuckie" Mashpee, MA |
|---|---------------------------------|

SOUTHWEST REGION

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|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Elveda Martinez Schurz, NV | Darren Talayumptewa Kykotsmovi, AZ |
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