

NATIVE AMERICAN FISH & WILDLIFE SOCIETY



VIC TRUJILLO

2021 Annual Report

NATIVE AMERICAN FISH & WILDLIFE SOCIETY

The mission of the Native American Fish and 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.



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings Members,

I'm proud to say that 2021 was good for NAFWS. Because of our dedicated, educated, and driven staff we were able to get a lot done. We've been able to get information out to the membership via of virtual methods for workshops, webinars and listening sessions. The Southwest Region held their regional conference virtually and we are thankful we were able to visit and see each other,

even though it was via a computer screen.

Slowly, but surely, we are getting back to in-person gatherings. With Covid-19 protocols in place we were able to hold our Summer Youth Practicum with a limited number of high school students and we were able to hold our annual conference in-person in beautiful Spokane, Washington. There are still tribes that have travel restrictions and we are concerned for everyone's safety and well-being.

NAFWS is growing in funding and staff. We are able to offer a lot more services and assistance to our members and tribes. It's been a goal of mine to ensure that we are accountable to our members and our funding agents. We are getting to a level of funding where we are required to get audits and we completed our 2020 audit in 2021 after we let an RFP for an audit firm. I'm happy to say that that audit had no findings. We will continue to work to make sure that we have professionals working on our accounting, record keeping and reporting for all finances. We also have an Audit Committee, consisting of Board members, that will oversee that we have our audits done for the next 3 years, as required in our Financial Management Policy. The funding that we receive is being used for the betterment and growth of NAFWS.

Personally, I was sad to see Karen Lynch retire after many years with NAFWS. For a few years she single-handedly kept our Society afloat. She is a life-long friend and I wish her well as she retires and returns home to the Navajo Nation. I wish her many Blessings, good health and happiness in her future years.

I will continue to pray for you all as we continue to navigate the pandemic. I hope that we see the end of it in 2022.

Our NAFWS family wishes you well in your work at your tribal departments and on our traditional homelands. It's up to all of us to protect our natural resources, fish, wildlife and all creatures for the next generations.

My Respect to All,

Elveda Martinez
Walker River Paiute
SW Regional Director & President



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Resilient, adaptable, dedicated, passionate, these are all words I think of when I think of Tribal fish and wildlife professionals. These characteristics were even more profound as we all navigated through another year of challenges brought on by the Pandemic. I feel so blessed to serve the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society amazing membership. I am pleased to provide the following update to the membership on the accomplishments of NAFWS staff and Board of Directors for 2021.

The Pandemic challenges continued to impact the way NAFWS served our membership as we remained primarily in a “virtual world” for most of 2021. The Pandemic challenges continued to impact the way NAFWS served our membership as we remained primarily in a “virtual world” for most of 2021. However, after a year of practice we were able to continue to serve our mission in many ways.

One of our major duties is to provide technical assistance to our membership. We educate on the importance and proper way to collaborate with Tribal fish and wildlife programs. We provided informational webinars, listening sessions, discussions, surveys, and trainings in 2021. We continued to increase membership, membership value, partnerships, opportunities, visibility, and funding in 2021.

We are due for a new Strategic Plan, as our current one is for 2017-2019. However, due to the uncertainties related to the current Pandemic it was decided to postpone the Strategic Plan and instead develop a one-year Strategic Operations Plan for 2021. This Plan allowed us to focus on the six national initiatives approved by the Board of Directors in December 2020.

We were excited to host regional and

national events again in 2021, such as the Southwest Virtual Regional Conference and in person events such as the National Summer Youth Practicum, the Great Lakes Regional Conference and the NAFWS Annual National Conference. Although these events were smaller than past conferences, the content and networking was top notch.

We saw many adjustments to NAFWS team in 2021, with Karen’s retirement, and the addition of April to our team. Our team became highly efficient working primarily remote in 2021; I am especially proud of holding a successful National Conference with a team that had never planned one before. We have been in listening mode for much of the Pandemic and are extremely excited to serve our memberships’ needs based on what we have heard.

I hope you are as excited as I am to see the continued growth and value of NAFWS to Tribal fish and wildlife professionals and programs. Thank you all again for your continued trust in NAFWS. I hope to see you in Miami, FL May 9-12, 2022 at our 39th NAFWS Annual National Conference.

Pilamaye ye,

Julie Thorstenson, PhD (Lakota)
Executive Director





Conferences

38th Annual National Conference

The 38th NAFWS Annual National Conference was sponsored by the Pacific Region and hosted by the Kalispel Tribe of Indians at the Northern Quest Casino & Resort in Spokane, WA on October 4-7, 2021. Despite COVID and travel restrictions, 120 people from 104 Tribes representing all seven NAFWS regions attended the conference.

REGIONAL CONFERENCES

Southwest Regional Virtual Conference

Due to the ongoing pandemic, the 33rd Annual Southwest Regional Conference was held virtually August 10-12, 2021. Fifty fish and wildlife professionals attended the conference enjoying presentations and networking sessions. Recordings of the presentations are available on the NAFWS website.

Great Lakes Regional Conference

The Great Lakes Regional Conference, hosted by the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians at the Little River Casino Resort, took place September 19-23, 2021. Seventy people from 23 Tribes, attended the event and enjoyed presentations, workshops, and tours of the Tribe's sturgeon facility.



Projects

ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST DISEASE & INVASIVE SPECIES RESILIENCE PROJECT

NAFWS' Fish and Wildlife Biologists, Sean Cross and Corey Lucero provided technical assistance to Native American and Alaska Native Tribes to identify invasive species, monitor wildlife disease changes, develop partnerships, and develop a resource bank to assist Tribes in the protection of their environmental resources and populations.

CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE PROJECT

Since it was first discovered in the late 1960s, Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), has spread throughout the United States and Canada. After its transmission in 1981 to wild populations of cervid species, it became detrimental to Tribal lands. With funding from the Bureau of

Indian Affairs (BIA) in 2021, NAFWS supplied trainings, sampling equipment, educational materials, and covered testing cost of 10 samples for 20 Tribes with more planned for 2022.

WILDLIFE WATER ASSESSMENT FOR SOUTHWEST REGION

The Southwest Wildlife Water Assessment Project, funded by the BIA, aims to assess the current wildlife water sources on Tribal lands in the arid Southwest Region. Kaleidoscope Consulting will survey Tribes and generate a report that will identify the current situation and impacts of wildlife water needs in the Southwest Region and identify 10-15 "shovel ready" wildlife water projects to be implemented on Tribal lands.

NAFWS JOHN HOPKINS UNIVERSITY PRESS TEXTBOOK

In October, final drafts were submitted for the first official volume on Tribal

NATIVE AMERICAN FISH & WILDLIFE SOCIETY

For more than 38 years, the Native American Fish & Wildlife Society (NAFWS), an intertribal non-profit 501(c)3, has strived to meet the needs of its members and member Tribes; directly, through conferences, training, youth education, and indirectly; through ongoing support of, and providing venues for government consultations, discussions, and by participating with innovative projects and initiatives in Indian Country.



Wildlife Management. The textbook is slated for publication by John Hopkins University Press in October 2022. NAFWS will receive all proceeds from the book sales for three years.

Tribal Conservation Law Enforcement

Robert Romero, former U.S. Fish and Wildlife Special Agent and citizen of the Pueblo of Laguna continued as NAFWS' Conservation Law Enforcement Officer (CLEO) Consultant to provide technical assistance for CLEO programming and activities. Mr. Romero served as the lead of the NAFWS CLEO ad hoc group and coordinator for NAFWS CLEO training. We offered several virtual trainings throughout 2021 and successfully held in-person trainings at the Great Lakes Regional and National Conferences. Thirteen CLEOs participated in the National Conference Practical Pistol Competition.

Education

NATIONAL SUMMER YOUTH PRACTICUM (SYP)



NAFWS held the 2021 National SYP in Estes Park at YMCA of the Rockies. Nine students from the Great Lakes and Southwest Regions attended.

INTERNSHIPS

Four college students participated in our Internship Program in the summer of 2021. Interns assisted with NAFWS projects, the National SYP, and presented their work at the 2021 Annual National Conference student poster session.

SCHOLARSHIPS

In 2021 we awarded a total of \$7,000.00 in NAFWS Scholarships to seven Native American/Alaska Native college students from the Southwest (4), Pacific (1), Great Lakes (1), and Northeast (1) Regions pursuing natural resource degrees.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE STUDENT POSTER SESSION

We held the first National Tribal Poster Session and Professional Mixer at our 2021 Annual National Conference in Spokane, Washington. Five students presented and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners were awarded.

Trainings, Workshops & Technical Assistance

CHEMICAL WILDLIFE IMMOBILIZATION

The course was conducted through Dr. Mark Johnson, DVM at Global Wildlife Resources and offered to NAFWS members. The interest from field staff was greater than the course had room for, but a total of 22 participants were accepted and were given 12 weeks to complete the training.

CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE

Two chronic wasting disease (CWD) workshops were provided to NAFWS members by the NAFWS Fish and Wildlife Biologists at the Great Lakes Regional and National Conferences. The workshops were attended by 52 members and covered sampling, management, hunter information and efforts to control CWD.

ENVIRONMENTAL DNA/RNA

A workshop on environmental DNA/RNA (eDNA/RNA) was held at the National Conference with the assistance of the USGS. This course covered ongoing research, sampling



techniques, management implications and the growing science of utilizing eDNA/RNA to manage both rare and invasive species.

FERAL HORSES

A virtual Tribal Feral Horse symposium was hosted by NAFWS in concert with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and presentations by different agencies with 50 attendees. The material covered the basic laws of horse management on Federal lands, impacts to habitat, impacts to wildlife, ongoing management and future horse and burro control.

TRIBAL WILDLIFE GRANT WORKSHOP



A virtual workshop in May on how to write and submit proposals for the USFWS' Tribal Wildlife Grant program was delivered by the NAFWS Fish and Wildlife Biologists. A total of 18 participants attended.

FISH & WILDLIFE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND OUTREACH

Fish & wildlife biologists provided technical assistance and information sharing on land management plans, research and monitoring projects, endangered species, wildlife disease, invasive species management, climate adaptation, regulation changes and funding opportunities.

INFORMATIONAL WEBINARS

NAFWS Fish and Wildlife Biologist

offered monthly online webinars on a variety of management topics to provide Tribal fish and wildlife staff the best and most current information. Additionally, the Executive Director hosted a webinar how the Recovering America's Wildlife Act would impact Tribal fish & wildlife programs.

LISTENING SESSIONS

NAFWS co-hosted several listening sessions throughout the year to hear directly from Tribes on their needs and priorities on topics including wildlife corridors, America's Recovery Plan, and Recovering America's Wildlife Act implications for Alaska Tribes.

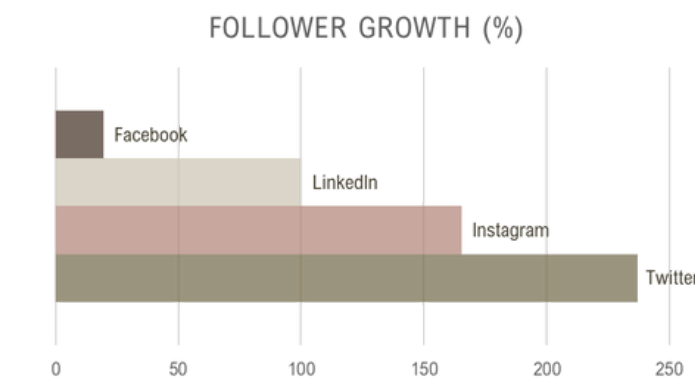
Public Information

After 28 years of service, Karen Lynch retired in June. In September, April Richards joined the team as the Public Information Officer. NAFWS continues to expand our communications efforts through the NAFWS website, quarterly newsletters, and increasing our social media presence.

NAFWS WEBSITE & NEWSLETTER

NAFWS launched a new website March 31st which continues to provide Tribal natural resource news, NAFWS press releases, events, jobs, funding opportunities and additional resources. The NAFWS Newsletter, *From the Eagle's Nest*, is published quarterly on the website and distributed to subscribers via email.

2021 PROGRAMS



SOCIAL MEDIA

NAFWS saw significant growth in our Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn audiences. In December, the board approved the 2022 Social Media Strategy to improve social media communications.

NAFWS IN THE NEWS

NAFWS was featured in many national media outlets in 2021 on a variety of topics, including pandemic impacts to Tribal natural resources programs, Recovering America's Wildlife Act, 30x30 initiative, endangered species work in Indian Country, and challenges faced by Tribal fish and wildlife managers.

Advocacy for Tribes

The new administration elevated the need for Tribal inclusion. NAFWS met with several key positions as they started their new roles, including USDA Office of Tribal Relations Director, USFS Office of Tribal Relations Director, and the FSA Administrator.

Presentations

NAFWS Executive Director presented at several virtual events to over 1,000 total participants. She spoke on topics including:

- Recovering America's Wildlife Act
- America the Beautiful
- Fish & wildlife conservation on Tribal lands and waters
- Wildlife migration
- Women in wildlife conservation, and more

Membership

NAFWS has 227 support member Tribes. Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 Pandemic and limited in person events, we saw significant growth of member Tribes and individual members in 2021. Become a NAFWS member on our website.



Partnerships

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS (BIA)

The BIA remains NAFWS’ primary partner and funder. In 2021 they provided funding for:

- Operations
- CLEO coordinator and training program
- Youth Project
- Environmental Trust Disease/Invasive Species Resilience Project 2020 & 2021
- Travel support for conference
- Chronic Wasting Disease Project
- Southwest Wildlife Water Sources on Arid Lands Assessment Program
- BIA Tribal Climate Resilience Grant

US FOREST SERVICE (USFS)

- Navajo Youth Hunt
- Native Youth Science and Internships
- Trainings for Tribal Fish and Wildlife professionals

US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE (USFWS)

- Wildlife Disease, Biosecurity and Biosafety webinar
- Alaska Native Relations 101 training course
- Native American Policy Review
- NAFWS National Annual Conference Support

ALABAMA FIRE COLLEGE

- Hazmat/WMD Awareness webinars
- Hazardous Materials Awareness workshops at conferences



- 2021 National Conference sponsor

BASS-PRO SHOPS

- 2021 National Conference sponsor

Additional Partners

- USDA-APHIS: Office of National Tribal Liaison
- US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- The Wildlife Society (TWS)
- National Wildlife Federation (NWF)
- World Wildlife Fund (WWF)
- Alliance for America's Fish and Wildlife
- Indian Land Tenure Foundation
- Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC)
- Association of Fish & Wildlife Associations
- Climate Adaptation Science Centers (CASC)
- Trees, Water, People (TWP)

Native American Fish & Wildlife Society

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY
January - December 2021
(Unaudited)

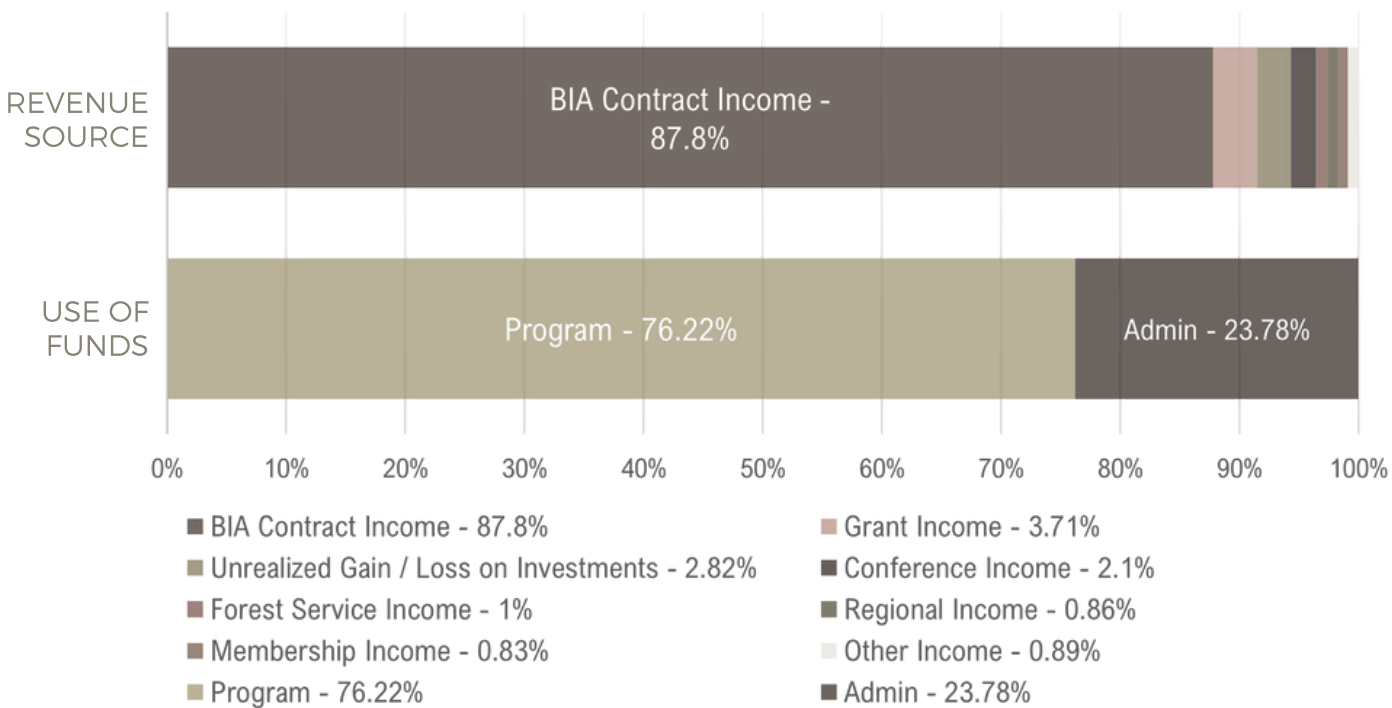
BIA Contract Income	1,764,053.55
Forest Service Income	20,000.00
Grant Income	74,467.00
Conference Income	42,151.00
Membership Income	16,700.00
Regional Income	17,266.59
Unrealized Gain / Loss on Investments	56,698.24
Other Income	17,897.22
Total Revenue	\$2,009,233.60

Native American Fish & Wildlife Society

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY
January - December 2021
(Unaudited)

Program	747,384.27
Admin	233,233.54
Total Expenditures	\$980,617.81

2021 FINANCIAL
REVENUE SOURCES & USE OF FUNDS





BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ALASKA REGION

- Orville Huntington, Wildlife Biologist
- Darcy Peters

GREAT LAKES REGION

- Donald J. Reiter – Wildlife Biologist, Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin Conservation Department
- Terry Metoxen – Conservation Law Enforcement Officer, Oneida Nation

GREAT PLAINS REGION

- Charles Wilkinson, Three Affiliated Tribes Fish & Wildlife Division
- Jeff Kelly, Director, Standing Rock Game and Fish

NORTHEAST REGION

- Dinalyn Spears, Community Planner/Natural Resources, Narragansett Indian Tribe

PACIFIC REGION

- Donna Nez, Fisheries Technician, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
- Laurel James, Yakama Nation, Program Manager, Wildlife Vegetation & Range Management

SOUTHEAST REGION

- Mike LaVoie, NAFWS Vice President, Natural Resources Program Manager, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
- Mitzi Reed, Biologist, NAFWS Secretary-Treasurer Southeast Region, Title Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians

SOUTHWEST REGION

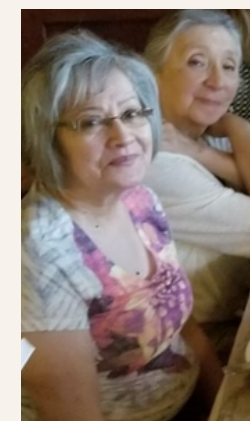
- Elveda Martinez, NAFWS President, Water Resources Coordinator, Walker River Paiute
- Darren Talayumptewa, Hopi Tribe Wildlife & Ecosystems Management

NAFWS STAFF

- Julie Thorstenson, PhD, Executive Director
- Heidi McCann, Office Manager & Membership Coordinator
- April Richards, Public Information Officer
- Ashley Carlisle, M.S., Education Coordinator
- Sean Cross, Fish & Wildlife Biologist
- Corey Lucero, Fish & Wildlife Biologist

CONTRACTORS

- Robert Romero, Conservation Law Enforcement Officer Consultant
- Management Partners Institute, LLC
- Kaleidoscope Consulting, LLC
- ARED Consulting



Karen Lynch Retires

After nearly 28 years of service and commitment to NAFWS, our members and our mission, Karen Lynch retired in June.

