I hope this message finds you well and that your fall is off to a good start. As we track into mid-late September, school is back in full swing, the persimmons are ripening, the nights begin getting cooler, and to paraphrase one of sporting literature’s finest, Havilah Babcock, “my health is better in September.”

You should have received an email on September 15 requesting your vote on some bylaws modifications, 14 of them to be exact. If you haven’t received this email, please let me know! Thanks to the hard work of the Bylaws Committee chairman, Darren Miller, I think our proposed modifications will help the Section function more smoothly, address new opportunities, and in some cases keep the Section in compliance with TWS National guidelines. Most of the modifications are minor whereas others (e.g., making our ad hoc Conservation Affairs Committee a standing committee) are quite important. If anything is unclear, please do not hesitate to shoot me an email or call. I’d be more than happy to provide you the rationale/discussions behind any of these modifications. Please be sure to email your vote of either “Yes-Accept” or “No-Decline” to Eric Pelren at epelren@utm.edu by October 31, 2016. You may respond to each individual modification or collectively.

I’m happy to report that Nelson Lafon, Deer Project Coordinator with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, has assumed the Chair position of the SETWS Conservation Affairs Committee. Nelson has been actively involved with the Virginia Chapter’s CAC and working with other state chapters as well as TWS National on deer policy issues. Nelson has already reached out to each state chapter to begin bringing the SETWS CAC online. If you haven’t gotten back to him, please do so at Nelson.Lafon@dgif.virginia.gov.

For those attending the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual meeting in Baton Rouge this October 16-19, Andy Madison is in need of several volunteers to help judge the best student presentation and poster awards. He needs three judges per technical session for presentations and three judges for posters. In short, we need A LOT of help! Not to mention the students appreciate greatly the feedback they receive from the judges. Please contact Andy via email at amadison@uu.edu if you can help.

The Executive Board will be meeting at the TWS National Conference in Raleigh on Tuesday, October 18 from 10:30am-12:30pm in room 204 of the Convention Center and the SETWS Business meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 19 from 10:30am-12:30pm in room 204 of the Convention Center. As always please double-check the time and location once you arrive on site. If you have anything you would like addressed, please let me know and we’ll get it on the agenda!
The call for oral and poster presentations for the 17th Wildlife Damage Management Conference that will be held in Orange Beach, AL from February 26-March 1, 2017 is now open. Abstracts are due December 1 and should be emailed to Jim Armstrong at wdmabstracts@gmail.com. More information including lodging and registration, please visit the conference website at www.aces.edu/WDM2017. Also, immediately following the WDM Conference, the 1st Meeting of the National Wild Pig Task Force will be held March 1-2 (more information to come).

That’s all from this end!

Mark Smith, President, Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society

SOUTHEASTERN SECTION REPRESENTATIVE’S REPORT

Greetings Fellow Wildlifers!

By the time you receive this newsletter, The Wildlife Society annual meeting will be just around the corner. By every indication, this meeting is stacking up to be one of the largest and best annual meetings ever, and it is in our own backyard! I hope to see you all next month in Raleigh.

Congratulations to Dr. Darren Miller for being elected as The Wildlife Society’s incoming Vice President! Darren is a dedicated wildlife biologist and has a long history of service to The Wildlife Society. If you see him roaming the halls or hanging out in the vendor booth area in Raleigh, make sure to congratulate him.

A big thank you to Nelson Lafon with Virginia’s Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. Nelson agreed to serve as the Chair of the SETWS Conservation Affairs Committee. The Wildlife Society Chapters and Sections establish these Committees to foster communication, collaboration, and cooperation on policy matters through the Conservation Affairs Network. For more information on the Conservation Affairs Network, visit http://wildlife.org/policy-2/conservation-affairs-network/

During my last newsletter article, I mentioned that members should be on the lookout for a few new benefits. By now, you should know that one of these new benefits is the inclusion of all TWS publications as part of your membership packet. In my mind, this is a huge member benefit. Please make sure that fellow wildlifers know about and take advantage of this offer by becoming members of The Wildlife Society. By now, you should have been contacted regarding the new online membership directory. The Wildlife Society plans to delay launching the new directory until there are at least 5,000 members with updated profiles. Please log in, click on the member profile link, and provide updates so we can get the new directory rolled out this year.

During my term as your Section Representative, I hope to attend at least one Chapter meeting in each state in the Section. Over the next couple of years, I will be watching for Chapter meeting dates to see if logistics will allow me to meet this goal. Regardless, I hope that you feel free to contact me with questions or concerns regarding The Wildlife Society. I can be most easily reached by email at mconner@jonesctr.org.

Sincerely,

Mike Conner
Southeastern Section Representative
Volunteer Judges Needed

We are looking for volunteers to judge student presentations and posters for the Southeastern Section of TWS at the upcoming 70th Annual SEAFWA Conference, October 16-19, in Baton Rouge, LA. If you know that you will be attending the conference and would be willing to serve as a judge, please contact Andy Madison at amadison@uu.edu. Thank you for your assistance!

The 2016 Clarence W. Watson Award will be presented at the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual Conference in Baton Rouge, LA, October 16-19, 2016. The Clarence W. Watson Award is the most prestigious award given at the conference and is presented to the career individual who, in the opinion of the Award Committee, has made the greatest contribution to wildlife or fish conservation during the previous year or years. Consideration includes research, administration, law enforcement, information and education, wildlife management, fish management, teachers, and students. Preference is given to nominees in the Southeast. The award is a mounted bronze plaque presented jointly by the Southeastern Section of the Wildlife Society, the Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society, and the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

The 40th Annual Meeting of the Southeast Deer Study Group will be held at the Hilton Frontenac in St. Louis, Missouri, Monday, February 27 through Wednesday, March 1. More information can be found at http://sedsg.com/annual_meeting.asp.
It has been an active loggerhead sea turtle nesting season all across the southeast this year, and the state of Alabama is no exception. So far this season, the beaches in Alabama have reached a total of 221 sea turtle nests. With 218 of those nests belonging to loggerhead sea turtles and the remaining 3 being laid by Kemp’s Ridley sea turtles (the world’s most critically endangered sea turtle). With data collection starting in 2003, these numbers are at an all-time high for the coast of Alabama. The last previous record was set in 2012 with that season’s total nests reaching 149. As of now there is no known explanation for this increased nesting activity; however a quiet tropical storm season may contribute to the overall nesting success.

Brittany Petersen Bon Secour NWR, USFWS and Dianne Ingram Alabama ES, USFWS

Auburn University

Researchers at Auburn University and the University of Georgia are initiating a collaborative research project with the objective of developing an evidence-based decision tool that will assist pine plantation managers in balancing timber and wildlife objectives. Principal investigators include Drs. Will Gulsby and Becky Barlow from Auburn University’s School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, and Drs. James Martin and Karl Miller from the University of Georgia’s Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources. Master’s students Kent Keene (AU) and Allison Gordy (UGA) will begin collecting data in both publicly and privately owned loblolly pine plantations this fall. Others involved with the project include Drs. Andy Little and Mark McConnell (UGA).

Funding for the Alabama portion of the project will be provided by the Alabama Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division through the Wildlife Restoration Program, whereas the Georgia Wildlife Resources Division will provide funding for the work in Georgia. This cooperative approach will improve the outcomes to private and public land managers by increasing sample sizes and allowing researchers to address additional research questions. Agency personnel involved include Dr. Tina Johannsen (GA WRD) and Keith Gauldin, Bill Gray, and Drew Nix (AL WFF).

Previous research has shown that mid-rotation thinning, along with prescribed fire, promotes the growth of understory plants important for wildlife like white-tailed deer and northern bobwhites. However, vegetation responses to specific thinning intensities have not been evaluated using controlled experimentation, and at this point the extent to which habitat quality for, say, deer is improved by thinning to a residual basal area of 60 ft²/ac versus 80 ft²/ac is unclear. Researchers will also compare habitat suitability for selected species in each treatment both with and without prescribed fire. Because timber production is often a high-ranking objective, they will also examine how each treatment combination affects net present value (NPV) of stands. This information will be combined to create a model which will allow managers to weight resource objectives and make informed decisions regarding thinning strategies. Alabama study sites will be located in Lee, Macon, and Barbour counties, whereas Oglethorpe and Wilkes counties will be used in Georgia. Treatments will begin early next year.

William D. Gulsby, Auburn University

Submitted by: Brittany Petersen (bpetersen85@gmail.com)
Arkansas Chapter

The Arkansas Chapter of The Wildlife Society, in order to promote professional development of student members, created the Student Activities Fund. Each year, student chapters may request funds from the Arkansas Chapter to aid in covering expenses for students to participate in activities or events that enhance student professional development and/or educational opportunities. Approximately $1,200 in funds is available for 2017. The amount given to each request will be determined at the discretion of the executive committee. Requests for funding are due to the Arkansas Chapter by Dec. 15, 2016. Please contact Clint Johnson, Secretary/Treasurer, with any questions at Clint.Johnson@agfc.ar.gov.

Florida

No News Reported

Georgia

Georgia DNR
Wildlife Resources Division

New Director Named to Georgia Wildlife Resources Division

Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Mark Williams, has announced the appointment of Rusty Garrison to serve as the Director of the Wildlife Resources Division of DNR upon the retirement announcement by Director Dan Forster. The Director of Wildlife Resources leads the Division of DNR tasked with conserving, enhancing, and promoting Georgia’s Wildlife Resources, including game and nongame species, fish and protected plants.

Mr. Garrison has been with DNR for 18 years, having served most recently as the manager of the Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center in Mansfield, Georgia. He has served in numerous capacities with DNR, including Assistant Chief of Game Management and State Coordinator of Project WILD. Before his career with DNR, Mr. Garrison worked for the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service for nearly nine years. Mr. Garrison holds the degrees of Bachelor of Science in Animal Sciences and a Master of Science in Wildlife Biology, both from the University of Georgia.

For more information on the Wildlife Resources Division, go to www.georgiawildlife.org
WRD Communications Team Wins Big at National Conference

The Association of Conservation Information (ACI) recently recognized multiple communications team members of the Georgia DNR Wildlife Resources Division.

ACI is a non-profit organization of natural resources communicators that serve to further natural resources conservation and exchange. The group is comprised of professionals representing state, federal and Canadian wildlife conservation and parks and natural resource agencies as well as private conservation organizations.

ACI hosts an annual awards contest which recognizes excellence in 26 categories. Recognized this year are:

- **Rick Lavender**: 1st place External Newsletter
- **Robin Hill**: 1st place Communications Campaign
- **Ryan Holt**: 1st place Graphic Design
- **Jenifer Wisniewski**: 3rd place Online Community Engagement

Congrats to the winners!

11th Youth Birding Event ‘Raises Bar,’ Breaks Record Again

The 11th annual competition set a new high for bird species seen or heard by a team, while also adding to the event’s legacy of spurring an appreciation of birds among youth ages 4 to 18.

About 100 searched the state for birds during the 24-hour contest held Friday through Saturday by the Georgia DNR Wildlife Resources Division. Two 16-year-olds from Gwinnet County, the Eagle Maniacs, were the overall winners with 170 species, three more than the top count last year, the previous record.

The event included participants of different skill levels and as many as 10 first-time teams. There was also a T-shirt art contest that drew 163 entries. In another part of the competition, teams raised $1,679 for conservation, a voluntary part of the event that pushed the 11-year total past $20,000.

The Youth Birding Competition is aimed at cultivating an interest in birds and conservation. Sponsors include TERN, friends group of DNR’s Nongame Conservation Section; Georgia Ornithological Society; and, the Atlanta and Albany Audubon societies. The event’s reach is being multiplied by Race4Birds (www.race4birds.org), a foundation that is helping spread the Youth Birding Competition concept. The 2017 event is set for April 29-30.

Visit www.georgiawildlife.com/conservation for more information.

New Recreational License Options Designed to Help Sportsmen and Women

While the process of purchasing a hunting or fishing license in Georgia is already simple — you can get a license online, by phone or in person at a license vendor - the Georgia DNR Wildlife Resources Division has made it even easier with two new options:

- License auto-renew system: this option guarantees that hunters and anglers will never miss an opportunity to hunt or fish as their chosen license(s) will automatically renew each year, and additionally ensures the renewal discount (given to sportsmen or women who renew prior to expiration date of their current license).
• License “packages”: Anglers, or hunters, looking for the licenses that allow them to pursue a specific activity can now choose a compiled license “package,” such as Avid Angler (includes annual fishing license and annual trout license) and Deer/Turkey (annual hunting/fishing combo license, big game license, harvest record), instead of having to determine which licenses they need. These simplified “package” options will be especially helpful to new sportsmen and women.

Visit www.GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com to purchase a license today!

Sea Turtle Recovery Hits Nesting Benchmark in Georgia

As of mid-July, loggerhead sea turtles had laid more than 2,810 nests on the state’s barrier island beaches this nesting season, according to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. A key recovery goal for loggerheads, listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, is 2,800 nests annually in Georgia.

DNR Sea Turtle Program Coordinator Mark Dodd expects 3,000-plus nests, about a third more than last year’s 2,335 nests, the previous high since comprehensive surveys began on Georgia beaches in 1989.

Dodd cautioned, however, that the recovery of loggerheads “still has a long way to go.” He stressed the need for continued conservation, and emphasized the partnerships – from grassroots groups to government agencies – forged to monitor nesting, restore habitats and protect sea turtles.
Georgia Hunting Seasons & Regulations Share Major Changes for Upcoming Year

The 2016-2017 Georgia Hunting Seasons and Regulations Guide is available online and in print, announces the Georgia DNR Wildlife Resources Division. This guide provides important information on season dates, bag limits, hunting licenses, wildlife management areas, quota hunts, youth opportunities and much more.

Major changes this year include:

• Georgia Game Check: Beginning this deer hunting season, all hunters on both public and private lands must check their harvest using Georgia Game Check. Additionally, all hunters must download a Harvest Record available at www.GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com. All harvested deer can be reported by visiting GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com, by calling 1-800-366-2661 or by downloading the GA Outdoors App.

• New Outdoors GA App: Purchase and store licenses, check your game harvest, locate properties and more with the new Outdoors GA App. Available now for both Android and iOS.

• Two new WMAs: Buck Shoals WMA (582 acres) in White County and Altama Plantation WMA (3,986 acres) in Glynn County.

• Migratory Bird and Waterfowl Seasons: No longer do bird-hunting enthusiasts have to wait for a later date for season announcements/bag limits/changes. Beginning with the 2016-2017 season, complete migratory bird and waterfowl seasons and regulations are now included in this publication.

For more information, visit www.gohuntgeorgia.com/hunting/regulations.

Submitted by: Andrew Edelman (aedelman@westga.edu)

Kentucky

Kentucky Dept. of Fish & Wildlife Resources (KDFWR)

In 2008, the KDFWR hosted a roundtable meeting of conservation partners committed to the expansion of prescribed fire in the Commonwealth. That event spawned the creation of the Kentucky Prescribed Fire Council. The most recent session of Kentucky’s General Assembly passed the Council’s top priority into law—a Prescribed Burn Program. HB 208 created a Prescribed Burn Program that empowers the Prescribed Fire Council to certify individuals to conduct prescribed burning during the fire hazard season. KDFWR joined forces with an array of partners on a project aimed at increasing prescribed fire capacity in Kentucky and Illinois and positively influencing Kentucky’s species of conservation need. Key partners in the grant opportunity include the Illinois DNR, Kentucky Chapter of TNC, Kentucky

KENTUCKY
State Nature Preserves Commission, USFWS, American Bird Conservancy, USFS, Kentucky Heritage Lands Conservation Fund, Kentucky Prescribed Fire Council, University of Illinois and the East Gulf Coast Plains Joint Venture. Funding from the project will establish two fire strike teams, one in Kentucky and one in Illinois which will focus on restoration of native prairies, barrens, and oak woodlands. KDFWR recently launched a program seeking big bass from anglers to use as brood stock. The department is requesting that anglers donate their live trophy bass so the department’s hatcheries can use them to produce new generations of large-sized fish. In return, anglers will receive a replica mount of their bass. The KDFWR has made public its draft Ruffed Grouse and Young Forest Strategic Plan. The plan calls for developing partnerships to help increase the amount of young forests that are critical for grouse populations. As part of the Cerulean Warbler Appalachian Forestland Enhancement Project, a team comprised of KDFWR, NRCS and Green Forests Work personnel is currently working to establish cerulean warbler habitat on over 100 acres of formerly mined land in the Commonwealth.

Submitted by: Chuck Elliott (Charles.Elliott@eku.edu)

LOUISIANA

The Louisiana Chapter / LAPB held their Fall Symposium on September 15-16, 2016. Oral presentations on recent research relevant to Louisiana natural resources were given by university students from across the state. A special focus session on the Evaluation of Effects to Fish and Wildlife 5 Years After the BP Oil Spill was held on Friday morning.

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

Maria Davidson (LDWF), Deborah Fuller (USFWS) and David Soileau (USFWS) have been named 2015 Recovery Champions for the USFW’s Region 4 for their work in the recovery of the Louisiana black bear. The trio earned the distinction because of their efforts in restoring the species and having it removed from the Endangered Species list in April of this year.

LDWF will be hosting the 70th Annual SEAFWA Conference in downtown Baton Rouge, October 16-19, 2016. Go to seafwa.org for more information.

Submitted by: Jeff Duguay (jduguay@wlf.la.gov)

USFWS 2015 Recovery Champion Award winners Maria Davidson (left), David Soileau (middle) and Deborah Fuller.
MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be initiating an invasive species inventory on 47,000 acres of state managed property. The inventory will take place on Buccaneer State Park, Shepard State Park, Pascagoula River WMA, and Ward Bayou WMA. This will be the most comprehensive invasive species inventory ever undertaken by the MDWFP. Once the inventory is completed and the management plans written, the process of eradicating the invasive species will begin. Funding for this project is being provided by the RESTORE Act.

Submitted by: Chris Ayers (chris.ayers@msstate.edu)

SOUTH CAROLINA

South Carolina Chapter

A meeting is being planned for March 2017. Details will be forthcoming.

State Wildlife Agency News

Three Southeastern At-Risk Species (SEARS) Grants will be operating in South Carolina this year. The 2016 SEARS focused projects were selected through an RFP, and the grant recipients are:

1. “Population genetic assessment of MacGillivray’s Seaside Sparrow (Ammodramus maritimus macgillivraii) as a potentially threatened taxon” [PIs: Dr. Stefan Woltmann, Austin Peay State University in TN; Dr. Christopher E. Hill, Coastal Carolina University in SC]

2. “Distributional surveys, taxonomic investigation, and conservation assessment of crayfishes in the Duck River Watershed of Tennessee and the Santee River Basin in North and South Carolina” [PIs: Dr. Zachary Laughman, West Liberty University in WV; Dr. Bronwyn Williams at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences]

3. “Status Surveys for the Rattlesnake Master Borer Moth (Papaipema eryngii) in the Southeast Region” [PI: Dr. James Bess, Northland Environmental Services, LLC in MI]

The mission of the SEARS Program is to implement the SEAFWA Species Action Plan, developed by SEAFWA’s Wildlife Diversity Committee. Successful implementation of the Program will be realized through the landscape-level cooperative management, monitoring, and research focused on at-risk species, such as the state’s Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), and selected habitats coordinated by SEAFWA member states that delivers effective conservation and minimizes biological, ecological, or social justifications for Federal listing of species under the Endangered Species Act.
The SEARS Program encourages regional collaboration because the issues facing many at-risk species cannot be meaningfully addressed by individual states. This program is positioned to be one of the most significant joint endeavors directed by state fish and wildlife agencies to effectively address critical landscape-scale wildlife conservation needs. It will complement work accomplished in individual states and through other regional efforts, while keeping the work relevant to member states.

USFWS News

On Earth Day 2016, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s South Carolina Field Office (SCFO) teamed up with staff and volunteers from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Atlantic Coast Joint Venture, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR), South Carolina Audubon, and Moran Towing to "re-purpose" an unused pier (Pier Romeo) for least terns on the former Charleston Navy Base, now home to the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center Charleston Complex. A state threatened species, this small seabird rapidly disappearing with nest counts declining 30% from 1989 to 2014. For the Pier Romeo Least Tern Project, an idea was “hatched” to place pea gravel on the pier, put least tern decoys in place, and install a Murremaid Sound System to attract least terns to the site. Additionally, an electric fence was installed for predator control.

After thinking that we had missed out on the terns this year, good news arrived on June 21 when our partners at NOAA indicated there was a flurry of tern activity on the pier. Staff from the SCFO met up with Mary Catherine Martin of SCDNR and our NOAA partners to check out the reports. Indeed, the terns had found Pier Romeo!

Although the nests came late in the season, the success documented thus far has been very encouraging. The colony consists of 7 pairs of least terns, averaging 2 chicks each. Small in size for a “colony”, the birds appear very settled, are tending chicks well, and are defending the colony quite tenaciously. According to SCDNR, it’s been a rough year for least terns with the high tides and storms...
that have over-washed many nesting areas. It’s quite probable that the birds nesting on Pier Romeo are re-nesters from another area where they may have failed in a previous nesting attempt. Whatever the case may be, this is what the crew was hoping for...“re-purposing” for a great purpose!!

Look for more updates from SCDNR on the success of this experimental colony or check the SCFO Facebook page for updates: www.facebook.com/SouthCarolinaFieldOffice

Submitted by: Anna H. Smith
(smithah@dnr.sc.gov)

TENNESSEE

University of Tennessee-Knoxville

Drs. Deb Miller and Matt Gray of the UT Center for Wildlife Health spent six months (Jan-July 2016) in León, Spain, working with colleagues on a possible new species of Ranavirus called Common Midwife Toad Virus (CMTV). This virus has wiped out amphibian populations in the Picos de Europa mountain range of northern Spain. During their stay, Deb perfected the use of immunohistochemistry for identifying ranavirus DNA in host cells. Matt did health assessments of amphibian populations along an elevation and human disturbance gradient, and led instruction of an online course on ranaviruses with 46 participants from 7 countries. They were accompanied by their son, Ethan, who spent the time “studying abroad” and learning Spanish in his pre-school class! Matt and Deb have played a significant role in organizing groups of researchers around the globe to investigate the impacts of ranavirus emergence on amphibians.

Submitted by: Steven Hayslette
(shayslette@tnstate.edu)

Deb Miller collecting tissue samples from capture amphibians to test for ranavirus and chytrid fungi, Castilla and Leon Province, Spain.

Matt Gray sampling in the alpine lakes of the Picos de Europa, Spain.
Staff Changes

Taylor Abshier joins DU as a conservation specialist in the Texas field office. He hails from Texas with a bachelor’s degree in Range and Wildlife Management from Texas A&M – Kingsville. Taylor’s primary focus will be delivering the Texas Prairie Wetlands Project.

Southeast Conservation Unit – AR, AL, FL, GA, North LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA

Alabama

Popular WMAs Restored – Alabama

DU engineering staff recently completed the topographical surveys at Raccoon Creek and Swan Creek wildlife management areas. A consultant will perform the LIDAR survey at the Swan Creek site, and the field work has been completed. The LIDAR survey data will be provided soon and this information will be used to identify improvements to both of these projects, which are important public waterfowl hunting areas in north Alabama. Vulcan Materials donated $10,000 to help pay for these projects.

Arkansas

AGFC Recognized by DU and DU Canada

On April 21, Ducks Unlimited, Inc. recognized Arkansas Game and Fish Commission Director Mike Knoedl for all he has done for conservation and for his leadership of the AGFC. Knoedl retired at the end of June.

Craig LeSchack, director of conservation programs for DU’s southeast region, and George Dunklin, DU chairman of the board, presented Knoedl with a hand-carved decoy for his years of commitment to Arkansas hunters and wildlife.

“I don’t know if we’ve had a director in history that’s been a better example of leadership,” Dunklin said. “Thank you very much for all you’ve done for the state of Arkansas, but more importantly for what you’ve done for conservation.”

Taylor Abshier joins the DU Texas field office.
At the same event, DU Canada presented the AGFC with an Order of Conservation Award for their long-term commitment to waterfowl breeding habitat conservation on an international level. Jim Couch, president of DUC, presented the award to the Commission and stressed the importance of international partnerships in waterfowl conservation.

“In just the last 10 years, Arkansas has contributed more than $3 million to Canada,” Couch said. “From this, DU Canada has generated $12.2 million in matching funds, so you can see this is an admirable investment in conservation.”

Many of the ducks and geese hunters pursue in Arkansas hatched in portions of Canada. Since 1968, Arkansas has provided nearly $6 million of much needed funding toward projects to protect that critical waterfowl nesting habitat.

Georgia
Planning for Georgia’s Future

DU engineering and biological staff members are working with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources to develop a five-year plan for funding and restoration at Altamaha Wildlife Management Area. The Altamaha WMA comprises 27,078 acres, of which 3,235 are managed, tidal freshwater and brackish impoundments. Although the primary objective of the WMA is to provide high quality habitat for wintering waterfowl, it also provides habitat for many species of other wetland wildlife. This project provides an opportunity to discuss an engineering agreement with GADNR.
Louisiana

DU Recognizes Jimmy Anthony - Louisiana

DU Manager of Conservation Programs Mike Carloss presented Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Assistant Secretary of Wildlife Jimmy Anthony a signed Charles Jobes canvasback decoy at his retirement party in March. Anthony had 40 years of service with the LDWF.

“Jimmy Anthony has demonstrated at each step in his long and distinguished career that he is a serious supporter of waterfowl conservation. For that, he has DU’s sincere appreciation and admiration,” Jerry Holden, DU director of conservation programs said.

Mississippi

Morgan Brake NWR Enhancements – Mississippi

Ducks Unlimited is working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to design and deliver a project improving management infrastructure on the units open to hunting at the refuge. Replacement of three water-control structures and associated levee repairs will improve habitat management capabilities. This project will be completed in time for the upcoming waterfowl hunting season.

Mahannah WMA – Mississippi

As part of Ducks Unlimited’s “Mississippi Wetlands Conservation Initiative” Phase I NAWCA proposal, we conducted several habitat enhancement projects on Mahannah Wildlife Management Area near Vicksburg, Mississippi. We planted 412 acres of bottomland hardwood trees during the winter of 2015 and replaced two separate wells, enhancing nearly 380 acres of emergent wetland habitat.

Upcoming work at Mahannah WMA is part of two different NAWCA grants, “Lower Mississippi Delta Wetlands” and “MAV Wetlands Conservation I.” One of the grants was awarded to the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP) and the other to DU, with both proposals being delivered by DU.

Work under these two proposals began this summer and should be completed next summer as long as weather cooperates. This work includes replacing existing water control structures, installing new underground piping and subdividing existing larger impoundments into smaller, more manageable impoundments to increase quality wetland habitat. DU will also create new impoundments through the installation of new levees, water control structures, water wells and underground piping. All together

Mike Carloss (l) and Jimmy Anthony worked together at LDWF for several years.
these projects will enhance over 900 acres of moist soil habitat in the Mississippi Delta for migratory waterfowl and other wetland dependent species.

**North Carolina**

**Futch Gameland Improvements**

DU is working with North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) to submit a proposal to the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program to fund the restoration and enhancement of 251 acres of managed palustrine emergent wetland units on the Texas Plantation Tract of the J. Morgan Futch Game Land. This property, located in Tyrrell County, is open to the public for hunting, birding, hiking and other outdoor recreational activities. The Texas Plantation Tract is protected by a Wetlands America Trust conservation easement and was acquired by NCWRC last year.

**South Carolina**

**ACE Basin Gateway Protected**

Thanks to a conservation-minded partnership effort, commuters on the Savannah Highway will have a new park to enjoy, and the Lowcountry will have 638 additional acres of protected open space. The ACE Basin – where the Ashepoo, Combahee and Edisto rivers meet – is home to a decades old conservation effort to create one of the largest protected estuaries on the East Coast. Through the ACE Basin partnership efforts, more than 261,000 acres are protected in perpetuity. Soon the public will enjoy more than 600 of those protected acres.

WestRock, the owner of Spring Grove and a long-time supporter of Ducks Unlimited, sold a portion of the property to make the park possible. Thanks to a grant from the South Carolina Conservation Bank, DU put the land under conservation easement with its foundation, Wetlands America Trust. The Charleston County Park & Recreation Commission bought the land in a simultaneous closing with funding from the Charleston County Greenbelt Program.

The Spring Grove easement protects a one-mile forested buffer along U.S. Highway 17 and a 100-acre bottomland hardwood swamp. With a conservation easement to the north, there is potential for connected trails across a wider region.

Spring Grove, once zoned for up to 900 units, will now serve as a county park, greeting visitors to the ACE Basin with walking trails and pristine natural areas.

**Tennessee**

**DU’s First Mitigation Bank Selling Credits**

In May another first occurred in DU’s first mitigation bank. The Wolf River Conservancy purchased 1 acre of mitigation to offset impacts to 0.3 acres of low quality wetlands along the planned Wolf River Greenway in Memphis. Year 2 monitoring is complete, and the planted bottomland hardwood trees are thriving. When our Year 2 monitoring report is approved later this summer, we will receive a credit release. Those credits are slated for sale to the Tennessee Department of Transportation. Upon that sale the mitigation bank will be in the black and paying dividends to DU and reaping rewards for wetland wildlife.

**Virginia**

**New Wildlife Management Area in Virginia**

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) announced its purchase of more than 2,600 acres of land in eastern New Kent County in May 2016. This acquisition, approved by the VDGIF board for the price of $9.3 million dollars, includes more than 2 miles of frontage on the York River in addition to 5 miles along the Ware and Philbates creeks. The property contains substantial tidal and upland wildlife habitat and will be a significant addition to the VDGIF’s wildlife management area system.

“Our partners play a very important role in the acquisition and future conservation of these valuable coastal wetlands,” said VDGIF Executive Director Bob Duncan. “The support of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Wildlife Foundation of Virginia, the Virginia
Land Conservation Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy in Virginia, Virginia State Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, the Elis Olsson Memorial Foundation and private individuals in the Williamsburg area demonstrates a broad and significant community-level commitment to this acquisition. Their enthusiasm and interest in resource conservation and opportunities for increased public access for hunting, fishing and wildlife watching in coastal Virginia was pivotal in ensuring the success of this project."

Extensive funding for the acquisition came from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the form of two National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grants and a Wildlife Restoration Grant, all administered through their Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program.

Located minutes from Interstate 64, about halfway between the Hampton Roads and Richmond metropolitan areas, the property will provide tremendous new public access benefits.

Ware Creek dedication.

(l-r) DU Regional VP Julian Ottley, VA Governor Terry McAuliffe, VADU state chairman Mike Lamberth, DU DOD Chip Heaps and DU land protection staff Justin Park.
Freshwater Introduction Project

Freshwater introduction projects like the recently completed Carencro Bayou Project can dramatically improve waterfowl foraging habitat. More importantly, they restore the system processes that can maintain and grow coastal marsh to provide lasting benefits. Because of that, these projects are unique among DU’s conservation work. Rather than trying to hold back habitat loss, freshwater introduction projects provide immediate stemming of loss and enduring habitat-building benefits going forward.

Funded by grants from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, ConocoPhillips and the state of Louisiana, the Carencro Bayou freshwater introduction project restored freshwater and sediment inputs to more than 1,500 acres of coastal marsh in Terrebonne Parish. A water control structure was installed to control salinity and maximize the flow of fresh water from the Atchafalaya River and Bayou Pencchant.

DU Engineer Joe Fifer stepped out of his standard duties overseeing construction of the Carencro Bayou Freshwater Introduction Project. He captured the project from start to finish with video and photos. With a little editing help from Regional Communications Specialist Andi Cooper, we produced a short video describing freshwater introduction projects and their importance in coastal Louisiana. Watch it on YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1QTbX4PONWQ

Submitted by: Andi Cooper (acooper@ducks.org)
Bylaws Revision – SETWS Member Votes Needed

Over the course of the past couple of years, the SETWS Executive Board has worked hand-in-hand with the Section’s Bylaws Committee to begin the process of updating our Bylaws to help the Section function more smoothly, address new opportunities, and in some cases to keep the Section in compliance with TWS National guidelines. Thanks to the hard work of the Bylaws Committee chairman, Dr. Darren Miller, we are now pleased to present to you our suggested modifications to the SETWS Bylaws. There are fourteen (14) proposed modifications to the bylaws, some are very minor whereas others (e.g., making our ad hoc Conservation Affairs Committee a standing committee, new process for position statements and resolutions) are quite significant. However, each of these proposed modifications have been discussed at length by at least two successive SETWS Executive Boards.

Links to the two documents for review can be found on the Southeastern Section website at http://wildlife.org/se-section/se-section-news/. Please take some time to carefully review these proposed bylaws modifications. Please email your vote of either “Yes-Accept” or “No-Decline” to Dr. Eric Pelren at epelren@utm.edu by October 31, 2016. You may respond to each individual modification or collectively.

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Articles Need for The Wildlife Professional

The Wildlife Professional is an official publication of The Wildlife Society and a benefit of membership in the Society. The magazine is guided by an Editorial Advisory Board and managed by a professional staff at the Society’s headquarters.

The Wildlife Professional accepts submissions for articles in 11 categories that reflect the broad range of activities and concerns of professionals working in wildlife management today. Those categories include:

- Commentary
- Education
- Ethics in Practice
- Health and Disease
- Human-Wildlife Connection
- Law and Policy
- Research and Practice
- Professional Development
- Reviews
- Tools and Technology
- Wildlife Imaging

Articles should present sound, scientific information and be written in a highly readable news magazine style rather than the strict scholarly style used in peer-reviewed scientific journals. Authors should convey information in a way that is understandable and accessible to readers who are not experts in the article topic and include references to peer-reviewed and/or related literature to support the article’s content. Articles submitted for publication are reviewed primarily by the Editorial Advisory Board and other experts to ensure completeness, timeliness, relevance and acceptability for publication.

We need good articles submitted, especially ones from the SE Section and I would encourage everyone to review the list of categories above and submit information that would be of interest and value to others. Before submitting an article, please contact Nancy Sasavage, Editor-in-Chief for The Wildlife Professional Guidelines for Contributors.

Thanks for your efforts and I look forward to seeing some articles in The Wildlife Professional with a southeastern flavor.

Joe McGIlincy
SE Section Representative
Editorial Advisory Board
The Wildlife Professional
### OCTOBER 2016

**70th SEAFWA Conference**  
October 16-19, 2016  
Hilton Hotel  
Baton Rouge, LA  

**23rd The Wildlife Society Annual Conference**  
October 15-19, 2016  
Raleigh, NC  

### NOVEMBER 2016

**11th Biennial Longleaf Conference**  
November 1-4, 2016  
Savannah, GA  
[http://longleafalliance.org/](http://longleafalliance.org/)

### FEBRUARY 2017

**2017 Annual Meetings for the Southeastern Bat Diversity Network and the Colloquium on the Conservation of Southeastern Mammals**  
February 16-17, 2017  
Asheville, NC  
[http://sbdn.org/event/2017-annual-meeting/](http://sbdn.org/event/2017-annual-meeting/)

**2017 Annual SEPARC Meeting**  
February 16-19, 2017  
Little Rock, AR  
[http://separc.org/meetings/](http://separc.org/meetings/)

**40th Annual Southeast Deer Study Group Meeting**  
February 27 - March 1, 2017  
St. Louis, MO  
[http://sedsg.com/annual_meeting.asp](http://sedsg.com/annual_meeting.asp)

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### 17th Wildlife Damage Management Conference

**Announcing the 17th Wildlife Damage Management Conference**

The Wildlife Damage Management Conference will be held at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach, Alabama February 26 - March 1, 2017. This meeting serves the professional field of wildlife damage management and nuisance wildlife management. Conference attendees represent research faculty, resource managers, and policy makers at US and International Universities, State, and Federal Agencies responsible for wildlife damage management, and professional nuisance wildlife operators in private practice. The meeting is organized by the Wildlife Damage Management Working Group of the Wildlife Society and hosted by the Alabama Cooperative Extension Systems and the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences at Auburn University. More information can be found at [www.aces.edu/WDM2017](http://www.aces.edu/WDM2017).
Wild Pig Management and Research Techniques

What: Hands-on workshop at the 23rd Annual Meeting of TWS
When: October 15th, 8:00-5:00
Registration: http://www.twsconference.org/sessions/wild-pig-management-and-research-techniques/
$45/student, $55/professional
For further information: david.keiter@gmail.com
Sponsored by: Wildlife Damage Management Working Group

Includes:
- Demonstration of trap types and triggers/thermal scopes
- Hands-on sample collection, radio-collaring
- Discussions and/or demonstrations of:
  - UAV use for wild pig damage assessment
  - Use of scat detection dogs for early detection
  - Alternative wild pig management strategies
  - Disease surveillance
  - Eradication strategies
  - Q&A sessions
The Longleaf Alliance: November Conference in Savannah

The Longleaf Alliance, an organization whose main purpose is restoring longleaf pine to its historic range, will hold its 11th Biennial Conference Nov. 1-4 in Savannah, GA.

Formed in 1995 by two foresters—Dean Gjerstad and Georgetown native Rhett Johnson—the Alliance is a diverse, grassroots organization made up of private landowners, conservation groups, and governmental organizations. The Alliance has been monumentally successful in restoring longleaf pine forests, woodlands and savannas in the tree’s historic range, from Virginia to Texas.

Longleaf pine once dominated 60-90 million acres of the Southeast, including much of South Carolina. It was the most extensive forest ecosystem in North America dominated by a single tree species. By 1995, however, because of fire suppression, unsustainable harvesting, conversion to other forest types, and development, only about 3 million acres remained.

“The Longleaf Alliance quickly reversed this alarming decline,” said Johnny Stowe, S.C. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) forester and wildlife biologist. “Its members and partners have led the way in restoring longleaf to the Southern landscape, planting and restoring millions of acres of longleaf and making folks aware of the unparalleled economic, ecological and cultural values of this quintessentially Southern tree. Thousands of people across the Southland are now taking regional pride in the many wonders of longleaf pine forests, and people from all over the world are learning the longleaf story, and coming to South Carolina to roam the longleaf pine firelands.”

Longleaf provides high quality lumber, can grow on a wide-range of sites, including dry, nutrient-deficient sands, and is relatively resistant to windstorms, insects and diseases that can plague other pines. These traits, as well as its fire tolerance, make longleaf a resilient and productive investment for landowners. Longleaf ecosystems, when frequently burned, are among the most biodiverse and beautiful landscapes in North America.

South Carolina’s once famous quail hunting was in large part centered on the widespread, multicultural heritage of burning the longleaf pineywoods. Fire suppression was one of the major factors in the decline of quail. According to Billy Dukes, DNR Wildlife Section chief and member of the S.C. Quail Council, “The restoration of longleaf pine and its associated diverse understory has great potential to boost quail populations throughout the range of longleaf in South Carolina. Prescribed fire is absolutely critical in the establishment and maintenance of the groundcover necessary to increase and sustain quail on the landscape. The DNR and S.C. Quail Council enthusiastically support prescribed fire as a crucial tool to restore and maintain quail habitat.”

The Longleaf Alliance is at the forefront of prescribed fire science, outreach and advocacy—conducting practical research, holding workshops and academies, and providing publications and advice of how to safely get more fire onto the longleaf landscape. The DNR will assist with one of the conference’s field trips, which will be held in the South Carolina Lowcountry. For more information on the conference, visit http://www.longleafalliance.org/.
Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society
Membership Application

☐ New       ☐ Renewal       ☐ Change of Address

_____ Number of years (multiple year membership)

(please print)

NAME ___________________________________________

ADDRESS __________________________________________

_________________________________________________

CITY, STATE, ZIP _______________________________________

E-MAIL _____________________________________________

PHONE ____________________________________________

For new memberships or renewals, please enclose a check for $10.00 per year
(students: $6.00) payable to Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society with this application
and send to:

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Owner/Lead Consultant
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