

PRONGHORN

2016 Legislative Reception a success!

WWF, as part of the Wyoming Sportsmen's Alliance, hosted the event in January in Cheyenne to honor the state Legislature and our elected officials. Governor Matt Mead was among the speakers. It was a great night and celebration of the collective efforts by sportsmen groups and the Legislature toward wildlife conservation and our hunting and angling heritage.

2016 Wyoming Legislature

WWF issued a number of Legislative and Congressional Alerts to its members and supporters for 2016. This effort led to mobilizing sportsmen and other wildlife enthusiasts for the cause.

A mountain lion trapping and snaring bill (HB12) died just after introduction. Together, we mounted this offensive with our supporters who contacted their representatives to say this ill-conceived bill ignored science and would have restricted

the management discretion of our agency wildlife experts.

The 2016 legislative session also saw several public land grab bills dead on arrival. The House of Representatives voted 52-7 against HB 126, the public lands access bill, and House leaders stopped hearing introductory bills just before HB 142, the transfer of public lands bill.

For a listing of wildlife bills passed during the 2016 Wyoming Legislature, log on to our website and click "Legislature."

WWF Banquet in Cheyenne: In celebration of wildlife!



Addison Trower (left) and Jace Cussins of UW's Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society present fishing auction items as Sen. Leland Christensen serves as master of ceremonies.



Above, left: The keynote address was provided by NWF President Collin O'Mara (left), as seen here with Craig Thompson of Rock Springs and Lew Carpenter (NWF Regional Representative). Left: Tim Stephens of Worland was awarded WWF Conservationist of the Year at the WWF banquet in Cheyenne, as seen here with Executive Director Chamois Andersen.



Nearly 24 years ago, in 1992, long-time WWF member Jim Willms won a guided fishing trip in the Wind River mountains through a WWF sweepstakes. Willms took his son David on the trip in 1993. Shortly after the trip, a then 13-year-old David wrote about their experience in a 1993 issue of the Pronghorn, which is reprinted below. We recently caught up with David to reflect on that experience and to find out what he is up to today.

THEN: '92 Sweepstakes Winner Finally Gets His Fish

This week in July has been the greatest. After 16 months of waiting, my dad, James, the winner of the sweepstakes, and myself, David Willms, Cheyenne, finally got to go into the Fitzpatrick Wilderness Area on our great adventure. Our guides were Tory and Meredith Taylor of Dubois.

We had a wonderful horseback ride into the area where we were to spend the next few days, passing some of the most beautiful country in the world. We took eight horses, four for riding, and four for gear.

Along the ride we encountered two elk running across a beautiful meadow. We also endured many short rain showers. When we got to our camp site, the rain broke just long enough to let us set up camp.

After we settled in, we went fishing until sundown, and the fishing was great. I caught five brook trout, Dad caught three, and so did Tory. We went to bed early because we knew we had a long day ahead of us.

On day two we decided to stay around camp. Rain and the occasional spitting of snow slowed us in the morning, but the fishing was unbelievable. We were catching and releasing six to seven fish an hour.

That afternoon we hiked down to a willowy meadow where there was a creek. We went fly fishing all afternoon, catching fish two minutes apart. The fishing might have been so good because of the mosquitoes. They almost picked us up and carried us away.

On the third day, we were unable to leave camp because of the horrendous blizzard that draped over us all day. So we fished in the lake that was next to our camp. Incredibly, the fishing was the best that day.

We caught and released at least 60 fish among the three of us. That night we had a great feast of brook trout. They were so pink they looked like the inside of a plum.

On the fourth day we finally got to explore. We went to two smaller lakes right on the tree line. These lakes had cutthroat trout. Fishing here was much more difficult, and we only caught two fish all day.

The day we hoped wouldn't come, came. We had to go home. First we took down camp and loaded the horses for our trip home. We started back down the mountain at a good rate, only stopping for lunch. The trip took over four hours.

We unloaded the horses, hopped in the car and headed back to Cheyenne.

NOW: We caught up with Willms with this Q&A. Today, he is a policy advisor with Governor Matt Mead's office.

What does your job entail?

I work with a wide array of interests in Wyoming and around the country on endangered species, and other wildlife issues in an effort to ensure that Wyoming retains management control over its wildlife and for future generations to enjoy.

Did your upbringing and love for the outdoors lead to your profession?

My love for wildlife and the outdoors started at a very young age, and has influenced every part of my life. Wildlife and the outdoors were an integral part of my childhood. So, when it came time to choose a career, I logically gravitated toward what I already knew and loved. I majored in Wildlife and Fisheries Biology and Management, and spent several summers working in the field before attending law school to focus on natural resource law.

How do you make a difference in natural resource management?

I try to do my part. In addition to contributing to many sportsmen's groups, in my nearly 11 years of legal practice, I have worked with many other talented people to protect the state's right to manage the water and wildlife within its borders.

How long have you lived in Wyoming?

I moved to Wyoming when I was less than a year old. I have lived in Wyoming almost my entire life. My wife and I choose to raise our family here because the people share our respect for wildlife and the open spaces that make Wyoming such a special place to live.

This trip with your Dad...is it something that has led to other fishing trips or memories with your family?

Though my Dad and I fished often when I was a kid, that trip was my first true wilderness experience. I knew from that moment that wilderness

experiences would be a big part of my life--experiences I would want to pass along to my children. Today, in addition to continuing to hunt and fish with my Dad, I expose my children to all forms of outdoor recreation.

Why do you feel it is important to get kids involved in outdoor activities such as fishing?

It's a bit cliché, but kids are our future. Quite frankly, our hunting and fishing heritage is under continuous assault from those who do not understand or appreciate the benefits these activities provide for the landscape and species. It is therefore incumbent on the current generation to educate future generations about the value of open spaces and wildlife conservation. That education is best achieved by exposing people at a young age to outdoor recreation activities.

What do you remember your Dad saying about our wildlife resources back then?

The outdoors were, and remain, very important to my Dad. He has been a long-time supporter of several conservation/sportsmen's groups, and continues to hunt and fish every chance he gets. I learned much of my appreciation for wildlife and wild places from my Dad.

What would you say to your kids about wildlife conservation and how would you show them your love and appreciation of the outdoors like your Dad did for you?

Wildlife conservation means making a conscious decision to make a difference, whether on a micro or macro scale. Maybe it is something as simple as picking up litter on a hike, or talking with a friend about the value of our wildlife resources. Alternatively, it may involve volunteering time to expose someone to the outdoors, joining a conservation/sportsman's group like WWF, or turning conservation into a career.



Facing page: David Willms with his father turkey hunting. Above: Willms fishing with daughters Ella, 6-years-old and Anneli, 3-years-old.

WWF's Work Toward "Keeping Public Lands in Public Hands"

The Wyoming Wildlife Federation (WWF) in collaboration with the Wyoming Sportsmen's Alliance (WYSA) has launched a national campaign designed to bring awareness to the importance of public lands in Wyoming.

The campaign "Keep Public Lands in Public Hands" includes a major stakeholder effort, the Wyoming Public Lands Initiative (WPLI). For this effort, Wyoming county commissions are in the process of creating advisory committees that will consider the status and designations of Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) across Wyoming. This process will also consider other public lands and land uses in the state. The goal is for one legislative package to be presented in the form of a bill by the Wyoming delegation to Congress.

"The WPLI will be an important process for the future status of these Wilderness Study Areas," says WWF Executive Director Chamois Andersen. "It is our hope we can apply good data to the county advisory committees when it comes to big game migrations, the economic impacts of hunting and fishing, and while also addressing public lands access issues during this stakeholder process."
—Chamois Andersen, WWF Executive Director



The guidelines for this process, developed by the Wyoming County Commissioners Association, state that WSAs are the "launching pad" for other public lands and land use considerations in this process.

What we will do: WWF will work with its aligned partners to

ensure a sportsman or woman is at the table in this process and to make recommendations for our wildlife and hunting and fishing interests. Other efforts led by WWF include a study on the economic impacts of hunting and fishing and a major public survey, in partnership with UW's Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics.

WWF has developed a solid campaign but we need proper funding and support for its success. Please consider a donation to support a coordinator position and for our outreach and advocacy work for this stakeholder process.

From the Field

WWF has had a busy first quarter with a number of wildlife conservation successes and initiatives. Here are some of the highlights...

Joy Bannon, WWF Field Director; Steve Kilpatrick, WWF Field Scientist



Big game migrations

CHEYENNE — The Wyoming Game and Fish Commission in January approved policy updates that will benefit big game animals along migration corridors. Migration bottlenecks and ungulate stopover areas will be listed as “vital” under the department’s mitigation policy. The Commission’s decision came after more than a year of collaboration with WWF and other stakeholders to develop new science-based conservation strategies for these important migration corridors, particularly between winter and summer habitats for big game animals such as elk, mule deer and pronghorn.

WWF Field Director Joy Bannon provided key testimony at the final Commission meeting in support of its adoption of this set of “migration definitions.” This effort represents an important victory for our wildlife, WWF and our sportsmen and conservation partners.

Greater Little Mountain Coalition

A brochure on the economic impacts of hunting and fishing for the Little Mountain is now available online via the WWF website. In addition, the coalition has requested that the BLM’s management proposal include the coalition’s alternative proposal for the Greater Little Mountain portion of the Rock Springs Resource Management Plan revision. The alternative includes management prescriptions that will safeguard valuable big game crucial habitats, healthy stream flows for Colorado River cutthroat trout, and the area’s prized hunting and fishing landscapes.

The Wyoming Range

The Forest Service recommends no oil and gas leasing! WWF along with the Sportsmen for the Wyoming Range have long been advocating for this draft decision recently released by the Bridger-Teton National Forest to protect nearly 40,000 acres from oil and gas development. This Wyoming landscape is known for its abundance of wildlife, diverse habitats and access to incredible hunting and fishing. We are one step closer to the final decision with our work to protect 35 parcels, which in 2011 were withdrawn from analysis

and thus considered for energy development. The Wyoming Range was originally protected under the Wyoming Legacy Act in 2009. The Forest Service considered four potential leasing options in its environmental review, ranging from no leasing to allowing development on 30 parcels in the area. Concerns over air quality and wildlife habitat, particularly lynx, were among the prime reasons for the Forest Service’s no leasing recommendation.



Allotment Retirements

WWF Field Scientist Steve Kilpatrick has been coordinating with leaders of the Bridger-Teton National Forest as well as with the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation, National Wildlife Federation, and numerous other stakeholders concerning two potential allotment buyouts, one in the upper Green River and the other in the Wyoming Range.

Since 2002, WWF has worked to retire livestock grazing allotments on public lands in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and in other parts of the state where there have been conflicts caused by the co-mingling of bighorn and domestic sheep, as well as large carnivore conflicts with livestock. This effort has contributed to 14 of these voluntary allotment buyouts thus far, totaling 850,000 acres. All transactions are on a willing seller, willing buyer basis, and the vast majority of the grazing permittees are still in the livestock production business while a few have reinvested elsewhere.

New Executive Committee members as of the annual meeting, March 2016

Board of Directors

Janet Marschner
Cheyenne (President)

Shane Cross
Douglas (Vice President)

Phoebe Stoner
Jackson (Secretary)

Dave Moody
Lander (Treasurer)

Reg Rothwell
Cheyenne (WWF Representative to NWF)

Bill Alldredge
Thermopolis

Blake Blazen
Wheatland

Chuck Butterfield
Alpine

Brianna Jones
Laramie

Rick Oblak
Cheyenne

Siva Sundaesan
Jackson

Lew Carpenter
Denver (NWF Regional Representative)

Steve Martin
(Affiliate Director)

Staff

Chamois Andersen
Executive Director

Joy Bannon
Field Director

Steve Kilpatrick
Field Scientist

Dot Newton
Administration Manager and Outreach Specialist

Lisa Hillmer
Membership

President's Corner

Mentoring: It is meaningful

By Janet Marschner, President of the Board

Mentoring is a learning experience with many benefits to both the mentor and the person mentored. Everyone has a unique skill or expertise to share with others, and it can really give meaning to your life. I know this first hand. My mentors have really made a difference in my life and now I am giving back by mentoring others.

Mentoring brings people together from all over the world, from different industries, backgrounds and interests to help each other. Mentoring helps you connect with other mentors and mentees, to reach your goals and aspirations sooner, to grow your network, expand your knowledge in a focused area, gain exposure to a new skill, and make a meaningful impact on someone's life. These are the reasons why I am a mentor.

A mentee is an individual who seeks a trusted advisor, or mentor, to provide direction and help them reach their true potential. We all have aspirations and skills we want to learn. They can vary, from improving time management skills to exploring a favorite hobby. Mentees learn new skills, can achieve bigger goals, successfully obtain opportunities to network with experienced mentors and finally, connect in learning with a partner who believes in them and their abilities. Having a mentor can really build self-confidence and vice versa for the person mentoring.

A mentor is an experienced trusted advisor who provides the mentee with direction and insight. Mentors share their knowledge and inspire others to achieve a higher capability through mutual trust. Becoming a mentor is an important and rewarding opportunity. Everyone has a unique talent or knowledge that can be shared. There are many benefits to becoming a mentor, including gaining the satisfaction of making a difference in a person's

life; the opportunity to tackle complex problems; to learn more about yourself and contribute to someone's future, to reflect on prior experiences to guide others; to make an immediate impact on your mentee; to become a real asset in a person's life; and share your expertise with others.

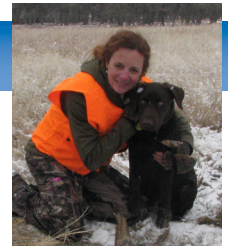
To me, it's about giving. Being a mentor is a gift. If we think about our lives, we may recall the times when we were mentored by someone or we mentored someone else. Mentoring is not dependent on your age.

Jim Dawson, retired coordinator of Hunter Education for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, was my mentor when I was learning how to teach Hunter Education. He shared his knowledge and along with his enthusiasm for teaching youth in hunting, including gun safety, ethics such as fair chase and outdoor survival skills. My sister was also my mentor and fostered in me a love for gardening. My friend Ray also mentored me by sharing his love of horses and he taught me how to ride my pony in the mountains. My friends Reg and Steve have also been my mentors on wildlife issues.

My hunting mentor and brother-in-law, Clint Fetting, shared with me his love of hunting, fishing and most importantly, his love for the public lands in Wyoming. If it were not for Clint, I am not sure I would have found the courage to hunt big game and to have the confidence to go exploring in the mountains.

Mentoring doesn't cost anything and it is a gift that provides guidance or learning for a lifetime. You should give it a try; mentoring is really meaningful.

How can you get involved? Contact your local conservation group such as WWF!





P.O. Box 1312 Lander, WY 82520

wyomingwildlife.org

You can make a difference: Support WWF today!

Enclosed is a gift of \$ _____

Thank you, your gift really matters to Wyoming's wildlife!

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Donation by telephone: Please call 307-335-8633

Donation via online: Please make a gift using our
secure server: www.wyomingwildlife.org

Thank you, your gift is tax deductible.

Get Involved! What can WWF members do?

Please write your local officials and attend the public meetings for the Wyoming Public Lands Initiative. WWF will provide meeting times/locations and information on this stakeholder process via its website. Please click "Sign Up" on our site to receive our email notices and updates.