

Executive Directors' Report

8 November 2019



• Organization:

- Board re-structure continues, slowly.
- RD replacement: Bob Kufahl is aboard and learning the ropes--inventorying and supporting the Lakeshore banquet with Tom. After the banquet on 13 Nov, Bob will be the lead RD, Tom will move to part time and complete remaining event paperwork next week, then formally retire 1 December. Tom has generously indicated he'll remain deeply involved with WWA as volunteer, while taking a part time job elsewhere. Rob Monette comes aboard early Feb as Associate RD.
- Director nominations—vacancies: Chris, Patrice, Eric, Rob, and Marty
 - Re Run: Mike D, Pat S, Dennis N, Russ Olson (Thanks!!)
 - New nominations: Todd Schultz (Lacrosse), Andy Ducato (SEWisc), Tim Gerdman (northern WI), Luke Whitburn (Madison).
 - Ross reaching out to set up joint call with Urben to discuss expectations. Please consider attached "commitment" letter.
- See finances from Kelcy.
- Compilation report of 2018 WWA finances is complete. This report has been re-formatted to comply with BBB expectations, but WWA remains slightly below their accreditation standard. Some minor adjustments in our allocation of expenses, and greater data collection/reporting on FMV of donations and volunteer hours could help us achieve the BBB standards moving forward, but requires additional effort --- benefit uncertain. Decision pends.
- **Habitat: Creating the environment for better waterfowling experiences**
 - Habitat committee moving forward: two initial priorities (1) Historical project review; (2) Understanding AWA and Alaimo's vision/capacity limitations. Currently reviewing historical records and building comprehensive listing.
- **Advocacy: Respected as responsible users of WI natural resources**
 - Duck Stamp Fee Increase lives: Stand-alone measure introduced at Capital with DU, WWF, WWA.
 - WWA survey (for duck hunter zone preferences) results in latest newsletter.
 - No Advocacy Committee meeting since last board meeting.
- **Education: Passing our waterfowling ethic to the next generation**
 - LTH 18-19 Oct in GB
 - No Education Committee meetings since last board meeting.
- **Membership/Communications: Engaging our members and Spreading the WWA Word**
 - (repeat) Committee non-existent. One non-director volunteered for FB admin.
 - Social media efforts paying off with membership – these informal members of WWA now exceed 3500. Targeted with membership drive this past weekend—results TBD
- **Development: Sustaining WWA**
 - Development Committee still requires new chair but meeting is being scheduled. ED will interim chair.
 - Draft Sponsor "pitch" (i.e., WWA's marketing value proposition for potential sponsors) is attached to this report – please review for additional thoughts (when text is right, I'll pretty it up). Then please think about the potential organizations who may want to partner with WWA and let me know so we can reach out. Bob K is already reaching out to his industry contacts (Lucky Duck, HardCore, et. al.).
 - State hunt shaping up to be 2-person, 3-day/4-night all-included combo pheasant/duck hunt on 10,000 acre ranch in west-central ND. Value around \$4,000. We'd probably want to kick in some travel/tip money.
 - Annual event budget drafted and submitted with this board meeting. Berlin chapter likely defunct, but Bob will reach out. Established a goal of two "new" chapter event this year—South shore/Racine? (Tom); Hudson (Bob) / Prairie du Chien (Bob/Dennis).
 - "Top 200" list on board website – historic donors or those with vested interest in WWA. We will be reaching out to them to establish recurring gift and thereby become a "sustaining member" for as little as \$10/month. Please review "top 200" list on board website for: (1) To whom you might feel comfortable co-signing the letter, and (2) who should not be included on the list.
- **UPCOMING EVENTS**
 - Lakeshore banquet 13 Nov (Manitowoc)
 - Christmas Bash – 5 Dec

The WISCONSIN WATERFOWL ASSOCIATION, Inc.

Marketing Opportunities

For over 35 years, our non-profit work has focused on:

- Wetlands restoration important to Wisconsin-breeding ducks and the life-cycle of its migratory waterfowl;
- Passing a waterfowling ethic to the next generation of WIWaterfowlers, and educating current waterfowlers on critical topics.
- Advocating on legislative and regulatory issues important to WIWaterfowlers.

Consider the return on your WWA marketing investment

By partnering with a trusted state-wide organization that is associated with quality results, which brings an existing outdoor-segmented audience, and offering refined multi-channel communications, you'd be reaching...

... a Wisconsin citizen that hunts:

- WI ranks 4th (behind only TX, LA, & MN), in sales of Federal Waterfowl Stamps
- 15% of all Wisconsinites hunt, tied for 3rd in the nation (behind only MT and the Dakotas).
- Wisconsin ranks 4th highest in total hunters, and hosts the 2nd highest number of non-resident hunters, of all 50 states.
- Wisconsin's waterfowling tradition runs deep—we are the 3rd largest group of hunters in Wisconsin, behind whitetail deer & wild turkey hunters. Wisconsin's sportsmen and women have lead the way in protecting waterfowl & wetland resources.

... a Wisconsin citizen that cares about the environment and the next generation:

- Our wetland restoration projects have broad appeal--It is hard to argue with the clean water, flood control, and other benefits that functioning wetlands provide.
 - WWA has restored tens of thousands of wetland acres in 62 of Wisconsin's 72 counties and built, placed and maintained thousands of duck nesting structures throughout the state; and engages scores of volunteers to DIY habitat work in their local wetlands.
- WWA has hosted more Learn to Hunt mentored education programs than any state-wide organization
- WWA serves on every state committee important to waterfowl and wetland management and enjoys access to decision-makers in Madison.

... a substantial WWA membership though existing, diverse communication channels

- Our 7,000+ members are diverse with a shared outdoors-focus, and personally value organizations that support Wisconsin causes that are dear to them.
- WWA messaging directly reaches a large percentage of WIWaterfowlers in multi-channel, redundant touches.
 - Our updated website is an easily-navigated source of all things Wisconsin waterfowl, including supportive sponsors.
 - Two information-packed monthly newsletters, with high production value, bring important issues, tips, and embedded product information directly to nearly 12,000 subscribers, including product and sponsor spotlights.
 - WWA's strong social media presence offers tailored, multi-channel marketing opportunities to over 4,000+ engaged followers. Monthly marketing promotions can be developed to your need.
 - WWA's popular calendar raffle targets an audience of at least 5,000.

- Our 25+ diverse events / year routinely attract thousands to fun events where product offerings are engagingly presented to a positively-disposed captive audience.
- WWA maintains an online “WWA Marketplace” where your item, co-branded with WWA, might be an excellent place to increase your brand awareness.
- WWA hosts three uniquely colorful, quintessential waterfowling events each year:
 - Wisconsin’s sanctioned duck calling contest sends our best callers to the world contest in Stuttgart Arkansas;
 - The state’s only authorized goose calling contest feeds world-class contestants to Easton, Maryland’ world competition;
 - Wisconsin’s only decoy carving contest offers regional carvers and vendors a high-end Wisconsin opportunity to display their talents and wares.

WWA staff can tailor a multi-prong marketing campaign to your unique interests.

Sponsorship packages can be creatively developed, based on your desires and sponsorship level. Reach our marketing team at info@...

WWA Volunteer opportunities

	Volunteer Opportunity	Effort (est.)	Committee	Description
1	Nesting structure coordinator	2-3 hrs/mo seasonally	Habitat	Coordinate the inventory and distribution of WWA's State-wide wood duck and nesting tube program
2	Nesting structure educator	16 hrs to develop, then 1 hr/month	Education	Develop and implement an electronically-delivered youth education program to understand the biology and phenology of wood ducks throughout the state.
3	Facebook administrator: WWA group	8 hrs/mo	Comms	Expand WWA's 3000+ member Facebook group page offerings by administering the group and providing engaging content for members
4	Facebook coordinator: WWA home page	8 hrs/mo	Comms	Keep WWA's 2000+ member Facebook group engaged with relevant and useful waterfowling information
5	Bird banding coordinator / volunteer	5 hours each spring and summer	Membership	Seasonally, track bird-banding opportunities throughout the state and advertise them to members who want to experience banding waterfowl.
6	State Event volunteer	Depending on which and how many events, 4-12 hrs /year	Development	Working with the Event coordinator, support state-run events (duck carving/calling events, golf outings, clay shoots, etc) around the state... only be 1-2 events per year for each volunteer.
7	Hunting policy regional lead / volunteer	Depends on issues, but roughly 14 hrs / year	Policy	Review and provide input on federal, state and local legislation or policies that could affect WIWaterfowling. Contact key policy makers to ensure WWA's voice is heard.
8	Policy Grassroots Coordinator	Initially, 3-5 hrs/mo	Policy	Build grassroots network to generate widespread and coordinated input on legislative and policy issues that could affect WIWaterfowling.
9	Chapter event volunteer	2 hrs/month average	Development	Working with local chapter chairperson, put on fun and profitable events.
10	Chapter start-up coordinator	2-4 hrs/month average	Development	Working with Development Chairperson and Regional Director, identify opportunities to establish new chapters in under-served areas of the state.
11	Habitat project lead generator	1-2 hrs/month average	Habitat	After understanding what makes a good wetland restoration candidate, project, identify local potential projects and help facilitate them to completion.
12	Habitat project photojournalist	2 hrs/month average	Habitat	Compellingly document and publish WWA's restoration work.
13	Wild Rice project coordinator	3 hrs/month average	Habitat	Identify potential wild rice re-seeding opportunities and help bring them to reality.
14	Membership Program Chairperson / vol	4 hrs / month	Membership	Start up a WWA membership committee (or be a member of the committee) to expand and engage WWA membership throughout the state.
15	Merchandise committee member	1 hour / month	Development	Provide insights and evaluations of potential products for WWA event and its on-line marketing programs.
16	Learn-to-hunt instructor	16 hrs annually	Education	Working with the Education Committee, assist in putting on one LTH event per year
17	Learn-to-hunt Mentor	16 hrs annually	Education	Working with Education Committee, mentor 1-3 novice hunters in their first waterfowling pursuits.
18	Learn-to-hunt property owner	2 hours annually	Education	Provide access to your hunting property once per year to support our LTH program
19	Marketing Program Coordinator	5 hrs/month	Comms	Develop and implement an approach to expanding the visibility and attractiveness of WWA to the general and hunting public
20	AWA field work volunteer	4 hrs / month, seasonal	Habitat	Hand-on marsh improvement work: installing waterfowl nesting structures, removing invasive plants; improving habitat.
21	AWA regional coordinator	4 hrs / month	Habitat	Coordinate regional AWA effort between local AWA teams and the DNR
22	Abrams Property Friend	3 hrs /month	Habitat	Help develop and maintain the WWA-owned Abrams property north of Green Bay
23	GIS coordinator	3 hrs / month	Habitat	Develop / publish GIS-based representations of WWA habitat work
24	Membership database entry	8-10 hrs in Nov and Dec	Membership	Assist entering annual membership data into database

Resume Highlights- Bob Kufahl

"...I am a quasi-retired sales & marketing executive with over 30 years of very successful experience in the outdoor industry who is always open to getting involved in challenging projects. I say "quasi-retired" because now I only get involved in projects that interest me. The position of Regional Director for WWA is something that would interest me and I believe that my 30+ years of experience in the outdoor industry give me some unique perspectives and contacts that would be of great benefit to WWA.

Briefly, my career experience includes 15 years as the COO of Carry-Lite Decoys; 9 years as the Sales & Marketing Director for Lansky Sharpeners; 2 1/2 yrs as Sales Mgr at The Outdoor Connection; 3 yrs as Sales & Marketing Director at SportLock; and 2 1/2 yrs as Regional Mgr for Bradley Smoker. While working at Carry-Lite and Lansky Sharpeners, I was instrumental in building both companies into dominant brands within their market segments and making both brands iconic brand names.

During my time with Carry-Lite, I worked closely with WWA, DU, Delta Waterfowl and the Wild Turkey Federation. I also served on the Elmbrook DU Executive/Banquet committee for 17 years and Tosa Baseball BOD for 8 yrs, and have been doing volunteer work with the Outdoor Heritage Education Ctr for 2 yrs, so I have extensive experience in planning, scheduling and executing fund raising events."

Emails from WWA founder Jerry Solsrud and Jim Tief

On Oct 10, 2019, at 2:01 PM, Jim Tief <tiefjim@gmail.com> wrote:

This should be sent to all WWAboard members immediately. They should be charged with recruiting at least 2 younger members and act as mentors for future board members....like within 3 years or so. How terrible for Mn.
Jim

On Thu, Oct 10, 2019, 1:31 PM Jerry Solsrud <jerry@solsrud.net> wrote:

Well this sure was a shock to me - the ending of the MN Waterfowl Assn!
And to think that when we were forming our association, I looked mostly to them along with the California Waterfowl Assn. for guidance as to what we should do to get WWA off on the right start. I even copied their bylaws for our use. And probably a lot of other things too.
What a shame.

JAY MICHAEL STRANGIS

JOHN GORDON

JARROD SPILGER

TOM ROSTER

ROBERT MILNER

DAVID REARICK

PATRICK METTIN

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Jay Strangis



It's Our Future

It's Sunday and I'd rather be watching football than writing this column, but there have been a few things nagging me this week and I might as well get them out in the open.

First, being a Minnesota native son, I'm sad to hear that the curtain has closed on the Minnesota Waterfowl Association. As of September 30, the MWA is no longer. Founded for all the right reasons, the organization did some good things in its 52-year life span, but it lost touch with today's young waterfowlers at a time when the old guard was passing. That's not a good combination. Aside from harkening back to those board members I watched and respected, and the wins, both big and small along the way, I'll remember it most for its Camp Woodie (wood duck), an annual, weeklong retreat for youngsters that taught hunting and conservation in a hands-on way. We published a story on Camp Woodie some years ago in *American Waterfowler* and got a lot of positive feedback from readers.

Perhaps it was just the MWA's time to pass away. But it brings up an uneasy feeling that's been percolating in me for a while. It's a feeling that perhaps too many of us today don't take seriously just how fragile our resource really is.

It makes sense that we might think otherwise. We hear about big survey tallies, Canada goose comeback stories, overabundant snow geese and perhaps think, "Well, everything is great." We see bird limits unsurpassed in modern times: 15 Canada geese per day in the early season in North Dakota, with a 45 goose possession limit; eight geese per day during the regular season; 50

light geese per day in North Dakota in the regular season; unlimited white geese in spring season. Even six ducks per day with 18 in possession is a gift (make it seven per day in the Pacific Flyway) to those waterfowlers who remember the two-duck limits.

Less talked about is that pintails have crashed. Once they outnumbered mallards nationwide, Canvasbacks now are number 15 among birds most harvested, when historically they once vied for top of the list. Hello! On the East Coast this year the mallard limit is two. Only one can be a hen! The Canada goose limit is one per day. No canvasbacks are allowed in California! The pintail limit is one nationwide.

And yet we are buoyed by Instagram and Facebook posts of giant piles of birds. "We got this," we seem to say. "No problem. Lots of birds where we hunt."

Is the conservation message somewhere buried under these enormous piles of birds? Are we fooling ourselves into thinking that we're riding an endless gravy train?

Lots of guys, myself included, send their \$35 each year to Ducks Unlimited. Perhaps half of those might attend a DU banquet. Or not. But our dedication can't end there. It's got to be part of our lifestyle. *WHERE DUCKS COME FROM* should be our mantra. And we need to make ourselves the gatekeepers—in the way we live, the way we favor breeding ground conservation and the way we use our votes. That wetlands and grasslands come first must be the basic tenant of our waterfowling faith. Wetlands aren't dumb. They aren't boring. They're our future. 