

International Wildlife Conservation Council  
Draft Meeting Minutes  
June 19, 2018

The **International Wildlife Conservation Council** (Council) convened for a meeting at 8am June 19 at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Southeast Regional Headquarters, Atlanta, Georgia. In accordance with the provisions of Public Law 92-463, the meeting was open to the public throughout the meeting's duration.

**Council members present:** Paul Babaz, Bill Brewster (chair), Steven Chancellor, Jenifer Chatfield DVM Dipl. ACZM (vice chair), Jeff Crane, Peter Horn, Chris Hudson, John Jackson, Terry Maple, Keith Mark, Olivia Opre, Erica Rhoad, Denise Welker. Ex officio representation included: Greg Sheehan (USFWS); and Rowena Watson (Department of State).

**Designated Federal Officer (alternate) for Council:**  
Doug Hobbs, USFWS

**Attendees:** Eric Alvarez, Clay Brewer, Peter Chipman, John Lukas, Mike Oetker, Kurt Powers, Emelio Rangel, Luis Santiago, Anna Seidman, Dr. Thomas Snitch

Meeting was called to order by Council Chair Bill Brewster at 8am.

**Presentations:**

- *Introduction:* Welcome and introductory remarks were provided by council chair Brewster.
- *Remarks:* USFWS Principal Deputy Director Greg Sheehan provided updates on USFWS International Affairs staffing changes since the council previous meeting; a short briefing on the International Affairs program organizational structure, and the strategic planning efforts underway with the program.
- *Remarks:* USFWS Southeast Region Deputy Director Mike Oetker welcomed the council to Atlanta and his office. Oetker provided comments on the geographic and issue range the southeast office handles, including the major workload of the USFWS wildlife inspection program.
- *Presentation:* Luis Santiago (USFWS Special Agent in Charge, Southeast Region) provided an in-depth briefing on the history of the USFWS wildlife inspection program, brining particular attention to describing the activities

USFWS wildlife inspection officers at various ports of entry (including Atlanta International Airport) to combat illegal wildlife trade.

- *Presentation:* Dr. Thomas Snitch (Bowling Green State University) discussed counter-poaching efforts currently underway in Africa with specific emphasis on the limits of technology, and highlighting how local culture and environmental conditions must be factored in when selecting counter-poaching tools and programs.
- *Presentation:* Peter Chipman (Kwalata Safaris) discussed the economic and conservation benefits of legal hunting in Africa, stating that more than 70% of the revenue earned from international hunting in Zambia is used for conservation. He stated that without these benefits, wildlife in most areas would be exterminated. He provided specific examples of human communities and wildlife populations that have mutually benefited from carefully managed hunting programs. Lastly, he argued against market closures for certain hunted animal species as it could lead to accelerating their total extermination.
- *Presentation:* John Lukas (Director, Okapi Conservation Project) discussed wildlife conservation in a conflict zone (Democratic Republic of the Congo). His key points included: funding for wildlife conservation needs to fund protection first and then develop revenue generation strategies i.e. tourism, trophy hunting, incentives for communities; political reality dictates what can be done to conserve wildlife and protect habitat; need to improve range state governments transparency on all levels; NGO's do the conservation work on the ground – need support – USFWS valuable partner, fills a critical role; need to identify pressures on habitat and wildlife – apply community based solutions; support educational institutions to build capacity of nationals to scientifically manage their own wildlife and protected areas.
- *Presentation:* Clay Brewer (Conservation Director, Wild Sheep Foundation) & Emelio Rangel (Board of Directors, Wildlife Sheep Foundation) discussed the wildlife conservation in Mexico and how sustainable hunting is a very important tool in wildlife management in Mexico. Their comments also included: funding generated from the hunting program goes back into (La Palmosa) wildlife restoration and management programs; investments in money and manpower for more than 20 years to bring Desert Bighorns and other wildlife back to the mountains of Coahuila, Mexico.

### **Public Comment**

- Anna Seidman (Safari Club International): Ms. Seidman provided verbal comment to the council: recommending the council establish a CITES taskforce to focus on what decisions will be made that will affect hunters

and hunting in the US and international hunting; suggesting the council also look at eliminating regulatory inconsistencies between CITES and US regulations; and recommending the council consider relevant papers and documentation from the IUCN and CITES conferences, either by inviting the authors of key papers to address the council or simply make those documents part of the discussion.

- Barbara Crown: Crown requested that the council help people understand that successful conservation isn't about saving a few individual animals or saving a small group of animals but about making an impact on an ecosystem. She stressed that people expand their understanding about what conservation is so that everyone can work together and not “non-hunters versus hunters”. Crown concluded by saying that if people fail to work together, sustainable funding for conservation will also fail.

### **Council Discussion, Actions, Recommendations**

- The council added the chair (Bill Brewster) and vice-chair (Jenifer Brewster) as ad-hoc members to all IWCC subcommittees established during the March meeting. The council also decided to create a new Communications Committee, chaired by Olivia Opre, with Keith Mark serving as the vice-chair. Other members include Paul Babaz, Erica Rhoad, and Cameron Hanes.
- The council invited all the presenters to engage in a conversation and Q&A session about the wide range of challenges facing international wildlife conservation and how a well-regulated sport hunting program can be more effective in overcoming those challenges.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5pm on June 19.