

International Wildlife Conservation Council
Meeting Minutes
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street N.W., Washington DC
South Penthouse

Wednesday, October 16th

IWCC Meeting (open to the public)

9:00 a.m. - 9:15 a.m. Introductions & Opening Remarks

Notes: Margaret Everson greeted the council members.

Wednesday, October 16, 2019

IWCC Council Member Attendees

Bill Brewster (Chair)-Former U.S. Congressman (OK)
Jenifer Chatfield (Vice-Chair)-DVM, DACZM, DACVPM
Margaret Everson (Ex-Officio)-Principal Deputy Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Rowena Watson (Ex-Officio)-Foreign Affairs Officer, U.S. State Department
Erica Rhoad-Director of Hunting Policy, National Rifle Association
Olivia Opre-Wildlife Conservationist, Show Host, Travel Consultant
Keith Mark-Host of MacMillan River Adventures
John Jackson-President of Conservation Force
Mike Ingram-Founder & Chairman of El Dorado Holdings, Inc.
Jon Harrison- State Department Senior Advisor
Gary Kania- Vice President, Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Ivan Carter-Founder of the Ivan Carter Wildlife Conservation Alliance
Paul Babaz-President of Safari Club International
Chris Hudson-President of Chris C. Hudson, P.C.

Presenters included:

Dave Hubbard	Office of Law Enforcement, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Rosemarie Gnam	International Affairs, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Gerhard Damm	Joint Editor in Chief at Conservation Frontlines
Michael Coppersmith	Coppersmith Global Logistics
Catherine Semcer	PERC, Research Fellow
Dr. Brian Child	Professor, University of Florida

9:15 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Office of Law Enforcement; *Combating International Wildlife Crime*.

Notes from presentation

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office of Law Enforcement, David Hubbard; *Combating International Wildlife Crime*

- Spoke about how OLE combats wildlife trafficking
 - o focuses on international wildlife trafficking through the disruption of high-level criminal organizations and syndicates
- Considers wildlife trafficking to be a national security threat to the U.S.; wildlife trafficking has significant connections and convergence to other disparate criminal sectors including the financing of terrorist activities, human trafficking, smuggling of radioactive material, and narcotics trafficking, showing binding international criminal networks.

10:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. Break

10:15 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Rosemarie Gnam; *Finding Common Ground in Africa: A group conversation post CITES CoP. How we can move conservation forward*

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service International Affairs, Rosemarie Gnam; *Finding Common Ground in Africa: A Group Conversation Post CITES CoP. How we can move conservation forward*

Notes from Presentation

- Provided a summary of the mega fauna decisions at the CITES CoP.
- There was a discussion among the Council covering the benefit from the decision to change the black rhino quota from a number to a percentage and its success.
- Discussions continued about tensions in South Africa about increasing elephant population without the ability to be involved in trade, and the possibility of changes in redistribution of populations and the ability to award grants to take this action through the African Elephant Conservation Act.
- Discussions concluded with the listing of the giraffe and the extent of the involvement in international trade of bones to Asia and the effect it may have on beneficial conservation

efforts, including measures of effectiveness, impact of trade on live rhinos because of farming, creating demand in non-host countries.

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Catherine Semcer; *Conservation as an Expression of American Values – Property and Environmental Research Center (PERC)*

Property and Environmental Research Center, Catherine Semcer; *Conservation as an Expression of American Values – Property and Environmental Research Center (PERC)*

Notes from Presentation

- Spoke about assumptions of the positive effects of trophy hunting to conservation efforts.
- Spoke about how trophy hunting policies and programs should ensure not only the conservation of sport-hunted trophy species, but free-market capitalism, democracy, and human rights, spoke of the negative impacts for local African communities if trophy hunting is banned.
- Spoke that the sentiment in many African countries show the desire for free-market conservation rather than reliance on tax-payer money and command and control so that the money can be placed into investable projects on the ground, for example, the ranch along the great migration corridor in Zambia increased prey species four-fold.
- Emphasized that NGOs are setting up venture capital funds for conservation of sustainable land use and the positive impact on allowing property rights and tenure rights, which allow conservation to flourish.

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. Lunch

1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Gerhard Damm; *Integrative Wildlife Conservation and Habitat Protection – The Role of Hunting in Wildlife Conservation, Landscape Preservation and Rural Development*

Joint Editor in Chief at Conservation Frontlines, Gerhard Damm; *Integrative Wildlife Conservation and Habitat Protection – The Role of Hunting in Wildlife Conservation, Landscape Preservation and Rural Development*

Notes from Presentation

- Spoke about the significant habitat and wildlife recovery of trophy hunting where the returns are given to the landowners over the returns from traditional land use in Asia and Africa, particularly with the ecological footprint per hunter.
- Suggested we hear a lot of anti-hunting sentiment, but do not hear much from hunting advocates on hunters being used for proper conservation and the economic stability that is given for the cultural and economic aspirations of the community.
- Spoke about the impact of species due to habitat fragmentation and climate change on conservation of native African species.
- Spoke about species that are stable, abundant, or overabundant in North America despite the hunting culture.
- Spoke about the community-involved successes of saltwater crocodiles in Australia, Markhor and snow leopard in Tajikistan, elephants in South Africa, and black rhinos in Namibia, and the negative impact on species in southern African countries from import regulations in the United States.
- Suggested incentive driven conservation with best practices are required for conservation-based hunting to work, including a written guideline for hunters, like a charter or protocol, to be made for Africa to develop actions that make hunting streamlined rather than a point of contention.
- Tools for such a written guideline, including citizen science for provisions of hunting data, should be provided. The USFWS should have the capacity to be involved to cooperate internationally with shareholders and stakeholders.

2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Michael Coppersmith; *Examples of Imports and Exports, Customs Brokerage – Coppersmith Global Logistics*

Coppersmith Global Logistics, Michael Coppersmith; *Examples of Imports and Exports, Customs Brokerage*

Notes from Presentation

- CGL, in business since 1948, has been clearing trophies since 1992, and has 9 offices across the country.
- Discussed original documents being lost by airlines, particularly CITES permits where replacement is not feasible. If clearance is not complete by 15 days, shipments are sent to

storage facilities with liens placed on the shipment, which is an economic burden and not covered by the airline that lost the document. Suggests the USFWS should be able to send a copy of these documents in the interim. Suggests a document imaging system (Automated Commercial Environment, ACE) to send original documents to USDA, USFWS, and CPB.

- Discussed length of time it takes to import/export permits past the 90 days it is suggested to take, often having to reissue the foreign CITES export permit, continuing the delay. Rosemarie Gnam, Chief of the Division of Scientific Authority discussed that leopards, being an Appendix I species and listed under the ESA 4d rule, allows regulation to fall to the CITES authority. General advice for evaluations were made until a lawsuit in 2017. Now, however, an individual finding has to be made for each import, causing a delay in the permitting process.
- Relayed that there has been confusion over the status of bontebok, with some applicants waiting up to 3 years, causing economic expense for storage; South Africa is issuing export permits, but the import permits are not being issued. Currently the response is that they're issued on a case-by-case basis, with the risk of not receiving this permit during the time of the hunt. Mary Cogliano, Chief of Branch of Permits, stated that the Branch of Permits is currently in communication with South Africa and for those applicants with questions should e-mail Mary Cogliano on any details on the specific information needed from South Africa that is holding things up. Although South Africa has issued export permits, the South African CITES scientific authority has not shown a non-detriment finding for bontebok. Discussed the increase in Bontebok over time, and the need for this to be resolved shortly. Discussion on how the decrease in trade causes reduction in the value of import from hunters.
- Discussed the need for additional communication with brokers and hunters.
- Spoke about the inconsistencies in enforcement at different ports of entry around the US, including the number of trophies that are allowed in a crate, mandatory quarantine for 1678 animals (swine, humanoid, or bird flu risk animals), and increasing the cost to maintain USDA approved facilities. Dallas/Houston is requiring further processing from USDA approved taxidermists for animals that are not 1678 animals. In Atlanta, USDA is now required to inspect all shipments, however brokers are sending employees to do this. In LA, declaration forms are getting cleared after arrival rather than the day of travel.

3:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m. Break

3:15 p.m. - 4:15 p.m. Dr. Brian Child; *Management of Protected Areas & the Political Economy of Conservation in Africa*

University of Florida, Dr. Brian Child; *Management of Protected Areas & the Political Economy of Conservation in Africa*

Notes from Presentation

- Discussed that Africa is one of the last places with a full suite of large animals from the Pleistocene, but they are in a downward trajectory because of such a large population boom in Africa. Stated the poorest people typically live with the richest wildlife.
- North American public model is one successful wildlife recovery model, financed by hunting/fishing, including many fish and wildlife agencies and wildlife schools to enhance this. Another example is the Southern African model. As wild resources become public goods, there has been too much focus on taking wildlife out of the marketplace in the North American public model.
- Discussed maximizing the value to society while maintaining biodiversity is the goal through community partner conservation; parks generate millions in GDP outside of just park fees, and double the livelihood of those living next to it compared to those outside of the vicinity of a park.
- Discussed that ecotourism is a cluster industry and is very successful, but only in one area. For example, where there is an overabundance of these safari species for tourism, it can ruin the ecosystem in these areas, additionally ecotourism brings in negative human impact around these areas.
- Suggested redefining wildlife accurately and match it to institutions now; that it is a private good with common good properties that often provides public benefits. Countries should open markets as much as possible. For example, in Zimbabwe, they decentralize management and let the community self-regulate.
- The value of wildlife should be able to outcompete livestock, therefore the value of wildlife must be increased. Instead of subsidizing livestock, countries must value wildlife and provide economic outcomes for recovery. Politicians and communities that used to have conflict with wildlife now support it through different value systems.

- Wildlife becomes a rural economic engine. A combination of high price and strong proprietorship creates a sustainable use approach. However, the government must allow for this privatization. The return per animal for safari hunting is much more lucrative for the community than the return for meat for far less impact, especially in drylands. Hunting, additionally, pays for 80% of wild land, which is much more lucrative than agriculture because of its multiple use, compared to the failed farming in drylands where subsidies are the only means of livelihood.
- Emphasized the use of wildlife to create democracy and property rights using wildlife, including the trust level with their leaders. Return of full benefits and teaching how to manage wildlife in communities are both necessary for a community-run management regime. Data shows that inclusive community-based governance creates much more revenue and establishes more projects than a community representative that represents the community. Breaking the decision-making down to communities minimizes corruption due to increased accountability, and communities working together creates larger ecosystem-scale conservation. Working with the communities is necessary to make this happen, and requires partnerships by NGOs.
- Proposed that the US looks past just permitting and biological scrutiny, but additionally encourages the free market value and governance.

4:15 p.m. - 4:45 p.m. Public Comment

4:45 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Closing Remarks

5:00 p.m. ***ADJOURN***

Thursday, October 17th (Notes, not verbatim) IWCC Meeting (Open to the Public)

9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Opening Remarks & DFO Instruction for Deliberations by Subcommittee topics

DOI Attendees; Rob Wallace, FWP, David Bernhardt, Margaret Everson & Aurelia Skipwith attended opening remarks

Council Attendees present: Bill Brewster, Margaret Everson, Jenifer Chatfield, Erica Rhoad, Chris Hudson, Keith Mark, John Jackson, Mike Ingram, Jon Harrison (arrived late), Rowena Watson (arrived late)

Council Attendees who called in: Peter Horn, Olivia Opre, Terry Maple (arrived late)

Secretary David Bernhardt expressed deep appreciation for their willingness to serve.

Opening remarks - Rob Wallace thanked the council; Margaret thanked the council, Aurelia thanked the council.

Rather than breaking for subcommittee discussions, the Council chose to remain as a full committee open to the public, so that subcommittee topics would be discussed openly and transparently.

9:30 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. Policy Subcommittee Topics

Notes:

John Jackson made a comment about short term and long term permitting changes (permit by permit basis). Suggests a need for rule-making on a region by region basis (if it takes 3 years); he said that we should increase International Affairs' budget).

Jenifer Chatfield asked if Dr. Brian Child had any comments. Brian suggested doing regional planning, and to look at where the money is going. Brian said he could assist in developing voluntary criteria.

Chris Hudson: we should incentivize in the local communities; we need a valuable economic model. Trophy hunting and photo safaris both have a place in this. Chris said we need to allow Law Enforcement to do their job. Can we lower the regulatory burden – two buckets; U.S. dollars and private money.

John Jackson: it is not a blame-game. We need to secure the habitat; don't blame the communities.

Chris Hudson. Seems to be a disconnect between FWS and consumptive use abroad; suggested that we follow the Ducks Unlimited model. Difference between the theory and the practice; economic activity. We can encourage U.S. citizens to participate abroad; we need to cure the permitting quagmire. There is a bureaucratic issue. Chris cited the "three amigos" case in Texas.

John Jackson: there were several anti-poaching units 5 years ago that are no longer present.

Bill Brewster: no further discussion at this point.

10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Break

10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

Enforcement/Trafficking Subcommittee Topics

Notes:

Bill Brewster discussed the problems as an example in Kruger National Park. Discussed use of dogs in finding poachers as an example. It's important to have the community involved.

John Jackson – indicated seizures by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been a problem in the past. Asked if the procedures have been changed in the FWS Service Manual?

Ed Grace, U.S. FWS, OLE, responded that he wasn't aware of what was provided to Greg Sheehan. Bill asked if what was discussed in a former council meeting with Greg had been provided to OLE. Ed Grace indicated he would look into it. Bill Brewster asked if there was anything that they could do to assist OLE. Ed Grace said that the presentation given by Coppersmith was helpful to know the challenges that the brokers face.

John Jackson said that over 40 hunters sent a letter to a Director and mentioned a Director's order that Ed Grace would look into.

Can a member of the public go to our website to search for a species to find out how a species is listed? Yes. Bill Brewster asked us to send information on this comprehensive database.

Public comment: Dr. Thomas Snitch (Bowling Green State University) indicated that community involvement is vital.

Action items:

None noted.

11:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Conservation Subcommittee Topics

Notes:

Dr. Chatfield, summarized comment from a presentation yesterday that conservation efforts should be less single-species focused. John Jackson noted that FWS is species-focused by law. John asked if there might be another way to look at (protect) species. Dr. Chatfield noted that it would be nice if the Service could focus more on a habitat basis rather than by species. Bill asked if it would be possible to view the information regarding the grants that are issued. Eric Alvarez indicated the grant information is all publicly available on the website and he would share the link on the IWCC website. (Break early for lunch.)

Action items:

None noted.

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. Lunch

1:00 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. Communications Subcommittee Topics

Notes:

Olivia called in on the phone; she appreciated the perspectives shared by the presenters and will consider them. Keith Mark, noted that everyone is trying to do the right thing. Keith Mark invited members of the public to speak up and voice their comments. If its community-based, it's a win for everyone. Hunting is a tool that should and must be used for these communities to survive and flourish and for the habitat to remain. The economic benefit to the communities. When the subcommittee concludes, Keith hopes they leave a record devoid of emotion; but that is full of facts; to help the health of the wildlife.

John Jackson; the wildlife depends on the local communities and the integrity of the habitat. Protection of the habitat is key. The anti-poaching units need the basic operating revenue. John suggested that U.S. FWS should have more organized communications with range nations.

Bill Brewster – we have attempted to make it informational as possible; we've invited members from all sides to participate and people who are directly affected by countries. Conservation equals management. In Africa, many people have to figure out on a daily basis, how they are going to find food for their families. None of us have ever been in a situation like that.

Keith Mark – hopes we are not so arrogant as Americans, with our wealth and privilege, to think that what works for us will work for them.

Bill Brewster – received many suggestions from presenters for the Council members.

Action items:

The IWCC will put together a summary of the last two years (over the next few days; they hope to have it completed 30-45 days from now).

1:45 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. Break

2:00 p.m. - 2:45 p.m. Public Comment.

Notes:

Bill Brewster asked who was filming in the members of the public section. Bill Snape was filming, Keith Mark asked him to speak to the Council. Keith Mark asked Bill Snape to speak; but he declined. Bill Brewster thanked Bill Snape for his attending as a member of the public.

2:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Closing Remarks

Notes:

Bill Brewster asked for folks to provide comments for by November 1; regarding the thoughts regarding the presentations given. Bill Brewster indicated that they all had the same intention of protecting the wildlife; sustaining the wildlife for grandchildren and other children to come. Jenifer thanked Elena and Mary for attending to be available for questions from the IWCC. Jenifer thanked the speakers and presenters and the members of the public who came to witness the meeting. Mike Ingram thanked the council members and the DFO (Eric Alvarez.). Bill Brewster concluded in thanking the FWS staff who attended. Motion to adjourn, motioned seconded. Meeting adjourned.

3:00 p.m.

ADJOURN