

## **Association for Conservation Information**

Business Meeting

7/16/15 Flagstaff, AZ

**Call to Order:** President Micah Holmes called the meeting to order.

### **Roll Call:**

**Board Members in Attendance:** Micah Holmes (OK), President; Robin Cahoon (UT), Vice-President; Kim Nix (AL), Secretary; Judy Stokes Weber (NH), Treasurer; Don King (TN), Immediate Past President; Tom Cadden (AZ), Aaron Meier (NV), Michael Gray (KY), Phil Bloom (IN), Regina Knauer (MO), Randy Zellers (AR)

**Board Members Not in Attendance:** Jane Gustafson (NE), Kathey Garza-Behr (OH), Rachel Piacenza (RBFF)

### **Agency Membership in Attendance:**

Alabama Department of Conservation  
Arizona Game and Fish Department  
Arkansas Game and Fish Department  
Colorado Parks and Wildlife  
Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission  
Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
Iowa Department of Natural Resources  
Kansas Department of Wildlife and Fisheries  
Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife  
Missouri Department of Conservation  
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks  
New Jersey Fisheries and Wildlife  
New Mexico Department of Game and Fish  
Nevada Department of Wildlife  
Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation  
Ohio Division of Wildlife  
Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation  
South Carolina Department of Natural Resources  
Texas Parks and Wildlife  
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources  
West Virginia Division of Natural Resources

### **Individual Members in Attendance:**

Marianne Burke (LA)

**Treasurer's Report:** Judy Stokes Weber announced that the accountant's review of both fiscal years 2014 and 2015 have been delivered to the board. The primary changes between the two years relate to the following: on the income side, we had no return from the Nebraska conference

and are longer earning interest from a long-held CD; on the expense side, the board allocated an additional \$5,200 for travel stipends. Each conference host state received \$5,000 with the hope that it is returned.

The organization's main revenue stream is memberships and awards, which account for approximately \$20,000 per year. Since we are not earning much interest in the money market account these two items are critical to the organization.

Our goal is to have every state agency a member by this time next year. Judy will work with states in any way necessary to get invoices paid. Agencies should expect 2016 invoices by September.

**Auditing Committee Report:** This year Regina Knauer and Julie Hammonds were assigned to look over the accounting books; they did not see anything questionable and it looked in order. Judy Stokes Weber mentioned that a CPA firm does look at the books and having members review the books is just for checks and balances.

### **Committee Reports**

**Auction Committee:** Randy Zellers announced that we raised the second highest amount ever this year with \$6,500. If anyone would want to serve on the auction committee, they can see him or Steve Wilson.

**Balance Wheel:** Randy Zellers asked for people who do not get the bi-monthly newsletter to write their email down and he will get them on the list. You can see newsletter on the ACI website. Currently we have 463 subscribers, a 30 percent open rate and a 15 percent click-through. He will include things from the conference in the next two issues. He wants more articles about what is going on in the states, so contact him with ideas. Scholarship recipients will be writing things about projects in their states as a requirement of their scholarship money. You can also send him changes to website directory.

**Awards Committee:** Julie Hammonds reported that awards entries are on display during the conference. An excel spreadsheet is on each table that outlines entry history. The 366 entries this year is an all-time high since we've been keeping records. Winners will be announced at the banquet tonight

For the first time, the entry process for the Photography, TV/Video and Website categories was done via URL or email rather than disk. Printed forms were still required for the SOP and scoresheet. Feedback on the changes was generally positive. Entry via URL was allowed in magazine categories for magazines published only online. Feedback on that was somewhat negative: there were problems with links, which required more work from judges and category chairs to follow up, and some judges prefer to judge paper rather than onscreen. Several suggestions were made to have the online magazine print its entry.

The Awards Committee met July 14 and considered possible changes to the scoring system and the awards categories. We also had good discussions about taking the contest online by working

with a vendor and, if we don't do that, finding other ways to streamline the entry process for more categories this year. The Awards Committee made the following recommendations:

- Continue to look for ways to streamline the entry process.
- Eliminate the requirement that judges physically sign their scoresheets.
- Invite everyone who has served as a category chair in the past three years to review the scoring criteria for their category and propose changes that would speed up the judging process without reducing the quality of scoring, so that perhaps judges can spend more time on constructive criticism.
- Consider development of a new category rewarding specific social media campaigns, given that all our agencies are expending effort in that direction and perhaps Online Community Engagement should not be the only way to recognize excellence in those efforts.
- Change the Audio Program category to Audio Program/Podcast and update the description, to encourage more entries.

The committee did not recommend deleting any categories or taking the contest online. If anyone is interested in being a category chair, please see Julie.

On the ACI website there are YouTube playlists for the Video Other, TV PSA and TV Show so that you can see all of the entries.

**Membership:** Micah announced that there is a need to establish a membership committee and he needs volunteers to serve on it.

**Future Conference Sites:** Kay Ellerhoff announced 2016 will be in Springfield, Missouri. Regina Knauer showed a short video and handed over an invitation from her agency (attached).

Phil Bloom made a motion to accept the invitation to Missouri in 2016. Jennifer Wisniewski seconded. The motion passed.

Kay announced future conference sites as the following:

2017 Nevada

2018 Alabama

2019 Penn Game and Fish

2020 New Mexico

2021 New Jersey

2022 Georgia

2023 Hawaii

### **Liaison Reports**

**AFWA:** No one from AFWA was present, but Micah Holmes announced that he will be attending their conference so that ACI will be start getting more involved in that organization.

**OWAA:** Phil Bloom reported that 200 people at the last OWAA conference in Knoxville TN. Lisa Ballard is the new president and he was elected second vice president. The organization

worked to prevent a Forest Service directive that requires fees for journalists on national forest land. Members feel it is a violation of the First Amendment. The Forest Service has changed its mind on that directive for the time being.

**Lifetime Membership:** Micah announced that a special category of membership is Lifetime and these are nominated and voted on by member agencies. Nominations for Judith Hosofros, Steve Wilson and Marianne Burke have been received.

The floor was opened for nominations, but none was received. Amanda Stroud made a motion to accept these three members for Lifetime Membership and Robin Cahoon seconded. The motion passed.

**Nominating Committee:** Marianne Burke, Phil Bloom and Don King were appointed to the nominating committee searching for three new board members to serve a three-year term. Seven people are on the ballot for the three positions. Each nominee was asked each to stand up and introduce themselves. Nominees were Julie Hammonds (AZ), Jennifer Wisniewski (GA), Bonnie Holding (Maine), Lance Cherry (NM), Jamie Emmert (OH), Blake Podhajsky (OK), and Abe Moore (TX).

Marianne explained that each agency gets one vote, and they are to select three people on the ballot. She encouraged those who are not selected to serve in a committee capacity within ACI.

Elected to the board for three-year terms to end in 2017 were Jennifer Wisniewski (GA), Blake Podhajsky (OK) and Lance Cherry (NM).  
Marianne.

**Next Board Meeting:** Micah announced that the date for next board meeting conference call will be October 7 2015, at 1 p.m. CST

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 a.m.



# MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

## *Headquarters*

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ROBERT L. ZIEHMER, Director

June 30, 2015

Mr. Micah Holmes, President  
Association for Conservation Information  
c/o Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation  
1801 N. Lincoln  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

Dear Mr. Holmes:

The Missouri Department of Conservation is pleased to host the 2016 Association for Conservation Information Annual Conference and wishes to extend this official invitation to join us in Springfield, Missouri, the week of July 11-17, 2016, for the 78<sup>th</sup> year of this conference.

Plans are in progress for lodging near the Missouri State University campus with conference events at the Wonders of the Ozarks Learning Facility (WOLF School) housed in the White River Conference Center adjacent to Bass Pro Shops.

Conference attendees have several flight options from which to choose with the Springfield/Branson National Airport (20 minutes from the Missouri State University campus) and the Branson Airport (less than one hour away). Both airports have connections from the Kansas City and St. Louis International Airports and other major airport hubs in the Midwest.

By coming together to learn and share knowledge and expertise, we strengthen the ability of our agencies and organizations to face the challenges of reaching stakeholders with our messages, engaging them in the resource, and helping them to discover nature.

Sincerely,

ROBERT L. ZIEHMER  
DIRECTOR

## COMMISSION

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