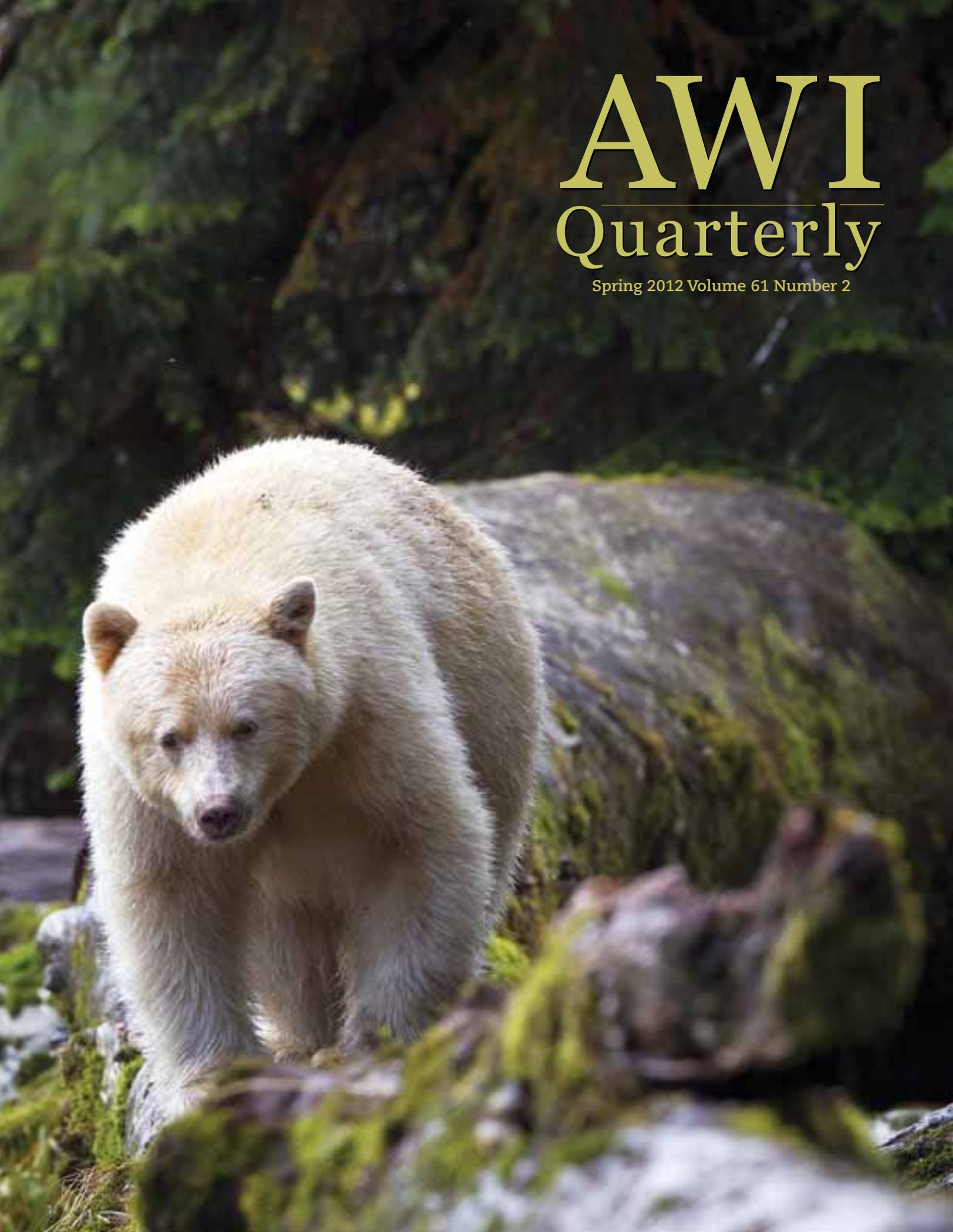


# AWI Quarterly

Spring 2012 Volume 61 Number 2



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## ABOUT THE COVER

The Kermode, or “spirit” bear (*Ursus americanus kermodei*), is a subspecies of the American black bear who lives only in the red cedar, hemlock, and spruce rainforest of Canada’s Pacific coast. About one tenth of the bears are white, owing to a unique recessive trait. A proposed Northern Gateway Pipeline project would carry oil from Alberta’s tar sands through the coastal forests to a port in remote Kitimat, British Columbia—to be shipped via massive tankers that would thread the rocky, island-studded Inside Passage on their way to Asia. An oil spill in this region could be catastrophic for the bears and the salmon upon which they depend. As discussed below and in the article on page 6, tar sand and other oil development has enormous—but often ignored—impacts on animals.

Photo by Eric Sambol

## RUNNING OVER ANIMALS IN THE PATH TO THE PUMP

President Obama denied a permit in January for the Keystone XL pipeline’s proposed route over the border from Canada, across the critically important Ogallala Aquifer, on down to the Gulf of Mexico. At an Oklahoma photo-op in March, however, the president expressed support for expedited construction of a southern pipeline leg below the aquifer.

The aquifer, of course, is hardly the only issue. A 2008 report by the Environmental Integrity Project used the word “staggering” to describe the environmental costs of developing Alberta’s tar sands—the source of the “sour crude” slated to flow down the Keystone pipeline to the Gulf. Among those costs are “...the clear-cutting and strip-mining of huge portions of intact boreal forest ecosystem, the creation of vast un-reclaimable toxic lakes of wastewater, the consumption of enormous amounts of water and energy, and the production of *three times more* greenhouse gas as extracting conventional [sweet] crude oil.”

Not two weeks after the president’s Oklahoma stop, the administration announced it will allow companies to conduct booming seismic surveys of the Atlantic Ocean for oil and gas as a first step toward offshore drilling. Meanwhile, dolphins are dying en masse off the coast of Peru—suspected victims of anthropogenic ocean noise (see back page).

In a paper published in the scientific journal *Animal Welfare*, Chris Genovali and Paul Paquet (authors of the article on page 6) assert that “...most people do not intend for animals to suffer at the expense of humans, but are unwilling to make the changes necessary to prevent degradation of the environment.” In an election year featuring high gas prices, such changes seem even more unlikely. Instead, more animals are apt to fall victim as ethical stances dissolve in a quick-fix slurry of water, oil and sand. 🐾



An upgrader plant alongside the open pit tar sands mines north of Fort McMurray, AB; a toxic tailings pond fills the foreground.

David Dodge/The Pembina Institute



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**Above Left:** Coot, an improvised explosive device detection dog, with a U.S. Marine on patrol in Afghanistan. Coot and other military working dogs routinely risk their lives in war zones. (DVIDS)

**Top Right:** American bullfrogs are among more than 12 million animals dissected in the U.S. each year. Humane, effective alternatives to dissection exist. (Oleg Drokin)

**Bottom Right:** Belly to the sun, a minke whale breaks the surface with a pectoral fin. Icelandic whalers continue to target minke and endangered fin whales. (Amanda Fletcher)



## Slippery When Wet: Ontario Town Yields Road to Salamanders

FOR THREE WEEKS IN MARCH, Jefferson salamanders have the right of way on a busy stretch of road in Burlington, Ontario. Only about 100 of the threatened amphibians (known locally as “Jeffies”) exist in the area, within a forested stretch along the Niagara Escarpment. Unfortunately, the night-traveling salamanders hibernate on one side of the road but breed and lay eggs in a pond on the other side. In recognition of the important niche the salamanders fill, Burlington’s city council agreed (without objection, according to the mayor) to close the road for a spell to give the Jeffies a chance to make it to the other side. 🐾

## Agencies Fight On as White-Nose Syndrome Advances

THE NUMBERS ARE EXTREMELY BLEAK: bats in 20 states are now affected by white-nose syndrome (WNS) or the associated fungus, and the estimated death toll was recently revised upward to a staggering 5.7 million (or more) bats. If there is any cause for hope, it resides in the efforts of federal, state, and tribal wildlife agencies and non-governmental organizations to coordinate and manage their WNS investigation and response activities on a national level. Confirmation that the fungus *Geomyces destructans* causes white-nose syndrome was one major step forward. Knowing this better enables scientists to devise ways to control the spread of the fungus and treat affected sites without introducing chemicals that would damage these delicate ecosystems. Additional research currently underway includes improving WNS detection techniques; developing a better understanding of how WNS is transmitted; determining the mechanics of *G. destructans* infection in bats, including the susceptibility and resistance of bats to the infection; and determining how persistent the fungus is in the environment. The discovery of some surviving—albeit isolated—colonies of little brown bats may also help scientists learn what conditions or traits allow some bats to escape the disease. 🐾

## Groups Ask EPA to Get the Lead Out of Ammo

THE CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (CBD) and 99 other groups in 35 states formally petitioned the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in March to regulate toxic lead in hunting ammunition to protect public health and prevent the widespread poisoning of eagles, California condors, and other wildlife.

Birds inadvertently consume lead via spent ammo or bullet fragments that have settled in soils or water sediments. According to the CBD, up to 20 million birds die each year as a result, including bald and golden eagles, trumpeter swans, endangered California condors, and more than 75 other species. Lead from other human sources has also been implicated in mass bird deaths (see “Lead Poisoning: The Lessons of the Birds of Esperance,” Fall 2010 *AWI Quarterly*), and hundreds of scientific papers have documented the dangers to wildlife from lead exposure. As with human young, lead poisoning is especially damaging to young birds, impairing brain development, causing anemia, decreasing growth rates, and increasing hatchling mortality.

“The unnecessary poisoning of eagles, condors and other wildlife is a national tragedy that the EPA can easily put an end to,” said the CBD’s Jeff Miller. “There are safe, available alternatives to lead ammo for all hunting and shooting sports, so there’s no reason for this poisoning to go on.” 🐾



Robert Bunday

Bald eagles and other birds who scavenge the remains of animals left by hunters may be poisoned by lead ammo.

# POACHERS DESCEND ON CAMEROON PARK TO SLAY HUNDREDS OF ELEPHANTS



CIFOR

*Elephants feeding in northern Cameroon. Across the region, gangs of poachers have stepped up their slaughter of elephants to supply the illicit trade in ivory.*

DURING A SIX-WEEK PERIOD in January and February, a brazen and well-organized gang of poachers slaughtered at least half of the roughly 400 resident savannah elephants in Cameroon's Bouba N'Djida National Park. Conservationists have been stunned by the magnitude of the killing. Dr. Allard Blom, who manages the Congo Basin program for the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), called it "the worst poaching massacre that I can recall in the decades we have worked to save elephants in Africa."

Bouba N'Djida, located in the north of Cameroon and generally protected only by unarmed rangers, is a prime target for Sudanese and Chadian poachers during the park's November to April dry season. The group of roughly 100 poachers responsible for the Bouba N'Djida elephant deaths were said to have been heavily armed

and provisioned—accompanied, even, by herds of cattle and camels.

Responding to international pressure, the Cameroon government deployed 150 soldiers on March 1 in an attempt to thwart the sustained attack. However, according to WWF's Natasha Kofoworola Quist, "The forces arrived too late to save most of the park's elephants, and

were too few to deter the poachers." At least one soldier and one poacher died in the ensuing gun battles.

A team from the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) documented the indiscriminate brutality of the slaughter, noting several very young animals—some with small or nonexistent tusks—among the dead. Many of the elephants were apparently chased before being gunned down. Veterinarian Sharon Redrobe of the IFAW team said it appeared as if some were still alive when their trunks were severed and tusks hacked out with a machete. "These elephants would have suffocated and experienced a long, agonizing death," she said. IFAW's Céline Sissler-Bienvenu stated that "in some groups, the state of decomposition was different, suggesting that poachers waited until

surviving elephants came back to 'mourn' their dead before shooting them as well."

A spike in demand for ivory in China is "the leading driver behind the illegal trade in ivory today," according to Tom Milliken, an elephant and rhino expert for the wildlife trade monitoring network, TRAFFIC. Such ivory is used primarily to make jewelry and ornaments. Sissler-Bienvenu asserts that "...the only way to stop these bloody attacks perpetrated against elephants in Cameroon and Africa as a whole is to eliminate the demand for ivory at the international level. To do this, a complete and unambiguous international ban on the sale of ivory is the only and best solution." Dr. Blom adds that "...if we fail to take immediate action in the face of such plunder, then much of Africa's elephants could disappear forever to satisfy human greed." 🐾



IFAW

*Evidence of a brutal massacre. Some elephants appear to have had their tusks hacked from their bodies while still alive.*

# Tar Sands Pipelines and Oil Tankers Threaten North American Wildlife

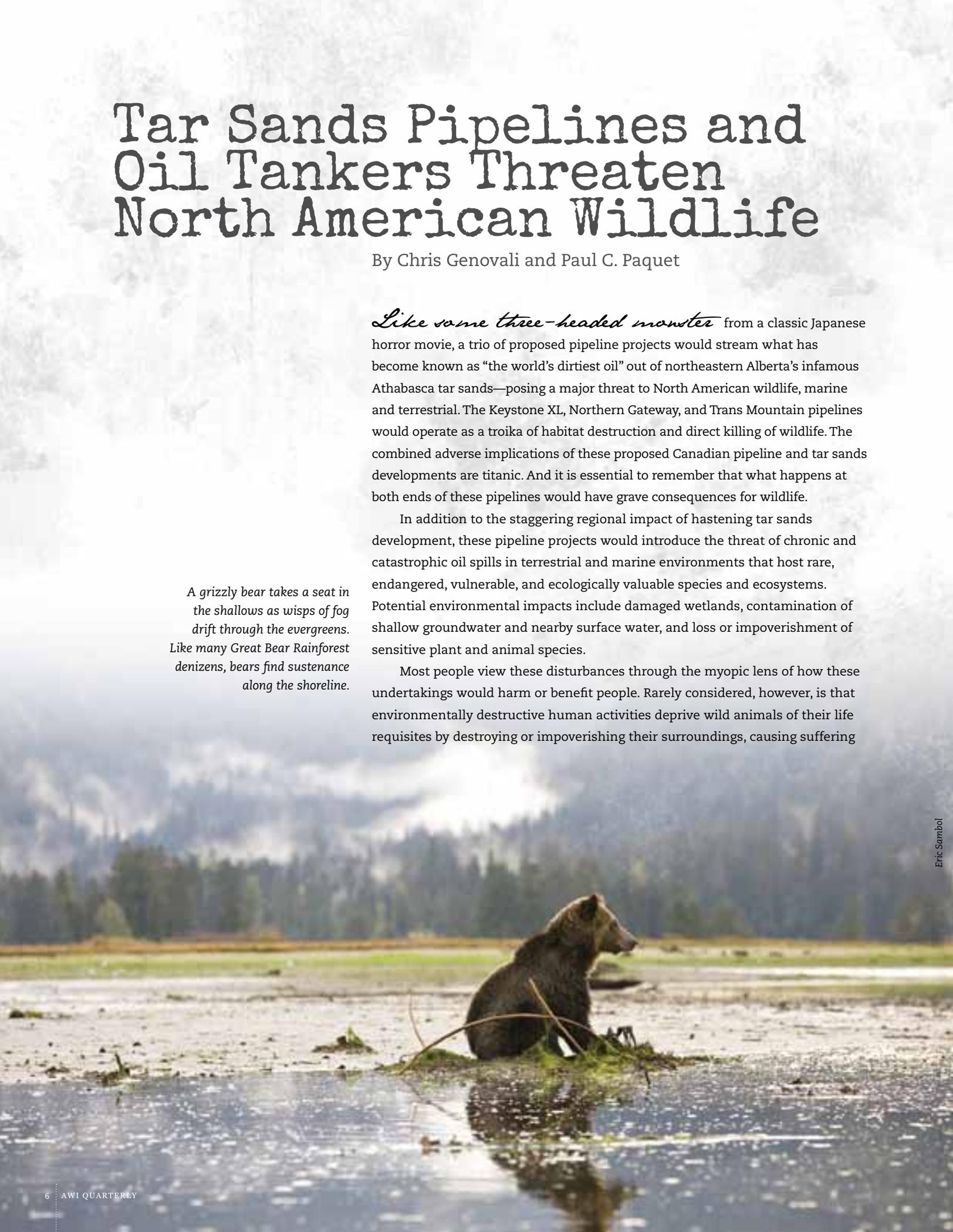
By Chris Genovali and Paul C. Paquet

*Like some three-headed monster* from a classic Japanese horror movie, a trio of proposed pipeline projects would stream what has become known as “the world’s dirtiest oil” out of northeastern Alberta’s infamous Athabasca tar sands—posing a major threat to North American wildlife, marine and terrestrial. The Keystone XL, Northern Gateway, and Trans Mountain pipelines would operate as a troika of habitat destruction and direct killing of wildlife. The combined adverse implications of these proposed Canadian pipeline and tar sands developments are titanic. And it is essential to remember that what happens at both ends of these pipelines would have grave consequences for wildlife.

In addition to the staggering regional impact of hastening tar sands development, these pipeline projects would introduce the threat of chronic and catastrophic oil spills in terrestrial and marine environments that host rare, endangered, vulnerable, and ecologically valuable species and ecosystems. Potential environmental impacts include damaged wetlands, contamination of shallow groundwater and nearby surface water, and loss or impoverishment of sensitive plant and animal species.

Most people view these disturbances through the myopic lens of how these undertakings would harm or benefit people. Rarely considered, however, is that environmentally destructive human activities deprive wild animals of their life requisites by destroying or impoverishing their surroundings, causing suffering

*A grizzly bear takes a seat in the shallows as wisps of fog drift through the evergreens. Like many Great Bear Rainforest denizens, bears find sustenance along the shoreline.*



Eric Sambol

of individuals through displacement, stress, starvation, and diminished security. Indeed, the notion that the welfare of wild animals should be taken into consideration has escaped most people—including some animal welfarists and conservationists. More troubling is that for many, suffering of wildlife is justified if humankind benefits or profits. Focusing on the past, present and future impacts to wolves and whales as examples, our intent here is to make people acutely aware of the pending threats to the welfare of wild animals that are the innocent victims of avaricious industrial “progress,” and why we should care.

To determine if these projects are in the public and national interests and should be allowed to proceed, governments are right now assessing the economic, social, and environmental impacts of the proposed pipeline developments. These are the supposed “three pillars of sustainable development,” but absent among the pillars is any serious consideration for the welfare of wild animals affected by the construction, presence, operation, and maintenance of the pipelines, or by the shipping of oil by supertankers. By using the faulty three legs of the stool as a model for sustainable development and decision-making, governments perpetuate the myth that animal welfare is something apart from the environment, humanity’s economy, and our social well-being. Humanity is once again placed outside the environment and the welfare of other species is completely ignored.

To appreciate the enormity of the proposed projects and their implications requires a brief background on the nature and status of the proposals, as well as an understanding of how wildlife and the environments that support them might be affected.

In early 2009, Trans Canada Corporation filed an application with the Canadian Government’s National Energy Board (NEB) for approval of the Canadian section of the proposed Keystone XL pipeline extension. Because the pipeline crosses the U.S./Canadian border, a concurrent but independent review by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency was also initiated. The pipeline extension is designed to transport synthetic crude oil and diluted bitumen from Canada’s tar sands to multiple destinations in the United States, including refineries in Illinois, the Cushing oil distribution hub in Oklahoma, and proposed connections to refineries along the Gulf Coast of Texas. The oil sent through the pipeline to the Gulf Coast would be processed and exported to foreign countries in Europe and Asia. The pipeline addition would extend over 1,700 miles and carry up to 830,000 barrels per day.



*A dark-coated mother bear nuzzles her ghostly white cub. Though black bears both, a recessive gene carried by the mother has given her youngster the distinctive look of the spirit bear—unique to this region.*

On May 27, 2010, Enbridge Inc. submitted a project application with the NEB for its Northern Gateway Project. A Joint Review Panel established by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency and the NEB is assessing the eight-volume regulatory application. The proposed project includes twin pipelines traversing 728 miles over the rugged Rocky and Coast mountain ranges, connecting a tar sands refinery hub near Edmonton, Alberta, and a marine terminal at Kitimat, British Columbia, where annually some 225 supertankers would navigate the oft-perilous waters of the north Pacific coast (also known as the Great Bear Rainforest). One of the pipelines would carry synthetic tar sands crude and diluted bitumen to the coast for export to energy-hungry Asian and American markets. The other would import highly toxic natural gas condensate from Asia and the Mideast.

The American energy company Kinder Morgan Energy Partners is now operating a 710-mile long Trans Mountain pipeline from Edmonton, Alberta, to terminals and refineries in central British Columbia, the Vancouver area, and the Puget Sound region in Washington. The company wants to triple the amount of crude oil being shipped from Vancouver’s Burrard Inlet through Georgia Strait, the Fraser Estuary, Gulf Islands, Haro Strait, San Juan Islands, and Juan de Fuca Strait. To accomplish this, Kinder Morgan proposed pipeline expansions that would deliver 700,000 barrels of tar sands oil per day to Burrard Inlet by 2016, which would translate into some 229 tankers traversing the region known as the Salish Sea.



Doug Brown

*Killer whales have no trouble navigating BC's convoluted coastal waterways. Tankers may not fare so well. A major oil spill would be catastrophic.*

## *whales*

The damage and deprivation to marine and terrestrial wildlife from catastrophic oil spills have already been extensive. For example, the effects of the Exxon Valdez disaster 23 years ago on wildlife populations in Alaska's Prince William Sound have been widespread and long lasting. Although the Exxon Valdez oil spill is indelible in our minds as one of the most environmentally destructive in history, it ranks only as the 53rd largest in history. Notably, its disproportionate impact relates to the ecological wealth of the west coast marine environment that was affected.

Although no oiled carcasses were recovered, two different populations of killer whales, both in Prince William Sound at the time of the spill, experienced dramatic declines. The fish-eating AB resident pod of killer whales lost 14 of 36 members following the spill. A second population, the AT1 mammal-eating transients, was seen surfacing in the oil near the Exxon Valdez. Since then, the group has not successfully reproduced. Most likely, this unique killer whale population will go extinct.

Every stage of the looming "energy corridor" schemes poses a threat to cetacean populations on the Pacific coast, through prospective spills to underwater noise to the ship strikes associated with the transport of oil and condensate. Humpback whale recovery could be put in jeopardy with the approval of Northern Gateway; humpbacks can often be found bubble-net feeding at the entrance of the

proposed Douglas Channel tanker route. British Columbia's threatened population of northern resident killer whales, and the slowly increasing population of endangered fin whales, would also be put directly in harm's way if Northern Gateway proceeds. It is noteworthy that coastal large carnivores, such as grizzlies, wolves and spirit bears, which function much like marine mammals in their reliance on ocean based food sources, would be at risk as well.

Whales to the south will also be put at risk if the Trans Mountain expansion moves ahead. One example of this risk is the overlay of the tanker route onto large sections of the critical habitat for the endangered southern resident killer whales that reside in the transnational waters of British Columbia and Washington. This population faces ongoing multiple threats, including declining salmon stocks, physical and acoustic disturbance, and toxic contamination.

The southern residents are a small population hindered by previous loss of individuals that make them vulnerable to chance circumstances. Dropping birth rates, increasing death rates, and random events like disease, food shortages or oil spills can be irreversible.

Increased tanker activity could also potentially affect a geographically distinct cross-border population of grey whales termed the Eastern North Pacific Southern Group, which are currently listed under Canada's Species at Risk Act.

# wolves

In northeastern Alberta, woodland caribou are teetering on the edge of extinction because multiple human disturbances—most pressing, the tar sands development—have transformed their boreal habitat into a landscape that can no longer provide the food, cover and security they need to survive. The relentless destruction of the forest has conspired to deprive caribou of their life requisites while exposing them to levels of predation they did not evolve with and are incapable of adapting to. Consequently, caribou in and near the tar sands are on a long-term slide to extinction; not because of what wolves and other predators are doing but because of what humans have already done to destroy the caribou's livelihood.

However, egged on by a rapacious oil industry and ever-increasing global demands for fossil fuels, the Canadian government is scapegoating wolves for the decline of boreal caribou by encouraging a caribou recovery strategy centered on killing thousands of wolves. Of course, professing to protect endangered caribou while killing thousands of wolves as the exploitation of the tar sands continues to expand is foolishness, but it matters little to policymakers and industry that the recovery plan is not commensurate with the threats to the species' survival. What does matter to them is that oil production and the export of oil via pipelines remains unaffected, which might not be the case if the needs of non-human animals were considered.

Unmistakably, the government's conduct is a morally and scientifically bankrupt attempt to protect Alberta's industrial sacred cow: the tar sands. In essence, Canada's proposed strategy to "recover" dwindling populations of woodland caribou in the industrial tar sands favors the slaughter of wolves over any consequential protection, enhancement, or expansion of caribou habitat. Essentially, wolves and caribou have become casualties of rampant and unbridled tar sands and pipeline developments. Politicians have decided that industrial activities have primacy over the conservation needs of endangered caribou (and frankly, all things living).

Clearly, the caribou recovery strategy is not based on ecological principles, available science, or any recognizable environmental ethic. Rather, it represents an ideology on the part of advocates for industrial exploitation of our environment, which subsumes all other principles to economic growth, always at the expense of ecological integrity. Accordingly, the human economy grows at the competitive exclusion of non-human species. The real cost of Alberta's tar sands development, which includes the potential transport of oil by the Keystone XL, Northern Gateway, and Trans Mountain pipelines is being borne by wolves, caribou, and other wild species. In doing so, it blatantly contradicts the lesson Aldo Leopold taught us so well: the basis of sound conservation is not merely pragmatic; it is also ethical.

*Three pack members make their presence known. When human development pushed woodland caribou to the brink, wolves shouldered the blame.*



A grizzly ventures down to the water in search of a meal. Brown and black bears alike depend on the diminishing salmon runs.

## conclusion

Tar sands cheerleaders try hard to convince Canadians that we can become an "energy superpower" while maintaining our country's environment. They are, of course, wrong. Thousands of wolves and our dwindling "wolves of the sea" (killer whales) will be just some of the casualties along the way. Politicians and industry will find more opportunity to feign empathy as Canadians also bid farewell to populations of birds, amphibians, whales, and other mammals that will be lost as collateral damage from tar sands and pipeline developments. How much of North America's irreplaceable natural legacy will we allow to be sacrificed at the altar of oil?

Why is there so little concern about the pain, fear, suffering, and even death that wildlife will endure if the Keystone XL, Northern Gateway, and Trans Mountain pipelines projects are approved? The simple answer is that we place a higher priority on economic growth than on environmental health and the welfare of other species.

Human-caused environmental degradation and the associated suffering of animals should be of concern for everyone, including conservationists and animal welfarists. As a species, we must garner the political will to exercise self-control, while acting with humility and compassion. 🐾

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Chris Genovali is executive director of Raincoast Conservation Foundation ([www.raincoast.org](http://www.raincoast.org)), a Canadian non-profit organization using research to protect the lands, waters and wildlife of coastal British Columbia. Paul C. Paquet is Raincoast's senior scientist.



Larry Travis

# FENCE MADE OF SCENTS MAY HELP WOLVES STEER CLEAR

By David Ausband and Mike Mitchell

By the 1930s, gray wolves (*Canis lupus*) had been extirpated in the Rocky Mountains. Natural recolonization from Canada into Montana, as well as reintroductions to Idaho and Yellowstone National Park brought back the wolves—but also the conflicts with livestock producers.

Generally, in the Rockies, wolves that prey on domestic livestock are killed by government agencies or private landowners. While these actions typically stop depredations in the short-term, wolf packs generally reestablish within one year and livestock predation often continues. Most tools currently available for nonlethal control of wolves are short-lived in their effectiveness, as well, or require constant human presence.

Wolves, like most canids worldwide, use scent-marking (deposits of urine, scat, and scratches at conspicuous locations) to establish territories on the landscape and avoid intraspecific conflict. We hypothesized that human-deployed scent-marks consisting of scat and urine (i.e., "biofence") could be used to manipulate wolf pack movements in Idaho.

We tested the effectiveness of biofencing within three wolf pack territories near Garden Valley, Idaho, from June to late August, 2010 and 2011. Each year, we deployed approximately 65 km of biofence, consisting of a primary line of feces and urine and an offset secondary line of additional feces and urine running parallel to the primary line. Overall, we used 440 scats and 11.4 liters of urine collected in winter 2009/2010, and 505 scats and 12.0 liters of urine collected in winter 2010/2011, from wolves other than those in the resident packs.

## RESULTS

Location data of satellite collared wolves in 2010 showed little to no trespass of the biofence, even though the excluded areas were used by the packs in previous summers.

Two of the packs either did not trespass or trespassed less than expected given historic home range data during 2010 and 2011. The data suggested that these wolves approached the biofence, and even walked along it, but then returned in a direction toward the center of their territory rather than trespass the biofence.

In addition, sign surveys at predicted rendezvous sites in areas excluded by our biofence yielded little to no recent wolf use of those areas. We deployed a biofence between a resident wolf pack's rendezvous site and a nearby active sheep grazing allotment totaling 2,400 animals. This pack had killed sheep every year since 2006, as well as one guard dog in 2006; they were not implicated in any depredations in the summer of 2010, even though their rendezvous site was in close proximity to the sheep.

In 2011, wolves in two of the packs demonstrated little to no trespass of the biofence. Wolves in the third pack, however, particularly the alpha female, showed little aversion to trespassing the biofence.

Our results suggest the biofence is effective for manipulating the movements of most, but not all wolves. Additional studies will look at the potential for total exclusion via more frequent refreshing, an adequate buffer distance (2-3 km) from the area to be excluded, and the use of automated howling devices. 🐾

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*David Ausband and Mike Mitchell of the Montana Wildlife Cooperative Research Unit were recipients of a Christine Stevens Wildlife Award to study the effectiveness of "biofencing"—natural scent barriers—to keep wolves away from livestock and out of harm's way.*

*On snowy ground in Glacier National Park, the crew collected wolf scat to use in the biofence study the following summer.*

# TEXAS SCIENCE TEACHER EMPLOYS HUMANE EDUCATION TO ENERGIZE STUDENTS

by Nancy Kellum Brown



*Nancy Kellum Brown strives to make science fun. A few of her students at Children's University show off their creativity.*

**WHEN I BECAME A SCIENCE TEACHER,** I was excited about the opportunity to educate students about this incredible world we inhabit. I have the greatest job in the world! I get to teach really interesting topics, work with remarkable young minds, and be a part of many educational journeys. Most importantly, I hope to have a positive influence on these valuable future innovators. However, with my job comes the struggle of balancing traditional scientific teaching methods with the desperate need to teach students compassion, respect for all living things, and the importance of being an advocate for change.

I teach at an elementary school, Children's University, that emphasizes its science program. We believe in hands-on learning in a collaborative environment, which I strongly advocate for science. The students have traditionally been introduced to

dissecting animal organs in the fourth grade. I knew this when I accepted the position and thought I was willing to continue the practice.

As the months passed, I noticed myself procrastinating when it came to dissecting. I constantly struggled with how I could teach the students about conservation of life, and yet continue to dissect animals. Several questions kept going through my mind: Is the life of that animal less valuable than the lesson I have to teach? What is this teaching my students about the value of life? Will my students really gain more knowledge by dissecting instead of an alternative activity?

I felt strongly about my beliefs and decided to talk to my principal. I explained how I was feeling about the lessons and asked if I could stop dissecting and use alternative teaching strategies. Thankfully, she agreed and has allowed me to replace the lessons. With the progression of technology and the desire to protect animal welfare, new tools—such as digital dissection software—can be used in the classroom to achieve these goals. The software provides a very realistic dissection experience and allows the steps to be repeated digitally for teaching



Photos by Nancy Kellum Brown



exercises. The software can also be used for focused individual work or in a group setting.

Our sixth grade class has usually dissected sheep brains during the Life Science unit about the brain. Now, each student makes a model of a human brain out of salt dough, paints and labels each section of the brain, and creates a key to correspond with the model that explains the function of each section. The students enjoy the project!

Students also love having animals in the classroom. Last semester, we received two little frogs from a student who wanted to donate his pet frogs to our Science Lab. He knew they would be well cared for. These cute little frogs were African Dwarfs and were about an inch long. The student had them for a couple of years, so I figured we had two or three more years to enjoy them. Unfortunately, within a few months, both frogs died. My students were very upset about the demise of the frogs so we used this as a learning opportunity.

The students were asked to research the African Dwarf frogs and their natural habitat. They were surprised to learn that they were primarily from the Congo region of Africa, can live up to twenty years and grow up to 2½ inches long. We researched their diet in the wild and

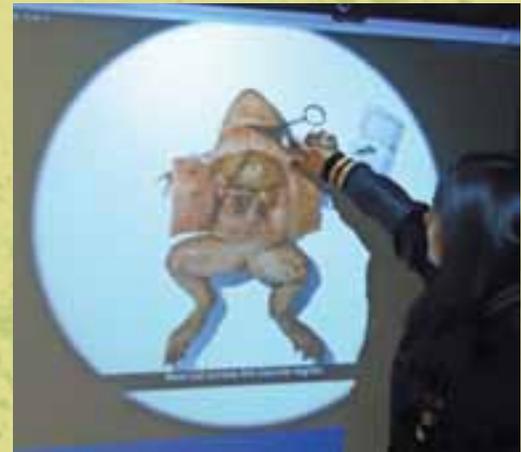
compared it to the diet we could provide from the frog pellets sold in stores. The students also researched their predators and members of their food web.

At the conclusion of the research and class discussion, I attempted to split the class into two groups for a debate on whether animals should be removed from their natural habitat for science classrooms. I knew it would be an uneven debate, so I planned to join the least popular side and play the devil's advocate. I was delighted to see that I was standing alone! I remained on the unpopular side and challenged the students to a heated debate. I found myself flabbergasted at the creative and thoughtful answers they provided on alternative ways to observe and study animals. They were so fervent about their feelings and concerns for the affected ecosystem and food web members. One student asked, "Whose idea was it to take two little frogs from the forest of Africa and put them in a 6" x 8" aquarium in Arlington, Texas?"

I hope my students are learning to consider the lives of the animals we so easily obtain at the local pet store and science supplier. For our little African Dwarfs, it was potentially 18 years of life in the wild, 1½ inches of growth, numerous offspring, health of other animals, and much more.

In the science classroom, the commonly utilized tools of animal dissections and the removal of animals from their natural habitats are a staple of the learning environment. However, I am on a mission to replace the traditional practices. My mission is to teach compassion, conservation and the importance of all species in this miraculous world! 🐾

*Top: Budding neuroscientists make models of the brain. Below: Studies have shown students catch on quicker with virtual—as opposed to real—frog dissection.*



**Children's University signed AWI's "Race to Stop Dissections" pledge, committing to discontinue all animal dissections for the next five years. In exchange, the school received free licenses for Digital Frog International's "Digital Frog 2.5" and "ScienceMatrix: Cell Structure and Function" software. There is still time for your school to take the pledge! For more info, visit [www.awionline.org/STOPdissections](http://www.awionline.org/STOPdissections).**



# LONGTIME FRIEND and NEW FARMER *join* ANIMAL WELFARE APPROVED *Program*

## *Shelby Grebenc*

Shelby Grebenc runs an Animal Welfare Approved (AWA) egg operation in Broomfield, Colorado. Every morning, she gets up at dawn to take care of her 130 pasture-raised Leghorns, Ameraucanas, Rhode Island Reds, and Plymouth Rocks—plus some “strays” that people have dropped on her doorstep... which, incidentally, is how the farm came by its colorful name: Happy Chapped Chicken Butt Farm.

“You can see my hens from the road, so people sometimes drive by at night and leave me chickens they no longer want,” Shelby explains. “I wake up and find an empty box and some chickens running around. One time the hens had lost all their tail feathers and looked pretty sore. I helped them back to health and happiness, so Shelby’s Happy Chapped Chicken Butt Farm seemed right.”

The laying hens at the farm produce around 28–56 dozen eggs a week, and it takes Shelby about an hour each morning to feed them and put out fresh water, then collect, clean and box the eggs. After her budding egg business is squared away, she goes to her “second job” at Rocky Top Middle School. Shelby isn’t a teacher, however. She’s a student. Currently in seventh grade, Shelby—at 12 years of age—is far and away the youngest farmer in the United States to have gained AWA certification.

Youth notwithstanding, Shelby is actually a veteran when it comes to raising chickens, having tended the family’s chickens since she was six. What began as a child’s desire to hang out with the flock and be useful to her parents turned into a more serious endeavor when her mother developed multiple sclerosis a few years ago. Though “just a kid,” Shelby started thinking about what she could do to help out with expenses. Her solution: Start an egg business.

Her first step was to get financing. Seeing as a bank might balk at lending money to an entrepreneur not yet out of elementary school, Shelby appealed to a source with a more relaxed lending policy; at the age of 10, she secured a \$1,000 loan from her grandmother. With that, she was on her way and Happy Chapped Chicken Butt Farm was born. (Her grandmother has since been repaid.) Today, the business is going strong. If on rare occasions her father covers for her, it is still Shelby who runs the show. She sells her eggs from home, to neighbors, and at area farmers’ markets.

Shelby first learned about AWI’s Animal Welfare Approved program from a neighbor and decided she wanted her hens to have the distinction of being raised with the highest animal welfare standards. “I wanted people to know my animals are being treated properly,” she says.

"I get lots of questions from my customers," she explains. "They don't always understand the difference between caged and pastured chickens. I think it is important that chickens get to be chickens. They have to be able to fly, scratch, peck, take dirt baths and react with one another. If chickens don't get a chance to do these things they are not going to be happy." Both compassionate and wise beyond her years, AWA farmer Shelby Grebenc works hard to keep her birds content—even those who come to her missing the occasional tail feather.



Each dawn, Shelby abandons her own nest to gather eggs and check on her flock of 130 pasture-raised laying hens. (Photos by David R Jennings)

## CAROLE MORISON

When last we caught up with Carole Morison (see Summer 2010 AWI Quarterly), she and husband Frank were out of the chicken business. Famously, they had walked away after more than two decades raising birds under (increasingly burdensome) contracts for Perdue on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Her mounting awareness of the absurdity of it all and efforts to buck the system earned her a starring role in the Academy Award-nominated documentary *Food, Inc.*, in which she gave viewers an inside look at the industrial system and what it does to both chickens and farmers.

On their decision to break free, Carole now says, "We had reached a point where we didn't feel like farmers anymore. We were completely at the mercy of the company in terms of every decision on the farm. Industrial systems are not set up for the benefit of the animals or the farmer—the company is the only one that thrives." After her appearance in *Food, Inc.*, Carole toured the country warning others of the pitfalls of industrial contract farming. Meanwhile, the big barns on her

property where 27,000 chickens once crowded together in lethargy and darkness lay empty.

Now, Carole and Frank are back in business on their own terms—with an Animal Welfare Approved egg operation. With the first flock of laying hens currently in production, their new Bird's Eye View Farm serves as a model for other farmers seeking to take wing from an oppressive, inhumane system. Demand for high-welfare, pasture-raised eggs is growing rapidly, and the Morisons already have interested buyers lined up.

The Morisons' transition from an industrial indoor system to pasture-based management was actually made easier by using the farm's existing infrastructure. They adapted one of the houses that once held thousands upon thousands of birds to create something spacious and comfortable—removing the company-mandated black-out curtains, installing perches and nest boxes, and cutting pop holes to allow the chickens to range onto surrounding pasture at their leisure. Moveable mesh fencing surrounding the house allows the flock of 500 Rhode Island Reds continuous access to fresh range, as they roam and forage as chickens are meant to do.

Carole says AWA certification was "a natural fit," as "the only food label that guarantees high-welfare production, outdoors on independent family farms." AWA Program Director Andrew Gunther was equally pleased. "We are delighted that Carole and her husband, Frank, have chosen to certify their new pastured poultry operation with Animal Welfare Approved," he says. "The innovative adaptation of their existing poultry housing is truly resourceful, and provides an exciting new model for other farmers to move to high-welfare, pasture-based systems without a huge capital outlay." 🐾



Carole Morison gives her birds a little TLC—something she couldn't do when raising chickens in dark barns in accordance with industrial dictates. (Photo by Frank Morison)



Mike Suarez

Though tight-lipped for now, this goat on Animal Welfare Approved Chaffin Family Orchards in Oroville, CA, may share a unique accent with others in the herd.

## No Kidding! Goats Have Accents

RESEARCHERS HAVE FOUND that goats develop their own “accents” as they grow older and move among social groups. The study, published in the journal *Animal Behavior*, shows that a goat’s environment affects his or her calls. These findings challenge the scientific community’s widely-held belief that most mammals’ voices are genetically predetermined. Until now, scientists were only aware of a few species capable of developing unique vocalizations based on their social surroundings, including humans, dolphins, and elephants. However, this research suggests that many more mammals may be capable of developing unique voices.

Perhaps more importantly, the conclusions drawn from this new research underscore the significant cognitive abilities of goats and other farm animals, as well as the value of socialization opportunities for the animals. Goats are generally spared the worst horrors of factory farming in the United States, but millions of other highly social and intelligent animals (such as gestating sows, confined in individual crates so narrow that they cannot turn around) are systematically denied the opportunity to socialize and form groups. As our understanding of animal cognition improves, so will our ability to advocate for better animal welfare. 🐾

## Country of Origin Labeling Reduces Long Distance Transport of Farm Animals

RESEARCH PERFORMED BY AWI SUGGESTS that Country of Origin Labeling (“COOL”) may reduce the suffering of animals by curbing the long-distance transport of animals from Canada and Mexico. In 2008, the United States adopted this mandatory labeling scheme to facilitate informed purchasing decisions by consumers.

AWI has found that since the start of COOL, many U.S. slaughterhouses have stopped processing Canadian or Mexican livestock because of the increased cost of segregating the foreign animals. This has benefitted farm animals by dramatically reducing the number of live animals transported into the country. For example, the number of pigs imported into the United States from Canada steadily decreased from 10 million in 2007 to 5.8 million in 2011. Similarly, the number of live cattle imported from Canada dropped from 1.4 million in 2007 to 0.7 million in 2011.

COOL has been so effective in reducing the number of animals brought into the United States that Canada and Mexico complained to the WTO, which found in November 2011 that COOL violated rules against technical barriers to trade. The Obama administration is currently appealing the decision. COOL is supported by farmers and consumer groups, but opposed by large meat companies. 🐾

## PRESIDENT HONORS AWA FARMERS

Chad and Jodi Ray, owners of Animal Welfare Approved Ray Family Farms, were honored by the Obama administration as “Champions of Change” in connection with the president’s Winning the Future initiative. Chad and Jodi, who pasture-raise laying hens, beef cattle, and pigs in Louisburg, North Carolina, were singled out for their commitment to “animal welfare, heritage livestock breeds, and environmental stewardship.” They accepted the award along with six other individuals at the White House on April 12. 🐾

# Industry Pumps Banned Antibiotics into Farm Animals

IN A JOINT STUDY, scientists at Johns Hopkins' Center for a Livable Future (CLF) and Arizona State University found evidence suggesting that a class of antibiotics previously banned by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for poultry production is still in use. The antibiotics detected—fluoroquinolones—were found in 8 of 12 samples of feather meal in a multi-state study, published in the peer-reviewed journal *Environmental Science and Technology*. The scientists

also found caffeine, the active ingredients of Tylenol and Benadryl, and—in a companion study published in another journal—traces of arsenic in the feather meal.

In the U.S., antibiotics are added to the feed and water of industrially raised poultry and other farm animals, primarily to spur faster growth. In the case of poultry, once ingested such substances bioaccumulate

in the birds' feathers. After the birds are slaughtered, their feathers are ground up to make feather meal, used as a protein feed supplement for cattle in feedlots, as well as pigs, farmed fish, and other birds. So in addition to antibiotics the latter animals are purposely fed, they potentially receive a second “boost” from the feather meal.

The fluoroquinolones found in the study are broad-spectrum antibiotics that can be used to treat many types of infections, and are considered “critically important” by the World Health Organization. After a prolonged battle with Bayer (the manufacture of the fluoroquinolone, Cipro), FDA banned fluoroquinolone use in poultry feed in 2005. A primary impetus for the ban was an alarming increase in the rate of fluoroquinolone resistance among *Campylobacter* bacteria—implicated in human intestinal illnesses.

But the present study indicates the ban is not so airtight. David Love, CLF project director and lead author of the study, says that “The discovery of certain antibiotics in feather meal strongly suggests the continued use of these drugs [in chicken feed]....” adding that, “The public health community has long been frustrated with the unwillingness

of FDA to effectively address what antibiotics are fed to food animals.”

To illustrate this point, in March, a federal district court in New York ruled that FDA must crack down on non-medical farm usage of penicillin and tetracycline because of dangers to human health, pursuant its own 35-year-old rule banning the practice. FDA has never enforced the rule because of blowback from the farm industry and pharmaceutical lobbies.

In April, in an attempt to quell the growing concerns, FDA published a guidance for industry that would require farmers and ranchers to obtain a prescription from a veterinarian before using antibiotics on farm animals. However, the agency is depending on drug manufacturers' cooperation to discourage non-therapeutic uses, and for the companies to make voluntary changes in their labeling so as to remove recommendations for “production uses” (i.e., increased weight gain and accelerated growth).

Not all remained convinced the new guidance will be effective. The Union of Concerned Scientists and the Center for Science in the Public Interest both issued statements expressing doubts. CFL study co-author Keeve Nachman did the same: “Based on what we've learned, I'm concerned that the new FDA guidance documents, which call for voluntary action from industry, will be ineffectual. By looking into feather meal, and uncovering a drug banned [in 2005], we have very little confidence that the food animal production industry can be left to regulate itself.” 🐾



Feather-light...but loaded down with antibiotics and other foreign substances if plucked from an industrial chicken.



Feedlot cows line up to eat. Feathers added to their food may breed antibiotic-resistant bacteria and reduce the drugs' effectiveness in treating humans.

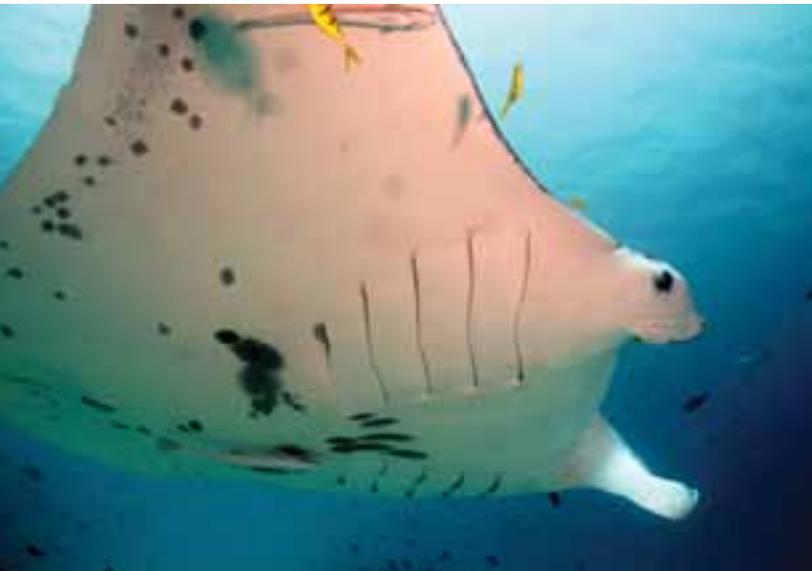
TomFish

NDSU Ag Comm

## Rays at Risk from Medicine Hunters

**ALARM BELLS ARE RINGING** for the fate of all manta and mobula ray species because of increased demand for their fins and gill rakers—the apparatus by which they filter their food. Gill rakers are promoted among some Chinese communities as a cure for a host of ailments, and due to that nation’s rapid economic growth, demand is soaring. According to a recent report entitled *Manta Ray of Hope: The Global Threat to Manta and Mobula Rays*, by Shark Savers and WildAid, the annual gill raker market is valued at \$11.3 million—a fraction of the more than \$100 million in tourism that the animals generate each year. (The majestic and huge manta ray is considered a prized find by scuba divers of tropical waters.)

The size of global manta and mobula ray populations are currently unknown, with leading experts reluctant to even hazard an educated guess at numbers. Similarly, little is known about their biology and behavior—but what is known is troubling for conservationists: They are slow to mature, are long-lived and reproduce very slowly, birthing as few as a single pup every two to five years. The report authors hope to draw attention to the rays’ plight, appeal for their protection, and offer non-consumptive alternatives to the local communities in order to provide an economic incentive to halt the killing. 🐾



Boris Bialek

*A manta ray swims near an island off the coast of West Papua, Indonesia. Rays are being targeted in increasing numbers for their fins and gill rakers to make medicine.*

## AMAZON AXES WHALE SALES

Online retailer [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) removed whale meat products from its Japanese website in February after a single day of public protests and a stern rebuke from the U.S. Commissioner to the International Whaling Commission (IWC). A December 2011 study by the Environmental Investigation Agency and Humane Society International had found 147 whale products for sale on [www.amazon.jp](http://www.amazon.jp), a wholly owned subsidiary of the U.S.-based company. The sale of the products contravened the company’s policy not to advertise endangered species. Importation of whale products into many countries would also have been illegal. The company later followed up with a company-wide ban on the sale of “shark, whale, or dolphin.” 🐾

## AWI Attends Beantown Seafood Show

**AWI’S MARIKO TERASAKI AND KATE O’CONNELL** took part in the Boston Seafood Show, March 11 through 13. The show was attended by more than 900 seafood supply companies from more than 120 countries. This is the second time the pair have attended the meeting, which provides a great opportunity to advocate for whales and interact with fishing and whaling interests—often the same people, as the two industries are inextricably linked in whaling nations. As case in point, Joji Morishita, the former alternate commissioner for Japan at the IWC, attended this year on behalf of the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to promote Japanese seafood and allay concerns about radiation in fish sold to the United States. Notably absent was Kristjan Loftsson, Chief Executive of Hvalur hf, the Icelandic fin whaling company and an IWC regular. Mr. Loftsson is also deputy chairman of HB Grandi, Iceland’s leading fishing company, and last year was part of a very large contingent of Icelandic fishing companies promoting the sustainability of Icelandic fish. (See next page for more on Hvalur hf and HB Grandi.) 🐾

# CLOSING MARKETS TO WHALERS

**AWI PREVIOUSLY REPORTED** on our efforts to dissuade tourists from the United States and other countries from bringing whale meat purchased in Iceland back home (See Winter 2011 *AWI Quarterly*). Joined now by almost 100 other NGOs around the world, we are urging a number of governments whose citizens travel in significant numbers to Iceland to warn travelers that importing whale products is illegal. Already, the United Kingdom, Germany and the United States have taken important first steps.

We are also asking the governments to press Iceland to comply with its obligations under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, by providing information to tourists in appropriate languages that they cannot take whale meat home legally. A shocking one-third of minke whales hunted in Iceland are consumed by overseas visitors and we hope that these awareness-raising initiatives will put a significant dent in those sales.

In addition, for more than a year, AWI has documented the strong corporate and familial links between Iceland's sole fin whaling company, Hvalur hf, and HB Grandi, its biggest fishing company and a major exporter of fish to 34 countries, including the United States. Since March 2011, more than 2.6 million pounds of HB Grandi fish have cleared U.S. customs.

Using state-of-the-art import databases and old-fashioned gumshoe techniques, we now know which U.S. distributors and retailers buy HB Grandi fish. Much of it is imported by Rhode Island-based Legacy Seafoods, Inc., identified by many in the industry as "HB Grandi's main broker in the U.S."

Legacy supplies more than 17,000 customer locations nationwide, and its retail and food service customers

include many leading grocery chains. Hundreds of thousands of Americans could unwittingly be eating Icelandic fish caught by whalers. If they knew, we believe many would object.

AWI is writing to each major retailer to warn them of a potential consumer backlash from their sales of fish caught by whalers. We want them to state publicly their opposition to Iceland's commercial whaling and trade in whale products, and commit to ceasing further purchases of seafood from any company that buys HB Grandi fish. Both Whole Foods Market and Trader Joe's, along with major U.S. distributor, United Natural Foods, Inc., (UNFI) are among those we identified as having bought fish from Legacy in the past year.

When we contacted UNFI, it claimed not to have purchased any Legacy products that were produced by HB Grandi; we have sought clarification on this and other issues, but have not received it. Trader Joe's said that it had terminated its contract with Legacy, but to date has not responded to our request to implement a "whaling-free" purchasing policy.

Whole Foods has already severed ties and committed to ceasing further purchases.

After AWI contacted Whole Foods, it took a proactive stand, announcing that its stores have "stopped buying seafood from this supplier in Iceland and have moved our source of cod for the frozen product we offer to domestically produced cod." Whole Foods has committed to a whaling-free purchasing policy, and stated that it would also make sure that it is not buying any fresh cod from the Hvalur Group. All of Whole Foods' Icelandic seafood vendors in the future will be asked to provide a written affidavit stating that they or their company are not involved in whaling. 🐾

# Kratie Declaration Offers Hope for Mekong Dolphins



Mekong River Irrawaddy Dolphin/Gerry Ryan

**THE MEKONG RIVER IRRAWADDY DOLPHIN'S ROUND AND BEAKLESS HEAD IS STRIKING**—reminding some of the iconic Pac-Man. But unlike the enduring video game character, this dolphin has been in steady decline since the 1970s. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) lists the Irrawaddy dolphin's Mekong River subpopulation (*Orcaella brevirostris*) as critically endangered, and they are in imminent danger of extinction; experts estimate that fewer than 70 individuals remain.

The Irrawaddy dolphin is a euryhaline species—one that can survive in a range of salinities. While typically oceanic, this unique physiological characteristic naturally extends the species' habitat range into coastal waters, brackish lakes, and freshwater rivers. Subpopulations of Irrawaddy dolphins are found in areas from the Bay of Bengal to New Guinea and the Philippines. The Mekong River dolphin, one of only three freshwater subpopulations, currently inhabits a 118-mile freshwater stretch of the Mekong River in central Cambodia and into southern Laos.

While the Mekong River dolphins have historically displayed a mutualistic relationship with traditional fishermen (the dolphins have been known to drive fish into nets for rewards), the dolphins have succumbed to human-wildlife conflicts in the last few decades brought on by modern fishing methods, habitat degradation, and capture

for the entertainment industry. Post-mortem examinations of adults indicate that gillnet entanglement is the main cause of death. Due to the increasing levels of bycatch and habitat loss in recent years, it is suspected that the Mekong subpopulation will face a further 30 percent reduction in size over a period of three generations.

In fact, the major threat across all subpopulations of Irrawaddy dolphins is bycatch. The IUCN lists five of the seven subpopulations as critically endangered, primarily due to drowning in fish nets. The ability to live in fresh water often brings these dolphins closer to human-influenced areas, where they are accidentally captured and drowned in gillnets, dragnets, and bottom-set crabnets.

Even though these dolphins have historically thrived in areas with humans, it is becoming all too clear that they no longer coexist with us so easily. The IUCN lists Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam as the dolphins' native countries; in fact, in the 1970s, their range had extended beyond the Mekong into the Sekong River and its tributaries, and stretched south of Kratie into central Cambodia to Phnom Penh. However, dolphins now only rarely, if ever, ascend the rivers north of the Mekong's confluence with the Sekong River. Downstream from Kratie to Phnom Penh, children were unaware of the existence of the dolphins, even though locals reported observing dolphins every day in both low and high water seasons before 1975 (Isabel Beasley, pers. comm.). As a further indication of the significant decrease in range over the last few decades, no Mekong dolphin has been sighted in Vietnam for nearly four decades other than a single carcass found in a fishing-net near the Cambodia/Vietnam border in 2002.

In general, to maintain populations, it is recommended that yearly removals of small cetaceans—which include all deaths and capture for captivity—should not exceed 1.2 percent of the population size. On average, four Mekong River dolphins die each year from gillnet entanglement. Assuming a high total population estimate of 69 (less than 50 of whom are mature individuals), four deaths represents 5.8 percent of this population. Given that even a single death per year exceeds the recommended level of yearly removal, it is clear that the current rate of incidental mortality would lead to the population's demise.

Despite these bleak numbers, international bodies, a number of local organizations with support from their communities, and the Cambodian government are now collaborating to prevent the extirpation of this particular subpopulation. In 2004, after the IUCN listed the Mekong River dolphins as critically endangered, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) transferred the Irrawaddy dolphin from Appendix II to Appendix I, forbidding all commercial trade in the species. The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals also lists various populations of Irrawaddy dolphins on either its Appendix I or Appendix II of threatened species. The Mekong dolphins are listed under Appendix I, and the Parties are encouraged to provide immediate protection and support research related to their conservation.

Recognizing the need to go beyond the protections afforded by CITES, especially given that most deaths are due to incidental take and not for trade purposes, Cambodia is considering a new fisheries law and royal decree to protect and conserve all cetaceans, including Irrawaddy dolphins, in the country's eastern provinces—which includes a segment of the Mekong River above Kratie corresponding with the dolphins' range. While other range states for the species—Bangladesh, India, Laos, Malaysia, and Thailand—prohibit the direct taking of cetaceans, Cambodia's recently proposed fishing regulation goes further toward conservation by banning fish cages and gillnets, thereby addressing the bycatch issue.

This progressive decree, introduced in March 2012 by Cambodia's Tourism, Agriculture, and Transportation ministries, comes on the heels of the January 10–12 Mekong Irrawaddy Dolphin Conservation Workshop, held in Kratie and supported through funding by AWI. At the workshop, Cambodian and international experts as well as government officials—including the Fisheries Administration of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries—collaborated to produce 25 recommendations aimed at understanding and conserving the Mekong River dolphins.

The recommendations elucidate needed resources and provide guidelines to facilitate and help standardize studies concerning mortality causes, population dynamics, behavior and ecology, and fisheries management. While there are a multitude of steps to be taken, the recommendations are based on practical needs that can and must be met in order to understand the problem and formulate strategies.

At the close of the workshop, three parties—the Commission for Dolphin Conservation and Development of Mekong River Dolphin Ecotourism Zone, the Fisheries Administration, and the World Wide Fund for Nature—signed the “Kratie Declaration on the Conservation of the Mekong River Irrawaddy Dolphins,” committing to develop a strategy for implementing the recommendations and to reconvene in January 2013 to review progress.

Conservation efforts must be conducted with a level of sensitivity that not only considers the animals' intrinsic value, but also acknowledges other powerful factors such as politics, economics, and the necessary support from local fishermen and other residents who share the environment. Thus, these recommendations were made with the recognition of the economic role that the dolphins play in northeastern Cambodia as the principal tourist attraction.

This acknowledgment of the relationship between animal protection and collaboration with local communities will lead, hopefully, to mutually supportive fundraising, effective law enforcement, and encouragement of livelihoods that do not pose a threat to the dolphins. Another vital outcome of this effort is a shared sense of urgency and optimism—the latter of which has been absent for far too long—that there is a future for the Mekong River dolphins. 🐾



*Officials sign the Kratie Declaration on the Conservation of the Mekong River Irrawaddy Dolphins following the Mekong Irrawaddy Dolphin Conservation Workshop, held in Kratie, Cambodia, in January.*

## Heroic “Equipment”?

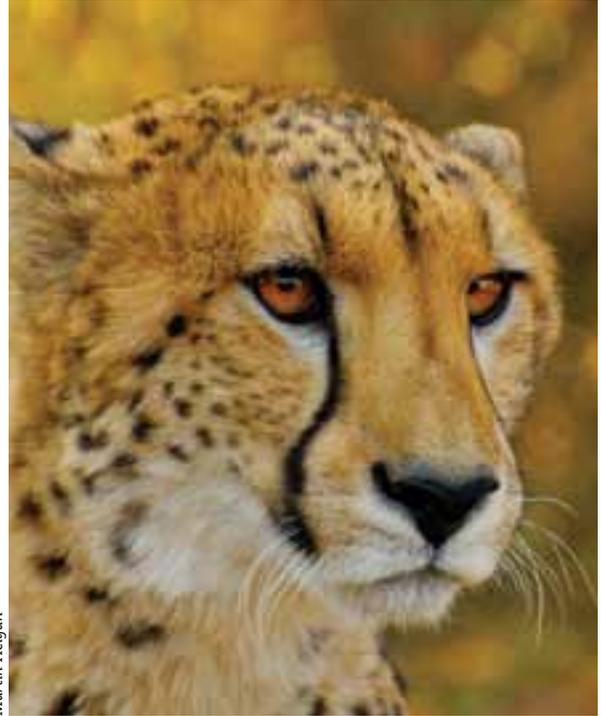
**THIS PAST YEAR HAS BROUGHT HEIGHTENED ATTENTION** to a very special class of veteran—the Military Working Dog (MWD)—especially when it was reported that an MWD was part of the team that roused out Osama Bin Laden! MWDs put their lives on the line to protect our soldiers in combat zones and protect us at home through service within many federal agencies. However, while regarded as “more than equipment” and “true heroes” for their contributions, they are not usually treated as such upon retirement.

While MWDs are now eligible for adoption, there is no provision for returning those serving outside the United States to a home base. Thus, any potential U.S. adopter must pay the steep costs of transporting the dog stateside. Moreover, adopting families may face hundreds or thousands of dollars in veterinary care for problems related to the dogs’ time in the military.

To rectify this injustice, the Canine Members of the Armed Forces Act—H.R. 4103, introduced by Rep. Walter Jones, Jr. (R-NC), and S. 2134, introduced by Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT)—specifies that MWDs are not to be considered as mere “equipment.” The bill reclassifies them as canine members of the armed forces, allows for their transport back to the United States, and authorizes the Secretary of Defense to contract (without expense to the federal government) for a system of veterinary care for adopted MWDs. 🐾

## Working to Get Animal Welfare into Federal Budget

**TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITY** to testify before Congressional committees as they begin to determine spending levels for Fiscal Year 2013 (beginning October 2012), AWI asked for continued support for the U.S. Department of Justice’s National Animal Cruelty and Animal Fighting Initiative, and for the agencies that are battling white-nose syndrome, the fungus that is killing bats across the United States. AWI also submitted written testimony requesting that Congress provide the resources to enable the U.S. Department of Agriculture to do a better job enforcing the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act and the Horse Protection Act, and not to spend money to license random source Class B dog and cat dealers or inspect horse slaughter plants, nor to allow the destruction of healthy wild horses and burros. 🐾



Martin Heigan

*Big cats like this cheetah belong in the wild, not in someone’s backyard cage. In the U.S., private ownership of such animals is largely unregulated.*

## HOUSE CATS DON’T ROAR

**Who can forget the tragedy** and panic in Ohio last year when the private owner of 56 wild animals, including a number of big cats, released them into the surrounding community? As often happens in such scenarios, most of the animals (49) were killed. Sadly, this was no isolated occurrence. In the past 11 years, incidents in the United States involving captive big cats—tigers, lions, cougars, leopards, jaguars, cheetahs, and lion/tiger hybrids—have resulted in 21 human deaths, 246 maulings, 253 escapes, 143 big cats deaths, and 128 confiscations.

The breeding and sale of big cats as “pets” has long been a problem in this country, where an estimated 10,000 to 20,000 large cats are privately owned. These animals present a threat to public safety and are often mistreated and neglected. Reps. Howard “Buck” McKeon (R-CA) and Loretta Sanchez (D-CA) have introduced H.R. 4122, the Big Cats and Public Safety Protection Act, to prohibit the private possession of big cats except at facilities such as accredited zoos and sanctuaries. H.R. 4122 also addresses the growing concern that these cats—including threatened and endangered species—are being killed to facilitate the illegal trade in their parts. 🐾

## AWI Pushes Animal Welfare in Illinois

**IN MARCH**, AWI staff led efforts on several animal protection measures before the Illinois General Assembly. HB 1607—a bill to prohibit tail docking of cattle, the inhumane practice of partially amputating the animals' tails—was approved by the House Business and Occupational Licenses Committee. The Farm Bureau worked hard to defeat this widely supported measure, and one dairy farmer testified against the bill, offering no scientific justification for docking tails but insisting that it was done for the welfare of the animals (a claim debunked by AWI's testimony). The bill's sponsor, Committee Chairman Robert Rita, also testified in favor of the bill. As of press time, no date had been set for a vote.

The Illinois House overwhelmingly approved HB 4119, a bill making it illegal to sell, possess or distribute shark fins. The bill awaits action in the Senate. If passed, this measure would reinforce federal legislation banning shark finning and the importation of fins.

The annual legislative effort to revive horse slaughter in the state, HB 5382, never made it out of committee. Given sponsor Rep. Jim Sacia's desire to restore horse slaughter in Illinois, it is highly likely he will try again next session. The Illinois House killed Rep. Sacia's other anti-animal welfare bill, HB 5143, which would have made it a crime to record undercover video at animal facilities. "Ag-gag" bills such as this one have surfaced in various states recently, and two (Iowa and Utah) have passed. These laws have a chilling effect on efforts to expose egregious animal cruelty.

Unfortunately, a bill to prohibit dog tethering also died in an Illinois House committee. 🐾



Cathy Liss

A tail-docked cow on a Pennsylvania farm. The American Veterinary Medical Association opposes routine tail docking of cattle, citing its lack of benefits and potential to cause distress and chronic pain.

## NC Night Hunts Darken Prospects for Red Wolf Recovery

**A NEW RULE PROPOSED** by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) would allow round-the-clock hunting of coyotes and feral pigs throughout North Carolina. Hunting under cover of darkness with the use of artificial lights, as well as hunting on private land using archery equipment, would be permitted under this proposal.

If approved, night hunting is likely to result in many more accidental shootings of the state's endangered population of red wolves (*Canis rufus*). Red wolves are difficult to distinguish from coyotes, even in daylight. Already, shooting is the number one cause of death for the wolves, which may number no more than 110 in North Carolina and are currently protected within a five-county recovery area on the Albemarle Peninsula. Night hunting of coyotes and feral pigs is also more likely to cause intense suffering—since quick kills are less likely at night—as well as endanger hikers, campers, companion animals, and other unintended targets. 🐾

## RHODE ISLAND CONSIDERS BETTER PROTECTION OF FARM ANIMALS

**AWI staff traveled to Rhode Island** in February to testify in favor of S 2192 and S 2032, bills to ban tail docking of cattle and to create an online animal abuser registry. AWI also joined a coalition supporting S 2191, a bill to prohibit the cruel use of intensive confinement crates for calves raised for veal and gestating sows. S 2191 requires that these animals be housed in a manner that allows them to turn around freely, lie down, stand up, and fully extend their limbs. Several states have passed similar laws, and some large producers claim they are phasing out their use. 🐾

## Animal Abuse Abundant in Spite of AAALAC Accreditation

**THE MISSION** of the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International (AAALAC) is to “enhance the quality of research, teaching, and testing by promoting humane, responsible animal care and use,” and the organization awards accreditation to institutions that are deemed to “meet or exceed AAALAC standards” regarding animal care. However, it appears that a number of research institutions that have been cited repeatedly by U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) veterinary inspectors for apparent violations of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) are nonetheless accredited by AAALAC.

USDA inspection reports document hundreds of AWA citations at AAALAC-accredited research facilities. The following accredited institutions all were cited by USDA for apparent violations including failure to meet minimum requirements with respect to Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) responsibilities and provision of adequate veterinary care: Lovelace Respiratory Research Institute (LRRI), SUNY Downstate Medical Center, Wellesley College, UCLA, UCSF, UC Davis, University of Utah, Brandeis University, Princeton University, Harvard University’s New England Primate Research Center (NEPRC), University of Kansas Medical Center (KUMC), and University of Louisiana at Lafayette’s New Iberia Research Center (see “Forgotten Monkeys Die at Primate Research Facility,” Summer 2011 *AWI Quarterly*).

KUMC has remained accredited despite vast numbers of citations by USDA inspectors over the past four years. A 29-page report from just one 2009 USDA inspection of the facility cites myriad problems including failing to provide proper pain relief to animals following intrusive procedures such as craniotomies, subjecting nonhuman primates to multiple survival surgeries, and failing to provide for the needs of the primates who were observed actively plucking or stripping hair from their bodies and engaging in stereotypic behaviors such as flipping or swaying—many of whom were not provided enrichment under a generic exemption approved by the IACUC. KUMC signed a settlement agreement with USDA acknowledging



Willem van de Kerkhof

Above: a cotton-top tamarin. In February, a cotton-top tamarin at the New England Primate Research Center died due to dehydration—the fifth primate to die at the Center in the past 19 months.

some violations, but USDA inspectors have continued to cite the facility for its apparent ongoing failure to meet the minimum requirements under the law.

At Harvard’s NEPRC, inspectors discovered repeated instances of primates housed in cages significantly smaller than federally mandated. On two separate occasions monkeys died from dehydration because staff failed to ensure they had water. And in another flagrant blunder by personnel, a dead monkey in a cage wasn’t discovered until after the enclosure had been through a mechanical cage washer. Mishandling by staff apparently led to the death of one primate and another suffered a broken leg.

At UC Davis, a 2011 inspection report states that a primate with a history of progressively worsening medical and behavioral conditions was subjected to four studies before being euthanized, causing the animal “unnecessary discomfort, distress, and pain.” At LRRI, a report indicates that a dog died during a research activity due to inadequate oxygen flow through an anesthesia machine (after the machine had previously been involved in a near-death incident), and a Rhesus monkey choked to death struggling to free himself from a hook caught in his jacket. At UCLA, lab personnel physically blocked entry of USDA inspectors to a surgical area, and appear to have intentionally provided false information to the inspectors, according to USDA.

The overwhelming number of instances uncovered by USDA inspectors at AAALAC-accredited facilities suggests that AAALAC needs to be far more vigilant in its administration, and far less lackadaisical in pursuit of its stated mission to promote humane, responsible animal care. 🐾

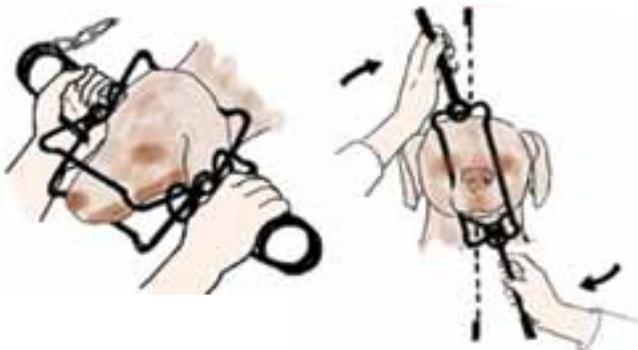
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For access to the detailed USDA documentation referred to in this article, see [www.awionline.org/USDAdata](http://www.awionline.org/USDAdata).

# Minnesota Hunters Push for Restrictions on Deadly Traps

A GROWING NUMBER OF HUNTERS IN MINNESOTA are supporting legislation currently pending in the state that would restrict the use of traps intended to catch and kill furbearing animals. The traps at issue are lethal “body-gripping” or “Conibear” type traps, which are powerful, spring-loaded devices with a pair of rectangular steel jaws. When the trap is triggered, the jaws are meant to close violently on the victim, breaking the animal’s neck and/or back. While designed to catch furbearing wildlife like raccoons, bobcats and beavers, these deadly traps catch and typically kill non-target animals as well. In addition, the traps often fail to strike as intended—thus leaving their victims to suffer protracted, excruciating deaths.

It is legal to set body-gripping traps on almost all public land in Minnesota. As a result, hunting dogs, who often run ahead to track down prey or pinpoint the precise location of animals, are falling victim to such traps. When a dog sticks his or her head in the trap—often baited with meat—it slams shut. In late December 2011, Jerry Noska was hunting ruffed grouse with his six-year-old English setter, Sue, when a Conibear trap broke her neck and took her life. That same month, Doug Snyder and his two teenage sons were walking along a forest road with their nine-year-old setter-Lab mix, Polka Dot, when she became stuck in a body-gripping trap just 60 yards away from them. They desperately tried to set her free but the trap’s jaws were closed too tightly around Polka Dot’s neck and head.



A Minnesota Trappers Association ad in the state's hunting and trapping regulations handbook offers instructions on how to free a dog from a trap. For frantic, injured dogs aided by panicked owners, however, the traps are usually fatal.

To end her suffering, they shot their beloved companion at point blank range. These two hunting dogs are among at least six reported to have been felled by traps in Minnesota since last fall. The number of hunting dogs killed as a result of being caught in Conibear traps is in all likelihood much higher since not all incidents are reported.

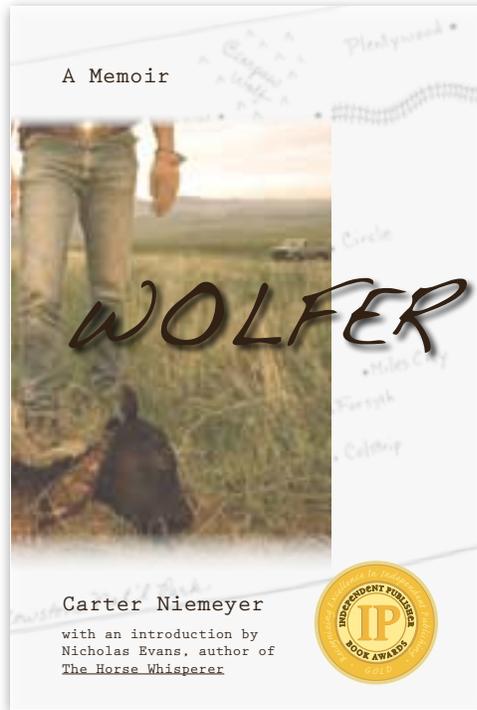
While the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) claims that the

number of dogs caught in Conibear traps is relatively small in relation to the number of traps set each year, MDNR wildlife chief Dennis Simon admits that the majority of such cases are, in fact, fatal. Legislation (H.F. No. 2243 and S.F. No. 1736) introduced in February of this year would require that Conibear type body-gripping traps be set at least five feet above the ground or completely submerged in water. The lead sponsors of the legislation, Sen. Chuck Wiger and Rep. John Ward, say they are not looking to ban body-gripping traps but instead hope that the legislation would serve to protect dogs and other pets who spend time in the same areas where such traps are set. While there are a number of hunters supporting the legislation, the Minnesota Trappers Association is opposing it—claiming that prohibiting the traps from being set on the ground would make them ineffective for catching most species of animals. This restriction, however, is not novel; 25 other states have already passed similar laws requiring body-gripping traps to be elevated off the ground, making it more difficult for dogs to reach them. 🐾



Jerry Noska of Staples, MN, with Chloe. His other hunting dog, Sue, was killed by a trap set in the Dry Sand Lake State Wildlife Management Area.

Brainerd Dispatch



## WOLFER: From Predator Control Agent to Predator Conservationist

*Wildlife consultant Camilla Fox interviews Carter Niemeyer, a former federal predator control agent and author of the award-winning *Wolfer: A Memoir*.*

CARTER NIEMEYER IS A WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST who started his career as a government trapper, and ended it working on wolf recovery in the northern Rockies. His much-lauded book, *Wolfer: A Memoir*, chronicles his years capturing, killing, tracking, and relocating wolves for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal Damage Control (later "Wildlife Services") program, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and examines the increasing societal polarity around wolf recovery.

*In your book, *Wolfer*, you talk about a significant career shift from having started doing predator control for the federal government to now working on wolf recovery in the northern Rockies in your "retirement." How and when did that shift take place?*

Working constantly in the arena of human/predator/livestock conflict resolution meant that I dealt with a lot of unpleasant situations—and in the middle of all this I learned quickly that wolves were often not responsible for all the dead livestock in a given area. Ranchers, politicians, and some of my own leadership in Wildlife Services, however, didn't want to hear it. I decided that to cover myself—and because I wanted to be accurate even when everyone else just wanted to blame wolves—I wanted to make sure my livestock depredation investigations were the best they could be and solidly justified wolf control, if that's what it came to. I never found solace in killing predators for no good reason. More and more I sensed what I was doing was for cultural and political reasons and decided that I would work toward better public communications through education, mentoring, and training of others who might experience the same problems I did.

*What is your view of the current controversy over wolf conservation in the United States? What do you believe are some of the root causes of this controversy that pits livestock producers and game hunters against wolf conservationists?*

This is clearly a culture clash where traditional Western practices such as livestock grazing and recreational hunting are feared to be under attack by federal wolf reintroduction into the NRM [Northern Rocky Mountain] region by big government and environmentalists. Writer Tim Egan put it bluntly not too long ago when he said the fear in rural America (he was referring to Oregon at the time) is that there will someday be more cappuccinos than cattle.

*From your experience, what do you think are the greatest misconceptions people have about wolves?*

I think it's fear. Most people, in their everyday lives, will never encounter a wolf—and have never seen one. But for some deep-seated, psychological reason they buy in to the fear-factor about wolves. Only two humans have been attacked and killed by wolves in the last 100 years or more and both of those people were not in the lower 48 states but in Canada and Alaska where over 65,000 wolves lived long before wolf reintroduction. It's a worn-out bit

of propaganda that wolves brought down from Canada are bigger and meaner than the ones that were here, and that they carry unusual, scary parasites. Compared to other causes of death to pets and livestock—and certainly humans—wolves should rate at the bottom of the list of things to worry about. Deer and elk are natural prey of wolves, but human hunters have decided they don't like the competition. I'm a hunter myself, but I don't get it. I don't worry about wolves a bit. It's a chance to see who's the better hunter that day.

*In **Wolfer**, you discuss some of the problems with the federal government's predator control program that operates under USDA's Wildlife Services—for whom you once worked. Please tell us about some of those concerns.*

My biggest single concern with Wildlife Services is that their field personnel need to document livestock losses by predators in a professional, transparent, and impartial manner. Too often I see Wildlife Services doing a shabby job of investigating, or outright misdiagnosing the real cause of death. These guys are under tremendous pressure from all levels to rubber-stamp livestock deaths as predator kills. Wildlife Services needs to be more concerned about its public image.

*What do you think of the Idaho Fish and Game Commission's recent announcement that it plans to expand commercial and recreational wolf trapping statewide?*

The biggest problem I see with legal wolf trapping is that much larger, stronger traps and snares can be legally used to capture wolves but at the same time put non-target species like elk, deer, livestock, pets, and other large predators at risk of being accidentally caught and injured.

*Some say that the divisiveness between wolf haters and wolf appreciators has never been so great. Given that people's attitudes and beliefs are so deeply ingrained, do you believe it's possible that we can build acceptance for large carnivore recovery in the West?*

I think good management decisions that balance public needs will need time to work in order to see if they can help people get to middle ground. When people on all sides are irrational I don't think anything works. We have to get to the point, sooner or later, where people can talk sensibly and find common ground. We don't have a wolf problem,

we have a problem of culture collision where old traditions and practices (ranching and hunting) are being questioned by a highly urbanized public who look at the use of our public lands with different sensibilities. You can't say one is right and one is wrong, but people have to grapple with the fact that things are changing. You know what they say: change or die.

*In your work, you've seen some of the tactical mistakes that wolf advocates made in their efforts to recover wolf populations in the lower 48. If you had some advice to those working for wolf recovery now, what would it be and how can mistakes from the past be avoided?*

I was part of the federal review team during formulation of the Environmental Impact Statement to reintroduce wolves into Yellowstone and Central Idaho. I think the public needs to review that document today to see what the goals and objectives were, just as a refresher. It's been a long time, and I think people have taken their eye off the ball for too long. The USFWS never intended to try and recover wolves throughout the entire West, but establish a viable wolf population in the areas delineated. I think that advocates had every right to legally challenge the procedural shortcomings of the rule during the delisting process, but the risk was that they would jettison everything into a philosophical debate over how many wolves were enough—and that's exactly what happened. I think the Service made some major mistakes, but the volatility of the wolf issue pretty much tells me that the Service will never again try it anywhere else. 🐾



Carter Niemeyer with a collared wolf who has been tranquilized to take blood samples. Niemeyer was overseeing wolf recovery efforts in Idaho for the USFWS at the time this picture was taken.



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## Unusual Mass Dolphin Stranding in Peru

PERU'S NORTHWEST SHORELINE above Chiclayo is beautifully desolate—sandy dunes running into the surf for over a hundred miles. In January, locals reported dead dolphins washing up on the beaches, but little notice was generated. In February and March, more animals were found by the hundreds, and as many as a thousand in one report. This prompted Dr. Carlos Yaipen Llanos of Lima-based *La Organización Científica para Conservación de Animales Acuáticos* (ORCA) to investigate and ultimately to contact long-time AWI friend, Hardy Jones, of BlueVoice for help.

Jones flew to Lima, and with Dr. Yaipen and his colleagues, set out for Chiclayo. The team drove 84 miles up the coast and identified 615 dead animals in one day alone. As many as 2,000 animals are estimated to have died. Most were long-beaked common dolphins according to Jones, but Dr. Yaipen also identified Burmeister's porpoises. The stages of decomposition in the stranded cetaceans varied, consistent with multiple strandings over a long

time period. Dr. Yaipen conducted on-scene necropsies on some of the animals, sampling internal organs to later test for disease and other causes. Both Dr. Yaipen and Jones suspect noise—from active sonar or seismic activity—as a likely cause of the unusual strandings. Initial reports on the animals show that they did not bear marks of external damage caused by fishing gear, or signs of poisoning. Sadly given the remoteness, state of decomposition, and logistical difficulties, the true culprit—and total number of animals involved—may never be known.

Closer to home, the U.S. Atlantic Coast, which already suffers from heavy shipping and military traffic, is due to get noisier, as early as next year. In March, U.S. Department of Interior Secretary Ken Salazar announced a plan to allow companies to conduct seismic surveys for oil and gas on the outer continental shelf, from Delaware to the middle of Florida. Public hearings were held in April and AWI submitted comments against the proposal. 🐾

