



North Carolina
**WILDLIFE
FEDERATION**

Journal

WILD LIVES □ WILD PLACES

Spring 2017



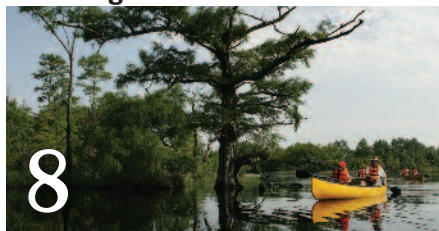
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of experience to
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Hanging Around

BY TIM GESTWICKI, NCWF CEO

Often at NCWF we talk about being in the “people business,” as so much of our work involves urging people to be actively involved in the conservation of wildlife. In this issue of the *NCWF Journal*, you get to read about some of the Federation staff members who have dedicated significant portions of their professional lives to the conservation of North Carolina’s natural resources. Amazingly, a number of Federation staffers have very long tenures, some over 25 years. It’s an interesting story line. Why do folks stay so long? What is the thread that binds such long tenures? It’s not the riches! I know for a fact that our cream-of-the-crop folks could find better-paying jobs. So what is it?

I can tell you what it is for me, but first allow me to harken back to January of 1991 when I first became employed by NCWF. I began my tenure as an entry-level door-to-door canvasser. I was the low man on the totem pole, charged with grassroots organizing, which is an euphemism for knocking on doors every night, rain or shine, summer or winter, to tout NCWF’s efforts, answer conservation questions, get petitions signed, and raise memberships. To say the least, it was an unforgettable experience. I enjoyed other roles before becoming the Federation’s CEO, including managing our wildlife habitat programs, forming local chapters, and being the deputy for conservation programs. Along the way I met many friends who came and went, some of whom remain my closest buddies. Some of them went on to distinguished conservation careers and others pivoted to professions in other fields. The biggest personal accomplishment for me through my Federation relationship was not reintroducing a species or protecting an ecosystem, but meeting my wife, who also worked as a canvasser in the early 1990s. For that I feel a sense of loyalty and gratitude to my employer.

NCWF is a perfect fit for me. As an organization that works for all wildlife and all habitat, the diversity of issues and programs is never-ending. One day I could be erecting wood duck boxes, the next day I would spend in the legislature. From working on forest management to marine fisheries, our efforts are as varied as the mountains, coast, and Piedmont regions. It’s exciting to work on elk one day, striped bass another. To tackle pollinator restoration while also focusing on deer management. Work is varied and endless as North Carolina teems with a multitude of species and is blessed with many different habitats. And for me, as one who enjoys all outdoor activities from gardening and camping to hunting and fishing, it’s the best of all worlds to be able to work for resource-based recreation and access to public places for all.

NCWF is the organizational fit for me, as well. I like being part of a credible, pragmatic organization that is measured and takes a science-based, non-partisan approach to everything it does. And I like the people who are attracted to our group—board members from all walks of life who share an indiscriminate common purpose in conservation, along with chapter members indefatigable in speaking for wildlife.

Has it been perfect for our long tenures? Certainly not. We suffered through the recession like all others, went through a number of executive directors, and had to re-invent our organization at least three times during my tenure here to avoid both bankruptcy and irrelevance. Through it all we persevered, celebrating momentous conservation achievements as further testament to the commitment and resolve of people dedicated to the group’s core mission and values.

Conservation has changed during my career. It has gotten way more polarizing and partisan. The economics and values of conservation are all the more important to tout to those wishing to roll back decades of progress. Using our voice to bridge the political divide is more critical than ever.

So enjoy reading about your wildlife team. It’s a formidable collection with tons of experience, skill and passion. They are the envy of many other wildlife organizations around the country. They work for wildlife. **And we all work for you. NCWF**

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North Carolina WILDLIFE Federation Journal

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Spring 2017

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NORTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

MISSION To protect, conserve and restore North Carolina wildlife and habitat.

VISION Our stewardship will result in a North Carolina with bountiful and diverse wildlife, including all species of wild flora and fauna, that is valued by its citizens and elected officials, and sustainably managed for future generations.

Our strength is derived from values driven leadership – science-based decision making; non-partisan approach to policy; stewardship of North Carolina's natural resources; inclusivity of broad wildlife interests and perspectives; and partnering with organizations and individuals who share our vision and our passion for wildlife.

GOALS Toward that vision, we will:

POLICY AND PROTECTION – Strongly influence state and federal policy that affects wildlife and habitat in North Carolina using established conservation models to guide our positions.

NETWORK OF IMPACT AND INVOLVEMENT – Foster a diverse, robust network of chapters, members, affiliates and partners; a network fortified by a variety of wildlife and outdoor interests.

EXPERIENCE AND LEARN – Enhance and expand opportunities for youth and adults that foster awareness and appreciation of wildlife and the important role healthy habitat plays in sustaining wildlife and humanity.

SIGNATURE PROGRAMS – Sponsor and support programs for the enjoyment and conservation of wildlife and habitat, including ethical and sustainable outdoor recreation pursuits.

EXPERIENCE MATTERS.

At a recent meeting, we tallied up the numbers: Collectively, NCWF staff members have nearly 200 years of Federation service. Six Federation staff members have been on the clock for more than 15 years. We thought you'd like to meet the long-standing members that work for wildlife on your behalf.

DOM CANAVARRO ▶ *Development & Operations Director*

I was raised in California and had lots of exposure to environmental campaigns like Save the Whales and Sea Otters or Save Mono Lake. And I'd worked in Oregon to help loggers and saw-mill workers hammer out consensus with environmentalists over how to modify a forest management plan for the endangered spotted owl. But it wasn't until I worked for a few years at NCWF that I really understood just how complicated it is to make real and substantial progress for conservation. I started with the Federation in 1994, and in the 1990s, we spent years getting buffer zones in place to protect rivers and streams. And then, with a few votes in the legislature, much of it gets undone. Frustrating? Yes! Daunting? Nope. We know from our more than 70 years of experience that we can indeed figure out solutions and move the ball forward for our wildlife and wild places. If you work at NCWF, you get up again the next morning and get back at it another way.

Lots of my time is spent making our case to foundations and individual donors about specific NCWF programs or legislative actions we are pushing for. What I think is dawning on so many of our donors these days is an understanding of the truly pressing issues we face. I've seen an embrace of the idea that it is absolutely imperative that we all get involved in issues such as climate change, and that we get it right, because there is no time to waste. Donors large and small really do ask me, "What are we doing that will help wildlife adapt to a changing climate?" "Will this also inspire and nurture the next generation of stewards?" "Are we seeing the bigger picture and addressing the underlying problems?"

The answer to all those questions is a resounding "Yes." I love helping our friends and volunteers and donors make a difference whether it's work at the landscape scale with our Native Fish Conservation Area and Sound Solutions, or on the next generation through our Chapters and our Great Outdoors University. Just one donor with a simple gift can help one child at a time make that first and most profound connection to nature that serves that kid for a lifetime.

I noticed starting a few years ago that so many of our long-time donors—most who do just a single gift or two a year when they can—are coming forward and letting me know they have put NCWF in their will. That is exciting and humbling news to hear. I believe that's indicative of not just the good work we do, but also the way we go about it. We seek science-based solutions, bringing everybody to the table to figure it out and move forward. We are so fortunate to have partners who truly desire to see that our style of conservation work spans generations.

CHRIS NORTH ▶ *Conservation Coordinator*

Over my 17 years working at the North Carolina Wildlife Federation, I have seen a lot of changes in individual, governmental, and business attitudes towards conservation and wildlife habitat. Home-owners are increasingly landscaping their property with native plants for wildlife. Municipalities across the state are mandating the use of native trees and shrubs on public property. Businesses are seeing the benefits for their employees when they provide a place for wildlife on their campuses while educating employees about local wildlife.

The way people live has changed because of their love for wildlife. We now have close to 10,000 homes as Certified Wildlife Habitats in North Carolina. This means more reclaimed and enhanced wildlife habitat for all to enjoy while providing financial and emotional benefits to residents. I have seen some yards change from all grass to a beautiful landscape with glowing flowers and lush vegetation. Beyond the landscaping, more and more people are reducing the use of toxic chemicals on their yards, composting more, and even recycling more. A friend of mine mentioned that his daughter is hyper-aware of recycling options, and makes sure her family does the right thing by reducing waste from the store.

I have seen new policies by many local municipalities to develop sustainably. The town of Matthews, for example, only plants natives along roads, in parks, and at government buildings, and residents are seeing the benefits as the years roll by. While working at the Federation I have witnessed six towns get certified as Community Wildlife Habitats improving their community both for wildlife and the overall health and well-being of their community.

Some of my favorite projects are with businesses and industry. Recently, I visited the Pfizer plant in Sanford, North Carolina. I was driven around in a very nice and large pickup truck to tour 29 acres of wildlife habitat with eight acres of wetlands and 21 acres of meadows and fields for local wildlife to enjoy and for their employees to find a connection

to nature. Company employees even conduct a wildlife photo competition that results in an annual calender. They donate the proceeds from these calenders to the Federation and send us updates on their continual progress on the property.

Spending most of my adult life with the Federation has been an incredibly humbling experience and working with all the wildlife enthusiasts has changed this state for the better. Each time we create a new chapter or certify a new property as wildlife friendly, we move closer to being a society where thoughts of wildlife and its welfare are aspects of daily life. Habitats are protected, people get more connected to nature, and children strive to become biologists and environmental scientists. Seventeen years ago, children weren't always aware of those opportunities, and even when they were, there were too few doors. Today it has become difficult to provide opportunity to all those who want to connect with wildlife. I say that is a good problem to have!



▶ When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe. —JOHN MUIR

GRETA SALEM ▶ *Office Manager*

I am proud to say that I have been a part of the Wildlife Federation staff for 26 years. During that time there have been a great many changes. When I first began working at NCWF, environmental activities such as recycling and backyard habitats were novelties and not many people participated in them. Twenty-five years ago we didn't have the technology that we have now, and we provided information about recycling, protecting habitats, and helping to keep our air and water clean through the *NCWF Journal* and walking into neighborhoods and speaking one-on-one with people. We handed out papers that had information about recycling, creating habitats and upcoming environmental legislation so that people were aware of these issues.

Over the years technology has advanced and we can now hit a button and information is available to large numbers of people in mere moments. Through technology and through our Wildlife Chapters, it's become easier for us to reach people and spread the word about protecting our wild places and wildlife and keeping our air and water clean. Recycling and protecting habitats is becoming more and more common and we make sure environmental information is out there for people who want and need it.

So, even though much has changed, there is still much that has stayed the same. NCWF still makes sure that people know about upcoming environmental issues and habitat projects. There are going to be challenges ahead but the NCWF family will face them head on as we always have. I still work with an amazing group of dedicated, knowledgeable people who are passionate about the environment and I don't see that changing any time soon.

TOM BEAN ▶ *Director of Government Affairs*

I started my work as an active advocate for conservation of natural resources with the North Carolina Wildlife Federation a little over 28 years ago. Back then, the Federation still had neighborhood canvassers going door-to-door across North Carolina, explaining the Federation's mission, asking folks to become members, and soliciting letters to decision-makers to urge their support for policies to conserve North Carolina's natural heritage. That's how I took the first steps on a cold December night in 1988 on my long journey of doing my part in the never-complete work of sharing the word with my fellow North Carolinians. I was the stranger at their door telling them that decisions were being made about whether and how to protect our natural resources, who was making those decisions, and how they could let their elected and appointed officials know that they expected them to do the right thing. It was kind of like being Paul Revere without a horse. Or so I imagined.

Reflecting back on those first nights, I see that many of the fundamental lessons that I've learned in the years since were in clear evidence. Each of us must do our small part, often alone, to the best of our abilities. And we need to understand that our work will have the most practical impact when it is

part of a larger conservation effort. Individual effort combined with the work of countless others is what gives the larger conservation movement the ability to influence decisions.

Those first nights I canvassed homes in Raleigh, I was urging folks to write letters and to support NCWF by convincing the Coastal Resources Commission to uphold the state's recently-adopted ban on hardened erosion-control structures (seawalls and jetties) that destroy beaches. Most of the folks I talked with had no idea about that issue—it was hardly front-page news—nor about how to participate in efforts to protect our beaches. If I had not been a part of the Federation's team, I would not have been given the training and transportation to be out there giving them my brief explanation and the opportunity to act. But I was there as part of the NCWF team, and, once informed, many of the folks I talked to *did* care enough about the future of North Carolina's beaches to act. And we and all our allies together won that round. The ban was upheld.

So why did people in Raleigh in the dead of winter care enough about the future of North Carolina's beaches to take action? That was the most fundamental lesson that I began to understand about my fellow North Carolinians. They acted because those beaches, because the mountains, fields, forests, streams, and lakes of North Carolina, are their home. Our home. These are places they have visited and hope to return to many times. These are places they can conjure up in their imagination in an instant, with their sights, smells, sounds, and the feel of the air: Home. You take care of your home.



T. EDWARD NICKENS ▶ *Conservation Editor*

I started working for the Wildlife Federation in 1985, as a recent graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill. I volunteered to edit the organization's newsletter, which used to be called *Friend O' Wildlife*, but folks at NCWF figured that if I worked for nothing that I would put nothing into my work. So they paid me \$50 an issue. It was my first true conservation writing gig. I was thrilled.

I've seen the organization change and mature in many ways since those long-ago days. The shift from door-to-door canvassing to a deep field of professional staff with broad direct experience in wildlife resources has been empowering. I travel across North America in my work these days, as an editor-at-large for *Field & Stream* and a contributor to many conservation magazines. But I've stayed at the helm of the NCWF membership magazine all along, because I believe in this organization's emphasis on wildlife and wildlife habitat. And I've never been more impressed with NCWF's ability to make a positive difference in the place I call home.

RICHARD HAMILTON ▶ *NC Camouflage Coalition Coordinator*

Hamilton graduated from North Carolina State University in 1968 with a M.S. in wildlife sciences and joined the ranks of the Wildlife Resources Commission in 1970 as a wildlife biologist. During his 37-year tenure with WRC, he served as a research project leader, chief of the division of game, and chief of the division of inland fisheries before his promotion to deputy director in 1986. He retired as executive director in 2007. Hamilton established the Federation's Camo Coalition in 2008 and is our lead fish and wildlife lobbyist.



If we bring together the right people, communities can flourish and wildlife can survive alongside them. — JOCHEN ZEITZ



DAN HARRIS ▶ *Marketing Manager*

Shortly after my U.S. Army service, I began working for a direct marketing organization that specialized in non-profit organizations. My primary client was the Christian Appalachian Project, with whom I worked for almost 40 years and whose goal was to help the poor in Appalachia help themselves. Working so long in Appalachia gave me a greater appreciation of the land and its wildlife. Late in my career I was fortunate to work with the National Wildlife Federation and subsequently with the North Carolina Wildlife Federation. Having developed a good working relationship with NCWF, we discussed how, after I retired, I might be able to help them in their direct mail program going forward, and the rest is history.

LIZ RUTLEDGE PH.D. ▶ *Wildlife Specialist*

Dr. Liz Rutledge joined NCWF in 2014. She leads the Federation's *Farmers and Communities Manage Deer* program as well as working with landowners, sportsmen groups, agency partners, and wildlife research and extension. Rutledge earned a Doctorate of Philosophy in Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology from N.C. State University. Rutledge has transformed the Federation's deer management program with over 5 million media impressions and 77,280 meals provided to the needy via donated venison.

FRED HARRIS ▶ *Natural Resource Specialist*

Harris began his professional career with the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission as a fisheries biologist in 1972. He rose through the ranks to lead the fisheries research program of the agency in 1981. In 1986, he was named chief of the division of inland fisheries and was promoted to chief deputy director of the agency in 2004. He served in that capacity through 2011 before joining NCWF. Harris served as president of the American Fisheries Society and is currently a member of the board of directors of the Fisheries Conservation Foundation, chair of the Scientific Council on Freshwater Fisheries in North Carolina, and is an appointed member of the Sport Fishing & Boating Partnership Council. Harris has vast and direct professional experience in dealing with policy issues related to fisheries and water resources and leads the Federation's Native Fish Conservation Area project.

LOUIS DANIEL PH.D. ▶ *Technical Advisor*

Dr. Daniel is a leading expert on marine resources. He works for NCWF by providing comments on federal and state marine rulemaking, fishery management plan development, and aquatic marine resource conservation. He joined in 2016 following a 21-year career at the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries where he was director from 2007 through March of 2016. He served as chairman of both the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. Daniel is an adjunct professor of marine resources policy and management at the N.C. State Center for Marine Sciences and Technology.



DAVID KNIGHT ▶ *Policy Advisor*

Knight started working for the Federation in the early 2000s as a contract lobbyist and consultant, working on issues ranging from the creation of a license for recreational anglers bringing millions of dollars into the state for marine fisheries management and protection, to leading the advocacy efforts to passing the Clean Smokestacks Bill in 2002 and passing the Million Acres Initiative. He received his B.A. in political science from UNC-Chapel Hill, and his law degree from Wake Forest Law School. After stints with The Nature Conservancy and the Department of Environment & Natural Resources, Knight rejoined NCWF three years ago to run the Sound Solutions campaign.

MARY BURES ▶ *Great Outdoors University Director*

Bures joined the NCWF team in October of 2012 to establish and direct the Great Outdoors University (GoU). She had been actively involved in a volunteer capacity with NCWF for 10 years. Bures has a B.S. in agricultural and life sciences from the University of Florida. She worked at Charlotte's Discovery Place directing the health, environmental, biological, and earth sciences departments, special projects, research and evaluation. She has grown GoU to include more than 50 partners since launching its first program in June of 2013.

ANGEL HJARDING PH.D. ▶ *Pollinator & Wildlife Habitat Programs Director*

Dr. Hjarding brought the Butterfly Highway to NCWF in 2015, creating the program as a part of her doctoral research at UNC-Charlotte. The Butterfly Highway started with 51 native pollinator gardens in six neighborhoods and has grown to over 1,400 registered pollinator pitstops across the state. Hjarding has received several grants, including one to build a new chapter of NCWF in Charlotte focused on the community where the Butterfly Highway began. Angel holds a M.S. in biology from the University of Copenhagen in Denmark. **NCWF**

We're looking for CONSERVATION HEROES!

2017 Governor's Conservation Achievement Awards



North Carolina WILDLIFE FEDERATION

Each year the North Carolina Wildlife Federation presents the prestigious Governor's Conservation Achievement Awards, an effort to honor individuals, governmental bodies, organizations, and others who have exhibited an unwavering commitment to conservation in North Carolina. These are the highest natural resource honors given in the state. By recognizing, publicizing, and honoring these conservation leaders— young and old, professional and volunteer—the North Carolina Wildlife Federation hopes to inspire all North Carolinians to take a more active role in protecting the natural resources of our state.

The nomination period for the Governor's Conservation Achievement Awards is open through June 30, 2017. These awards are presented each year at a gala banquet. Award recipients receive a handsome statuette and certificate. On the opposite page is the official nomination blank. Additional forms are available by request. For more details or to download a form, go to www.ncwf.org.

CONSERVATIONIST of the Year

Overall outstanding effort and achievement in any field of natural resources conservation.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATIONIST of the Year

Accomplishments in the management, study, or restoration of wildlife, fisheries, or habitat.

SPORTSMAN OR SPORTSWOMAN of the Year

Exemplary efforts by an individual to encourage good sportsmanship and/or outdoor ethics.

LAND CONSERVATIONIST of the Year

Outstanding effort by individual, organization, or agency in the arena of land conservation, such as private or public land acquisitions, management, or conservation.

WATER CONSERVATIONIST of the Year

Outstanding effort by individual, organization, or agency in the arena of water conservation, such as water pollution control, stream/river protections, wetlands and/or estuarine protections, or aquatic wildlife conservation.

FOREST CONSERVATIONIST of the Year

Outstanding effort by individual, organization, or agency in the arena of forest conservation or the conservation of forest wildlife.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATOR of the Year

Outstanding environmental education effort by an individual or organization.

YOUTH CONSERVATIONIST of the Year

Outstanding conservation effort by a person under the age of 18.

CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION of the Year

Outstanding accomplishment by an organization in affecting a particular issue during the year, or for raising awareness about conservation and/or wildlife habitat.

LEGISLATOR of the Year

Outstanding effort by a member of the North Carolina legislature in support of conservation.

MUNICIPAL CONSERVATIONIST of the Year

Outstanding conservation effort by any federal, state, or local government entity, including efforts to aid the public's ability to enjoy natural resources.

BUSINESS CONSERVATIONIST of the Year

Outstanding effort by any firm, business, or industry that has displayed an unwavering commitment to conservation or the public's ability to enjoy natural resources.

HUNTER SAFETY EDUCATION

INSTRUCTOR/ORGANIZATION of the Year

Outstanding accomplishment by an individual or organization in the state's Hunter Safety Program.

NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY of the Year

Outstanding effort by any local, state, or national agency responsible for managing natural resources.

NATURAL RESOURCES SCIENTIST of the Year

Outstanding scientific effort by an individual working for governmental agencies, educational institutions, or related enterprise.

WILDLIFE VOLUNTEER of the Year

Outstanding effort by a citizen volunteer in the service of North Carolina's wildlife and wild places.

NCWF CHAPTER of the Year

Outstanding effort by member chapter in one or more of the following areas: wildlife habitat, environmental education, youth participation, and/or community involvement in conservation issues.

AFFILIATE of the Year

Outstanding support effort by NCWF affiliate.

OFFICIAL NOMINATION FORM

To make a nomination, send one copy of this form, with all supporting attachments and a resume of achievements, to the North Carolina Wildlife Federation, ATTN: Awards Committee, P.O. Box 10626, Raleigh, NC 27605. Deadline for receiving applications is June 30, 2017. Please print or type all data below. This form may be duplicated.

Nominee _____

Complete address _____

Award category* _____

(Nominees may be nominated for more than one category, but send a separate nomination blank for each award category. Multiple copies of supporting materials are not necessary.)

Nomination made by _____

Complete address _____

Daytime phone number _____

NOMINATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. Fill out Official Nomination Form completely.
2. Attach a resume of achievements or nomination essay explaining why the nominee deserves the award. Attach nominee's resume if available, and information about the nominee's affiliations, past recognitions, and other references for substantiation. Full documentation is needed by the Awards Committee—the only information the Awards Committee will have is what you provide. Please be particular about the specific acts on which the nomination is based.

3. Deadline for receiving nominations is June 30, 2017.

**The Awards Committee reserves the right to place nominations in the appropriate categories as the case may arise. In the case of insufficient nominations in any category the Awards Committee reserves the right not to name a category winner.*



STANDING UP FOR *Public Lands*


Our national public lands are one of the defining features of America. They include our national parks, national forests, national wildlife refuges, federally designated monuments and wilderness areas, and lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management. Collectively, this is “America’s big backyard,” where people of all social, economic, political, racial, and ethnic backgrounds are welcome.

Despite overwhelming support for public lands, disputes over the use, management, and ownership of these lands have been a perpetual source of political tension in the West, home to the bulk of the lands. Recently, members of Congress introduced legislation that would have opened the door to the transfer of millions of acres of national forest land to states. Legislative efforts have passed to circumvent federal laws requiring public input and review of environmental impacts on public lands. And with the start of the 115th Congress, we’re already hearing calls to roll back oil and gas leasing reforms on public lands and improvements to the planning process, plus renewed attacks on the use of the Antiquities Act to conserve natural and historic sites. The House also passed a rule making it easier to sell or transfer public lands by negating the value of the lands—setting the value of public lands at zero—thus advancing the myth that public lands have no public value.

NCWF works to vigorously defend public lands. We co-sponsored the video *This Land is Your Land* and joined the successful opposition to federal bills that sought to transfer federal lands. We sent a group sign-on letter to each member of the North Carolina congressional delegation, and traveled to Washington, DC, to lobby on behalf of public lands.

As the attacks on our public lands have become more extreme, it is important to understand why the Federation fights for these special places:

- ◆ National forests and grasslands, totaling 193 million acres, make up the largest single source of water in the U.S., with about 20 percent of the nation's water originating on the lands. About 180 million people in more than 68,000 communities rely on forest lands to capture and filter drinking water. The value of the water flowing from national forest lands is estimated at \$7.2 billion annually.
- ◆ Lands managed by the Interior Department hosted an estimated 443 million visits in fiscal 2015. These visits generated an estimated \$45 billion in economic output, \$26 billion in value added, and supported about 396,000 jobs.
- ◆ Outdoor recreation, much of which occurs on public lands, generates \$646 billion annually in consumer spending and is responsible for 6.1 million direct jobs, according to the Outdoor Industry Association.
- ◆ North Carolina's Pisgah National Forest is the second busiest in the country, with an estimated 6 million visitors a year.
- ◆ The most popular national park in the entire country is Great Smoky Mountains National Park, with more than 11 million visitors a year.

Our public lands and waters are an American birthright, landscapes where we connect with America's history, hunt and fish with our friends, camp with our families, and enjoy the solitude and natural beauty of our country. Public lands are the foundation of the growing outdoor economy, and are a critical underpinning for the travel and tourism industry that keeps North Carolina's economy strong. We ask you to join us in opposing every effort to sell our nation's public lands or transfer them to the states, as we work to improve how these lands are managed for conservation and recreational benefits. 

What I Believe

I grew up being outdoors. It's a natural thing to me to be outside, either in personal reflection, or

even better, in enjoyment with my family. I fully ascribe to the belief that being outdoors in nature is an essential health benefit, for mind, body, and soul. I get recharged when I spend time outdoors and those feelings stay with me when I have rich outdoor experiences.

My family and I are blessed with the ability to have our own outside space, surrounded by a variety of natural habitats. My state and nation are further blessed with having the foresight and stewardship of those in the past who set aside lands across the country for the public good.

But we live in a time when some elected officials tasked with the stewardship of our public resources instead are seeking to take away our public assets. They wish to turn federal lands over to the states or to private interests for uses in ways that compromise or ruin them, to ways that consume the lands for the benefit of a few. This is more than wrong in my judgment. It is immoral and violates the public trust to which they have been charged.

These public lands I refer to are not just a natural resource. They are a National Resource. Public is us. You, me, and all the citizens of this great country. Our band sings these words in concert regularly: "These lands are your lands, these lands are my lands." This is what I firmly believe in.



Scott Avett

Scott Avett is a North Carolina native son whose band, The Avett Brothers, is world renowned. Scott and his family live on a family farm and enjoy hiking in North Carolina's Uwharrie National Forest and exploring the state's mountains and coastal regions.

SARAH TURNER WELLS



FISH FORWARD

In a monumental step forward for marine resources conservation, the N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) voted to approve the Wildlife Federation's Petition for Rule-Making to expand nursery area designation for juvenile fish to include all state coastal waters. MFC was under immense pressure from the shrimp trawling industry to oppose these recommendations.

New information from the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission indicates that many species most common in shrimp trawl bycatch—spot, Atlantic croaker, weakfish, flounders, and blue crab—are declining in North Carolina, despite various measures adopted to protect those important fisheries. The Federation's basic premise is that a healthy resource will benefit all user groups, commercial and recreational, as well as the ecosystem. We know that the shrimp trawl fishery in particular has a disproportionate impact on the mortality of many of our important marine resources. An estimated 15 million



RED DRUM WILL BENEFIT FROM MORE CAREFULLY MANAGED MARINE RESOURCES.

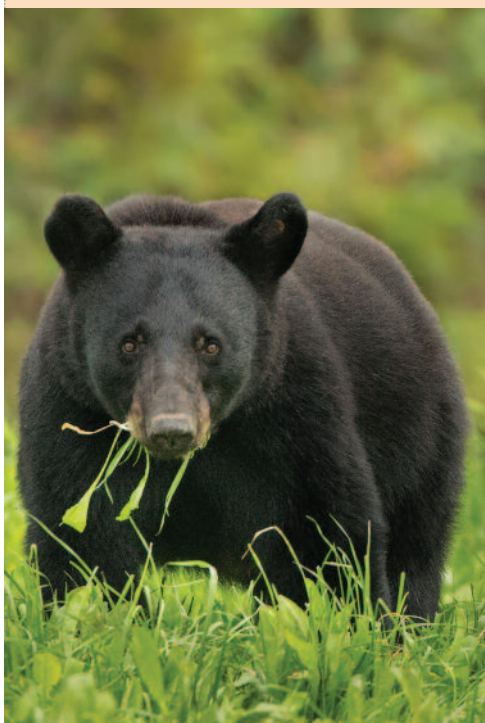
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pounds of juvenile Atlantic croaker, spot, and weakfish were caught by trawl nets and thrown overboard in 2014 alone.

Consequently, NCWF proposed measures we believe would maintain a viable shrimp fishery but reduce its impacts. A reduction in trawl effort will likely have positive impacts on the availability of shrimp to these shrimp fisheries and potentially increase participants in less impactful fisheries. Likewise, reductions in capacity and effort in the shrimp trawl fishery could yield higher catches per unit

of effort in that fishery, thereby defraying costs to fishermen and providing an opportunity to pursue other fisheries.

With the Petition now approved by the Commission, we enter the rule-making phase. MFC has indicated that it wants to bring the state's Shrimp Fisheries Management Plan back up for review, based on the Petition's recommendations. We hope this process moves quickly. It will be a public process, with the public and stakeholders having more opportunity to comment and weigh in on these recommendations.



USFWS / PAM MCLHENNY

Roanoke Refuge Could Expand

In exciting news for wildlife, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service is considering adding an additional 250,000 acres to the acquisition boundary of the Roanoke River National Wildlife Refuge, with authorization to purchase up to 50,000 acres and easements up to 100,000 acres. (Exact acreage of the proposed expansion is yet to be determined.)

The expansion of Roanoke River NWR is critical for the refuge to succeed in its mission of conserving the fish and wildlife resources within the basin. The predicted rise of the Albemarle Sound due to climate change effects will widen the Roanoke River, thereby eating into the existing refuge acreage. There also is likely to be a shift in habitat from bottomland hardwoods to open marsh as the level and salinity of the river changes. Already repeated storm surges and saltwater intrusion are killing the forests at the easternmost extent of the peninsula. Continued losses of bottomland hardwoods habitats adjacent to Albemarle Sound will reduce critical habitats for species such as red wolves, black bear, red-cockaded woodpeckers, short-eared owls, prothonotary warblers, and others. Waterfowl including wood ducks, tundra swans and snow geese will lose valuable wintering areas.

The Roanoke River basin is a treasure among our state's diverse natural resources. NCWF applauds and supports the Fish and Wildlife Service's commitment to protecting the resources of the basin by expanding the Roanoke River National Wildlife Refuge.



Federation Welcomes New Directors

Two NCWF members have been elected to the organization's board of directors. Norwood West of Warsaw, NC, is a Real Estate Broker in his family's business focusing on property sales and acquisitions. West enjoys spending time on the farm, fishing, hunting, and going to the beach. His conservation priorities are protecting the inshore waters of eastern North Carolina, and wildlife habitat enhancement of farmlands that have been taken out of production for solar fields. "I am honored to have been elected to this esteemed board," says West. "I am impressed by the various viewpoints and interests on the board and how they come together for the same common interest for conservation."

John Crumpler of Raleigh co-founded Hatteras Venture Partners in 2000 after a successful career as a technology entrepreneur. At Hatteras, John is responsible for the firm's investments in healthcare and life science information technology, and overall fund operations. He was founder and CEO of E-Comm, Inc., a software development company. John currently serves on the boards of Clinipace Worldwide, and Cliniverse, an IT company focused on the financial management of clinical trials. He holds a B.A. from Harvard University. He also was appointed and served as a trustee of the N.C. Clean Water Management Trust Fund.

NCWF Joins North Carolina Sound Economy Coalition

The Federation, through the Sound Solutions Campaign, has joined a coalition of conservation and business organizations in pursuing the passage of comprehensive legislation to modernize and reform the so-called "Fisheries Reform Act." Since its passage in 1997, the statute has received few positive changes and amendments, and consequently, the state's fisheries management strategies have fallen behind other states. Out of 13 fish stocks managed by the Marine Fisheries Commission,

only three are listed as viable. Across the board, most of our fish populations are depleted and our fishing economy is struggling. The name of the coalition is North Carolina Sound Economy, www.ncsoundeconomy.com, and its focus will be showing the economic benefits of improving and protecting the state's fishing economy.

We look forward to working with this coalition and improving the status of our marine fisheries.

GARYTOG / ISTOCK / THINKSTOCK



MARGARETW / ISTOCK / THINKSTOCK

Scholarship Nominations Open

For more than five decades, the NCWF scholarship program has helped hundreds of North Carolina students pursue their dreams of studying and working in the conservation field with many award recipients going on to achieve significant success. Many recipients have gone on to careers with state and federal wildlife agencies, conservation groups, and academic institutions.

The Wildlife Federation provides scholarship grants to students enrolled and attending an accredited North Carolina college or university full-time. We're looking for deserving students and are soliciting applications for scholarship aid. Applicants must be majoring in the areas of wildlife, fisheries, forestry, conservation or environmental science.

Need is a factor, and a good record of scholarship and extra-curricular involvement is considered. The Federation will provide up to seven grants to students in both undergraduate and graduate programs, with scholarships ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,500. Scholarship applications will be accepted until 5 p.m. June 26, 2017.

To obtain an application, go to www.ncwf.org. For more information, contact info@ncwf.org.

CHECK OUT OUR CHAPTERS! For more information on how you can participate, contact Christopher North at chris@ncwf.org.



Capital Chapter



Community Alliance for Wildlife



Concord Wildlife Alliance



CROWN (Charlotte Reconnecting Ourselves With Nature)



HAWK (Habitat and Wildlife Keepers)



Lake James Area Wildlife and Nature Society



Lake Norman Wildlife Conservationists



Mountain Island Lake Wildlife Stewards



Mountain WILD



PACT (Protecting, Advocating and Conserving)



PAWC (Pamlico Albemarle Wildlife Conservationists)



PAWS (Gaston County Piedmont Area Wildlife Stewards)



River Hawks (Wake Forest)



South Wake Conservationists



The Albemarle Conservation and Wildlife Chapter

CONSERVATIONISTS IN ACTION

NCWF chapters are the lifeblood of the Federation's conservation network. Across the state, conservation education and projects are accomplished all year long by community volunteers who share a common purpose. Key components of chapter activities are nature programs, outings, events, and direct conservation efforts. Here are some of the recent activities produced by our chapters.



The Annual Gaston County Piedmont Area Wildlife Stewards Wildlife banquet is always a sold-out fun event.

Lake Norman Wildlife Conservationists build and deploy osprey nesting platforms ahead of nesting season.



JOHN SIMMONS / CHARLOTTE OBSERVER



Habitat and Wildlife Keepers' free monthly nature programs are a big hit in Matthews, NC.

South Wake Conservationists build and install brown-headed nuthatch boxes around Bass Lake Park in Holly Springs, NC.

If you are a wildlife-oriented person and want to have fun with like-minded people, contact a local chapter, or help to form one in your area by contacting us at info@ncwf.org.





WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY...

for Wildlife

Here are four simple ways you can leave a lasting legacy.

- Make a bequest to NCWF in your will or trust. Find out how easy it is to put wildlife in your plans.
- Realize the value of your retirement plan by making NCWF a beneficiary. You can consider full, partial or percentage options to benefit wildlife.
- Consider a gift of life insurance that your family has "outgrown" or making NCWF a partial or full beneficiary of your plan.
- Build your gift by using real estate and personal property.

If you or your attorney have questions, or would like NCWF to provide you with sample customized language for your will that is specific to your goal and interest, please contact NCWF's Development Director, Dom Canavarro. All inquiries are confidential. He can be reached at 919-833-1923, or drop him a note at 1024 Washington St., Raleigh, NC 27605.

Charlie Shaw Society



NCWRC

John Robbins, owner of Greathorn Properties in Concord, and a long-time philanthropist and sportsman is the current chair of the Charlie Shaw Society. He encourages others to join him in support of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation.



Current Members

Members in the Charlie Shaw Society are our most dedicated supporters—generous members who have made a commitment to the work and programs of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation through an annual contribution of \$1,000 or more. Gifts can be made in one lump sum or in any number of smaller contributions within a calendar year, and can be directed to any Federation program that is of interest to the donor.

To learn more about the Charlie Shaw Society and benefits of membership, please visit our website at www.ncwf.org, or Dom Canavarro, Development and Operations Director, at (919) 833-1923; dom@ncwf.org.

Tom Angelo
Ben and Jeanette Barker
Avery Bates
Robert Berton
John Bishop
Frank Bragg
Robert Brown
William Brown
Mollie Brugh
Richard and Maria Buchsbaum
Pinkney Bynum
Maurice and Addria Capps
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THE Season

Jeff Beane's GUIDE TO
NATURAL NORTH CAROLINA

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MAY

May 1: Fire pink, tread-softly, lyre-leaf sage, and grayhairy wild indigo are in bloom.

May 3: Striped bass spawning runs peak on the Roanoke River. Ruffed grouse are nesting.

May 4: Peak honeysuckle bloom.

May 5: Eastern sweetshrub is in bloom.

May 5-6: Eta Aquarids meteor shower peak. This is a light meteor shower, one of two created by debris from Halley's Comet. Best viewing should be just before dawn. Open fields, beaches, or other remote areas make good viewing spots for meteor showers.

May 6-7: The North Carolina Herpetological Society will hold its annual Spring Meeting at Carolina Beach State Park. For information, contact nathan.shepard@ncdcr.gov or jeff.beane@naturalsciences.org.

May 7: Trilliums are in bloom along the Blue Ridge Parkway. Piping plovers have begun nesting on our barrier islands.

May 8: Bog turtles are mating.

May 10: Rail nests are hatching.

May 11: First broods of American robins are fledging.

May 12: Rat snakes are mating. Tulip-poplar is in peak bloom.

May 13: International Migratory Bird Day. Many late spring migrants are coming through, and several spring bird counts will be held around the state this weekend. Contact your local Audubon Chapter or the Carolina Bird Club, www.carolinabirdclub.org.

May 14: Wild strawberries are ripe.

May 15: Hardwood trees are in full foliage over most of the state. Mourning dove nesting peaks. Pink-shell azalea is in bloom; this North Carolina endemic is known only from high-elevation spruce forests in a few of our mountain counties.

May 16: Passion vine is in bloom. Longnose gars are spawning. Pine-devil moths are flying.

May 17: Our smallest reptile, the ground skink, is nesting. Unlike our other four skinks, this species does not guard its eggs.

May 18: Least terns—our smallest tern species—are nesting, mostly on our more remote beaches and barrier islands.

May 19: Diamondback terrapins, the world's only uniquely estuarine turtles, are nesting along the coast.

May 20: American alligators have begun mating. Northern bobwhite begin nesting.

May 21: Grassleaf roseling, sandhills dawn-flower, and Pickering's daisy are in bloom in the Sandhills.

May 22: Yucca is in bloom.

May 23: Purple pitcher plants are in bloom.

May 24: Spider lilies are in bloom in Coastal Plain bottomlands.

May 25: Loggerhead sea turtles have begun nesting. Eastern prickly-pear is in bloom.

May 26: Coal skinks are nesting in the Mountains and Foothills. Like of our most skinks, these uncommon and poorly known lizards guard their eggs during incubation.

May 27: Most treefrog species have begun breeding.

May 28: Larvae of our state salamander—the marbled salamander—are transforming; juveniles disperse from ephemeral wetlands into terrestrial habitats on rainy nights.

May 29: Cecropia moths—our largest moth species—are emerging. Venus' looking-glass is in bloom.

May 30: Wild turkey eggs are hatching. Ruffed grouse eggs are hatching in the Mountains. Several species of dusky salamanders are nesting.

May 31: Mountain laurel is in bloom. Eastern box turtles—our state reptile—begin nesting.

JUNE

June 1: Venus' flytraps are in bloom in the southeastern Coastal Plain.

June 2: Galax is in bloom in the Mountains and western Piedmont.

June 3-11: National Fishing and Boating Week (actually lasts for nine days each year).

June 4: Flame azalea and columbine are in bloom in the Mountains.

June 6: Great-spangled fritillaries are flying. Common mullein is in bloom.

June 7: Grass pink orchid and orange milkwort are in bloom in Coastal Plain savannas.

June 8: Rosy maple moths are flying.

June 11: Peak flight period for King's hairstreak—a small, uncommon butterfly found mostly in our Sandhills and southern Coastal Plain.

June 12: Japanese beetles are emerging. Littleleaf sensitive-briar is in bloom.

June 13: Bluehead chubs are spawning. The large stone nests built by these abundant, stream-dwelling minnows are used by several other minnow species.

June 14: Rosinweed is in bloom. Ten-lined June beetles are flying.

June 15: Spotted salamander larvae are transforming; juveniles will disperse into terrestrial habitats on rainy nights.

June 16: Gray's lilies are in bloom in the Mountains.

June 17: Five-lined, southeastern five-lined, and broadhead skinks are nesting. Females of these lizards tend their eggs until they hatch.

June 18: Carolina gopher frog tadpoles and tiger salamander larvae are transforming; metamorphs will migrate into upland terrestrial habitats on rainy nights.

June 19: Rhododendron and mountain laurel are near peak bloom in the Mountains. Good places to admire this floral show include Roan Mountain in Mitchell County and Craggy Gardens on the Blue Ridge Parkway in Buncombe County.

June 21: It's summer, and it's going to be a hot one. Solstice is at 12:24 a.m. EDT (04:24 Coordinated Universal Time).

June 22: Sourwood is in bloom.

June 23: Eastern box turtle nesting peaks.

June 24: Forgotten how much fun camping can be? It's National Wildlife Federation's Great American Backyard Campout. Take a kid (or a grown-up) camping! Visit <http://www.nwf.org/Great-American-Campout.aspx> for more information.