

Conservation Committee

Committee Members: A. Ali, J. Aliperti, B. Arbogast (Chair), C. Aylward, E. Baerwald, P. Barboza, E. Beever, B. Bergstrom, C. Callahan, G. Ceballos, A. Chavez, J. Cook, M. Cove, E. Davis, N. de la Sancha, M. Dudenhoefler, M. Dyck, N. Edmison, S. Farr, A. Ferguson, A. Ford, A. Giordano, C. Goblet, J. González-Maya, D. Green, E. Green, R. Green, K. Gutierrez, M. Hawkins, J. Heffelfinger, A-M. Hodge, R. Honeycutt, M. Hughes, R. Jakopak, T. Jezkova, T. Jung, D. Kaufman, T. Knowles, J. Koprowski, A. Krevitz, T. Lacher, N. Lewis-Rogers, H. Lutz, J. Malaney, R. Medellin, M. Merrick, M. Novillo, R. Ojeda, G. Perner, L. Randa, K. Reiss, M. Rentz, C. Warret-Rodrigues, M. Schadler, S. Sheffield, K. Smith, W. Smith, M. Snider, S. Stephens, M. Tewes, N. Upham, E. Wilson.

Mission:

The Conservation Committee (CC) was established by the American Society of Mammalogists (ASM) in 1927, a few years after the Society passed a resolution condemning the unscientific and propagandistic extermination campaign against predators at its 4th Annual Meeting in 1924. First known as the Conservation of Land Mammals Committee, the committee's name was changed to the Conservation Committee in 2002 to reflect the fact that it dealt with conservation issues that included all mammals, terrestrial and marine. In 2002–2003, the Aldo Leopold Conservation Award subcommittee that CC had recently established was moved to full standing committee status. The CC promotes research, education, and science-based solutions to conservation and management of native mammals in North America and globally.

Information Items:

(1) Activities of the ASM CC from June 2021 to April 2022 included:

(a) The Conservation Committee (with extensive contributions from Andreas Chavez) assisted in the drafting of a public comment letter, signed and submitted on behalf of the ASM by the Society's President, Enrique Lessa, in January 2022, on the the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) proposed rule to revise the existing experimental population designation of the Mexican wolf (*Canis lupus baileyi*) in the Mexican Wolf Experimental Population Area (MWEPA) in Arizona and New Mexico under section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA), 86 Fed. Reg. 59953 (October 29, 2021). ASM showed both support and concern for this proposed rule. In summary, ASM supported the Service's removal of the population cap from the population objective, recommended that the Service provide more criteria in the genetic objective that assures sufficient genetic diversity is explicitly identified and monitored for, and that the Service make it explicitly clear in their "take" policy that future border wall projects that may impact connectivity between wolf populations in the United States and Mexico is reviewed for "take" by the Service, as well as the freedom by wolves to naturally establish populations in suitable habitat outside of the MWEPA. The full letter is posted on the ASM's website at:

https://www.mammalsociety.org/uploads/committee_files/ASM%20Mexican%20Wolf%2010j%20comment%20-%20final.pdf

Action Items:

(1) **There are no new action items.** However, the Conservation Committee reiterates its support for the "Recent advances in the conservation of African mammals" Symposium,

originally proposed to be held in 2021 at the joint American Society of Mammalogists–IFM 13th International Mammalogical Congress in Anchorage, Alaska. Given that this joint meeting has been re-scheduled for 2023, the Conservation Committee assumes that the Symposium will also be re-scheduled for 2023. As such, the Committee asks for the ASM Board’s support for this Symposium here. The original request is summarized below:

“In conjunction with the sponsoring African Graduate Student Research Fund Committee and ASM’s International Relations Committee and the Human Diversity Committee, the Conservation Committee is co-sponsoring the effort to organize a symposium entitled, “Recent advances in the conservation of African mammals” at the 2021 joint American Society of Mammalogists–International Mammalogical Congress in Anchorage, Alaska. This symposium would represent the first effort to increase exposure of meeting attendees to historically-underrepresented geographic regions, and attendance by mammalogists from said regions. With the Board’s support, it is our intent that this symposium would represent the first in a longer-term commitment by the ASM to promote global diversity of mammalogists and mammalogy. A request is being considered for the next ASM budgetary cycle for the ASM Board to consider matching funds for up to \$9000, which the Board of Directors unanimously supported in an informal straw poll at the annual meeting in Washington DC, as reflected in the unabridged minutes from last year's meeting. Since this time, our committees have raised \$24,000 for this effort. We ask for the Board's support in dedicating \$9000 to this effort.”

Respectfully Submitted,
Brian S. Arbogast, Chair
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