

# NORTH AMERICAN WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ASSOCIATION



*"The Voice of Resource Law Enforcement"*



**2020 NAWEOA OFFICER OF THE YEAR**  
**Robert L. Currier III**  
**Vermont Warden Service**

Picture: Robert L. Currier III, Vermont Warden Service

**FALL 2020**  
**74th Edition NAWEOA Newsletter**

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### SOUVENIR PATCHES AVAILABLE



← 2017 NAWEOA conference patches are **available for purchase**. The cost per patch (including shipping and handling) is \$7.00 each USD. Patches are available online at [NAWEOA.org](http://NAWEOA.org)

***All 2018 and 2019 patches are sold out.***

# The President's Report

By Rick Langley



Normally I would be writing to you about all that happened at Nashville in July... but you all know the story. There's always next year! The hunts have already begun here in AZ and it has been hot! I'm so glad that I live in

the mountains with some elevation and pine trees. Phoenix has recorded a record number of days above 110° this summer. We have seen a huge influx of visitors to our public lands and waters. I think it will be interesting to see if these folks who are discovering the wild world around them will become lifelong customers or if this is a flash in the pan. We are breaking record in license sales and we had numerous license dealers report that they ran out of tags for our recent archery deer opener. How will we keep up with the demands on the resource if this trend maintains itself or increases?

On the job front, my Department is continuing to hire and train new officers, all while navigating the guidelines and restrictions put in place by the state. We still have many vacancies and we are trying to hire two classes of recruits each year. It's nice to see other states also continuing to hire right now. We are still seeing a lack of qualified individuals who can pass the background check and now we are seeing an increase in reluctance to enter a law enforcement career with the current anti-law enforcement sentiments.

Despite everything, your NAWEOA board has been busy. We have been holding video conference calls bi-monthly to keep in touch and keep our progress moving forward. We have a committee looking at branding and marketing to keep us identifiable and relevant. Expect some new developments when we all get together again in 2021.

After many years of faithful and dedicated service, we are allowing Rich Cramer to retire as the Conference Liaison. Rich has provided NAWEOA with more than a decade of service as a Regional Director, Vice President, President, Past President, and Conference Liaison. He has provided a wealth of guidance, knowledge, experience, and a source of constant entertainment. There were many times the train was about

to derail and Rich kept us from jumping the tracks. I will forever appreciate what he has given to NAWEOA. Taking over for Rich, is Jason Sherwood from Wyoming. Jason is your Regional Director for Region 4 and was the Conference Chairman for the Cheyenne Conference. Jason will finish out his term as Regional Director in July 2021 and continue to put the finishing touches on Nashville with our Tennessee crew.

I have more good news on upcoming conferences. NAWEOA and the Utah Conservation Officers Association have signed a contract for the Summer 2022 Conference. Thank you Sean Spencer for stepping up as the Chairperson and making sure this comes to fruition. I think we are all excited to have another host association and to have the opportunity to see what Utah has to offer.

We have had several potential hosts express interest for 2023 and 2024, but we do not have any firm commitments. We would love to talk to any of the provinces or states about hosting in the near future. I feel like Canada is getting the short end of the stick and I would love to bring a conference to Canada. I know the exchange rate really hurts our brothers and sisters to the north.

I will keep this brief and let you all get back to work as I am sure you are feverishly working into your fall hunt routine. As always, be safe, be healthy and have fun. Know what is important and take care of those priorities first.

Respectfully, Rick Langley





## The Vice President's Report

By Kurt Henry



side so much has happened!

First of all I would like to acknowledge all those that reached out to me and offered support and encouragement this spring. I quickly realized and am so appreciative of the brotherhood and family that NAWEOA really is to each of us. I see this as one of the biggest benefits that NAWEOA brings to each of our members. My personal family is about 500 miles away and I felt alone but contact with fellow officers from many times further made those miles disappear and your thoughts and prayers helped so much. I huge thank you to all!!

We all saw so much change in our work and personal lives as COVID started and continues. Many departments mine included had us working informational check stops at our borders to inform and ultimately deny access to our Province. Our department's implemented new protocol with social distancing and how we interacted with our user groups. As this continues and now with the possibility of a second surge bringing or returning to more stringent protocols. Where or what is the end, or rather the happy medium of our

former jobs. We are getting into our busy hunting seasons and interactions will increase. Let's all be safe and figure it out.

By now you all have heard the great news on the convention front. Idaho has stepped up and signed a host contract for 2022. Thanks you to all involved and the work only starting for that organizing committee. Nashville again will host the convention in 2021 and fingers crossed the lose of one years events will make it an even bigger success!!

The executive is working hard to keep the machine running. With out our general meeting at the summer convention it has given us challenges. Trust that we are putting the association first as a whole in any of our decisions and or deferrals to bring major issues to convention for consensus and votes. We have had several conference calls and fingers crossed will be able to meet in person for our winter meeting in 2021.

So with that I am about to start some moose hunting patrols and as with us all will start the busy time of our careers. While work takes so much of our time make sure you step back and make it a priority to make it to our children's sport events, our family dinners or even just a drive in the country with the special person in our lives. Be safe and enjoy the time we are around friends and family.

Kurt Henry

Proudly your Vice President.





# The Past President's Report

By Shawn Farrell



Hello everybody. The leaves are starting to turn and the morning air is starting to get crisp. It's the time of the year that most of us look forward to as the fall hunting season is upon us. I hope you have all weathered well over the summer during this COVID-19 crisis. We are certainly living in different times and many of us have had to change the way we conduct daily business and work duties. Its hard to believe I am entering my last year on the executive board. Where has the time gone. Unfortunately, we could not meet this summer and rekindle friendships and share stories. Fingers are crossed that we can all meet in Nashville next year.

I would again like to thank Josh Landrum and the Tennessee Wildlife Officers Association for committing to next year as well thanks to the host hotel, the Millennium Maxwell who will host our NAWEOA family next year.

The election process was explained in the spring newsletter and the Canadian Directors will continue in their current positions.

Region 1 – Brock Lockhart (2 terms complete)

Region 2 – Martin Thabault (1 term complete)

Region 3 – Josh Thibodeau (1 term complete)

Next year we will have elections for all seven of our Director positions. The four US Directors will be elected for a full two-year term and the Canadian Directors will be running to complete one more year of their two-year term. Once this is done, we will be back to a normal director election rotation.

I would also like to thank Rich Cramer for completing his role as Conference Liaison. Rich has been around NAWEOA for a long time and is a great wealth of

knowledge. Thank you Rich I am sure we will still be reaching out to you. After openly running an add for a new liaison, no interest was shown. Jason Sherwood has agreed to fulfill the role. Jason recently hosted a successful conference and is very knowledgeable of NAWEOA and its workings. Welcome aboard Jason. I know the membership is in good hands.

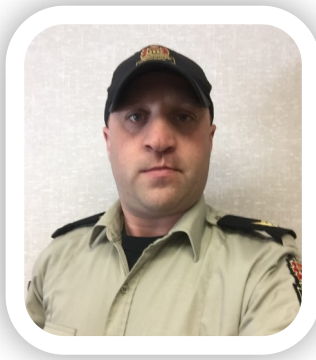
To our membership, take care of yourselves and family, stay safe and I look forward to Summer 2021 when we can all meet again.

Shawn Farrell



*NAWEOA Region 3 Director Josh Thibodeau and NAWEOA Past President Shawn Farrell present New Brunswick Conservation Officer Roger Mann with his NAWEOA retirement certificate. Officer Mann has served the people of northern New Brunswick and has protected its Natural Resources for 37 years. Congrats Roger. Enjoy your well-deserved retirement.*

## Region 1 Director Brock Lockhart



### Saskatchewan

Greetings from Saskatchewan,

As like every other jurisdiction in North America, COVID has changed the world and how we operate as a society. While the majority of society was

sent home in March, Conservation Officers in Saskatchewan continued working their normal day-to-day operations (with a bunch of roadblocks in the way of course). Saskatchewan Conservation Officers were busily involved with COVID highway checkpoints limiting travel across the northern part of Saskatchewan. 12 checkpoints across the north were manned 24/7 for close to a month. Lots could be said about these checkpoints but it best told at a hospitality night at NAWEOA.

With COVID brings less travelling, and we've seen an increase in new anglers hitting up Saskatchewan's many lakes and rivers. Our provincial parks opened late this year but the number of users are higher than normal years. With the border closed we didn't have any American bear hunters up for the spring hunt. Coincidentally, we've had a high number of problem bears across the province (mostly forest and fringe areas.). Not sure if that's related or not but I'm sure the biologists and the outfitters could debate that one till next year.

The provincial Protection and Response Team has continued responding to 911 calls and RCMP requests across the province. Some of these are MVA's, boat requests, missing people, and unfortunately drowning victims.

We saw the effects of government cut backs as well and lost 3 positions this year (2 occupied and 1 vacant). We've also had a few retirements as well. I'd like to thank Daryl Minter, Bill Zimmer, Peter Schulz, Kevin Fitzsimonds, Dean Grisdale and Warner Carlson, for their service to our province and their hard work protecting Saskatchewan's resources.

I'd also like to wish all the best to Keith Haensel who hung up his duty belt to pursue missionary work in

Niger, West Africa. Keith leaves a large hole in our department being one of the most professional and dedicated people I've known.

Saskatchewan is still eagerly awaiting the arrival of Matt Sabo, who was the successful winner of the NAWEOA officer exchange. Unfortunately we haven't been able to make the trip happen but our fingers are crossed for 2021.

That's all I have for now, this is my last message as J-REP and I'll pass the torch to Jaret Engele who is SACO's new president.

Be safe and have a good fall

Chris Maier

Saskatchewan Association of Conservation Officers

### Parks Canada

Hello once again NAWEOA. We missed not being able to see our colleagues at Nashville this year, hopefully 2021 brings more jovial times and we'll be able to gather again. I will open by saying that much like our colleagues across North America, our National Park Wardens adapted quickly to the rapid change in working conditions and we have continued to provide a high level of service across the country.

While early spring saw the complete closure of most of the National Parks, Historic Sites, and Canals across the country, once restrictions were lifted in various stages in early summer, record number of visitors began coming back. Much like what has been shared by public land agencies on both sides of the border, the rapid return of visitors looking to reconnect with nature in these stressful times has also brought a big uptick in compliance issues at Canada's National Parks. Predominantly overflowing parking areas, littering, and large groups not following COVID related health measures. This has kept Park Wardens busy with both education and enforcement duties.

Ok, enough about the ongoing pandemic and into some updates for the Law Enforcement Branch.

On the HR front, we recently completed our first Experience Officer Training Program course in mid-July. Training was initially set to begin in early March, however that was delayed. The LEB was proud to welcome three new Park Wardens into our ranks via this

## Region 1 Director Brock Lockhart (Continued)

program and they have already been deployed into the field at their respective sites. New recruit training is due to start at the end of August. As RCMP Depot is still running at reduced capacity due to the pandemic, third party venues have been secured and more online learning will be done this year to reduce the number of people gathering in one place. The new troop is due to graduate this winter, and they will be a welcome addition to top up the number of wardens in the field.

On the technology front, we recently switched out our old Toughbook tablets for new rugged laptops. This was due to the tablets no longer being able to run on new windows software. We have also begun to slowly roll out a new Mobile Law Enforcement app for our smartphones. This app allows the capturing of tombstone information that can be used to start occurrence reports in the field and then later synced to our main enforcement database for completion.

Enforcement news and notable case updates,

A judge recently upheld a sentence against the Lake Louise Ski Area (inside Banff National Park) for cutting down 169 trees, 58 of which were endangered White Bark Pine. The LLSA originally plead guilty in 2017 to the charges and in late 2018 was sentenced to pay a \$2.1 million dollar fine. The LLSA then appealed on the grounds the penalty was “much too high”, however in July 2020 a judge dismissed the appeal. This is the largest penalty ever involving a case investigated by Park Wardens.

You can read more about the case here: <https://calgary.ctvnews.ca/2-1m-fine-upheld-against-lake-louise-alta-ski-resort-1.5034991>

Also in Banff National Park, a portion of Johnston Canyon is closed during the summer to protect the endangered black swift nesting habitat. This included a significant number of signs and a large number of patrols by Park Wardens to catch violators. The closed area does not include the incredibly popular hiking trail. However, the closed area has been very popular with social media enthusiasts looking for hidden caves located off the trail. In 2019 alone, 77+ individuals were charged for entering the closed area, and in court many were issued \$1,250 fines. A reduction in disturbances resulted in a record number of black swifts were found nesting in the Johnston canyon area this spring.

More in depth info can be read here:

<https://www.rmotoday.com/banff/johnston-canyon-closure-charges-continue-1723965>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/black-swift-population-johnston-canyon-banff-1.5649368>

In May 2019, the Canadian government implemented an interim protection order to preserve the last few remaining Southern Resident Killer Whales on British Columbia's west coast. This order set up several “sanctuary zones” that restricts vessel traffic from entering or only travelling through at very slow speeds. Several of these zones are located around both Gulf Islands and Pacific Rim National Park Reserves. As a result, the law enforcement branch was able to hire 4 more Park Wardens and station 2 in each respective National Park Reserve. This has resulted in increased patrols with plenty of warnings given to vessels straying into these restricted areas.

On the opposite coast, the protection of endangered Atlantic salmon continues in Fundy National Park.

The Atlantic Salmon Law Enforcement Coalition is a partnership between Fisheries Officers (Department of Fisheries and Oceans), RCMP Officers, Wildlife Enforcement Officers (Environment and Climate Change Canada), New Brunswick Conservation Officers, and Park Wardens that is critical in protecting the endangered Atlantic salmon. The Coalition was the cover story for the December 2019 edition of Blue Line Magazine. You can access the entire article here: <https://www.blueline.ca/protecting-the-endangered-the-Atlantic-salmon-law-enforcement-coalition/>

Park Wardens in the Yukon have been partnering with the RCMP, Environment and Climate Change Canada, and the Yukon Conservation Office Service to conduct Law Enforcement patrols to Ivvavik and Vuntut National Parks, Herschel Island, and the Yukon North Slope for over 10 years now. One of these annual patrols is in the late winter or early spring and is performed by snowmobile over the snow and sea ice from either Old Crow (Yukon) or Inuvik (NWT). This trip takes anywhere from 6 to 10 days, depending on the route, snowmobile and toboggan breakdowns, and snow/ice conditions. This article in Blue Line Magazine documents the spring 2019 snowmobile patrol. You can access the entire article here: <https://www.blueline.ca/rcmp-officers-trek-to-herschel-island-for-memorial-patrol/>



## Region 1 Director Brock Lockhart (Continued)

We have some good news and sad news with respect to our K9 program. First the sad. Former Parks Canada K9 “Cazz” passed away in June after retiring from active service back in 2019. Below is a summary of Cazz’s service written by his former handler Park Warden Mike Henderson.

Honouring a distinguished career in service ... thank you Cazz

Losing a member of the team is always tough. It is especially difficult if that team member is your partner and best buddy, as PCA K9 Cazz was for Park Warden and Dog Handler Mike Henderson. Cazz was unique, and those of us that worked with Cazz and Mike regularly, or even just got to meet them once, were left with an incredibly memorable and lasting impression.

Parks Canada’s canine member, Cazz, passed away in Canmore, Alberta on June 30th, 2020. Cazz had an extraordinary career with the Agency. Cazz started his service in the Banff Field Unit in 2011 after he and Mike successfully completed the RCMP Dog and Handler Training Course, billed as one of the most demanding training courses delivered by the RCMP. After over 8 years and hundreds of calls to service, Cazz retired from the Agency in April 2019 to spend more time with his one true buddy, Park Warden Mike. Cazz was a multi-functional national resource. During his stellar career, he responded to 450 calls for service in six national parks. He provided invaluable support to many of our law enforcement partners, such as Alberta Parks, Alberta Fish and Wildlife, and the RCMP in both Alberta and BC.

### Public Safety

When it came to visitor safety, Cazz’s contribution was significant. Cazz made four avalanche recoveries and returned numerous missing and/or suicidal visitors to safety, and to their families. Many of his tasks were hazardous, but that was just part of the job for Cazz. Two assignments stand out in particular, including a perilous ice climb on Polar Circus in Banff National Park and another on Serra 2 in the Mt Waddington Range in BC. Both of these successes expanded the limits and set a new standard for dog searching in technical terrain. Cazz’s performances were incredible.

### Law Enforcement

In the law enforcement portfolio, Cazz discovered countless illegal camps which quite likely prevented many forest fires; apprehended an antler poacher leading to wider knowledge of the issue in the mountain parks; provided back-up to Park Wardens when dealing with visitors with lengthy criminal records; responded to wildlife poaching files in other parks; located firearms and regularly patrolled the park boundaries during hunting season.

Cazz also assisted outside agencies. During his career, Cazz pulled more than \$2 million in drugs off the streets, including the largest single MDMA dog seizure in Alberta at the time (2016).

In 2016, Mike and Cazz were both recognized with the CEO Award for Exemplary Service as a result of their extraordinary and professional response to a call for assistance from the Banff RCMP. In November 2015 the RCMP reported to Mike that a suspect driving a stolen vehicle, full of stolen property, had crashed into the highway fence. When the RCMP officers arrived on scene, the suspect fled towards the Bow River and into the thick bush and boggy terrain. After a rugged and harsh six kilometer trek, Cazz and Mike apprehended the suspect while he was floundering in the freezing cold Bow River. Their training, determination, courage and teamwork brought this dangerous situation to a safe conclusion, and they may well have saved the life of the suspect.

Cazz was unique among professional service dogs – a big friendly guy around the office who was always ready to complete his assigned missions with astounding skill. Cazz was truly part of the community. By attending many avalanche awareness nights, and by participating in many community and school programs, Cazz showcased his unique skill set and brought a lot of awareness to law enforcement branch, and to Parks Canada as a whole.

Cazz’s outstanding career continues the incredible legacy of the PCA K9 program. Not only was Cazz a distinguished member of the law enforcement branch, he was also a best friend to Park Warden Mike Henderson, a teammate to all Park Wardens, a colleague to all at Parks Canada, and a hero to many. He will be forever missed.

## Region 1 Director Brock Lockhart (Continued)

Thank you for your service Cazz. Rest in peace.



*K9-Cazz*

Now onto the good news. Parks Canada welcomed a new K9 team in Banff in early 2020. I will once again let the words of Mike Henderson introduce you to Logan and “Leroy”.

Welcoming Parks Canada’s Newest Member!

It is with great pleasure that we introduce our newest member to the Parks Canada team, Parks Canada K9 “Leroy”. Leroy, a recent graduate of the RCMP breeding program, is a striking, sable-coloured German Shepherd with a barely containable amount of raw energy!

Park Warden Logan Bennett and his K9 partner successfully completed the RCMP Dog and Handler Training Course in late November, 2019, returning to the Banff Field Unit after getting through what is billed as one of the toughest training courses delivered by the RCMP.

For many Parks Canada staff, there are questions of how and why we utilize a police dog team within our agency.

Parks Canada has been delivering professional K9 services for almost 50 years, working cooperatively with the RCMP National Police Dog Training Centre in Innisfail, Alberta. In a reciprocal training arrangement, we develop and validate our dog teams with the RCMP, while providing RCMP dog units with assistance in winter travel and avalanche search skill training.

Parks Canada uses our multi-tasked K9 team in law enforcement and visitor safety roles. Their work profiles include tracking and searching for lost visitors, locating victims in avalanches, searching for and apprehending criminals including poachers and squatters,



*Park Warden Logan Bennett and his K9 Leroy*

## Region 1 Director Brock Lockhart (Continued)

providing back up to park wardens in high-risk law enforcement calls and searching for evidence including firearms, to name just a few.

As is sometimes the case when training dogs in a difficult and exacting environment, Park Warden Bennett experienced bad luck, with his first two dogs not meeting the grade and having to restart from scratch. This meant a longer training period with more time away from his home and family. We would like to extend our thanks to Logan's wife Christy and their daughter Eleanor for being patient while Logan and Leroy completed their training.

Logan and K9 Leroy are now gearing up for the avalanche profile, and settling into their new role within

the Law Enforcement Branch. They are primed for an exciting operational career and honoured to be the newest generation of the Parks Canada K9 legacy.

On the association side there is nothing new to report. However, you can always check us out on Facebook, just search "National Park Warden Association".

Well that wraps up another summary from your National Park Warden colleges here in Canada. All the best in the months ahead, and we look forward to seeing you all again at a conference someday!

## Region 2 Director Martin Thabault



Never take anything for granted, expect the unexpected and adapt and overcome. The last few months have brought a new reality to these old sayings as each one of us was impacted to various degrees, both in our personal and professional lives. In Canada our NAWEOA members

were all affected differently. Some of us were called to the front lines on day one, enforcing emergency orders and other public safety restrictions. Others saw their priorities drastically change as more public pressure was put on recreational areas and certain wildlife resources. One of Region 2's jurisdictions even remains Covid-19 free to this day (Nunavut), but not without taking important safety measures to prevent its introduction. You will read about some of the challenges Region 2 jurisdictions went through in the next few pages.

On a personal note, most of us had to drastically restrict our daily activities, often down to the bare minimum of getting supplies to weather it out. Most travel plans had to be cancelled. We did not have a summer conference. To this day, the land border between Canada and the USA remains closed to non-essential trav-

el, and has so for more than 6 months. My heart truly goes out to those of us who unexpectedly lost family members and friends and to those who saw close ones get ill without being able to visit and comfort them, often not knowing what the outcome would be. These are challenging times. Let's keep our heads up, there are better times ahead.

Finally I would like to express my gratitude to Region 2's Jurisdictional Representatives (J-Reps) for contributing extra material and photographs to fill the void left behind by not having a summer conference to report on. I truly appreciate your efforts.

Please read on to get an update from the active Region 2 Jurisdictions.

Martin Thabault

Region 2 Director

[region2@naweo.org](mailto:region2@naweo.org)

### **Environment and Climate Change Canada, Wildlife Enforcement Directorate**

Since February 2020, our Atlantic Region has obtained Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994 (MBCA 1994) convictions in three 2019 files that total \$35,000 in fines which will be directed to the Government of Canada's Environmental Damages Fund. These files definitely bring to light the effect of the new mandato-



## Region 2 Director Martin Thabault (Continued)

ry minimum penalty of \$5000. A summary of the files are as follows:

1) On February 3, 2020, three individuals of Yarmouth County, Nova Scotia all pleaded guilty to one charge each of having committed an offence under the MBCA 1994 by contravening a provision of the Migratory Birds Regulations. As a result, the trio was fined a total of \$15,000. These charges stem from wildlife officers conducting surveillance in the early morning of October 8, 2019 of a baited area found on Little Island in Ogden Lake, Nova Scotia.

2) On August 5, 2020, an individual was found guilty of three offences under the MBCA 1994 after a trial in Grand Falls-Windsor provincial court in Newfoundland. This file stems from an October 2019 migratory bird coastal patrol in Notre Dame Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador where wildlife officers observed a boat with two individuals and hunting equipment on board. Upon inspection, officers discovered three birds and two shotguns. The individual was unable to produce a migratory game bird hunting permit at the time of inspection. Additionally, one of the shotguns could hold more than three shells, contravening the Migratory Bird Regulations. Two of the birds were razorbills, which are protected under the MBCA 1994. Razorbills are part of the auk family (Alcidae) and are considered as migratory nongame birds (see pictures below).

As a result, the individual was fined \$15,000. In addition to the fine, he is prohibited from applying for, using, or possessing a migratory game bird permit for a period of one year. He was also ordered by the court to forfeit the seized items including a shotgun and shells.



*The two birds on the left (bottom on the second photo) are razorbills, and the last one is a murre, commonly*

*referred to a "turr" in Newfoundland. According to one of our wildlife officers in NFLD, hunters can tell the difference before shooting because they have different characteristics and mannerisms on the water. Murre season is only open to residents of Newfoundland and Labrador, and is the only migratory bird that can be hunted with a powerboat.*



3) On August 5, 2020, an individual was ordered to pay a fine of \$5,000 in the Provincial Court of Stephenville, Newfoundland and Labrador. The individual pleaded guilty to one offence under the MBCA 1994.

During a routine patrol on February 7, 2019, wildlife officers were inspecting hunters to verify compliance with the MBCA 1994. That afternoon, an inspection revealed that an individual had been hunting migratory birds, and had in his possession a razorbill. The individual was charged under the Act for unlawfully possessing a migratory bird.

In addition to the fine, the Court ordered that he be prohibited for a period of three years from:

- possessing migratory game birds;
- possessing a migratory game bird hunting permit;
- being in the presence or company of anyone hunting migratory game birds; and
- being near coastal waters, with the exception of general transportation.

As of the beginning of July 2020, our wildlife officers have focused on patrolling our open National Wildlife Areas (NWAs) across the country. Environment and Climate Change Canada has a total of 55 NWAs, and as of mid-August only 19 of them were open to the public due to COVID-19 restrictions. I've included few pictures from across two of our five regions, illustrating the diversity of the wildlife (Stay 2m apart

## Region 2 Director Martin Thabault (Continued)

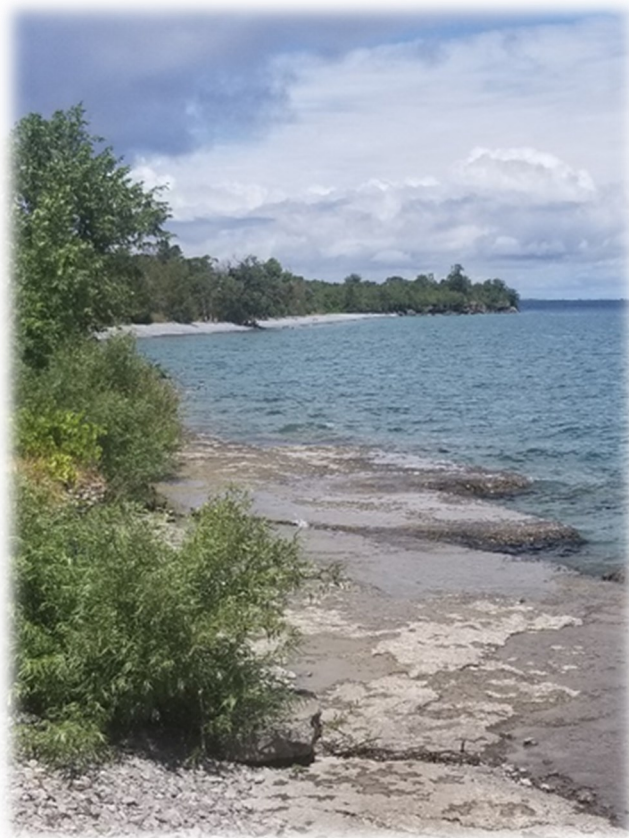
signage) and the amazing views should you ever be in the area and decide to visit.



*Last Mountain Lake National Wildlife Area and Migratory Bird Sanctuary, Saskatchewan. The first federally protected bird sanctuary in North America.*



*Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area, Ontario.*



*Over 300 species of birds have been recorded on the point.*

And last but not least, it has been confirmed that our two 2020 Torch Award winners (Nathan Thomson-Pacific & Yukon Region and Marjolaine Lagacé- Quebec Region) will be given the opportunity to attend the 2021 NAWEOA Conference in Nashville, TN and represent the Wildlife Enforcement Directorate, Enforcement Branch at Environment and Climate Change Canada. Congrats to both of you!

Julie Horvath  
Wildlife Officer, Ottawa  
J-Rep, ECCC Wildlife Enforcement Directorate

### **National Capital Commission**

Greetings from the National Capital Commission! Conservation Officers have had a very busy year since we last spoke. As I am sure many of you would agree, as soon as a partial to full lift of the COVID lockdown was announced, our properties were flooded with



## Region 2 Director Martin Thabault (Continued)

“cabin-fevered public”. In the beginning of the pandemic our officers were heavily involved in closing public areas to prevent community spreading. While we have no authorities under provincial laws to enforce social distancing, we spent many weeks dealing with trespassing and expelling individuals from closed off areas. I would say this has been the busiest summer I have ever worked. The amount of people we have encountered out on the lands committing offences has been incredible. Our most common offences have been illegal camping, trespassing, squatters, fires, fishing offences and small vessel regulation offences. One interesting call resulted in our officers locating some men firing rifles in a public trail. As you can see from this picture, we were a bit surprised to find these things.



I am sure that this is not uncommon for some of our US counterparts, but in Gatineau Park, in Canada's Capital, it was a big deal! Hard to tell from a distance, but luckily these turned out to be airsoft rifles, and no one got hurt.

NCC officers have also had to relocate and chemically immobilize several large game animals within the City of Ottawa limits. From a moose in a pool, to a white-tailed deer that got trapped in the fence of the Canadian Prime Minister's residence.



This black bear was relocated from a busy Ottawa suburb. NCC officers, Ottawa Police, Ottawa fire and paramedics all took part in a 5-hour long operation to get the bear back into a forest environment.



Pictures courtesy of the Ottawa sun. PHOTO BY ASHLEY FRASER /Postmedia

As more public used our lands, inevitably more search and rescues and injured people reports kept us on our toes. When starting a shift most of us prepare for a daily hike or atv ride to locate someone lost or in need of first aid. What a year...

We are looking forward to participating in the 2021 Tennessee convention!

With masks on and hands washed, I wish you all well and good health.



## Region 2 Director Martin Thabault (Continued)

Jason Pink  
Senior Conservation Officer  
J-Rep, National Capital Commission

### **Manitoba Department of Sustainable Development**

The introduction of the Coronavirus to Manitoba, Canada, has drastically changed the ways of life for all of us. Similar to many other enforcement agencies across North America, Manitoba's Conservation Officer Service joined in the battle to prevent further spreading of this virus.

On March 25th, 2020, Manitoba Conservation Officers were deployed to five separate checkstop locations throughout the Province. These checkstops were situated on some of Manitoba's busiest highways that connected Manitoba to neighboring Provinces of Ontario and Saskatchewan. For several weeks Conservation Officers conducted 24 hour checkstops advising travelers of the current Public Health Orders issued after the Province declared a state of emergency.

In the first week of May, Conservation Officers were given additional authority to further enforce the Public Health Orders introduced by Manitoba's Chief Provincial Health Officer.

Conservation Officers continued to conduct regular fish and wildlife compliance checks, while educating and enforcing this new legislation that involved limitations on the size of public gatherings, travel in and out of Manitoba, travel to Northern Manitoba and remote communities, and numerous other restrictions.

While most government offices and businesses were closed during the initial phases of this pandemic and employees were encouraged to work from home, Conservation Officers were tasked with additional authorities and required to be more visible than ever. This appears to be a common theme with most Conservation agencies throughout Canada and across the States. Although, this is not a common battle we are used to fighting, we as Conservation Officers should all be proud to serve and protect the people in our great Provinces and States.



From the MCOA, Thank you all and stay safe!

Joey Foxon  
Conservation Officer, The Pas  
J-Rep, Manitoba Department of Sustainable Development

### **Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources**

This has likely been the most bizarre spring and summer many of our officers have worked through as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, but thankfully we

## Region 2 Director Martin Thabault (Continued)

made it through the peak of the outbreak without any major issues. Covid-19 has impacted the way we typically do business with direction to do more surveillance, plain clothes work and reduce the high-volume contacts and vehicle stops many officers would normally see in a normal year. Like many other events, we saw the cancellation of our association's annual summer conference and have deferred elections of upper executive positions to allow for a proper nomination and voting process. Our new way of life hasn't been all bad news, many great pinches have come as a result of officers changing some of their tactics with more surveillance on sanctuaries, known poachers, closed fisheries, etc. As much fun as this work has been, we're hoping that we can keep the downward trend of Covid cases in Ontario and get back to our normal way of life chasing poachers.

In terms of equipment and resource updates, our agency has moved forward with a modernized long gun policy and procedure including the installation of long gun carriers in the front of all our new patrol trucks. This is a step in the right direction and was supported heavily by the Ontario Conservation Officers Association. Our current agency long-gun is the Remington 870 police edition. Our new trucks have also seen the elimination of roof-mounted light bars to help reduce noise inside the truck and save on some repairs. So far, we've received positive reviews of the in-dash window mounted lights with the exception of some officers experiencing some flash back of the red and blues or takedown lights when working after dark. It's tough to make everyone happy, but I have to say it's pretty incredible to see that our officers input is being well received by our enforcement branch leadership and improvements are constantly being made to our already great equipment.

We're seeing quite a few retirements of our veteran officers and as a result some hiring has been occurring across the province along with a fair bit of shuffling between work locations from officers which means we should have some great opportunities for new officers in the near future. Unfortunately, our most recent competitions have been restricted to Ontario Government employees making the pool of candidates somewhat limited. Here's hoping we will see these restrictions lifted and we can draw some talent from other work locations across Canada.

By the time you've likely read this report, officers in Ontario will be fully consumed by our diverse big game hunts across the province and I have to say I can hardly wait for moose season to open up in my neck of the woods. That's it for now.



CO

*Dunville showing off his pit crew skills while scouting out a moose decoy site northwest of Thunder Bay*



*An overlimit of walleye from northwestern Ontario this summer. The limit is 4. The angler was also warned for having skinless fish that could not be easily identified.*



## Region 2 Director Martin Thabault (Continued)



*Plainclothes work made up a good number of field officers patrols this spring and summer. Recently retired CO Steve Pauluzzo (left) and CO Marco Grigio head into a remote walleye lake. This patrol yielded an overlimit and several safety related violations*

Davis Viehbeck  
Conservation Officer, Thunder Bay  
J-Rep, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

2020 Ontario Conservation Officer of the Year  
The Ontario Conservation Officers Association (OCA) is pleased to announce that Mike Schenk has been selected as the 2020 Conservation Officer of the Year. Mike is part of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) North Bay Enforcement Unit working out of the New Liskeard office.

Mike has been employed with MNR across Northern Ontario since the early 1980's and been a Conservation Officer for over 20 years, the last 18 of which he has patrolled the Temagami area. He has proven throughout his career to be an outstanding officer, widely respected and relied upon by officers and staff from internal and external organizations. This is evident by the long list of people that supported his nomination. "Mike is a very deserving recipient of this year's award," said OCA President Sean Cronsberry, "Mike has been an invaluable asset to our profession over the years, both as a skillful investigator and as an instructor. In the field, Mike is among the best officers we have at taking statements and conducting thorough investigations. In the classroom, Mike is a captivating speaker who speaks from experience."

Mike is an accomplished investigator and instructor

who has demonstrated his commitment to the job and to protecting the public and our natural resources. Some of Mike's career highlights include:

Conducting and assisting with many complex investigations and projects, including investigations into night hunting, forest fires, illegal black bear outfitting operations, illegal netting and commercialization of fish, moose hunting investigations with a focus on the inhumane killing of wildlife and projects with a focus on public safety related offences.

Receiving two OCOA Life Saving Awards  
Receiving an OPP (Ontario Provincial Police) Commissioner's Commendation

Developing and delivering training on a variety of topics to fellow Conservation Officers and other MNR staff

Receiving multiple Appreciation in Motion awards from the MNR

Delivering hundreds of natural resource related presentations to; youth/public groups, hunter safety classes, cottage associations, park visitors and angler and hunter groups

Being a dedicated volunteer, including:  
Leading and supporting food drives for local food banks

Being a Canadian Armed Forces Reserve Lieutenant to instruct at the Army Cadet Corp in his community 5 years as a Scout leader and 2 years as a Beaver leader with Scouts Canada

Participating in the Cops for Cancer fundraising campaign

Active member with the Temiskaming Anglers and Hunters Association and Temiskaming Bullseye Club

Upon learning he had been selected as the 2020 Conservation Officer of the Year, Mike said, "I am truly surprised and humbled by this award. I was raised in a family environment full of outdoor adventure accompanied by terrific lifelong friends, so a career in natural resource management and enforcement was an excellent lifestyle fit for me. I share this award with all the dedicated officers and MNR staff that I have



## Region 2 Director Martin Thabault (Continued)

worked with over the past 36 years, we have effectively learned and supported each other in the pursuit of sound resource conservation. It has been a privilege to be an Ontario Conservation Officer, I wish I could turn back time so I could live the adventure all over again."

Mike was also awarded the MNRF Conservation Officer of the Year Award and he will be receiving the Shikar-Safari Club International Ontario Wildlife Of-

ficer of the Year Award, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) Conservation Officer of the Year Award, and he has been nominated for the North American Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association Officer of the Year Award.

*Mike Schenk, Ontario Conservation Officers Association 2020 Conservation Officer of the Year*



## Region 3 Director Jason Thibodeau



What a different year we are all experiencing as we navigate through this pandemic that is affecting the whole world. We were not able to have our annual summer conference which was a big disappointment for us all. We are very fortunate that the logistics were able to be worked out

and Nashville was able to have the conference rebooked for 2021. Thank you to the Tennessee Game Warden Association for making this happen.

I now have one term under my belt and was planning to rerun in Nashville this past summer for a second term as Region 3 director. I am very hopeful that we can return to normal for next summer and get back on track.

I would like to remind everyone to visit the NAWEOA website and stay connected. Please nominate deserving Officers for awards as there are numerous categories that capture the great work Officers do. NAWEOA is here to help recognize and also connect Officers from all over North America.

I would like to thank all the J Reps for their hard work and dedication being the connection between their jurisdictions and NAWEOA. The work you do is very important and does not go unnoticed. Thank you again!

I am looking forward to seeing everyone at the 2021 summer Conference in Nashville and I plan on running again for a second term as regional director. I take pride in representing Region 3 and NAWEOA and will continue to do so to the best of my ability. Take care and stay safe!

### NEW BRUNSWICK

Conservation Officers are busy manning the Provinces 6 land borders and 3 airports in the fight against Covid-19. New Brunswick has taken a strong stand since the beginning of the pandemic and as a result the Covid positive numbers have been very low. Less than 150 cases in the province since March and currently only 3 active cases. Conservation Officers work long tiring

hours at the borders and are trying to manage and keep up with their primary fish and wildlife mandate also. As hunting seasons approach more Conservation Officers are being pulled off the borders to get back in the woods. There has been 10 term Conservation Officers hired and there is plans for more to be hired as interviews are soon underway in another wave of hiring. Conservation officers are currently over 2 years into a contract negotiation and recently just had a job study evaluation approved which came with a small raise. The contract is still being negotiated.

I would like to say congratulations to Conservation Officer Travis Macfarlane on being a recipient of NAWEOA certificate of Valour for his actions in responding and assisting to a fatal car accident.



*Photo- Officers screening inbound traffic to New Brunswick at one of the land borders.*

Submitted by Region 3 director Josh Thibodeau



## Region 4 Director Jason Sherwood



While I'm not sure how many different ways we can say "times are tough," "things are different this year," or "what an unprecedented year it has been," I will share some observations from Region 4 and continue to look forward to the future. Hopefully everyone is ready for the busy fall seasons to bring some normalcy back.

The NAWEOA Marketing Team has continued to work with Jaimel Blajszczak and is narrowing down options for an updated look. Jaimel is doing an excellent job of balancing various requests of the team (the deer will not be replaced with an eagle eating a goose...) while maintaining important ties to our group's tradition—and making everything mesh together so it looks pleasant. The executive board will soon be reviewing draft logos and hopefully moving into work on the remainder of the marketing plan before long.

In looking to the future, I'm happy to report Sean Spencer and his Utah team are making progress in their plans to host the 2022 NAWEOA Conference! They have completed their hosting agreement and are finalizing the last couple details with a potential conference hotel. It's starting to look strongly like we'll be heading to Provo July after next.

Sean also reports Utah has been doing relatively well. Like many jurisdictions, their policy now includes wearing masks when in public and most meetings and trainings are cancelled or held virtually. Utah wardens have been called on to help with some social unrest issues and they have also had several large fires requiring their assistance.

Utah was able to hire seven new officers at the beginning of COVID, and they are now in the field, just in time for the fall hunts. For the first time in a long time they are fully staffed. Sean is also excited to report they are adding their fifth K-9 unit, which will equate to one working dog in every region.

Todd Anderson reports Montana saw an incredible increase in the use of waters and parks, "Access site

parking lots are overflowing and conflicts have been many." When COVID hit they were expecting a slow-down of fishing, boating and hunting license sales. All non-resident hunting licenses were sold quickly and resident license sales have also been extra brisk. Like many Region 4 jurisdictions, their wardens are reporting an increase of calls inquiring about hunting and fishing in their districts. Seeing a potential silver lining to the 'Rona, Todd hopes this will recruit more people into the hunting and fishing world and help us all build awareness and support for wildlife and the environment. Unfortunately, they are also reporting some very interesting movement and "squatting" on public land, from people all around the country. They have also experienced an increase in mutual aid requests from local police and sheriff's offices, ranging from pursuits, assaults, and other especially dangerous situations. Many wardens have never seen the range of calls and situations like this in their careers.

Similarly, an Idaho officer recently stepped up and is credited with saving two local sheriff's deputies who had been ambushed by a suspect with a rifle. The conservation officer was able to return fire on the suspect and provided the deputies cover to move to safety. The suspect fled and later turned himself in. Many Idaho officers were asked to provide security at regional offices. Luckily some angry phone calls were the worst problems they had to address, however the office staff appreciated the added presence.

Rob Howe reports the Idaho Fish and Game Commission shut down all nonresident license sales this spring, while the Governor and his team took an assessment of the COVID situation. Of course the "Governor's assessment" required conservation officers to take on the new duty of taking surveys of both residents and nonresidents recreating at state access sites and providing insights.

Rob also alluded to several significant cases and some major takedowns culminating from long-term, in-depth investigations. I expect we'll be seeing more of them in a coming issue of International Game Warden magazine!

Jeromy Huntington reports Colorado has faced many similar issues throughout the pandemic. After starting the year with discussions of adding game warden positions, COVID hit the "pause button" and instead gave



## Region 4 Director Jason Sherwood (Continued)

them reason to make other plans and work extra hard to address wildlife management goals with the staff they have. They proactively offered a completely-online hunter education class, on a temporary basis, to meet demands of new hunters wanting to join the hunting heritage, while in-person classes are not possible. Despite COVID concerns and a number of large wildfires around the state (one of which closed I-70 for a significant amount of time), and working with affected hunters to make alternative hunting plans, Colorado has still witnessed an increase in license sales over last year. In an attempt to prioritize hunting and fishing activities on state wildlife areas, Colorado implemented a new requirement for any person over 18 years old to possess a proper and valid Colorado hunting or fishing license while utilizing their properties.

This is a big political year for Colorado as well. Wolf reintroduction has made its way onto their November ballots, and I would encourage you to read up on Colorado Senate Bill SB20-217

bill/sb20-217). Luckily wildlife officers are defined a bit differently and are not impacted as much as other law enforcement, but much of the statute, which has already passed, will have huge effects on officer recruitment, retention, and the manner in which officers work.

Aaron Kerr provided Wyoming's annual law enforcement report (<https://wgfd.wyo.gov/WGFD/media/content/Law%20Enforcement/2019-WGFD-Law-Enforcement-Report.pdf>), which includes some interesting cases and regional statistics from 2019. He also reported four of Wyoming's newest game wardens graduated from the Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy on July 31. Those four, as well as five other wardens hired in the past year, attended an additional week of formal training in Casper this August to prepare for their first hunting season as law enforcement officers. Training covered various aspects of Wyoming's hunting statutes and regulations, field forensics, investigative techniques and more. The week was capped off by a series of scenarios dealing with com-

## Region 5 Director Jesse Gehrt



temperatures. Fall harvest of Crops is just getting ramped up, which means hunting seasons are getting in to gear. Officers in this area have been transitioning from the boating season to full on hunting, a much welcomed change for some. COVID-19 has not put too much of a strain on those that I have spoken to throughout the summer so far, it mostly has just changed our day to day activities, and made us think about our hygiene and being safe around others. I

Greetings from Kansas, in NAWEOA's Region 5. I hope this message finds you all safe in these unprecedented times, especially as Law Enforcement Officers. The heat wave of the summer has finally decide to go away and now we are getting Fall like tempera-

would like to send out a THANK YOU to all of the Region 5 J-Reps for their work throughout the year so far. Our condolences were sent to our fellow Game Warden Brothers in Florida, after the untimely loss of one of their officers. I would like to remind all of our association members of our awards program with NAWEOA. Please start thinking about those officers who have stood out this past year so far, and consider nominating them for one of the annual awards. Information on each of these can be found on the NAWEOA website. Please take the time to recognize your peers! Unfortunately we were not able to have the summer conference this year in Nashville, TN, but your NAWEOA board has stayed in touch with each other, and the 2021 conference is planned and ready to go for next year. I am looking forward to catching up with you all. Hug your loved ones, and most of all...Be safe and watch your six....

### Nebraska

We recently received final authorization from State

## Region 5 Director Jesse Gehrt (Continued)

Personnel to fill our five (5) new CO positions and one (1) additional position that was added as of July 1st to backfill for a fulltime investigator position. This will make 11 officers that we are hiring. With all the duty stations being opened, this has created a flurry of transfers by senior officers that must come first before we can fill with a new hire. We are in the process of assigning sergeants to each district. But this is on hold with all the transfers taking place. Conservation Officer John Lee has been selected to fill the investigator position which will be based out of Lincoln. Keith Jadowski and Jaden Porter are going to be stationed at Ogallala, Nebraska and are in the final stages of their field training program. We have extended Conditional Offers to cover the following duty stations, Auburn, Chappell and O' Neill. All of these individuals are currently certified and will begin the field training process with Jacob Stoinski which will be stationed in Chadron. In October.

Sentencings continue to happen as a joint investigation with USFWS on violating federal and state wildlife regulations in connection to Hidden Hills Outfitters of Broken Bow. To date, 30 defendants have pleaded guilty and have been sentenced and ordered to pay a total of \$353,048 in fines and restitution as part of an ongoing prosecution related to violations committed by owners, guides and clients of Hidden Hills.

### Texas

Chad Jones has been selected as the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's new Law Enforcement Director. Col. Jones became a game warden in 2004 and has held duty stations in Brazos and Trinity Counties, has served as a Team Lead for the Forensic Accident and Reconstruction Team, a Lieutenant at the Game Warden Training Center in Hamilton County, Texas, a Captain in Uvalde and a Major in both Corpus Christi and in the Pineywoods region of East Texas.

### Kansas

Kansas currently has some open positions; The Major of Operations, and two Regional Captain spots. We were able to make offers to fill three field level warden positions, and anticipate a couple more to open in the near future, mostly due to retirees and potential leavening for greener pastures. Applicant numbers are still lower than in the past, but we have been getting some decent ones, and some being already LEO certified. The longtime Kansas Game Warden Law Enforcement Administrative Specialist has recently retired after nearly 30 years of service. Officers will say that she was the glue that kept our Division, and a lot of the Dept., together. Her position has been filled with the daughter of one of our retired Game Wardens. We look forward to the knowledge base that she brings to the table. Earlier this year Kansas Wardens, along with Ft. Riley Wardens, wrapped up a good case involving retired soldiers coming back and illegally hunting elk and whitetail deer in KS and on the Military Installation, with at times hunting on the Artillery Impact Area where unexploded ordinances may lie. Multiple state and federal agencies were involved and a good time was had by all, except the poachers. The adjudication is in the works.

This summer we had two longtime officers, and NAWEOA members, retire. They will be missed. Kansas has moved to a Hunting and Fishing phone app, with sportsmen able to select, purchase, and then utilize the Electronic tagging option for Big Game. Even with COVID-19 numbers rising, we are currently still a GO with our 2020 Deer seasons. If that season gets nixed, that would mean a huge revenue shortfall for our department, as well as many businesses in KS. Kansas has also slowly started hosting Hunter and Boater Education classes, with more guidelines to keep everyone safe, throughout the summer.



**NAWEOA** is an 8000 member organization of Wildlife and Fisheries enforcement officers from across North America. The association began at a meeting of 16 Wildlife Officers from the U.S. and Canada in Great Falls, Montana in 1980. Other associations for wildlife officers existed, but this was the first to actively solicit membership from all officers in North America.

**What can NAWEOA do for you?** NAWEOA as a group of dedicated wildlife law enforcement professionals is committed to wildlife protection and to the public we serve. NAWEOA supports the activities of many major conservation organizations through membership and active participation. If you are a Fish and Wildlife Officer, you can be part of the NAWEOA team today by becoming a member. Let us share the benefits of membership with you! If you are a Natural Resource Program Administrator, you can improve your program by sending your officers to NAWEOA conferences and training programs, or let us help you in hosting one yourself.



## Region 6 Director Dan Fagan



Greetings everyone from sunny Florida! I hope this finds everyone well and healthy. Unfortunately, as everyone knows, the 2020 NAWEOA Summer Conference in Nashville, TN had to be postponed due to the COVID pandemic, which I am sure everyone was just as let down as I was. However,

I have faith our brothers and sisters of the Tennessee Wildlife Officers Association (TWOA) will come back strong and host the biggest conference NAWEOA has ever seen! I want to thank everyone in the TWOA for their willingness to host in 2021.

I would like to take this time to welcome a few individuals as they take on the roles of Jurisdictional Representative (JReps) for their respective associations:  
Joe Goddard – Alabama Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources

Bryan Dolan – Kentucky Conservation Officer's Association

David Boudreaux – Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries

Michael Lathroum – Maryland Natural Resources Police

Jesse Fielder – US Fish and Wildlife Service

Welcome aboard gentlemen and I look forward to working with you.

This July marks the completion of my first year as the Region 6 Director and it has been an amazing journey thus far. The networking this association provides is second to none, not only for job related inquiries, but for friendships as well. I look forward to continuing to serve Region 6.

Thanks for all you do. I wish you and your families good will and continued health.

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• As told by IGW contributor Terry Hodges.

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## Region 7 Director Larry Hergenroeder



2020, what a year to say the least! As with most of us walking the thin green line, not only has our everyday lives changed but so has how we've been forced to operate in this profession that we so dearly love. Within a profession that normally requires close public interaction, the term "normal" takes on a whole new meaning. During thousands of warden and sportsmen contacts annually, the new CDC recommendations for a 6-foot social distancing requirement still doesn't help our wardens as we commonly have to close that distance for the exchange of licenses or other documentation or physical arrest. Prior to Covid-19 our training and attention was only directed to the dangers of entering the officer safety reactionary gap. Now we have been relinquished to conducting interviews for only the more serious of violations and adding to the fold, a mask that easily hides some of the non-verbal cues we look for as law enforcement investigators. Some of the first mandates in the Corona Virus protocols left those to their own devices where local magisterial courts were simply not processing summary violations even though these violations make up a majority of some state's game laws. Regardless of the grading of these violations, they are still being committed on daily basis by those that possess the attitude that they aren't going to be prosecuted for committing them anyway. I spoke with a Warden from a northern state that had nearly three dozen summons to file from a weekend ATV law enforcement detail and the court adamantly stated they would not process them. That's over thirty contacts by this warden putting himself and his family at risk continuing to perform his sworn duties as a conservation law enforcement officer only to have them ignored and basically exonerating those in violation still out recreating without concern for transmitting or acquiring the Corona virus.

I am not a health professional, nor do I claim to be, so I listened to the guidelines set forth by the CDC when we had to make the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 Summer Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. Knowing what I know now, it proved to be the correct decision as the International border with our brothers and sisters to the north is still closed. Fortunately, we were blessed to have an understanding host in the Tennessee Wildlife Officers Association and the Maxwell House Millennium Hotel staff that graciously postponed the conference until 2021 without penalty regarding the signed contract for hosting the 2020 conference. Please remember to express your gratitude to both at next year's conference when you attend in 2021. Those that have never hosted or have the knowledge regarding booking a venue such as the Maxwell House Millennium hotel, there are guaranteed revenue quotas that have to be met or there are penalties along with the outstanding balances that have to be paid. For the hotel to postpone and honor this contract a year later without penalty is astonishing and greatly appreciated as it shows their incredible support for those of us that work in conservation law enforcement.

Looking ahead, I have already begun a countdown to the 2021 conference in Nashville. I have to be honest, July 2020 was a depressing four weeks as for the first time in a decade I wasn't boarding an airplane or loading the trunk of my wife's car with luggage and driving to the annual summer conference. I replaced the missed time spent at hospitality night by facetimeing many of my friends to the north and relying on the US postal service to send and deliver the latest challenge coins I usually trade with fellow wardens each summer at the conference. The worse part was no longer having an excuse to put off summer projects around the house. I now have a new roof, deck and bathroom due to being home without anywhere to go. Like many others, I let my registration fees and airline tickets carry over to 2021 so basically our 2021 trip to Nashville is paid for. Missy and I will probably find another adventure to spend the annual budget on since we are in

## Region 7 Director Larry Hergenroeder (Continued)

surplus for the conference. Unfortunately, there are those that have taken a big financial loss during these very trying times and my sympathy goes out to you. I am fortunate that I am not trying to put a couple teenagers through college or many of the other financial hardships that come with spouses having lost their jobs due to this pandemic.

Be vigilant and have a safe 2020 fall hunting season. Keep a positive attitude and remember you have family in NAWEOA that cares about you. If you need someone to vent to or just want to check in since we didn't get the chance to chat in July, send me an email [region7@naweo.org](mailto:region7@naweo.org) or give me a call, I would love to hear from you. Until next newsletter in the spring, stay safe and thank you for all you do. I look forward to seeing you all in Nashville next July.

Below are submissions from the Region 7 JReps with what is happening in their State and Association.

### **Maine**

JRep Kris MacCabe reports the following from Maine:

Maine Warden Service/Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

The Maine Warden Service has seen a large increase in outdoor activity use since the outbreak of COVID-19. The Maine Warden Service has been very busy with search and rescue calls with an increase in hiking activity. With subjects trying to get outside many rescues have been for subjects that are not prepared for the conditions.

With increased retirements this year the Maine Warden Service has opened the hiring and continues to look for qualified applicants.

The Maine Warden Service would like to congratulate the following on their dedicated service to the people of the State of Maine and their unrelenting determination to catch intentional violators of Fish and Game Laws.

Lieutenant Kevin Adam  
Sgt. Glenn Annis  
Sgt. Tim Spahr  
Game Warden Investigator Bill Livezy  
Game Warden Dave Milligan  
Game Warden Joe Lefebvre  
Game Warden Joey Gardner  
Game Warden Gary Sibley

The Maine Warden Service want to congratulate all of these retirees on successful Game Warden Careers but most of all continued success in their future endeavors.

Maine Warden Service Promotions:

Lieutenant Aaron Cross

Sergeant Cross began his career with the Department in 2007 as a District Warden. He was soon promoted to Corporal where he served as the Department's Whitewater Specialist overseeing the commercial whitewater industry. In the spring of 2016, he was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in Division C, Washington County. Currently Sergeant Cross supervises the Mid-Coast in Division B. He serves on the Camp Trip Leader Advisory Board, Incident Management Team, Evidence Response Team, Advisory Board for the Licensing of Whitewater Guides, Advisory Board for the Licensing of Guides, and is one of our Operation Game Thief Liaisons.

Sergeant Cross is a graduate of Unity College where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Conservation Law Enforcement in 2007. In 2018 he graduated from the National Association of Conservation Law Enforcement Chief's Leadership Academy, held at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. Sergeant Cross embodies our core values, exhibits excellent communication skills and shares a vision which will help lead IF&W into the future.

## Region 7 Director Larry Hergenroeder (Continued)

Lieutenant Jason Luce

Lieutenant Luce began his career in 1999 as a District Warden in Division A. After spending 9 years patrolling the Sebago Lake Region, Sgt Luce was promoted to Game Warden Investigator. He has extensive experience investigating complex calls for service including fatal boat, recreational vehicle and hunting incidents. In 2013 Luce was promoted to his current position as Game Warden Sergeant in Section 2. Since that time, he has been directly supervising 6 game wardens in a very busy portion of the state. Sgt Luce will be reporting to Greenville in two weeks where he will be supervising 3 Sgts and 16 wardens in the Moosehead Lake Region.

Sgt. Josh Bubier

Investigator Bubier began his career with the Warden Service in January of 2008 when he was assigned to the Skowhegan district. In 2013 Josh was promoted to investigator for the Greenville Division. In addition to his role as investigator he has also been a member of the Incident Management Team working in the operations and planning sections since 2009. In April of this year Investigator Bubier was named as the interim Statewide Search and Rescue coordinator. He has been a frontrunner concerning technology and has become well acquainted with cellphone mapping technology for use by the planning section during searches and rescue operations. Throughout his career he has consistently shown exemplary service and was recently named the 2018 Game Warden of the Year. Investigator Bubier has served as an ERT and Honor Guard member as well as being involved in MSLEA and heavily involved in the Maine Warden Service Association. Josh currently also serves as a part-time task force officer on the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force.

### New Hampshire

JRep Josiah Towne reports the following from New Hampshire:

On the afternoon of Saturday, June 13, 2020, Conservation Officer Matthew Holmes was struck by a "Side by Side" ATV while conducting off road vehicle speed enforcement in a remote area of industrial woodland in northern NH. CO Holmes was immediately helped at the scene by Conservation Office Bob Mancini, whom he was working with on that afternoon. Following the crash, CO Holmes was taken from the scene by ambulance to a local hospital and then transported via helicopter to a trauma center at Central Maine Medical Center in Lewiston, Maine. CO Holmes underwent a number of tests and was found to have sustained 8 broken ribs and a separation in a shoulder. He was kept overnight at the hospital but released to the care of his family the following day. During this time, the Maine Warden Service did an outstanding job of helping with logistics and providing CO Holmes' wife and coworkers with lodging and information.

On the evening of the crash, the New Hampshire State Police tactical accident investigation team responded and conducted an investigation, along with Conservation Officers from the NH Fish and Game Department, into this incident. The tactical team determined that the vehicle that struck CO Holmes and his ATV was traveling in excess of 60 mph at the time of impact (nearly 40 mph above the posted speed limit). All parties believed to have been involved were identified, and charges are pending against the 26-year-old Massachusetts man who struck CO Holmes.

In the days and weeks following the crash, CO Holmes attended numerous doctor visits and underwent physical therapy. Very thankfully his recovery has gone extremely well, and he was able to return to work, full duty, on August 12 (almost two months to the day from the crash). CO Holmes has remained in good spirits and is extremely grateful for all of the support and well wishes that has received from near and far.

At the time of the crash, CO Holmes was working with the Engle Entertainment film crew who produce the show, "Northwoods Law." Much of the incident



## Region 7 Director Larry Hergenroeder (Continued)

was caught on film, making for a very rare and unique documentation of the events that unfolded that day. It is believed that some of this footage will be shown on an episode of the show that may air at a later date.

CO Matt Holmes is a 15-year veteran of the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department. He was been assigned to the northern part of the state near the base of Mt. Washington for the past 14 years. CO Holmes has a wife and two children, ages 3 and 5. CO Holmes is a member of the state's Advanced Search and Rescue Team, an FTO, a background investigator, sits on the Guide's Oral Board and is an active Hunter Safety Instructor.

### New Jersey

JRep Anne Quirk reports the following from New Jersey:

The New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife is proud to announce the graduation of five Conservation Police Officer Recruits from the Gloucester County Police Academy's 56th Basic Class on August 28th. Pictured from left to right are Recruit Colby Capri, Recruit Dane Bahrle, Recruit Michael Bickerton, Chief Jonathan Cianiulli, Recruit Nicholas DellaVella, Recruit Ryan Szelc and Lieutenant Paul Toppin. The patrol areas that the CPO Recruits will be assigned are:

Colby Capri – Ocean County Marine Region  
Dane Bahrle – Cumberland/Cape May Counties  
Michael Bickerton – Middlesex/Monmouth Counties  
Nicholas DellaVella – Sussex/Morris Counties  
Ryan Szelc – Atlantic County Marine Region



*Recruit Michael Bickerton received the Director's Award, the Award of Merit, the Award for Excellence in Physical Fitness, and the Academic Excellence Award.*

In February a graduate of Gloucester County Police Academy's 55th Basic Class, Recruit Jonathan Malinski, joined the Bureau of Law Enforcement. Stationed in Atlantic County, he is completing field training with veteran Conservation Police Officers as mentors.

## Region 7 Director Larry Hergenroeder (Continued)

The addition of these six officers brings the total sworn force of the Bureau of Law Enforcement to fifty-one.

Like other state wildlife agencies, New Jersey experienced an unprecedented increase in visitation to Wildlife Management Areas as a result of the Corona virus pandemic. Governor Murphy's Executive Order 118 closed the NJ State Parks and county parks effective April 7th, 2020. The Division of Fish and Wildlife's Wildlife Management Areas remained open, with buildings, archery and gun ranges closed. To give people the opportunity for socially distanced recreation, trout season was modified to allow an early catch and release period during the weeks when trout stocked waters are normally closed to fishing. Many trout-stocked water bodies were affected by the park closure, focusing angler pressure on those in WMAs.

The Bureau's monthly reports to the Fish and Game Council tell the story of the pandemic response in numbers. In April visitation to WMA's by non-traditional users, ie individuals who are not hunting or fishing, began to increase especially in the Central Region. Conservation Police Officers began to allocate a larger percentage of their patrol hours to the WMA's compared to 2019. In 2019 CPO's spent 3.8% of working hours for April in WMA patrols. In April of 2020 the allocation of hours increased to 18.6%.

State Parks reopened May 2nd, but despite that, in this month the increase in visitation to the WMA's continued, with a corresponding increase in violations and apprehensions. Officers made contact with 3410 people on WMA properties, a 1571% increase over 2019's number of 217. Of the 925 summonses issued in the month of May, 552 were for violation of the WMA regulations. Officers in the inland regions, with help from the Administrative unit, dedicated 29.5% of their hours to WMA patrol, compared to 4.3% in 2019. For the twelve-month period of June 2019 through May 2020, 30% of the apprehensions made by CPOs occurred in May alone.

In June the increase in visitation continued, with CPO's making contact with 6,074 people, compared to 655 in June 2019. Inland region CPOs dedicated 41.9% of their work hours to WMA patrol, compared to 8.9% in 2019.

The month of July saw a shift to heavier usage in the Southern Region, where the man-made lakes and quarry-sand beaches draw large crowds of people violating WMA regulations by swimming, camping, consuming alcohol, and remaining in the WMA after hours. Illegal ATV use in the Central and Southern Region also demanded a significant portion of the CPOs time. Inland region officers dedicated 41.4% of their work hours to WMA patrol in July 2020, compared to 10.3% in July 2019.

Increasing patrol hours on WMAs comes at the cost of fewer patrol hours spent protecting wildlife on State Parks, private, municipal, and county lands. Perhaps time will tell what the impact of the absence of Conservation Police Officers on these properties will be for the State's wildlife resources.

Another "victim" of the Corona virus pandemic, the IHEA HRSI Academy that was scheduled for April 2020 has been postponed to March 2021.

### Ohio

JRep Joshua Zientek report the following from Ohio:

2020 has been a very busy year for the Ohio Division of Wildlife with the hiring and training of twelve wildlife officer cadets to fill some longstanding vacant field assignments. Many challenges and obstacles were overcome during the course of the academy due to Covid-19. The cadets of the 30th Wildlife Officer Training Academy graduated on August 21st, 2020 and are working in their new areas while in the six month field training program. For the first time in many years, the Division of Wildlife now has a wildlife officer in every county across the state. We are extremely excited to have them in the field!

## Region 7 Director Larry Hergenroeder (Continued)



Commissioned staff have had to adapt to many changes throughout the last several months due to the current health pandemic. Officers have seen a large increase in outdoor recreation on all areas across the state. Several great cases have been made from the shores of Lake Erie to the Ohio River and all areas in between. Even during these trying times, everyone continues to execute the mission of the Division of Wildlife.

### **Pennsylvania (Game)**

JRep Rick Finnegan reports the following from Pennsylvania:

The Northwest Region of the Pennsylvania Game Commission has several investigations ongoing: Some involve fleeing / false ID, poisoning of waterfowl - joint case with the USFWS, and several cases are pending with the help of trail cameras capturing violations.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission welcomed three new OSI / K-9 teams in 2020. The agency now has six teams, one located in each of the agency's six regions. These teams work as Overt Special Investigators and assist game wardens and other law enforcement entities with a wide array of cases across the state. All six K-9s are Labrador Retrievers and their roles include wildlife detection, recovery of physical evidence and tracking/trailing humans. The three newest K-9s are four months into their formal training, learning to locate articles such as shell casings, firearms, bows, knives, phones, wallets and have also begun human tracking/trailing training. PGC K-9's are actually trail-

ing dogs when searching for humans, however most are familiar with the "tracking dog" terminology. In the spring of 2021 the K-9's will be trained to detect the scents of deer, elk, bear, turkey and waterfowl as they reach approximately one year in age.

The three newest OSI / K-9 Teams are as follows:



*OSI Shawn Barron and K-9 Ayla serving Pennsylvania's Southwest Region.*



*OSI Tyler Kreider and K-9 Cali serving Pennsylvania's Southeast Region.*



*OSI Steve Brussese and K-9 Kya serving Pennsylvania's Southcentral Region.*



## Region 7 Director Larry Hergenroeder (Continued)

The PGC Tracking team has been activated on multiple occasions recently. They have been called to assist several different agencies including Homeland Security and PEMA to assist against riots in several different regions / counties. The Secret Service called and asked for assistance from the tracking team which responded for a security detail to help protect President Trump when visiting the Northeast Region. PSP and the District Attorney called and used the tracking team in an effort to search for a homicide suspect along the river in Luzerne County.



The newest members to join the tracking team completed their first step in becoming tabbed Operators. In July, Mike Hull helped in training State Game Wardens Andrew Hueser, Praveed Abraham, Blake Barth, Brandon Pfister, and Ryan Zawada to complete their Level I Tracking Training in the Northwest Region. These Officers will be an integral part of the tracking team and have already showed proficiency in many areas.

There are currently 29 cadets in the 32nd cadet class at the PGC's Ross Leffler School of Conservation. These cadets will be heading to their field training assignments from early October until late December. During these 10-12 weeks, they will be learning from their respective field training officers (FTO's) some on the on the job training during the 2020 fall / winter hunting / trapping seasons. They are all excited to hit

the field and graduation is scheduled for February 2021.

November 11th 2020 is the 10 year anniversary of when David Grove made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty while attempting to apprehend a convicted felon and deer poacher. Orvis is partnering with CO-PA (Conservation Officers of Pennsylvania Association) to have a benefit Sporting Clays Shoot at the Orvis Hill Country facility located in Adams County, PA. The money raised will be donated to help fund the youth game warden camps put on by the PGC and state game wardens across the state.

### Vermont

JRep Robert Currier reports the following from Vermont.

#### Career Poacher Taken Down

After seven months of investigation Jeremiah Ruhl (Jed), 43 of Colchester, was arrested by Vermont Fish and Wildlife Wardens, along with Special Agents from US Fish and Wildlife and Officers from Colchester Police. A joint investigation by VTFW and USFW, with assistance from the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) resulted in a six-count indictment of Ruhl in United States District Court, District of Vermont. Ruhl has also been charged with several state fish and wildlife crimes that were committed over the course of a three-year period. He was arraigned in Chittenden County Superior Court to answer to approximately 30 counts of state Fish and Wildlife crimes brought forth by Vermont Game Wardens.

Ruhl has been a habitual violator of Vermont State Law and has a record of the illegal taking of fish and wildlife dating back to 2002. The crimes he has committed have been both gruesome and disrespectful in nature, displaying a complete lack of respect for wildlife and the laws that govern such.

"Mr. Ruhl has repeatedly shown himself to be a significant threat to both the natural resources of Vermont

## Region 7 Director Larry Hergenroeder (Continued)

and the migratory species we share with neighboring states and provinces. Thanks to our dedicated State Game Warden investigators, Federal Agents and prosecutors working in concert, the crimes committed will see an appropriate response.”, says Colonel Batchelder.

## Secretary/Treasurer Steve Beltran

“Many warm regards extend it to you all during this time of isolation. Despite not having our summer meeting and getting to enjoy the fellowship of each other I assure you your executive board and directors are working hard to keep and maintain this great organization running. In regards to the financials it is presented as a double edge sword. We don’t have money going out as expenses for the conference but at the same time we don’t have money coming in. Thank goodness for savings and preparation as we will be able to sustain this pandemic and the financial byproduct.

of you review the numbers and contact anyone on the executive board with any questions or concerns. I would also like to address the formality of approving our last year’s budget as well as approving our proposed budget for this year. Generally we have a motion and a second followed by discussion and a vote. Before the pandemic hit we met in Pecatonica Illinois and the executive board was able to review and accept the financials as they stood from July 1, 2019 to February 1, 2020. We had a motion from the executive board on both items and they passed.

In the absence of a actual meeting I am presenting the membership with a financial budget and ask that each As always I encourage you to ask early and often on any questions or concerns that you have. And with that being said here is our financial information.

### Canada

FOF checking 481.39  
NAWEOA saving 39,232.77  
NAWEOA checking 5,635.38  
FOF savings 8,420.58

### US

FOF savings 21,725.28  
NAWEOA savings 13,3873.95  
Credit card savings 5,579.10  
NAWEOA checking 75,383.57



Profit Loss Detail.pdf



profit loss standard.pdf





- Smaller departments are our specialty
- 23 colors, plus three camos available in weather treated materials
- All long gun, A/R & range bags have one-inch foam protection
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### **Red Lake Nation Conservation Officer Shannon Barron**

On Sunday July 7, 2019 Conservation Officer Opie Barron suffered a fatal heart attack while investigating an illegal harvesting call off Highway 89 north of Red Lake. He was nearing the end of his shift when the call came out and being the officer he was it was not a question if he would go, it was where was the call and he was on his way.

He and other officers had just cleared from the call when he radioed dispatch requesting EMS for himself. The other officers returned and immediately began performing life-saving measures. He was transported to Red Lake Indian Health Service Hospital where he was pronounced dead.



### **Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Wildlife Officer Julian Keen, Jr.**

On Sunday, June 14, 2020 Wildlife Officer Julian Keen was shot and killed in Labelle when he attempted to stop a hit-and-run suspect while off duty.

Hendry County deputies located Officer Keen's body after responding to reports of a shooting near the intersection of Nobles Road and Apache Circle. Three subjects were taken into custody.  
Officer Keen had served with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for six years.



**2021 Conference  
Nashville, Tennessee**



**Tennessee 2021**

**The TWOA welcomes NAWEOA to Tennessee for the 2021 annual conference.**

**7/12/21 - 7/17/21**

**Opening Ceremonies - Tuesday, July 13th**

**Banquet Dinner - Friday, July 16th**



## 2021 Conference Nashville, Tennessee



Room Rate: \$139.00 per night +taxes and fees

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For Reservations : 1-800-457-4460  
Mention the 2021 NAWEOA Conference or  
use the group code: 2007NAWEOA if  
using the website.



### Information regarding **NAWEOA Jurisdictional Representatives,**

- ♦ Names
- ♦ Contact information
- ♦ The jurisdictions they serve
- ♦ Etc.

Can be found elsewhere on the NAWEOA website  
**[naweo.org](http://naweo.org)**





## MUSEUM VISITING OFFICER PROGRAM

Looking for a get-away weekend or planning a family vacation? The International Peace Garden on the Manitoba-North Dakota border is a great destination. Each summer, officers from the US and Canada plan a vacation or a trip that includes a stop at the Game Warden Museum, not just to see the Museum, but to participate in its Visiting Officer Program and explore the Peace Garden.

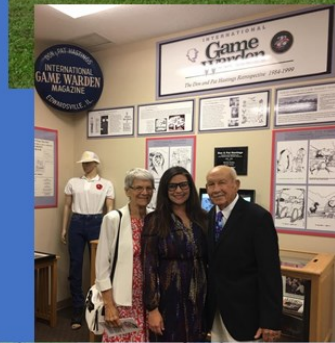
Museum Director Tom Caifa, a conservation officer from New York, has participated and describes the experience. "I have done the Visiting Officer Program three times in the past and I really enjoyed it. It's not just the program itself, but the whole experience of staying at the Peace Garden and seeing the Museum that celebrates the game warden profession."

Presentations can be as simple as the standard "who we are and what we do" or can be more elaborate. Every game warden has interesting stories and since every state is different, the material is always fresh.

If you have an interest or know of any game warden that you think might like to participate in the program (active or retired), please contact the Museum or any Board Member.



# NORTH AMERICAN GAME WARDEN MUSEUM





# SUMMER OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYMENT – INTERNSHIP



## NORTH AMERICAN GAME WARDEN MUSEUM AND EDUCATION CENTER

LOCATED IN THE INTERNATIONAL PEACE GARDENS  
NORTH DAKOTA/MANITOBA

We are seeking individuals for employment in June, July, and August. Duties include assisting as Museum attendant, meeting visitors, interpreting exhibits in the Museum and the Memorial Garden, salesperson, and possibly some light maintenance. Hourly pay rate will be negotiable based on the individual's commitment to length of employment, experience, and skills.

We would consider commitment for as short as one month to three months. Local housing is available.



Send a resume and references to  
[board@gamewardenmuseum.org](mailto:board@gamewardenmuseum.org)