

Summary Report
of the Tri-National Conference
on Wildlife Enforcement Activities
“In Search of Better Avenues for Public Participation”
28 February – 1 March 2002,
Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, DC, USA

Sponsored by the
North American Wildlife Enforcement Group (NAWEG)
North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC)

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This is the summary report of the Tri-National Conference on Wildlife Enforcement Activities—“In Search of Better Avenues for Public Participation,” which was held from 28 February to 1 March 2002, at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC. The conference was organized by the North American Wildlife Enforcement Group (NAWEG) and the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC). Approximately, 60 participants from Canada, Mexico and the U.S. attended the meeting as representatives of governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academia and the private sector.

The Conference explored existing and potential avenues, mechanisms, and partnerships for citizen participation in wildlife enforcement issues in Canada, Mexico and the United States. The Conference’s primary objectives were to: identify various avenues for public participation; explore differences in wildlife enforcement in the three countries; build public support for enforcement; and develop recommendations for building partnerships between agencies and the public.

The meeting included five plenary sessions addressing:

- a comparative overview of systems for wildlife enforcement;
- a comparative overview of public participation mechanisms;
- transboundary enforcement cooperation;
- partnership models; and
- case studies on citizen involvement.

Each session included three presentations, generally reflecting a perspective from each of the three countries, and a discussion period for comments, questions and recommendations. There was also a keynote presentation by John Webb of the U.S. Department of Justice, and breakout groups to develop recommendations for building public support for enforcement.

I. OPENING PLENARY

Ignacio González, CEC Program Manager, opened the meeting and welcomed participants.

Yvan Lafleur, Chair of NAWEG, reviewed NAWEG’s role as a mechanism for regional discussion of enforcement issues, noting its mandate to build capacity and coordinate regional approaches to enforcement obligations and priorities. This Conference was the latest in a series of NAWEG-sponsored conferences with past seminars focusing on issues such as identifying controlled furs, birds, reptiles, coral and marine invertebrates, wildlife forensics and customs officer training. NAWEG’s upcoming priorities include capacity building in the areas of trade in endangered plant species, invasive species, intelligence operations and outreach to Central American and Caribbean countries.

Greg Block, CEC Director of Programs, noted that the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation contains strong language on enforcement of national laws and the role of public participation. Positive examples of participation from other CEC programs, include: a pollutant release and transfer registry; development and implementation of regional action plans for persistent organic pollutants; assessments of the impacts of trade liberalization on the environment; and an initiative on electricity and the environment. Mr. Block noted that there has long been a challenge to involve the public in supporting the work of enforcement officials and underscored that public participation is a dynamic, ongoing process requiring the free flow of information between authorities and the public. He stressed the need to support cross-border, ground-up communication networks, and suggested further exploring means for their coordination and institutionalization.

II. COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW OF SYSTEMS FOR WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT

Don MacLauchlan, International Resource Director, International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, moderated the session, which compared domestic wildlife enforcement systems, including: the basis for jurisdiction over wildlife; roles of the federal and subnational governments; interagency cooperation on wildlife enforcement; and the setting of enforcement priorities.

From Canada: Steve Curtis, Canadian Program Director, Association for Biodiversity Information, reviewed the jurisdiction of federal, provincial and other levels of government and corresponding legislative instruments over wildlife in Canada. The federal government is responsible for fisheries, migratory birds, endangered species, and species on federal lands and waters, and is guided by legislation including the Fisheries Act, the Migratory Birds Conservation Act, the Wildlife Act and others. Enforcement officers at the federal level include fisheries officers, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and others. Provincial governments have responsibility for all other areas of wildlife, and often have their own provincial wildlife acts and provincial-level officers. Mr. Curtis also recognized the role of aboriginal and municipal governments in wildlife management. He noted that the coordination of enforcement efforts among the different levels varies by sector, as there is no contracted arrangement. Curtis highlighted the work of the Canadian Natural Resources Law Enforcement Chiefs Association which involves the ten provinces, three territories and relevant federal agencies. The Association works to: provide a forum on natural resource enforcement matters; promote cooperation, information exchange and sharing of intelligence and resources; enhance integration of law enforcement and natural resource management; encourage professional standards; and facilitate training and development.

From Mexico: José A. Gómez Rodríguez, General Director, Petitions and Complaints, Head Office of the *Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente* (PROFEPA) outlined the legislative framework for wildlife enforcement in Mexico. He noted four principal pieces of legislation: the national Constitution, the Law on Ecological Equilibrium and Environmental Protection; the national Wildlife Law; and relevant local legislation. The Wildlife Law, which was recently enacted, involves federal, state and municipal governments, provides venues for public participation and includes a consultative council for protecting wildlife. The two main avenues for its enforcement are through PROFEPA of the *Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales* (SEMARNAT), and through the judicial system. Sanctions for non-compliance have been increased from past levels and include both fines and prison terms. PROFEPA supervises over 142 million hectares of land and its program activities derive from the national development plan and a national program for environmental and natural resources. PROFEPA's current priorities are in the areas of critical zones, non-compliance, high risk enterprises, threatened species and corruption.

Rodríguez noted that stakeholder participation requires legal elements institutionalizing dialogue and training. He highlighted the potentially critical role of the national consultative council, which includes a wide range of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. He also emphasized Mexico's system of public denunciations, by which individuals or groups can inform the government of illegal activities, which then must be investigated by the appropriate government agency.

From the United States: Richard Marks, Deputy Assistant Director, Division of Law Enforcement, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), explained that the basis for federal jurisdiction over wildlife is the U.S. Constitution, which assigns the federal government jurisdiction over regulation of interstate and foreign commerce, international treaties and federal property. The United States has over fourteen major wildlife statutes, is party to several international treaties and has enacted the Lacey Act, which helps to expand the impact of wildlife enforcement. Current emphases in wildlife enforcement include enforcing import/export controls, regulating interstate and foreign commerce in wildlife; controlling the import of harmful wildlife; safeguarding wildlife habitat; and assisting state, tribal and international law enforcement agencies. Interagency cooperation has been expanding, through for example: joint task forces for criminal

investigations and enforcement matters; enforcement alliances with states, tribes and foreign governments; development of cooperative law enforcement agreements; training in law enforcement techniques; wildlife forensic examinations; participation in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and Interpol; and operation of repositories to support education and fulfill trust responsibilities to tribes. Marks noted the importance of public-private cooperation and welcomed public input into a review system prioritizing activities impacting wildlife resources.

Discussion: Responding to an inquiry about efforts to address corruption within enforcement agencies, Marks noted a strong correlation between the potential for corruption and illegal activities, such as smuggling, and emphasized the role of internal affairs groups in addressing this important concern. He further noted that law enforcement officials must be beyond reproach in this area. Rodriguez noted that corruption is a serious problem in Mexico, which is exacerbated by low salaries and inadequate resources, and recommended rotating inspectors and increasing public participation in the reporting of corruption. Curtis highlighted the need for greater accountability, transparency and public involvement as mechanisms for limiting the reach of corruption.

Participants highlighted that sometimes governments can be significant obstacles to public participation despite the existence of formal rules and regulations. In this regard, they underscored the use of advisory councils and inclusion of accountability mechanisms within national legislation. Other commentators emphasized that coercive enforcement or the use of public denunciations should be the exception and not the rule for protecting wildlife. It was emphasized that enforcement is only one of a range of tools for protecting wildlife.

III. COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MECHANISMS

Carroll Muffett, Director of International Programs, Defenders of Wildlife, moderated this session, which addressed existing avenues, barriers and future opportunities for the public to participate in wildlife enforcement activities. In his opening remarks, Muffett noted commonalities between all three countries in lack of public familiarity with relevant laws, political pressure to under-enforce unpopular laws and insufficient resources available for effective enforcement. He emphasized that NGOs can play an important role in addressing these problems by educating the public, bringing pressure to ensure laws are adequately enforced, lobbying governments to commit more resources to wildlife enforcement, and cooperating with enforcement agencies in enforcement activities

For Canada: Randy Christensen, Senior Attorney, Sierra Legal Defense Fund, discussed legal avenues for public participation in Canada. Noting some benefits of informal collaboration and information exchange with governments, Christensen argued that NGOs can sometimes be more effective by working inside the process with governments, than in always publicly opposing the government. He highlighted a specific program where citizens are encouraged to observe, record and report wildlife violations, while noting the need for further education and improved opportunities for participation, particularly in the establishment of hunting quotas and licensing.

This was not meant to understate the importance of more formal ways of participation, through for example the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, which allows citizens to request an investigation and in some circumstances to file citizens' suits. Other avenues for participation in wildlife enforcement include: private prosecution; judicial review of agency decisions; statutory rights for appeal; administrative mechanisms, such as appeals to environmental boards and Freedom of Information Action (FOIA) requests; international mechanisms, such as citizen submissions under Articles 14 and 15 of the NAFTA Environmental Side Agreement; and the use of foreign laws, such as the Pelly Amendment to the U.S. Fisherman's Protective Act, which sanctions countries that may be undermining the ability of the U.S. to protect endangered species. He concluded by proposing that public participation in enforcement activities

can be improved through: better monitoring of activities and public right to data; provision for public participation in relevant legislation; and requirements for citizen suit provisions.

From Mexico: María Elena Sánchez Saldaña, President, Teyeliz, A.C., described the work of Teyeliz, a Mexican NGO, that provides a valuable case study in how the public can support the enforcement of Mexico's wildlife laws. Teyeliz uses verified information from sources including governments, NGOs, academia, media and commercial enterprises to among other things identify: traded species; trends in use; origin of such species; transportation routes, distribution and storage; consumer markets; quantities of legal and illegal trade; principal seasons for extraction and trade; and the traffickers or their networks. Reports are published and submitted to PROFEPA, natural resource management authorities, academics, NGOs, the public, foreign authorities and the Secretariats of relevant international conventions. Teyeliz has analyzed gaps in the existing legislative framework and recommended proposals for modifications. Teyeliz has also participated in national consultative committees, international networks and intergovernmental conventions addressing the use and commercialization of wildlife. Ms. Saldana also endorsed use of Mexico's popular denunciation mechanism as an effective means for participation as an official response is required any citizen filing a complaint.

From the United States: Eric Glitzenstein, partner, Meyer & Glitzenstein, discussed the obstacles and opportunities for public participation within the U.S. context. A number of avenues for public participation exist in the United States, including:

- accessing information, such as through Freedom of Information Act requests, as a fundamental prerequisite for assessing the situation and determining necessary steps for action;
- petitioning governments and participating in formal proceedings, such as through the Administrative Procedure Act;
- lobbying for better and new legislation; and
- litigating or at least threatening to litigate in order to get the necessary attention to promote change.

Obstacles to effective public participation in the United States include for example:

- legal barriers, including laws that do not provide public recourse to courts, such as the Animal Welfare Act;
- court-created barriers, such as the Supreme Court decision preventing suits against government agencies for not effectively prosecuting others for violating the law, or the need to demonstrate legal standing or protectable interest to litigate in courts;
- agency barriers, such as efforts to avoid the release of information or overly broad interpretation of exemptions; and
- deep-seated attitudes among upper levels of government that the public has little role to play in enforcement activities.

Discussion: Participants highlighted the broad range of responsibilities held by enforcement agencies, while underlining the scarcity of resources within the three countries. With regards to capacity, participants stressed the need for legal training and awareness-raising for the public, possibly through the development of social communication programs or public agendas on wildlife protection. One respondent highlighted the need to pressure legislatures to provide adequate resources for proper enforcement.

Discussants also noted the importance of attitudinal factors. One participant stated that the private sector generally enjoys a close relationship with economic development authorities, whereas NGOs and civil society have a more distant relationship with environmental agencies. Enforcement activities may be one area where environmental groups and government agencies are naturally allied in their goals. In this

regard, authorities should take advantage of the expertise, information and assistance of NGOs. One participant also stressed the need to look specifically at the role, responsibilities and opportunities of the government, private sector and civil society.

One participant highlighted the specific need to consider the participation of indigenous and aboriginal peoples, while respecting the legal rights and treaties that such groups have signed with federal governments. Indigenous and aboriginal peoples are frequently more dependent on and closer to wildlife resources, which can present specific opportunities and challenges for effective wildlife enforcement. Another highlighted the role of NGOs as intermediaries between the public and governments, especially where those reporting on illicit activities may not want to be publicly identified.

IV. KEYNOTE ADDRESS

John Webb, Assistant Section Chief, Wildlife and Marine Resources Section, Environmental and Natural Resources Division, U.S. Department of Justice, delivered the keynote address. He reviewed the historical development of the Wildlife and Marine Resources Section and the recognition of the need for legal specialists to fight wildlife crime. He highlighted the move by the National Marine and Fisheries Service and customs authorities from a focus on poaching to larger scale, illegal commercial trafficking in wildlife. One of the best vehicle for fighting such trafficking is the 1981 Lacey Act , which allows authorities to prosecute U.S. citizens for violating the wildlife laws of other countries while in those countries. He stressed that this was an important mechanism for enabling other countries to enforce their environmental laws within the United States. Webb reviewed cases where the Lacey Act was applied to illegal trafficking of reptiles through Mexico and the sale of undersized Honduran lobsters.

Mr. Webb emphasized recent trends in stronger criminal penalties, including prison sentences. The United States has also enhanced its use of extradition treaties and information-sharing agreements. The government can collect property and assets acquired through trafficking activities. Any revenue is often shared with countries from where the species originated or is funneled into further enforcement activities.

Discussion: Responding to a question regarding mechanisms to allow Canadian aboriginals to carry parts of endangered species within the U.S., Webb responded that one possible avenue would be negotiations between the U.S. and Canadian governments to identify specific tribes recognized to carry such parts by the Canadian government. Regarding a question about the repatriation of seized species or their parts to the country of origin as stipulated in CITES, Webb noted that CITES also states that the country of origin should pay costs related to the seizure and upkeep of live specimens, which can be expensive. The United States sometimes repatriates seized species, but also sells such species at auctions and invests the money in further enforcement investigations.

V. TRANSBOUNDARY ENFORCEMENT COOPERATION

Craig Hoover, Deputy Director, TRAFFIC North America, moderated the session, which addressed formal and informal trilateral and bilateral transboundary wildlife enforcement agreements and partnerships, transboundary enforcement priorities and the role of citizens in transboundary enforcement. TRAFFIC is a leading NGO in ensuring that wildlife trade is conducted legally and sustainably.

From Canada: Garry Bogdan, Chief, Wildlife Enforcement Division, Prairie and Northern Region, Environment Canada, described the role of inspection agencies in Canada. His region, which encompasses half of Canada's territory, only has three inspectors. Enhancing public participation and involvement is thus a necessary strategy to make limited enforcement resources go further. Particular frameworks for enforcement and related activities include protected areas (e.g., sanctuaries, parks), legislation (e.g., national treaties, legal assistance agreements, memoranda of understanding), public information (e.g.,

educational materials) and public input (e.g., consultation processes, management boards). Avenues for citizen participation include: “turn in poacher” (TIP) programs; observe, record and report programs; use of paid and unpaid informants; public education and outreach; and volunteer programs for monitoring and maintaining some federal lands. Mr. Bogdan stressed the need to work closely with aboriginal peoples regarding application of federal laws in their territories.

From Mexico: Karla Logan López, *Universidad Autónoma de Tamaulipas*, noted that Mexico is one of the five megadiverse countries, and underscored the need to consider its socioeconomic context as a developing country with a limited culture of conservation. Some NGOs, universities and others have nonetheless made natural resource management a priority and have made important links with Canadian and U.S. organizations. Mexico has joined a number of international agreements and commitments, including: the U.S.-Mexican Agreement to Protect Mammals and Migratory Birds; the Joint Committee for the Conservation of Natural Resources between Mexico and the United States; the Tripartite Committee for the Conservation of Wildlife and Ecosystems including Canada, Mexico and the United States; the Management Plan for Waterfowl in North America; the Ramsar Convention; CITES; the Convention on Biological Diversity; and Program Frontier 21. Current priorities include biodiversity conservation, sustainable use, conservation of germplasm, preservation of migratory birds and their habitats, and protection of endangered species.

Ms. Lopez reviewed the role of consultative councils for sustainable development as mechanisms for public participation in Mexico. Such councils were created in 1995 in four regions where groups were invited to participate in discussions regarding the management of natural resources and wildlife. The Mexican system of over 2,500 wildlife management and conservation units involve private associations in examining the economic and intrinsic values of wildlife.

From the United States: Benito Perez, Assistant Regional Director, Division of Law Enforcement, Region 1, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, noted that enforcement efforts include three elements: inspections of permit holders and compliance at borders; overt and undercover investigations; and outreach and public information efforts. Approximately half of his cases have had some form of public involvement. In some contexts, citizens may have an advantage over government officials because they are not bound by the same rules as law enforcement. Enlisting assistance from the public requires developing and providing relevant information, promoting public vigilance generally and in some cases offering rewards. The profitability of illegal trafficking in wildlife means that a consistent effort is necessary and that law enforcement can only be one component of an overall strategy to address the problem.

Discussion: Participants discussed the need to encourage government decision-makers to appropriate adequate financing for enforcement agencies and activities. Regarding a question on existing gaps in wildlife legislation, the panelists highlighted: invasive species; organized crime; impacts caused by illegal immigration in remote areas; inconsistencies between subnational laws; commercialization of wildlife and the resulting increased scale of activities; protection of CITES Annex 1 species; coastal pollution; fisheries; and timber and non-timber forests products. Participants also highlighted several issues that have a potentially large, albeit indirect, impact on wildlife conservation, including for example genetically modified organisms and transborder environmental impact assessments. There was also a discussion of the Escalera Nautica, an ecotourism project planned by the Mexican government in the Gulf of Cortez.

VI. PARTNERSHIP MODELS

Monica Alegre, Technical Assistant Director to the Deputy Attorney General for Natural Resources, PROFEPA, moderated this session, which reviewed models and opportunities for citizen participation in efforts to prevent poaching and trafficking of wildlife.

From Mexico: Georgita Ruíz Michel, Oaxaca State Office Director, PROFEPA, highlighted three mechanisms for public participation in Mexico: community vigilance groups; public denunciations; and information networks. In Oaxaca, alone, 48 community vigilance groups involve 405 people and cover 21 forest areas and 27 fishing zones. These vigilance groups are honorary volunteer positions selected by the community to oversee management of local natural resources. Community vigilance groups are trained by PROFEPA. The overall effectiveness of these groups is less than it could be otherwise because of the high levels of poverty in the communities, frequent changes in membership in the vigilance groups, and a general lack of resources for their activities, including basic supplies and equipment. Nonetheless the community vigilance groups provide important benefits, including: strengthened community values; improved control over illegal activities; promotion of protection and conservation measures; recovery of local ecosystems; resolution of environmental problems through self-regulatory mechanisms; and community and individual empowerment.

Regarding the system of public denunciations, Ms. Ruíz noted that 1,196 environment-related denunciations were filed from 1993-2001, with recent trends showing a 35% annual increase. In one recent case offered as an example, denunciations led to a reduction in damage caused by electrical and fiberoptic cables.

From Québec: Daniel Nadeau, biologist, Abitibi-Temiscamingue Region, Société de la Faune et des Parcs du Québec, highlighted experiences with the use of *zones d'exploitation contrôlées* (controlled use zones – ZECs) as a means to promote user participation in conservation and sustainable use of wildlife. Until 1978, Quebec had a system of private hunting and fishing clubs holding private leases of wildlife areas from the government. Beginning in 1978, ZECs were established to address issues of over-exploitation, particularly for speckled trout and moose. Currently, Quebec has 63 hunting and fishing ZECs; 17 salmon ZECs, and 1 wildfowl ZEC, with a combined revenue of \$16 million (Canadian) and membership of 41,000. Criteria creating a ZEC include: a proven need for enhanced wildlife management controls (e.g., because basic regulations are failing); substantial wildlife potential; and relatively easy access to the area. The government delegates management of the ZEC to a non-profit organization or association through a memorandum of agreement. Management plans, which are formulated every three years based on potential yields, set specific regulations regarding the length of the hunting or fishing season, days of operation and size and quota limits. Protection plans are prepared annually and are based on estimates of that year's available resources, planned activities and results of past efforts. There are also requirements for the ZEC, including for example guidelines on the composition of the ZEC Boards of Directors, requirements for open membership and access to the resource and standards for registering harvest rates and setting and collecting fees. Enforcement responsibilities remain primarily with government conservation officers.

From British Columbia: Paul Mitchell-Banks, Muskwa-Kechika Program Manager, Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management, talked about public participation in enforcement within Muskwa-Kechika Management Area (MKMA), which is a vast (6.3 million hectares) and remote site with limited access. The MKMA includes protected areas, special management zones (where industrial activity is permitted) and special wildland zones (which allow industrial activities except for commercial timber harvesting). The MKMA resulted from three land and resource management plans and five sectoral legislative plans for oil and gas exploration, parks, recreation, wildlife and forestry. Various enforcement responsibilities are vested in conservation officers, park rangers, forestry personnel and the oil and gas commission. Certain members of the public, including most notably local pilots, trappers' associations, loggers and First Nations groups, have proven to be important sources of support and information in policing such a vast and remote area. Given the MKMA's remoteness, the volunteer 'park watch program' used in other Canadian parks has not been formally established for the MKMA. A similar wilderness watch

program uses organized volunteer groups to observe, record and report potential illegal activities in wilderness areas.

Discussion: Responding to a question on the use of mediation and conflict resolution techniques, commenters noted that land management issues are particularly good candidates for alternative dispute resolution techniques given the many different stakeholders with long-term interests in a resource. Dispute resolution mechanisms need to rely on conventional science and traditional ecological knowledge. Regarding a question on tensions between communal land tenure and legal activities, there was a discussion of laws protecting communal rights, while highlighting potential land conflicts with agrarian populations. The most successful examples of communal resource management have well-defined parameters for resource values, geographic areas, membership, behavioral norms and punitive measures. One participant raised a question regarding the utility of informal agreements between enforcement agencies and the community, which can be compromised by external political changes if not enshrined in formal legislation. Such legislation must be implementable and robust enough to withstand political change and other developments, such as discovery of oil and gas deposits.

VII. CASE STUDIES ON CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

Benito Perez, Assistant Regional Director, Division of Law Enforcement, Region 1, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, served as moderator for the session, which considered case studies for citizen monitoring and methodologies for monitoring and its support for enforcement actions.

From Canada: John Mombourquette, Director of Enforcement Division, Department of Natural resources, Nova Scotia, emphasized the need to reorient the philosophical approach of enforcement agencies from reactive policing to preventive problem solving. Communities vary in size; socioeconomic structure; ethnic, cultural and spiritual makeup; attitudes and expectations; and interest in enforcement agencies and community partnerships. Enforcement officials must know exactly who the community is and must ensure that the enforcement staff is representative of that community. Traditional enforcement practice emphasizes the three “R’s”: random patrol, rapid response and reactive investigation; this is incident driven, response-oriented, and focused on means rather than ends. A new, more effective approach should emphasize the three “P’s”: prevention, problem solving and partnerships; this entails a proactive process of problem identification, analysis, response and assessment. Such an approach is customer-oriented, responsive to community needs, open to input from citizens, visible in the community, proactive, accountable and representative of authorities’ knowledge of and interest in communities and their problems.

A number of strategies have been employed to enhance cooperation between enforcement officials and local communities, including neighborhood watches, community meetings and citizen patrols. Neighborhood watches and community meetings apparently have little impact on the number of offences, although community meetings and citizen patrols have increased public involvement with enforcement agencies. Building on these experiences, enforcement officials should strive to: involve communities in the identification of and approaches to problems; ensure that enforcement services are consistent with community concerns; include participation of other concerned agencies and interest groups; promote public commitment to and involvement in resolving wildlife crime; and encourage the evaluation of enforcement services by the community.

From Mexico: Ing. Trinidad Benavides, Advisor, *Asociación Nacional de Ganaderos Diversificados Criadores de Fauna* (ANGADI). ANGADI is a national cattlemen’s association, whose main objective is to defend the rights of landowners and to change cattle ranching culture toward conservation and sustainable development. He highlighted the group’s involvement in and response to the Law for Ecological Equilibrium and Environmental Protection and the Wildlife Law, noting the association’s stress on the rights to use wildlife resources sustainably. ANGADI has grown from 118

members at its inception to over 1,200 members operating on 20 million acres. Two cases demonstrated how ranchers were instrumental for conservation goals--the recovery of white-tailed Texan deer and black bear populations. From ANGADI's experience, gaining greater public commitment and participation in sustainable land management requires enhanced communication of the public's responsibility and patrimony over lands and natural resources and increased dissemination of information regarding the potential impacts of pollution and the degradation of natural resources.

From the United States: Richard McDonald, Special Agent in Charge, Branch of Investigations, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, provided a case study of the reintroduction of the grey wolf into Wyoming and Idaho in 1995-96, noting the different public responses between the two states. Wolves once ranged throughout the country although they had mostly been exterminated within the lower 48 states (except for Minnesota). As a result, the wolf was listed under the Endangered Species Act. The re-introduction plan, prohibited the taking of wolves except in cases of self-defense or with permits, and designated the reintroduced wolves as non-essential experimental populations. This allowed for their removal if caught preying on livestock.

Generally speaking, the proponents of introduction were a small cross section of hunters and ranchers, conservation groups and the Nez Perce tribe. Opponents included a larger cross section of hunters, ranchers and outfitters, as well as property rights advocates and anti-government groups. Concerns of those opposed to the introductions included fear of livestock losses, perceived competition for big game resources, resentment of big government and concerns for public safety. There was considerably stronger opposition to the wolf introductions in Idaho than in Wyoming. The Wyoming introductions were primarily in Yellowstone National Park, whereas in Idaho the wolves tended to spread more rapidly to private lands. The media and local politicians also played a significant role in politicizing the introductions in Idaho, which made enforcement activities more difficult. Public support for the wolf introductions came in a number of different forms. The role of NGOs was instrumental in de-escalating opposition by offering compensation for confirmed livestock losses due to wolves. Environmental groups also offered to supplement the government's reward program for information leading to the arrest of people who harmed the wolves. Supplementing the rewards had some interesting pros and cons: on the one hand it provided additional resources for publicizing the issue and on the other it added to some resentment for outside interference in local affairs and led to disparities between award amounts (e.g., between the killing of a wolf vs. a child). Large rewards also may have delayed some investigations due to erroneous leads. The wolf reintroduction program was also developed in conjunction with the Nez Perce, who because of the importance of the wolf to their culture, assumed responsibility for management operations and outreach, both on and off reservation lands.

Discussion: One participant noted that enforcement officers are generally not trained in community interactions, and noted the need to close the gap between the government and the public. Budgetary constraints have been a factor in changing the orientation of enforcement agencies towards problem recognition and away from reactive policing, because short-term investments in work with the community can save resources over the long-term. Underlying socioeconomic factors, such as extreme poverty, must be understood and reflected in developing management solutions. Policing efforts, alone, will not resolve wildlife-related conflicts that reflect such deep-seated cultural or economic factors. Participants also highlighted the difficulties of translating concepts such as outreach and enforcement across linguistic and cultural contexts.

VIII. BREAKOUT SESSION: BUILDING PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR ENFORCEMENT

Participants were divided into three smaller groups to discuss their experience with public participation in wildlife enforcement, particularly the challenges and opportunities they have experienced. The groups discussed specific recommendations for building public support for wildlife enforcement and developing

stronger avenues for information-sharing and cooperation between enforcement agencies and concerned community members and NGOs. Among the recommendations raised in the different small group discussions were the following:

- Enforcement agencies and NGOs should recognize and build on the fact that they have similar goals with respect to wildlife enforcement.
- Enforcement agencies should develop an NGO focal point to facilitate information flow, build relations and develop formal agreements and partnerships. Among other things, the focal point could develop a database of potential supporters or partners for enhancing public awareness and participation in wildlife enforcement activities.
- NAWEG or the CEC should document successful public-private partnerships in wildlife enforcement and collect or develop model protocols, memoranda of understanding and other types of agreements for implementing such partnerships.
- More resources should be spent on public and community outreach. Face-to-face contact between enforcement personnel and the public is particularly useful. Nature interpretive centers provide a good vehicle for this as do a variety of community meetings and awareness programs. In some circumstances “tea brigades” can be useful, whereby enforcement officials visit individual community members in outreach efforts.
- Participants suggested that the CEC and NAWEG cooperate to: institutionalize and coordinate meetings with NGOs to prioritize issues or formalize plans around particular themes.
- Wildlife enforcement authorities and NGOs should cooperate more frequently at an organizational level, to facilitate the complementary use of institutional resources and expertise.
- The group recommended that NAWEG consider hosting a workshop on the role of NGOs in ensuring compliance with wildlife laws with a specific focus on practical mechanisms and concrete projects or areas of collaboration.
- NGOs should seek to develop a tri-national support network for those working on wildlife issues in order to share lessons learned and examine means for working cooperatively with enforcement officials.
- Stronger citizen suit provisions should be provided in all three countries’ wildlife laws as a means to complement existing law enforcement efforts and to provide means to address government non-compliance with legislation. Relevant information should be made available to the public.
- Special efforts should be made to reach out to indigenous, traditional and other communities that are closely associated with specific resources.
- Wildlife enforcement agencies in all three countries and at all levels should develop rules of procedure for eliciting public comments, for ensuring that the results of such public

consultations are considered by the relevant policymakers, and for providing feedback regarding what the government's response was to specific recommendations.

- The governments should undertake periodic analyses of the gaps and inconsistencies in existing wildlife policy and law frameworks.

IX. CLOSING REMARKS

Yvan Lafleur, Chair of NAWEG, and Greg Block, CEC Director of Programs offered closing remarks. Two recurring themes were highlighted: (1) the lack of adequate resources, which requires improving outreach and public understanding of the importance and role of wildlife enforcement; and (2) the potential value of enhanced partnerships that incorporate different stakeholders into enforcement and implementation of laws. Further work was encouraged, perhaps emphasizing the development of regional partnerships organized around a resource or bioregion could effectively complement local activities and participants were urged to move beyond rigid perspectives about the traditional roles of advocacy groups or enforcement officials with respect to wildlife enforcement.