## **What’s the deal with …**

### **EFB 390, Fall 2022 – Final Project Guidelines**

The theme of the final project in EFB 390 is “*What’s the Deal with … ?*”.

Students are going to get into groups of size **4-6** from within the four recitation classes and dig deep into a question (or *mystery*) that can be summarized as: *What’s the Deal with Topic X*. The questions will have something to do with wildlife ecology and wildlife management or conservation. Diving into the topics will involve learning about the science of a system, but – depending on the question – will also involve learning about implementation, legal and regulatory frameworks and/or cultural and historical contexts of the various issues. The outcome of the research will be (1) a group presentation, and (2) individual write-ups.

Research will be conducted by a combination of literature and document review and at least one **interview**, via email or voice, with an expert on the subject. For the interview, each group (or some member of the group) will reach out to a biologist, manager, or other relevant party to ask questions that shed some expert light on the topic. Content from that interview (including direct quotes, whether by phone or email) should be included in the write-up.

For the final 5 weeks of class, we will be using recitation periods to workshop the research topics, with the TA’s and professor helping facilitate the structure and content of the write-up and presentation.

**Presentations** (worth **35%** of the final project grade) will be given on **Dec 6**& **Dec 8** in-class. They will be 6-7 minutes long with 3 minutes for questions & discussion. Everyone must speak.

**Write-up** (worth **65%** of the final project grade)will bedue **December 12** (before finals). The write-ups must be individually written and constructed – NO COPY-PASTING FROM GROUP MATES. The length is somewhat flexible: no less than 2000, no more 3500 words (approximately 5-10 pages at 1.5 spacing). The references must be in ecology style and include at least **8** peer-reviewed papers, at least **4** grey literature reports and/or popular media. Insights – or direct quotes – from the expert interview are to be included in the write-up with a proper citation.

**Time-line:**

* Week of Oct 31:  Ranking favorite topics + project assignment (TA’s)
* Thurs, Nov 10:  Submit outline
* Week of Nov 14: Schedule meetings to discuss outline & project with TA’s
* Final presentations: Dec 6-8
* Final write-up due: Dec 12 (reading day)

Below is a list of ***proposed***topics for a final project. If there are other topics that you (or a group of you) are interested in pursuing, you may suggest it and develop it with the professor and TA’s.

1. ***The Renew America’s Wilderness Act:*** How would the Renew America’s Wilderness Act address (or fail to address) issues with the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation (NAM).
2. ***No venison in stores:*** In many places in Australia, kangaroos are an over-abundant agricultural pest that can be recreationally hunted. Much of that meat ends up in supermarkets. Why is that possible in a nation with similar background and traditions to the USA and Canada, but it is not possible in North America?  How could the NAM be adapted to accommodate a market for game meat?
3. ***Wolves in Europe:*** Why are there more wolves in Europe than the continental US, despite higher human density and fewer protected areas?
4. ***Moose in the Adirondacks:*** Why are there so few moose in the Adirondacks - a largely and historically (semi)-protected area - but so many in Vermont and New Hampshire, in a very similar biome?
5. ***Fishers:*** Fishers are supposed to be old growth obligates, but they thrive in Albany, while reintroductions in the Pacific northwest routinely fail. Why?
6. ***Reindeer and Caribou:*** Why have reindeer been (semi)-domesticated in Eurasia but never caribou in N. America, despite them being the same species? Why have attempts to introduce reindeer domestication failed in North America?
7. ***Blinkers on the North American Model****:*What perspectives have been left out of the North American Model?  What implications do those omissions have for management & conservation?  How might those be addressed?
8. ***Game farms for deer:*** What are arguments for and against farming cervids?
9. ***Game farms for wildfowl*:** What are arguments for and against farming and releasing waterfowl & (non-native) pheasants?
10. ***Mallards standing in for all ducks:*** Harvest quotas for waterfowl are based primarily based on mallard abundances.  Why?  How does this process work?  What problems might arise?
11. ***Herp management:*** New York State (like most states) monitors reptiles and amphibians (herps), maintaining a list that includes conservation status, habitat requirements and more information. Given that none of these are harvested species, how does the NY-DEC manage these populations?
12. ***Climate change and the ESA:*** Certain species - like polar bears and pikas - that have been listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act specifically because of climate change. This is highly debated strategy. Why?
13. ***Bat diseases***: White-nose syndrome is a fungal pathogen that has had very significant impacts on bat populations across North America. What is being done and/or can be done to manage the spread of white-nose syndrome?
14. ***Chronic Wasting Disease***: CWD is a lethal, untreatable, prion disease that affects cervids and is spreading relentlessly across North America. What is being done and/or can be done to slow the spread?  Is the NAM equipped to deal with CWD?
15. ***Sheep pneumonia*:**Wild sheep populations in the mountain West are limited mainly by pneumonia contracted from domestic sheep. How is that currently managed? How might that best be managed?