News from the WEST

Fall/Winter 2010/2011

in this issue

WEST Unveils New Logo and Website

WEST is proud to reveal our new logo in conjunction with the release of our new website.

WEST has long been recognized by our mountain logo, and in honor of our 20th anniversary, we have updated this logo to both embrace our past and look to the future.

After many months in development, the new WEST website is now available for use! This site is part of our new branding initiative and is reflective of the more contemporary look and feel of our new logo and corporate image. We have employed new technologies that will allow us to offer visitors even more information than before in a visually appealing and easily navigated site. We have also added a variety of social media sites that will allow us to share many of the exciting things happening at WEST. Please visit our new site at: www.west-inc.com.

Habitat Conservation Planning

An ever expanding component of our work lies in Habitat Conservation Planning. WEST has extensive experience working with threatened and endangered (T&E) species and compliance projects under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). We have written and participated in development of Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP) for wind projects, forest projects and Biological Assessments for a variety of projects such as highway construction, wind power projects, gravel mines, and reservoirs. Our personnel have a strong working knowledge with numerous listed species and are familiar with techniques necessary to study rare and uncommon wildlife and plants. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has trained our staff in Section 7 consultation, Habitat Conservation Planning, and survey protocols for a variety of listed species.

WEST has proven expertise in estimating the impacts and take of listed species, and assessing the impacts of that taking. WEST has done a considerable amount of work with Conservation Planning and minimization and mitigation measures, as well as Compliance Monitoring and Effectiveness Monitoring Plans. We have also worked to develop alternatives to the taking as well as adapted to changed and unforeseen circumstances.

WEST has developed a collaborative process for building defensible HCPs with the USFWS through a stepwise process fulfilling the mandatory elements of an HCP:

Determining an accurate assessment of the incidental take-

In general, there are several acceptable means by which take can be estimated; for example, a habitat equivalency approach, or a surrogate species approach, all of which have merit and may be variably applicable for different projects and may be combined to corroborate the level of estimated take.

Determining the impacts of the take-

Assessing the impacts of the taking is a mandatory element of an HCP and requires an accurate assessment of the potential incidental take (step 1) and a thorough understanding of the baseline conditions for the resource potentially impacted. Determining the impacts of the take is a significance evaluation.

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WEST Office Locations

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Laramie, Wyoming 82070
Trent McDonald

NE/Mid-Atlantic Region
Waterbury Branch Office
P.O. Box 60
Waterbury, Vermont 05676
David Tidhar

Midwest-East Region
Bloomington Branch Office
804 North College Street
Suite 103
Bloomington, Indiana 47403
Rhett Good

Pacific Northwest Region
Walla Walla Branch Office
38 East Main Street
Suite 210
Walla Walla, Washington
99362
Tamara Enz

Midwest-West Region
Bismarck Branch Office
4007 State Street
Suite 109
Bismarck, North Dakota
58503
Clayton Derby

Conferences, Training and Workshops

Trent McDonald, **Terry Enk, Jim Griswold, Fawn Hornsby, Chad LeBeau,** and **Ryan Nielson,** attended The Wildlife Society (TWS) 17th Annual meeting in Snowbird, Utah; October 2nd thru 6th. This conference has long been the largest gathering of wildlife professionals in North America.

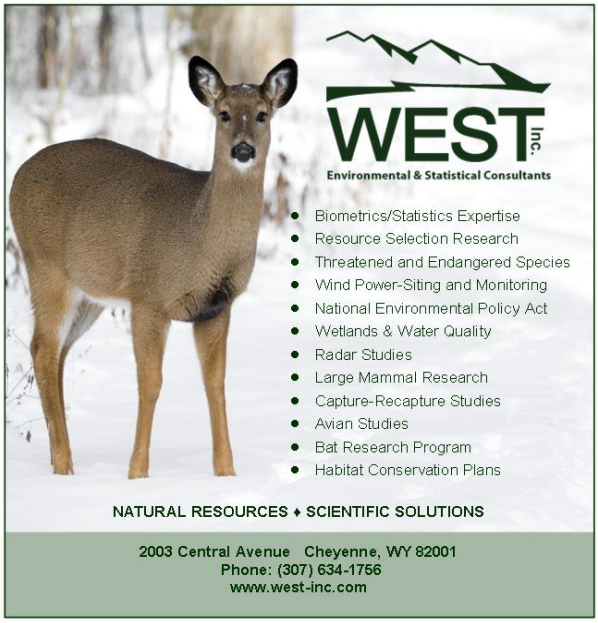
Ryan Nielson presented a workshop at TWS, "Advanced Ecological Data Analysis with R" along with Glen Sargeant of the US Geological Survey Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center. The presentation used spatiotemporal data typical of most ecological investigations to introduce R users to some of the most generally useful and powerful tools for analyzing ecological data, documenting analyses, and sharing information.

Chad LeBeau presented a symposium while at TWS, "From Road Kill to Road Wise – Keeping Wildlife Alive and Moving". It was based on a case study about reducing mule deer vehicle collisions with underpasses from Nugget Canyon, Wyoming.

Saif Nomani and **Andy Merrill** attended the USGS webinar "Modeling Patterns and Dynamics of Species Occurrence." by Dr. James Nichols and Dr. Darryl Mackenzie, Aug 23-27.

Joel Thompson attended the 19th Annual Desert Tortoise Handling Workshop on Nov 6th & 7th in Ridgecrest, California. These workshops are structured to provide information on handling, monitoring, surveying, and biology of the desert tortoise.

Dr. Lyman McDonald, and Dr. Timothy Robinson, Associate Professor of Statistics, University of Wyoming, Laramie Campus taught a short course "Data Analysis IIIB: Environmental Sampling and Monitoring using R," December 13-17 at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Conservation Training Center, in Shepherdstown, West Virginia.



Habitat Conservation Planning (Continued from Page 1)

Determining an effective conservation plan-
This is a mandatory element and the heart of an HCP. Once the impacts of the take are determined, measures to minimize the impact of the taking and mitigate for unavoidable take can be developed.

Develop a process for monitoring the impacts of the take-
In addition, a mandatory element of an HCP, WEST has extensive experience developing quantitatively based monitoring plans to insure compliance with the Incidental Take Permit.

These four elements are integral to developing an effective HCP and serve as milestones in successfully negotiating a conservation plan that fulfills requirements under the ESA for acquiring an Incidental Take Permit. Once these milestones have been successfully negotiated with the USFWS, a HCP that meets the issuance criteria is compiled and the application for the Incidental Take Permit is then submitted.

WEST Staff Shine at NWCC Wind Wildlife Research Meeting

This past October, several WEST staff members attended and presented at the 8th Annual National Wind Coordinating Collaborative (NWCC) Wind Wildlife Research meeting in Lakewood, Colorado.

WEST staff members contributed nine presentations and five posters to the meeting which had over 340 researchers, academics, federal and state officials, and industry representatives in attendance

Topics covered a wide spectrum of issues regarding impacts of wind energy on birds, bats, and big game throughout the United States.

We are extremely proud of the continued ability of our staff to share our expertise with others in our field.

Recent Publications

Beck, J.L., **C.W. LeBeau**, A.M. Mason, and K.R. Simpson. 2010. "Reducing impacts of energy developments to sagebrush wildlife habitats in Wyoming." University of Wyoming, Cooperative Extension Service, Laramie, Wyoming, USA. Bulletin B-1209 (October 2010). 12 pp.

Bromaghin, J.F., **R.M. Nielson**, and J.J. Hard. 2010. "A model of Chinook salmon population dynamics incorporating size-selective exploitation and inheritance of polygenic correlated traits." Natural Resource Modeling, no. doi: 10.1111/j.1939-7445.2010.00077.x

Holst, M., C.R. Greene, Jr., W.J. Richardson, **T.L. McDonald**, **K. Bay**, S.J. Schwartz, and G. Smith (in press). "Responses of Pinnipeds to Navy missile launches at San Nicolas Island, California." Aquatic Mammals.

Welcome New WEST Staff Members

Jon Cicarelli-GIS Technician-Cheyenne Office-Jon Cicarelli joined WEST in August 2010 as a GIS Technician in the Cheyenne Office. Jon graduated from the University of Wyoming with a B.A. in Anthropology and a B.S. in Geography. He has worked for the U.S. Forest Service, and for the SAWLS group at the University of Wyoming, doing surveys and mapping.

When not working, Jon is interested in mountain biking and exploring the mountains.

Matt Clement-Bat Biologist-Bloomington Office-Matt Clement is a Biologist and a team member of the bat program in the Bloomington Office. Prior to joining WEST, Matt has been part of several bat and bird related research projects, including studies of bat ecology in Alberta, Virginia, and Georgia, bat-wind turbine interactions in Pennsylvania, and falcon ecology in New Zealand. Matt holds a B.A. in Economics from Haverford College, and is in the final stages of finishing his Ph.D. at the University of Georgia, where he studied the roosting ecology of the Rafinesque's big-eared bat.

Matt and his wife, Kristen, live in Bloomington. In his free time, Matt enjoys playing with his dog, hiking, and Steelers football.

Tim Sichmeller-Bat Biologist-Laramie Office-Tim joined WEST in 2010 as a Bat Biologist in the Laramie office. Tim received his M.S. from Ball State University in 2010, where he studied the physiology and ecology of three sympatric Myotis bats, including the endangered Indiana Bat. In 2005, Tim received his B.S. in Zoology from Colorado State University. Tim has previously worked for the Bureau of Land Management as the Program Lead for the black-footed ferret recovery program in Colorado and as a crew leader for mist-net and radio-telemetry studies on forest bats in western North Carolina. Tim will be spearheading our Indiana bat mist-net surveys in the midwest and eastern US. In addition, Tim is involved in Anabat deployment, quality control and call analysis as well as reviewing and writing reports for bat acoustical monitoring surveys.

Tim and his wife live in Fort Collins, where he enjoys hiking, camping, fishing, and rooting for the Broncos.

Chris Fritchman-Bat Data Entry Specialist-Cheyenne Office-Chris Fritchman joined WEST in 2010 as a Bat Data Entry specialist in our Cheyenne office. He has worked with WEST since 2008, as a crew leader and wildlife technician. He has been involved in several pre- and post-construction wind energy projects. Before joining WEST, Chris has experience as a research assistant in Peru, and worked on Ecosystem Management in Fort Collins, Colorado. He is a 2007 graduate of Colorado State University with a B.S. in Wildlife Biology.

In his spare time, Chris enjoys hiking, camping and most outdoor activities as well as reading and traveling.

Elizabeth Baumgartner-QA/QC Technician-Cheyenne Office-Elizabeth joined WEST in August 2010 as QA/QC technician. "Libby" received her B.S. in Wildlife Biology from Colorado State University. Prior to accepting the QA/QC position, Libby worked for WEST since March 2008 as a

6th Annual Golden Eagle Survey Completed

WEST successfully completed another golden eagle survey in the western U.S. Between August 15 and September 15, over 17,400 km of transects were surveyed from small, fixed-wing aircraft across four Bird Conservation Regions in twelve states.

This is the sixth year the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has contracted WEST to conduct the survey and estimate the total number of golden eagles living in the western U.S. It is anticipated that the final report will be available in the Spring of 2011.

Final reports from past surveys can be found here.

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Welcome New WEST Staff Members (continued)

field technician conducting pre- and post-construction field surveys. In addition, she has been involved in the report writing process as a compiler, reviewer, and technical editor. Prior to joining the WEST staff, Libby conducted field work for both the USDA/APHIS and Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory. Libby's field experience includes a variety of surveys conducted in Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Nebraska, and North Dakota.

Libby currently lives in Cheyenne with her family and enjoys wildlife photography, hiking, camping, and reading.

Stacey Farland-Office Assistant-Cheyenne Office-Stacey joined WEST in November 2010 as the Office Assistant for the Cheyenne office. She is currently pursuing her B.A. in Human Resources Management. Her primary tasks are answering and routing calls, correspondence distribution, document preparation, general office tasks, and providing assistance to the administrative staff.

Stacey lives in Cheyenne with her husband, Rob. In their free time, they enjoy mountain biking, hiking, snowboarding, and flying in their airplane.

Lindsay McManus-Biometrician-Cheyenne Office-Lindsay joined WEST in 2010 as a Biometrician in the Cheyenne Office. Lindsay has a B.S. in Mathematics from Michigan Technological University. She was then accepted into the Program for Interdisciplinary Mathematics, Ecology, and Statistics at Colorado State University, where she received a M.S. in Statistics while working with biology, ecology, and mathematics graduate students. While in the program her project involved a basic population analysis of the Badlands National Park bison, using mark-recapture data that is collected every October when the bison are rounded up. At WEST, Lindsay is working on quality assurance and quality control of bird and bat survey data for wind energy projects, related analyses, and R-coding.

Lindsay lives in Fort Collins with her husband, cats, and Siberian Husky. She enjoys photography, running with her puppy, and hiking and snowboarding in the mountains.

Upcoming Workshops/Seminars

Bryan Manly will be presenting an online course, **Ecological and Environmental Sampling**, via the internet at www.statistics.com from February 25th to March 25th. This course covers sampling methods and analyses used to study the density and abundance of animals and plants, and other important biological variables. The theoretical basis behind methods is discussed, but the emphasis of the course is on how to use methods effectively rather than the derivations of the equations used. There are no set times for this course, participants work online at their own convenience. For more information on this course, click here.

Bryan Manly will be presenting a course, **Computer Intensive Statistical Methods in Biology**, March 14th thru 18th at the University of Wyoming Conference Center in Laramie, Wyoming. This course will provide an introduction to computer-intensive approaches to statistical analysis, with emphasis on applications in biology and environmental science. Each day will consist of lectures and hands-on data analysis by participants. For further information on this course, click here.

Elk Habitat Selection in Western Oregon and Washington: Models for the New Century, will be held in Portland, Oregon on April 5th and 6th. This free workshop is hosted by the elk modeling team, and will present final results and example demonstrations of the Westside Elk Habitat Modeling Workshop. The workshop will consist of a full day Tuesday of presentations followed by hands on demos on Wednesday. For additional information on this workshop, click here.

For additional information on any story contained within this edition of News from the WEST, please send an e-mail to marketing@west-inc.com. In our continuing effort to be an environmentally conscious firm, we ***only*** send out an electronic version of our newsletter.

A New Green File Format

The World Wildlife Foundation has recently created a brand new file extension that aims to stop unnecessary printing and increase awareness of paper use. The new format a .WWF will save your files that works much like a .PDF except that with a .WWF the print option is completely blocked.

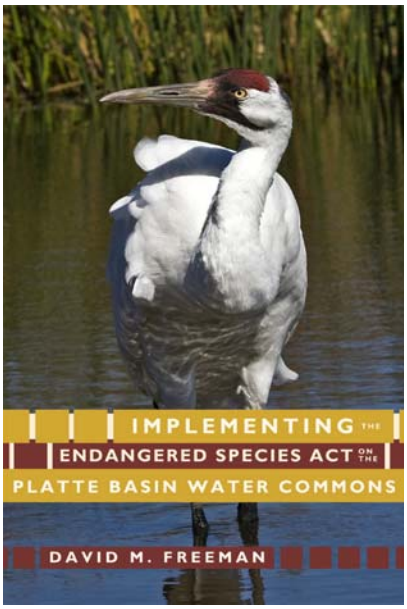
The World Wildlife Foundation feels that this new file extension will not only make people more aware of their paper use, but will give individuals the option to participate in the "no print" cause.

.WWF files can be opened in most of the programs that you would use to open a .PDF file. The file extension can be e-mailed just like .PDF's. The software is provided for free by the World Wildlife Fund and is a simple download. Transforming your documents into an electronic only file is simple and another way to help save on paper use.

To download the .WWF file visit : www.saveaswwf.com/en

Platte River Study Published

Dr. David M. Freeman, professor Emeritus in the Department of Sociology at Colorado State University, recently published, Implementing the Endangered Species Act on the Platte Basin Water Commons. This book details the negotiations among the U.S. Department of the Interior, the environmental community, and the states of Wyoming, Colorado, and Nebraska that took place from the mid-1970's thru 2006. In the arid high plains where water is a limited commodity, there has long been conflict in regard to the Platter River Basin; especially with regard to organizing collectively owned and managed water systems, allocating water along extensive stream systems, as well as integrating newer groundwater with existing surface-water uses. The U.S. Department of the Interior, who oversees the Endangered Species Act, provided further challenge in 1973 by incorporating the needs of the whooping crane, interior least tern, piping plover and pallid sturgeon into the water management plan. The Platte River Endangered Species partnership was formed and worked to create the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program, which provides habitat restoration for these endangered species.



This book provides a unique insight from Dr. Freeman who attended the negotiations as an impartial observer on these negotiations for over ten years, documenting how organizational interests found remedies within the conditions that were set forth by the Endangered Species Act. These negotiations were no easy task, for when states and the federal government start with very different agendas, it is often difficult to find a common ground for solutions. He details how the process took over thirty years of negotiations but how in the end each party was able to transcend self interest to benefit the environment through habitat restoration. "This book digs in and tells how a difficult negotiation was very possible, even with all parties coming from such different places," said Freeman.

Success was achieved by each group respecting each other's positions without giving up on their own. They created what was termed a Chinese Wall. Each party agreed that one side of the project would be focus on program efficiency by judging according to the ability to fulfill milestones. On the other side, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife would have the states' permission to test hypotheses and allow for exploration and adaptation. It turned out to be extremely beneficial to keep the two sides separated.

WEST was hired as a contractor to provide administrative support to the Governance Committee, which consisted of the representatives of the three states, the U.S. Federal Government and members of the environmental community. Several WEST staff members were integral to the Platte River Endangered Species Partnership. **Dale Strickland** served as the Executive Director of the Governance Committee, and then the Interim Executive Director of the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program. **Clayton Derby** was the Assistant Executive Director. **Nadine Wilson** was the Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director. **Shay Howlin** worked with the Technical Committee. According to Dr. Freeman, "WEST did extremely well in the administration of the Governance Committee, as the contractor was never an issue, which allowed the group to focus on issues at hand." WEST provided support in several key places, but potentially one of the most important roles served by WEST staff was in cases of disagreement. Dale and Clayton were instrumental in taking statements, characterizing the opinions of the members of the committee, and then proposing solutions.

As a sociologist, Dr. Freeman's interest stems from the fact that all water resources are fundamentally social and run by social organizations. "No matter what culture, humans have to get organized to run water resources," he said. According to Dr. Freeman, this is one of the first times that members of several states, the federal government, and the environmental community have come together to reach complete agreement when starting at such polar opposite views. This process will impact how many other water interests will be managed in the future, particularly when pertaining to common property.

For a more information or to purchase a copy of Dr. Freeman's book, you can click here.