

# CANADIAN SECTION OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY AGM COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2022-2023

**DATE:** March 21, 2023

**REPRESENTATIVE ROLE/COMMITTEE NAME:** Chair / CSTWS Certification Committee

**Name:** Don Barnes (TWS Fellow, CWB®)

## **Committee Members and Vacancies as of April 1, 2023**

Education Liaison: Don Barnes (TWS Fellow, CWB®)

Student Liaison: Cailin Hesketh-Jost (University of Manitoba)

Secretary: Miriam Boucher (AWB®, P Biol., RPBio.)

TWS/CRB Canadian Section Rep: Al Arsenault (TWS Fellow, CWB®, P. Biol.)

CSTWS Board Rep: Mike Gillingham (TWS Fellow, CSTWS Director)

Member-at-Large: Dan Chranowski (CWB®, P. Biol.)

ASPB Liaison: Vacant

BC-CAB Liaison Officer: Vacant

ECO Canada Liaison: Stephanie Walsh (EP®)

BC Chapter Liaison: Rod Davis (PAg)

AB Chapter Liaison: Vacant

SK Chapter Liaison: Vacant

MB Chapter Liaison: Vacant

ON Chapter Liaison: Don Barnes (TWS Fellow, CWB®)

## **Recommendation(s) to CSTWS BoD:**

### REQUEST FOR A WEBSITE UPDATE TO OUR CERTIFICATION BROCHURE

On February 4, 2023, I sent the CSTWS Board of Directors a copy of our revised Certification Brochure. At this time, I am requested that the CSTWS Web Master replace the older 2018 brochure with the most recent 2023 version.

## **Representative Update Report**

### WEBSITE UPDATE

In April 2022, Jessica Lang, CSTWS Web Master, asked committee chairs for revisions/updates to their respective committee websites. I took full advantage of this generous offer and submitted a number of significant changes to the Certification Committee site. I would urge you to peruse our site. Many thanks to Jess for being so speedy and efficient. These revisions will really help to show the CSTWS members that our committee is working to promote professionalism across Canada.

### THE CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP STATUS

#### Members Confirming for 2023-2024

Recently, I polled the Certification Committee to confirm their membership for 2023-2024. To date, I have heard positively from 6 members—Al Arsenault CWB® (CRB-CSTWS Liaison), Dr. Mike Gillingham, (CSTWS Board of Directors Liaison), Dan Chranowski CWB® (Member-at-Large), Steph Walsh (ECO Canada Liaison), Dr. Rod Davis (BCTWS Liaison), and Cailin Hesketh-Jost (Student Liaison). Still waiting on Miriam Boucher AWB® (Secretary).

#### Members Stepping Down for 2023-2024

The following three AB members will not be affiliated with the committee in the upcoming year: Dr. Everett Hanna (BC-CAB Liaison), Jessica Metsted AWB® (ACTWS Liaison), and Dave Ealey (ASPB Liaison).

If you know anyone who is willing to fill any of these vacancies, please email me at the Certification Committee email address (above).

#### Need MB and SK Chapter Liaisons for 2023-24

We continue to look to each of these chapters to appoint a liaison to the Certification Committee.

#### New Student Liaison for 2023-2024

It gives me great pleasure to announce that Cailin Hesketh-Jost, an undergraduate student from the University of Manitoba, will be our new Student Liaison. Special thanks to Dr. Rick Baydack for suggesting Cailin.

As I have said in the past, I firmly believe that the future success of TWS Certification in Canada lies with getting our students motivated about certification. I see this Student Rep as a way to give voice to students. I have further strengthened our representative's voice by making arrangements with Brianna Lorenz (CSTWS Board's Student Liaison) to allow our student liaison to participate in teleconferencing meetings with other Canadian Student Chapter Presidents. Our student rep will be responsible for being our committee's connection to students. At these Student Chapter Meetings, our student representative will let students know about the certification committee activities and in turn will be expected to report back to us if there are any student inquiries/issues.

Besides these Student Chapter Meeting Reports to the committee, the student representative will need to present a summary report which will be incorporated into the Certification Committee's annual report to the CSTWS Board. Further, we are currently working on a Wildlife Professional article and are in need of a student perspective. In addition to these tangible reporting obligations, I would like her to represent the student perspective on TWS Certification in Canada in our many committees email discussions.

### REVISED 2023 CERTIFICATION BROCHURE

In December 2022, the CSTWS Board approved the Certification Committee's request for funding. We have decided to use this opportunity to revise our 2018 brochure and use these monies to make them available to interested students and biologists across Canada.

Since students are key to keeping TWS' certification alive in Canada, we want to ensure that these brochures make it to our 11 student chapters members. In order to facilitate this distribution, I would ask that each Student Chapter provide me with a mailing address and how many brochures you acquire. We will do the best we can to accommodate these students' needs.

The remaining revised Certification Brochures will be reserved for members interested in knowing more about TWS certification.

### REVISION OF OUR MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

In 2018, I took over as Chair of the CSTWS' Certification Committee. This leadership role allowed me to converse with students and biologists about TWS' certification program. From my many discussions, it became painfully obvious that most Canadians were ill-informed about this certification program. In an attempt to increase its national image, the Certification Committee has launched many promotional initiatives i.e., workshops, webinars, talks, and brochures. In 2019, thanks to input from Dr. Darren Miller (2019 TWS President), we introduced a mentorship program, which would allow us the opportunity to inform and guide interested Canadians towards certification. However, since we launched our mentorship program, there have been many changes to TWS' certification program. In an attempt to remain current, the Certification Committee has undertaken to update and modernize our mentorship approach. In our 2023 revision, we have decided to stratify our mentorship effort to better focus attention on the unique needs of students, young biologists, and long-time biologists.

Based on the information provided, we will reach out to the Canadian certification community and pair the TWS member with an AWB or CWB. Once the pairing is completed then dialogue can begin. I feel this arrangement is a win-win situation for both the TWS member mentee and AWB/CWB mentor. The student/biologist gets the benefit of some sage advice from a seasoned AWB/CWB and the AWB/CWB gets to know the student/biologist, so he/she can feel comfortable in acting as a CWB reference. Another hidden advantage to this mentorship program is the potential for the establishment of long-term connections between two Canadian TWS members.

Once the Certification Committee has completed their 2023 revision of our Mentorship Program, we will be asking the CSTWS Website to replace the 2019 version with that of 2023.

## MAKING TWS IN-ROADS ON THE EAST COAST

Once again, I have renewed my membership in the Atlantic Society Fish and Wildlife Biologists (ASFWB). In talking to ASFWB further, they are trying to dialogue more with other parts of Canada. Being a member has allowed me “to keep a finger on the pulse”, which means I receive Biolink (their newsletter) and information on other events. As much as possible I have been sharing this information with the CSTWS Board, members of the Certification Committee, plus a number of selective CSTWS members.

## CSTWS CURRICULUM REVIEW COMMITTEE (CRC) TASK TEAM UPDATE

This ad hoc committee was designed to explore ways to aid colleges and universities to better meet course requirements for TWS’ certification program. In order to help out, TWS’ Certification Review Board (CRB) has developed a program designed to evaluate university/college curricula at no charge. In the past, one college (Lethbridge College) and three universities (University of Northern British Columbia, University of Manitoba, and Lakehead University) have availed their institutions to CRB evaluation. As a result, their respective students know that with careful planning they have the courses required to achieve their Associate Wildlife Biologist (AWB®).

In an effort to encourage more universities to take advantage of this CRB initiative, the Certification Review Committee (Don Barnes—Chair—; Rick Baydack—University of Manitoba—; Mike Gillingham—University of Northern British Columbia—; and Brian McLaren—Lakehead University—) has made contact with a number of universities across Canada. NOTE: Recently, Everett Hanna of Lethbridge College has stepped down and is no longer a committee member.

Out of curiosity, I created “mock” AWB® applications for each of student chapter post-secondary institutions and have found that by and large all have the courses available for students to acquire their AWB®. As well, four of the Certification Review Committee’s target universities—University of Saskatchewan, University of Regina, University of Guelph, and University of New Brunswick—have courses which would allow a student to become an AWB®. If your university is one of those mentioned above and want to peruse your “mock” application, then contact me at the Certification Committee email address given above.

In addition, feel free to contact the CRC if your university/college needs help in determining how well your courses align with TWS’ certification requirements. We can also help in generating your “mock” application to the Certification Review Board.

## UPDATE ON PROPOSED “WILDLIFE PROFESSIONAL” ARTICLE CONCERNING TWS’ CERTIFICATION IN CANADA

In the recent January/February 2023 issue of the Wildlife Professional, TWS’ Certification Review Board (CRB) published an article entitled “*Are you Certified?*” In this publication, four long-time CRB members (including Al Arsenault, our CSTWS representative) extolled the virtues of being certified by TWS. If you have not read it, I strongly suggest you do so.

As I mentioned in previous newsletter articles, the Certification Committee is poised to launch our own WP article focusing on the Canadian TWS' certification scene. Once the BCTWS-CSTWS AGM and Conference is done, we will re-group and begin in earnest to try to understand and report on TWS' certification scene in Canada.

As always, we would like to hear your thoughts about how to better promote TWS' certification program in Canada. As well, we are interested in hearing why you have not pursued this certification option.