

# From the Eagle's Nest

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## FISHERIES EXPERT RECEIVES SEALTH AWARD

by: Karen Lynch, NAFWS

It's been more than hard work that this year's Chief Sealth Awardee, David Close, a member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, as a student, researcher, and noted scientist that the pacific lamprey is making a come back.

The pacific lamprey, an important resource also has historical importance for the CTUIR. "Our people have relied heavily upon aquatic resources," said Close. "Although through treaties, our tribe has retained aboriginal rights to hunt and fish. We have to acquire the tools for gaining knowledge so that we can continue to protect our treaty

resources."

As a doctoral candidate in fisheries science at Michigan State University, Close has combined graduate work with his position as a fisheries research scientist with the CTUIR where he has worked since 1988. Currently he is working on identifying novel stress steroids in pacific lamprey. This research will help fisheries managers evaluate environmental stressors causing harm to lampreys.

Starting his career as a



David Close, Chief Sealth Award recipient said "tribal elders influenced my thinking about why natural resources is so important to our people in the past and continues to be crucial to our future survival."

fisheries technician with his tribe, Close said it wasn't long before he realized that his tribe

(See p. 9 - Sealth Award -)

## PARTNERSHIP REAPS BENEFITS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING

By: Ron Skates, President, NAFWS

After several meetings in 1997, interest from Tribal Conservation Officers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society (Society) entered into an informal agreement.

This agreement would provide law enforcement training designed to meet the requirements of the "Indian Law Enforcement Act" which requires that each officer take 40 hours annually. The Society has played an important and supportive role by providing facilities, equipment, targets, some ammunition and other necessary supplies.

The course has evolved since 1997 from a basic format that included an overview of Federal Wildlife Laws/

Regulations, Service and Department of Justice Policies and Procedures, Jurisdictional Issues, Criminal vs. Civil Prosecutions, Relationship between the Lacey Act and Tribal Codes and Officer Safety to more advanced courses. These include Weapons Certification, Crime Scene Investigations, Search and Seizure, Continuum of Force, Evidence Collection Techniques, Interview and Interrogation Techniques, Defensive Tactics and Simmuntions.

In 2003, we provided a Rookie Training course at Lower Brule, South Dakota for those individuals who had not attended any formal Academy type training and needed more time on the range to become qualified to carry their duty weapon.

To date, 14 trainings have been provided at various locations throughout the country. Approximately 535

(See p. 4 - LE Training -)



Roger Parker, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service conducting a law enforcement training in Billings, Montana in May 2004.

# SOUTHWEST TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION ELECTS NEW OFFICERS

The Southwest Tribal Fisheries Commission (SWTFC) elected its first executive committee officers during a meeting on May 14, 2004 at the Pueblo of Laguna in New Mexico. The meeting was attended by at least 27 people representing tribes from New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, including representatives from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

The SWTFC is a grassroots, non-profit organization formed by participating Tribes in the Southwest. The Southwest includes the same area defined by the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society's Southwest Region. This includes the states of Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Nevada and Southern California. Its focus as a commission is to develop and organize a more comprehensive and collaborative approach to securing the futures of tribal recreational fishing programs, and to further enhance "capacity building" of tribal-controlled fisheries resources and management programs. Specific objectives are to organize member-Tribes to complete a region-wide assessment and strategic planning effort that addresses southwestern tribal fisheries needs and priorities.

The SWTFC Chairman, Butch Blazer, announced that the commission's planning and management will be performed by Interim Executive Director, Mike Montoya who previously served as a fisheries biologist for the Ute Tribe Fish and Wildlife Department in Ft. Duchesne, Utah. He was also formerly on the SWTFC

executive committee as secretary-treasurer. Montoya replaces Mr. Jon Cooley who served in the capacity of Executive Director before accepting a position with the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

The SWTFC's Board of Directors, elected from/by member-Tribe representatives, will provide management oversight and appropriately direct SWTFC governance as the organization continues to develop its membership and management focus.

During the meeting on May 14<sup>th</sup>, the commission elected the following as officers:

**Butch Blazer**, Mescalero Apache Tribe was elected SWTFC Chairman. He previously served as interim chairman and will serve a two-year term. He is currently the Director of the New Mexico State Forestry Division, New Mexico Department of Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources.

**Jim White**, representing the Jicarilla Apache Tribe (NM) was elected as Vice-Chairman. He previously served as interim vice-chairman and acting Executive Director with the commission and will serve a one-year term. He is currently a fisheries biologist at the Jicarilla Apache Game & Fish Department.

**Steve Whiteman**, representing the Southern Ute Tribe (CO) was elected as Secretary-Treasurer for a two-year term. He is currently the Director of the Wildlife Resource Management Division of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe.

*(Submitted by Mike Montoya, Executive Director, Southwest Tribal Fisheries Commission)*

# MAKING THE CONNECTION: FOR WILDLIFE HANDLING

*(Editor's Note: This is an interview with Mark Johnson, Global Wildlife Resources' approach to wildlife handling which offers a holistic method of care.)*

## Q: What is Global Wildlife Resources?

A: GWR is a non-profit organization providing field assistance and courses in wildlife capture and handling throughout the country. These include courses for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources and several national parks and universities. We are dedicated to improving the well-being of wildlife affected by research and management especially as it relates to capture and handling. We are simultaneously empowering wildlife professionals by teaching and demonstrating the highest quality of techniques and equipment. This non-prescriptive manner honors the biologist as much as each wild animal.

## Q: Tell us more about the work taking place at Global Wildlife Resources?

A: Our ever bolder holistic approach emphasizes care, honor, and respect for each animal that is handled. The science in the wildlife and veterinary professions is impressive. It allows us to gather data through systematic research and then use it to make wise management decisions. But our science does not help us address or explore our deep and long-standing relationship with the

animals we are dedicating our lives to.

## Q: Why do you think this is so?

A: Contemporary society has not created space for this. I have found there is a huge craving for most professionals to bring heart and compassion into their work, especially as it relates to our connection with animals. This relationship with animals and all of life is a part of our very Being.

## Q: In what way are professionals wanting to bring heart and compassion to their work?

A: I think that in many ways, biologists often do not realize the extent they seek the deeper meaning of their work. I have met many young professionals in my courses who are frustrated or dismayed by their work environment. It is amazing how excited they get as they hear ways of expressing and practicing compassion in our profession. Many students *(See p. 13 - Global Wildlife Resources)*



A student practices blood collection with an eastern red wolf under the instruction of Dr. Johnson (left). Blood is collected as part of the animal's annual physical examination.



walk away from our courses with a sense of empowerment or affirmation.

**Q: What is the foundation of the courses taught at GWR?**

A: Our courses will always be based on abundant practical information for preparing and conducting successful field operations in wildlife capture and handling. For example, we discuss field preparation in detail and, as with other courses, we cover the latest information about legal aspects, immobilizing drugs, and drug delivery systems. We also discuss how to provide the best care possible for the drugged animal by monitoring temperature, pulse, and respiration. In addition, practical field techniques are covered such as how to ear tag or radio-collar an animal or how to collect tooth and blood samples. I have found that the practical information in these courses meet the expectations of most participants regardless of their views.

**Q: You mentioned that you discuss equipment and techniques in the courses, plus exploring the importance of how intuition plays into this aspect of choosing equipment? Can you explain?**

A: By using our heart and intuition, we can explore how to incorporate empathy for each animal. This can be done without interfering with our field of work and our scientific processes. I believe these contrasts are not only compatible, both are also necessary for carrying out truly successful animal capture and handling.

**Q: Can you give an example of using this intuition in the field?**

A: At the beginning of the course, I often show a slide of biologists weighing a wolf by tying the legs together and hanging it upside down. There is no headcover and the wolf has a drugged stare with eyes wide open even though it is unconscious. I ask the students to sense how they feel about the photo and most do not like

it. We discuss how covering the wolf's eyes and weighing the animal with a groundcloth makes it safer for both wolf and biologist. When we sense a situation that does not feel right, we can explore how to change our equipment or techniques.

**Q: How is this experienced in your courses?**

A: We strive to include a hands-on lab with live animals so that we can experience ways of practicing care, honor, and respect when the animal is in hand. For example, we do not step over the animal, we do not crack jokes, and we tend to our responsibilities in a focused way. Working as a structured team, we set ego aside. There is no room for ego around the animal. All of these considerations maximize our success in the field and strengthen our professional approach and presentation while acknowledging and supporting a heart-felt connection with all beings.

Before our hands-on labs, I suggest that if they so wish, they can also create personal ceremony which reflects their beliefs, as another way to address their connection with the animals. I explain how intentional honoring through ceremony can be done before each field operation. Before I capture wildlife, I smudge in prayer offering gratitude for their gifts (my home, clothes, and food are all given to me by wildlife), inviting them to participate, and apologizing for the crudeness of our methods. It may be a delicate topic, but there are many delicate topics relating to wildlife capture and handling. We need to explore them all. These topics can be addressed in a manner which respects the ways of life for all people.

**Q: How did you first decide to begin using a holistic or heart/intuitive connections into your work?**

A: I was not comfortable working without it. Years ago, I wondered why I was so uncomfortable during some of the wildlife and veterinary conferences. I realized that I needed to interweave human



Student listens to airway with a stethoscope. Monitoring TPRs (temperature, pulse, and respiration) is crucial for safely anesthetizing wildlife.

and spiritual components. Secretly, I began to incorporate ceremony into my work.

**Q: You say that science does not utilize holistic approaches so how do you balance this? Is it possible?**

A: I am slowly realizing how to make it possible. First, I must give myself permission. Then I learn how to create quiet time and sacred space as I work in the field, teach in the classroom, or write in my office. As I begin to share this with others, I am careful in honoring other peoples beliefs. In a recent course I chose not to openly discuss it at all.

**Q: Are tribes openly receptive to this form of teaching or respect?**

A: Until this interview, the only people who knew about my holistic approach were those taking my course. Tribal biologists have been very receptive and understand my terminology and practices more than most. In one course where over half the participants were tribal members, I

offered a private place to smudge before the labs with animals if they so chose. Many evaluations from that course thanked me for providing this special opportunity.

**Q: Is this method used elsewhere?**

A: I am searching for professional environments where heart and spirit is intertwined and although I do not see open discussions or explorations on this, I am sure it is abundant in quiet practice. It is difficult to bring this to the surface because there are so many different ways to practice ceremony. But there is a universal connection and Truth that is common to all of us. I hope we can bring this more out in the open and into our every day work and lives. There are so many people craving this, but they do not have the words or tools to express this heartfelt connection with animals and all of Life. If we bring this to the surface, it will not only empower ourselves, it will also give others examples for walking their own path.

