



# 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Native American Fish & Wildlife Society National Conference

May 12 – 15, 2025

Wind River Hotel and Casino, Riverton, WY

Sponsor: Great Plains Region, Tribal Host: Northern Arapahoe and Eastern Shoshone

THEME: “Restoring the Land, Reclaiming the Future”

## National Conference Agenda

### Monday, May 12, 2025

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Location: Hotel Lobby –  
Wind River Casino

**Exhibitors and Vendors Set-Up**

**Coordinators:** Shailyn Wiechman, Wildlife Connectivity Coordinator – NAFWS  
Andy Edwards, Grants Field Liaison – NAFWS

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Location: Hotel Lobby –  
Wind River Casino

**Registration**

**Coordinators:** Heidi McCann, Membership Engagement & Board Affairs Coordinator – NAFWS  
Jennifer Bills, Financial Advisor – Management Partners

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Location: Blue Sky 1

**Meeting:** NAFWS Research/Publication Committee – Open to Committee Members only

**Coordinator:** Hannah Golden, Fish & Wildlife Biologist – NAFWS

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Location: Blue Sky 2

**Meeting:** Federal & State Relations Committee

**Coordinator:** Julie Thorstenson Ph.D., Executive Director – NAFWS

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Location: Spring Mountain  
(Morning); Off-Site  
(Afternoon)

**Workshop:** Wildlife Health and Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Workshop

**Coordinators:** Shailyn Wiechman, Wildlife Connectivity Coordinator – NAFWS

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Location: Cottonwood

**Workshop:** Diversifying Funding and Increasing Financial Resilience in Tribal F&W Programs

**Coordinator:** Megan Hawkins, Director of Operations – NAFWS

11:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Location: Off-Site

**Workshop:** Invasive Species Management Workshop

**Coordinator:** Mitzi Reed, Invasive Species Coordinator – NAFWS

**Instructions:** Meet at Wind River Hotel Lobby at 11:30 a.m., Please ensure you have lunch.

<b>12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.</b> Location: Off-site	<b>National CLEO Competition Shoot</b> <i>Coordinators:</i> Robert Romero, CLEO & Hunter Education Consultant - NAFWS
<b>1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.</b> Location: Cottonwood	<b>Workshop: Adaptive Leadership Workshop</b> <i>Coordinators:</i> <i>Gina Jackson-Krusinski, Program Manager for Communications and Learning Development - Association of Fish &amp; Wildlife Agencies</i> <i>Mark Ohm, Regional Supervisor - South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks</i> <i>Ashley Mueller, Education and Advancement Director – NAFWS</i>
<b>1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.</b> Location: Spring Mountain	<b>Workshop: Tribal Mapping</b> <i>Coordinator:</i> Emily Hagler, Tribal Mapping Analyst – NAFWS
<b>5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.</b> Location: Spring Mountain	<b>Meeting: NAFWS Great Plains Region Business Meeting</b> <i>Coordinators:</i> Shaun Grassel, Ph.D. and Michael Thompson, GP Regional Directors – NAFWS *Refreshments Will Be Served*
<b>7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.</b> Location: Holiday Inn Dome Area	<b>Professional Mixer &amp; Trivia Night (networking opportunity)</b>  Holiday Day Inn Riverton, 900 E Sunset Dr, Riverton, WY 82501 *Refreshments Will Be Served*

## Tuesday, May 13, 2025

<b>8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.</b> Location: Hotel Lobby – Wind River Casino	<b>Registration</b> <i>Coordinators:</i> Heidi McCann, Membership Engagement & Board Affairs Coordinator Jennifer Bills, Financial Advisor – Management Partners
<b>8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Exhibitors and Vendors Set-Up</b>

**Coordinators:** Shailyn Wiechman, Wildlife Connectivity Coordinator – NAFWS  
Andy Edwards, Grants Field Liaison – NAFWS

## General Session

**9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.**

Location: Blue Sky

### Opening Ceremony

Master of Ceremonies – Shaun Grassel, PhD – NAFWS Great Plains Region Director  
Posting of the Colors – Conservation Law Enforcement Officers  
Invocation – Sam Dresser, Northern Arapahoe

#### *Welcoming Remarks:*

NAFWS Executive Director – Julie Thorstenson, Ph.D.  
NAFWS Vice-President, Southeast Region Director – Mike LaVoie  
NAFWS Great Plains Region Director – Michael Thompson  
Host Representative, Director of Wind River Fish & Game – Arthur Lawson

**9:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.**

Location: Blue Sky

### Conference Overview

**10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.**

Location: Blue Sky

**Keynote Address:** Leslie Shakespeare, Senior Leader Supporting Tribal Nations in the Rocky Mountain Region - BIA

**10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

Location: Blue Sky

**Presentation:** Wind River – Fisheries and Wildlife Management Overview

**Presenter:** Arthur Lawson, Director – Wind River Fish & Game

**11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

Location: Blue Sky

**LUNCH (Provided)**

**1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

Location: Blue Sky

**Presentation:** NAFWS National Office Update

**Presenter:** Julie Thorstenson Ph.D., Executive Director – NAFWS

**2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

Location: Blue Sky

**Panel Discussion:** Intertribal Organizations

#### **Panelists:**

InterTribal Timber Council (ITC)– Jim Durglo, Fire Technical Specialist  
National Congress of American Indians' (NCAI) – Cynthia Harris, Director  
Indian Nations Conservation Alliance (INCA) – Delane Atcitty, Executive Director  
InterTribal Buffalo Council (ITBC) – Jason Baldes, Vice President

**Moderator:** Shaun Grassel, PhD, CEO Buffalo Nations Grasslands Alliance/NAFWS Great Plains Regional Director

3:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

**BREAK**

3:15 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Location: Blue Sky

**Panel Discussion:** Co-Management and Co-Stewardship Success Stories

**Panelists:** Chairman Ryman LeBeau, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe

Fawn Wagner, Wildlife Refuge Manager/Ecologist Dungeness/Protection Island

Marcel Bozas, Director Fish & Wildlife Department, Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida

**Moderator:** Julie Thorstenson, Ph.D., Executive Director – NAFWS

4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Location: Blue Sky

**Presentation:** Federal Partner Updates

USDA APHIS – Denise Salvetti M.P.A., Program Analyst, Office of National Tribal Liaison

BIA – Diane Mann Klager, Natural Resource Officer

BLM – Casey Burns, Threatened and Endangered Species Ecologist

USFWS – Karen Cogswell, National Native American Program Advisor

**Moderator:** Michael Thompson, GP Region Director – NAFWS

**ADJOURN 5:00 p.m.**

6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Location: Off-Site

**Traditional Feast**

Fort Washakie Powwow Grounds, 36 A Gaw Bombe Ln, Fort Washakie, WY 82514

**\*\*Limited Transportation Provided, Encourage Carpooling\*\***

**Wednesday, May 14, 2025**

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**Registration**

**Coordinators:** Heidi McCann, Membership Engagement & Board Affairs Coordinator —NAFWS

Jennifer Bills, Financial Advisor – Management Partners

## Concurrent Sessions I

Topic	Fisheries Management	Wildlife Health	Sovereignty	Methods
<i>Moderator:</i>	<i>Hope Roberts – AK Regional Director</i>	<i>Benjamin Simpson – NE Regional Director</i>	<i>Matt Gamble – SE Regional Director</i>	<i>Terry Metoxen – GL Regional Director</i>
Location:	Blue Sky Room 1	Blue Sky Room 2	Cotton Wood	Spring Mountain
<b>9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.</b>	<p>Lake Whitefish (<i>Coregonus clupeaformis</i>) decline and possible senescence in Little Traverse Bay, Lake Michigan</p> <p><i>Kae Skubik, Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians</i></p>	<p>Using non-invasive methods to detect small mammals: track plates, environmental DNA, and cameras</p> <p><i>Carol Chambers, Professor, Northern Arizona University</i></p>	<p>Implications of environmental data collection on Tribal lands for Native Nations, Tribal Sovereignty and Indigenous Land Management in the Upper Missouri River Basin</p> <p><i>Paige Johnson, Native Resilience Data Fellow, Montana Climate Office</i></p>	<p>NAFWS Certified Tribal Technician Program</p> <p><i>Sean Cross, Acting Director of Programs, NAFWS</i></p> <p><i>Mitzi Reed, Invasive Species Coordinator, NAFWS</i></p>
<b>9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.</b>	<p>Native Fish Keepers</p> <p><i>Cindy Bras-Benson, Fisheries Specialist, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes</i></p>	<p>American black bear density and genetic diversity in Penobscot Nation, Maine, USA</p> <p><i>Jeff Stetz, Director of Science Center for Wildlife Studies</i></p>	<p>Landscapes of Land Return: Examining trends in land re-acquisitions by Indigenous communities in the United States</p> <p><i>McKalee Steen, Ph.D. Candidate, UC – Berkeley</i></p>	<p>Black Bear Research on the Navajo Nation</p> <p><i>Deandra Jones, Ph.D. Student, University of Arizona</i></p>

<b>10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.</b>	<p>Haich ik'tat'uu: Restoring and Reconnecting on the Siuslaw River Estuary on the Oregon Coast</p> <p><i>Jesse Beers, Cultural Stewardship Manager, Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians</i></p>	<p>Chronic Wasting Disease Outbreak In the Wind River Basin: Historical Perspectives, Impacts, And Contributing Factors</p> <p><i>Tucker Russell, Graduate Research Assistant, University of Wyoming</i></p>	<p>Conservation Easements and Bison Restoration: Exploring Opportunities, Challenges, and Alternatives</p> <p><i>Alyson White Eagle, Fellow Native American Rights Fund</i></p>	<p>Assessing Moose Distribution and Impacts of Winter Tick Using Remote Camera Surveys</p> <p><i>Nina Kappel, Graduate Student, University of Maine</i></p>
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**BREAK 10:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Fisheries Management</b>	<b>Wildlife Management</b>	<b>Sovereignty</b>	<b>Methods</b>
<i>Moderator</i>	<i>Ted Lamebull – P Regional Director</i>	<i>Kai-T Blue-Sky – SW Regional Director</i>	<i>Shaun Grassel, PhD – GP Regional Director</i>	<i>Jason Mitchell - NE Regional Director</i>
<i>Location</i>	Blue Sky Room 1	Blue Sky Room 2	Cotton Wood	Spring Mountain
<b>11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.</b>	<p>The Evolution of Supply Creek: Restoring Fish Habitat in the Hoopa Valley</p> <p><i>Ana Rubio, Stream Restoration Specialist, Hoopa Valley Tribal Fisheries</i></p>	<p>Female elk select habitat differently before, during, and after calving</p> <p><i>Daniel Bird, Graduate Student, University of Montana</i></p>	<p>The McGirt Ruling</p> <p><i>Jay Harvey, Game Warden Supervisor, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma</i></p>	<p>Nature's Hidden Logbook: How eDNA can Inform Tribal Conservation and Land Management Decisions</p> <p><i>Julie Stanford, CEO, eDNA Explorer</i></p>
<b>11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.</b>	<p>From Barriers to Solutions: Tribal Capacity Building for Fish Passage Restoration</p> <p><i>Madelynne Dey, Chickaloon Village Traditional Council</i></p>	<p>Methods and Analysis of Endangered Bats on Cherokee Lands</p> <p><i>Jessica Nagel, Lead Wildlife Biologist, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians</i></p>	<p>Tribal Access to the Land and Water Conservation Fund</p> <p><i>Michael Spears, LWCF Tribal Access Author</i></p>	<p>Braiding Indigenous Knowledge and Western Science in the Yellowstone Bison Species Status Assessment</p> <p><i>Ehakela Cummings, InterTribal Buffalo Council</i></p>

12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. Location: Blue Sky	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NAFWS NATIONAL BUSINESS MEETING</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Coordinators: Mike LaVoie, NAFWS Vice-President and Julie Thorstenson, PhD, NAFWS Executive Director</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>**LUNCH PROVIDED**</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">—SEE MEETING AGENDA—</p>
2:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Location: Holiday Inn Taggart's Room 1	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CLEO Training</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Coordinators: Robert Romero, CLEO and Hunter Education Consultant</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Holiday Day Inn Riverton, 900 E Sunset Dr, Riverton, WY 82501</p>

## Concurrent Sessions II

Topic	Education & Outreach	Wildlife Management	Habitat Conservation	Methods
<i>Moderator</i>	<i>Ashley Mueller, NAFWS Education Coordinator</i>	<i>Michael Thompson, GP Regional Director</i>	<i>Orville Huntington, AK Regional Director</i>	<i>Jason Mitchell, NE Regional Director</i>
Location	Blue Sky Room 1	Blue Sky Room 2	Cotton Wood	Spring Mountain
2:00 p.m.– 2:30 p.m.	Descriptive Languages Can Guide Knowledge Revitalization to Reconnect Cherokees to their Aboriginal Landscape  <i>Caleb Hickman, Supervisory Fish &amp; Wildlife Biologist, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians</i>	Tribal Collaboration and the Olympic Cougar Project in Support of Habitat Connectivity Planning  <i>Kim Sager-Fradkin, Wildlife Program Manager, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe</i>	Conservation Through Fire  <i>Sheldon Fletcher, C.W.A 319 &amp; GIS Coordinator, Lower Brule Sioux Tribe</i>	Streamflow revival: A framework for monitoring and assessing the ecohydrological impacts of ongoing stream naturalization and land use conversion  <i>Cory Ott, Ph.D. Student, University of Wyoming</i>
2:30 p.m.– 3:00 p.m.	The National Summer Youth Practicum: Highlights, Lessons Learned and Moving Forward  <i>Ashley Mueller, Education and Advancement Director, Native American Fish and Wildlife Society</i>	Toxicology Analysis in Moose Populations of the Ahtna Region (Alaska): Assessing Cadmium and Copper Impacts on Wildlife Health and Food Security  <i>Kelsey Stanbro, Ecologist, Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission</i>	Bringing Back the Grass - Cultural, Ecological, and Environmental Benefits of Native Rivercane and Grasslands Restoration  <i>Marvin Bouknight, Wildlife &amp; Habitat Program Manager, Catawba Nation</i>	Distributional Ecology of Medium and Large Mammals of the Baboquivari Mountain Range  <i>Kathryn Beard, Ecologist, Tohono O'odham Nation</i>

**BREAK 3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

Topic	Education & Outreach	Wildlife Management	Invasive Species	Plants
<i>Moderator</i>	<i>Emily Hagler, NAFWS Mapping Analyst</i>	<i>Shailyn Wiechman, NAFWS Wildlife Connectivity Coordinator</i>	<i>Mitzi Reed, NAFWS Invasive Species Coordinator</i>	<i>Hannah Golden, NAFWS Fish &amp; Wildlife Biologist</i>
Location	Blue Sky Room 1	Blue Sky Room 2	Cotton Wood	Spring Mountain
<b>3:30 p.m.– 4:00 p.m.</b>	<p>White Earth Natural Resources Youth Program</p> <p><i>Zoe Keezer, Environmental Coordinator, White Earth</i> <i>Jason Clark, Parks &amp; Recreation Manager</i> <i>Ashley Zurn, Conservation Officer, White Earth</i></p>	<p>Review of Wildlife Zoonoses and Game Meat Safety for Wildlife Biologists</p> <p><i>Tolani Francisco, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, Native Healing LLC</i></p>	<p>Pechanga's Goldspotted Oak Borer Efforts with the Community</p> <p><i>David Newman, Environmental Program Manager, Pechanga Tribal Government</i></p>	<p>Ghvtlh-k'vsh shu'-srnelh-'i~ (Kelp Guardians) of California's North Coast</p> <p><i>Rosa Laucci, Marine Division Manager &amp; Marine Biologist, Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation</i></p>
<b>4:00 p.m.– 4:30 p.m.</b>	<p>Expanding Cherokee Youth Engagement in Fishing and Conservation</p> <p><i>Mike LaVoie, EBCI Natural Resources</i></p> <p><i>Christopher Davis, Teacher, Cherokee Central Schools</i></p>	<p>Navajo Bighorn Recovery Program Update</p> <p><i>Jessica Fort, Wildlife Biologist, Navajo Nation</i></p>	<p>Tribal Pesticide Programs and Impacts to Tribal Resources</p> <p><i>Jasmine Courville, Pesticide Program Manager, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes</i></p>	<p>Understanding climate impacts on cone production and the need for comprehensive pinyon jay population monitoring in the Dinetah (Navajo Nation)</p> <p><i>Arantxa Curley, Post-Baccalaureate Student, Northern Arizona University</i></p>
<b>4:30 p.m.– 5:00 p.m.</b>	<p>Seven Generations of Student Stewards</p>	<p>Thirty Years of Wolves and Sovereignty: The Nez Perce Tribe's Legacy and Future in Wolf Management</p>	<p>Ecological Concerns Of Feral Equidae</p>	<p>Restoring the Land with Native Knowledge: Plant Restoration and the Asqinaq Cultural Ranger Program</p>



	<i>Brandon Edwards, Natural Resources Technician, Forest County Potawatomi Land and Natural Resources</i>	<i>Rosie Sanchez, Wildlife Carnivore Fellow, Nez Perce Tribe</i>	<i>Tolani Francisco, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, Native Healing LLC</i>	<i>Angutekaraq Estelle Thomson, President, Native Village of Paimiut &amp; Creator, Asqinaq Cultural Ranger Program</i>
<b>ADJOURN 5:00 p.m.</b>				
<b>6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.</b>  Location: Holiday Inn Dome Area	<b>Tribal Student and Professional Mixer and Poster Session</b> <i><b>Coordinator:</b> Ashley Mueller, Education Coordinator – NAFWS</i> Holiday Day Inn Riverton, 900 E Sunset Dr, Riverton, WY 82501 <i>*Refreshments will be served*</i>			

## Thursday, May 15, 2025

<b>6:45 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.</b> Location: Starting Line –	<b>5K Buffalo Stampede Fun Run &amp; Walk</b> <i><b>Coordinators:</b> Thomas Hafen, Invasive Species Technician - NAFWS &amp; Katie Schultz, Grants Field Liaison – NAFWS</i> <i><b>Instructions:</b></i> <i>Pre-registrants receive race packet near the registration desk. On-site registration at conference registration desk. Safety Briefing at 6:50 a.m.   Race Starts at 7:00 a.m.</i>
<b>9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Natural Resources Tours:</b> <i><b>Coordinators:</b> Wilma Wagon, Wind River Fish &amp; Game</i> <i><b>Instructions:</b> TBA Meet in Lobby at 9:20 a.m., Depart by 9:30 a.m.</i> <i><b>Tours: See our website for full descriptions</b></i> Wind River Canyon & Boysen Peak - Fisheries, Tribal Outfitter, Scenic Views Diversion Dam & Bull Lake - Water Management, Invasive Species, and Fly Fishing Red Rock, Dinwoody & Washakie Reservoir - Ungulate Habitat, History, Petroglyphs Crow Creek - <b>4wd required</b> , Migration Pathways, GPS Collar Retrieval, Geology, Sand Dune Visit
<b>6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.</b> Location: Blue Sky	<b>BANQUET</b> <i>Master of Ceremony: Mike LaVoie, NAFWS Vice-President, SE Regional Director – NAFWS</i> <i>Retire the Colors</i>

*Invocation – Ivan Posey, Eastern Shoshone*

*National Award Announcements: Darren Talayumptewa, SW Regional Director - NAFWS*

National Tribal Student Poster Session Awards

Emerging Professional of the Year Award

Biologist of the Year Award

Chief Sealth Award

CLEO of the Year

National Conservation Officer Shoot Team Awards

*Great Plains Regional Award Announcements: Shaul Grassel, GP Regional Director - NAFWS*

*Silent Auction –*

Benjamin Simpson – NE Regional Director

Michael Thompson – GP Regional Director

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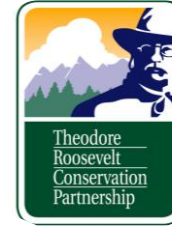
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