

# FROM THE PRESIDENT

## The Accomplishments and Progress of The Club



**Ben B. Wallace**  
PRESIDENT  
Boone and Crockett Club

In this, my last president's column in *Fair Chase* magazine, I would like to take a glance back a few years on the accomplishments and progress of the Club and take a quick look forward as to what may lie ahead for our Club, our wildlife, and habitat conservation.

During my three years as executive vice president of administration under then-President Lowell Baier and my next two years as president, one area of focus has been on the internal organization and operations of the Club. The Board of Directors endorsed a modified version of a policy governance model, which was also embraced by B&C Club members. This has given the Club clearly defined operational parameters, greater input from the members into the direction and operations of the Club, and greater consistency in accomplishing the Club's objectives under its mission and vision statements. While Lowell and I may have started this ball rolling, it took the organizational skills and hard work of Regular Member Morrie Stevens and Professional Member Mary Webster to bring it to fruition.

Two years in the making, and with input from members, staff, conservation partners, sponsors, and many others, our strategic plan and implementation plan were completed and took effect on July 1, 2012—thanks to the tireless efforts and prodding of Regular Members James Cummins and Jayar Daily. Both plans place emphasis on the desire of our stakeholders that the Club, its members, and its partners have an even greater focus on the area of conservation policy, which, with the hard work by our Conservation Policy Committee under the leadership of past President Bob Model and honorary Life Member Steve Mealey, has brought the name Boone and Crockett Club

to the forefront of conservation conversations across North America.

In my previous column, I discussed attending the Canadian National Fish and Wildlife Conservation Congress and opportunities for our Club and members to assist in Canada's conservation efforts. While this movement is just beginning, I believe that if the conservation community in the United States gets behind the Canadian efforts, we can have a substantial impact for wildlife and habitat in all of North America.

The Boone and Crockett Club Foundation began a planned giving campaign under Past President Gary Dietrich and it continues to be strong under current President Ben Hollingsworth. Ben began another program to enhance the Foundation's endowment, the Wilderness Warrior Society, which currently has 19 members who have contributed or pledged more than \$2.3 million to the foundation.

I could go on and on about the Club's successes these past few years—from the numerous awards achieved by the Club's books and television show "Boone and Crockett Country," to the incredible increase in our Big Game Records entries, to the significant effects that our Conservation Grants, Conservation Leadership, Conservation Education, and Boone and Crockett University Programs are having. But that is why we publish *Fair Chase* magazine—to inform you about what we are doing and accomplishing for wildlife conservation. It has been an incredible honor to work with our members, staff, partners, sponsors, and others dedicated to conservation during these last nine years as a director and officer of a truly great conservation organization.

Looking forward in today's political and economic environment is like being on a flats boat when you can't see your running lights due to the heavy fog. You simply can't see far enough to know where you are going. There are many challenges ahead for our

conservation community, but none greater than the economic uncertainty that prevails in the United States today. Uncertainty to a business person is his or her greatest fear. Being in the banking industry, I see the unbelievable amounts of cash being held in the system earning next to nothing, just waiting to see what will happen. As a businessman, I've read, listened to and met with many economists, investment advisors and industry leaders and none of them really know which direction the United States is headed. Will taxes go up? Will our deficit continue at its yearly trillion dollar-plus pace? Will we have draconian cuts to our conservation program? Will we fall off the "fiscal cliff" as the media pounds into our brains every day? I have no idea, but I do know our conservation community stepped up last year and fought a great fight to keep wildlife conservation funding where it is today, and that we'll have an even greater fight over the next several years to maintain it at acceptable levels.

December 8, 2012, marks the 125th anniversary of the inaugural meeting of the Boone and Crockett Club held in New York City. Over those 125 years, the Club and its members have a history and legacy rich in wildlife and habitat conservation achievements. On December 1, 2012, the Club, at its annual meeting in New York City, will begin its year-long celebration of its 125th anniversary. I'm proud to say that the Club has the leadership, membership, staff, partners, and sponsors who are dedicated and able to continue that legacy for the next 125 years. Most of all, let's continue our camaraderie and have fun celebrating our past achievements while planning and achieving our future successes in wildlife and habitat conservation. ■

Yours in Conservation,

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