

# CAPITOL COMMENTS

## Spotlight on Our Partners



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Recently the secretaries of the Departments of Interior and Agriculture announced the appointment of 18 individuals to the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council (WHHCC). Eight of the members belong to the Boone and Crockett Club.

This council will serve as a formal advisory board to the Cabinet-level secretaries who are responsible for the primary federal land management agencies. The WHHCC has been tasked with providing advice concerning activities that benefit recreational hunting, wildlife, and habitat. In addition, the council will focus on developing and encouraging partnerships to promote shooting and recreational hunting. I applaud the current administration for establishing this high-level commitment to our nation's hunting heritage and our wildlife resources.

But how did this significant decision and announcement come about? Through no small measure, it originated from the efforts of about 30 national conservation organizations that gathered in Missoula, Montana, in 2000 to discuss how to make the hunter-conservationists' voice heard more clearly and loudly in Washington, DC. Boone and Crockett Club members, Daniel Pedrotti (president), Bob Model, and Steve Mealey,

played key leadership roles in developing what is known as the American Wildlife Conservation Partners (AWCP), which has now grown to a consortium of 45 national conservation organizations (for more information, see the Winter 2007 issue of *Fair Chase*).

Since 2000, AWCP has published three concise sets of recommendations (two for President Bush and one for President Obama) concerning the management of our nation's lands and wildlife. AWCP organizations have developed and distributed numerous letters that encouraged action on federal legislation or policy. They have played significant roles in Farm Bill and Healthy Forests legislation. AWCP evolved from a loose and sometimes tense affiliation of conservation organizations to one that is now based on a high level of trust and cooperation among organizations. AWCP gained increased public and political visibility during President Bush's terms in office.

When the Sporting Conservation Council (SCC) was established in 2005 (a predecessor to the WHHCC) appointments to the SCC were drawn primarily from the ranks of AWCP organizations. The SCC and AWCP organizations were the key drivers of the White House Conference that took place in Reno, Nevada, in 2008. As a result of that conference and SCC white papers, the Bush administration released the *Recreational Hunting and Wildlife Resource Conservation Plan—A Ten-Year Plan for Implementation* (Plan). One of the duties of the WHHCC is to provide recommendations to the secretaries to implement the Plan. As such, the Plan

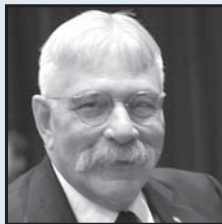
has become a significant bridge between two administrations from different political parties. Hunters should recognize that this signaled the recognition that conservation is a long-term and bipartisan endeavor.

It is clear that AWCP has evolved in the last 10 years to become an important force for wildlife conservation. At least 23 Boone and Crockett Club Professional Members serve as senior staff in 14 AWCP organizations. Because of the role that AWCP organizations have played in the formation and operation of the SCC, the fact that half of the WHHCC membership is drawn from AWCP organizations, and the productive work that these organizations do for conservation, we plan to highlight those conservation organizations in future issues of *Fair Chase*. Last issue, David Nomsen provided an excellent article on the growth and success of Pheasants Forever. Future issues will focus on major conservation organizations, their work, their membership, and their accomplishments.

Conservation is a long, tough slog. The combined efforts of our nation's conservation organizations have produced some incredible accomplishments on the ground and in the halls of Congress. We hope that you enjoy learning about these organizations, some spawned and nurtured by Boone and Crockett Club members and some that can trace their existence to the vision and actions of Club members dating back to 1887. ■

### CLUB MEMBERS APPOINTED TO THE COUNCIL INCLUDE:

- Robert Model (Boone and Crockett Club)
- M. David Allen (Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation)
- Jeffrey S. Crane (Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation)
- John Tomke (Ducks Unlimited)
- Thomas Franklin (Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership)
- Christine L. Thomas (College of Natural Resources, University of Wisconsin)
- Steve Williams (Wildlife Management Institute)
- Joanna Prukop (Freedom to Roam)



Robert Model



M. David Allen



Jeffrey S. Crane



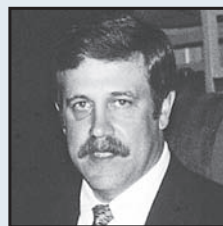
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