

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Ben B. Wallace
PRESIDENT
Boone and Crockett Club

Defining the Future of Our Club

My first column as your president is about one of the Board of Director's most important duties this year—to adopt our new strategic plan for 2011-2016 (we agreed last year to start five-year

plans as opposed to three-year plans) then develop the business plan to implement the strategic plan.

Three years ago, our newly elected President Lowell E. Baier wrote his first "From the President" article in the spring 2008 edition of *Fair Chase* titled, "Envisioning a Future of the Club." His article discussed how cooperative efforts with groups like American Wildlife Conservation Partners (AWCP), the Club had achieved a national leadership position in conservation policy development. Lowell articulated numerous achievements that were directed or assisted by our Club through the Conservation Policy Committee and Club members—namely, two executive orders, two national conferences, and the White House Conference on North American Wildlife Policy scheduled later in 2008.

Lowell properly pointed out that these achievements supported his thesis that the Club had re-established itself as "a key leader in national conservation policy." Lowell's article also pointed out that the Club had recently adopted a 2008-2010 strategic plan, in which the following visions were stated: "We envision a future in which the Boone and Crockett Club continues to be an internationally recognized conservation leader; a future in which the Club continues its legacy as a key leader in national conservation policy."

The strategic plan and business plan are very important because they will define the future of the Boone and Crockett Club for the next five years. For those of you who did not have the opportunity to read the January newsletter article by the Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee James L. Cummins and Vice-Chairman F. R. Daily, I should point out that the committee's process is more expansive than it has been in the past. In addition to interviewing our members, the committee is interviewing current and potential sponsors, current and potential donors, state and federal agencies, outfitting associations, and other conservation organizations.

I had the opportunity to be involved in the interview process during the National Shooting Sports Foundation's Shooting Hunting and Outdoor Trade (SHOT) Show in January. I, together with Marc Mondavi, our communications vice president, Tony Schoonen, chief of staff, and Keith Balfour, director of marketing, interviewed 14 CEOs, owners, vice presidents, etc., of companies involved in the shooting sports industry. We came away with three observations from those interviews: First, it was very apparent our Club does not do a very good job of getting the word out about our accomplishments and endeavors in areas other than our Big Game Records program. Second, there is a concern about future participation in hunting and the shooting sports, and several felt a potential ban on lead will compound this concern. And third, there are a lot of conservation organizations and missions—pockets of passion so to speak—and that some consolidation or unity in this arena would be more effective and helpful to the industry. Only a few of those interviewed knew about our conservation efforts and even fewer about the AWCP.

I'm proud of what we've accomplished, especially over the last 10 years, and am looking forward to what we'll achieve over the next decade. I know that with the deep and vast pool of talent, which is composed of our diverse membership and professional staff, we can accomplish whatever we collectively decide upon.

Now the issue of defining the direction and future of our Club is upon us, certainly for the next five years, if not the next few decades. We know we have the capability to make a meaningful difference in the future of wildlife and habitat conservation in North America. We know we have the desire to make a difference—we've been saying that in our last few strategic plans. We must determine how best to utilize our talent pool, resources, and desire to accomplish our visions that we are about to define.

Our outcomes will be important not only to our Club as a committed group of hunter-conservationists, but more importantly to wildlife and wild places. We all—members, associates, conservationists, hunters, huntresses, sportsmen, and sports-women—as a part of our Club both collectively and individually, must work with dedication and persistence to promote wise and shared use of our natural resources and

preserve a wildlife legacy for generations to come. This is our legacy and our charge moving forward.

It is our shared passion for wildlife and habitat conservation and for our Boone and Crockett Club that is our common bond and which will be the driving force in defining the future of our Club. ■

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