

Resolution on Transparency

by Jeff Davis

As an organization, we are always striving to improve. Being transparent is a critical hallmark of that process. It establishes trust and confidence. As we consider new ideas, new technologies, and new approaches, we need to be accountable for our actions and ensure those actions help us improve our organization and further our mission. Not being transparent and accountable can lead to deleterious situations and unintended consequences. Therefore, recognizing that few aspects of the Western Section's operations need to remain confidential, we believe all Section members have a right to know the details of all business conducted by the Executive Board on their behalf. For this reason, we will be including the following resolution on transparency as a preamble and guiding principle in our updated strategic plan. This resolution is an explicit commitment to Section members that transparency will be a fundamental policy for Western Section business.

Preamble

Resolution on Transparency in the Western Section:
A commitment to Western Section members

Whereas, the Western Section of The Wildlife Society is a professional society and

Whereas, our mission is to serve the interests of our members and

Whereas, it is also our mission to advance the cause of wildlife conservation (*sensu* wise use) and

Whereas, the Western Section's Executive Board and chapter officers and volunteers are either elected or appointed per bylaws of the Section and

Whereas, these officers and volunteers therefore serve at the behest of the members and

Whereas, recognizing the mission and membership of the Western Section, secrecy has little place in such an organization and

Whereas, secrecy and lack of transparency can lead to deleterious situations and unintended consequences

Be it resolved, that a guiding principle of the Western Section shall be transparency in all its operations and functions, and its Executive Board and chapter officers and volunteers "shall endeavor to avoid even the suspicion of dishonesty, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, or unprofessional demeanor," in accordance The Wildlife Society Code of Ethics.

Further, **be it resolved**, that the Western Section should maintain secrecy only under three circumstances – where personal information of contractors and members is concerned, when negotiating with prospective donors or contractors, and when a donor wishes to remain anonymous. Therefore, all Western Section business information available to the Western Section Executive Board (except the sensitive information described above) shall be available to any member of the Western Section upon request.

I thank Past President Rocky Gutiérrez for drafting this resolution and the Executive Board for discussing and approving the final version at our August 25 board meeting in Cambria.