

Workshop: University-based Programs

Workshop: University-based Waterfowl Programs: Past, Present & Foresights - Presentations, Panel Discussion & Interaction with Audience (Organizers: Rick Kaminski, Bart Ballard, Warren Conway, J. Brian Davis, John Eadie, Jake Straub)

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University students, faculty, and staff have made significant contributions in teaching, research, management, and outreach related to waterfowl and wetlands, and many of these students subsequently have served the waterfowl and other natural resources profession since the 1930s. We define university-based waterfowl programs as those offering courses in waterfowl and wetlands ecology and providing faculty-mentored research and outreach opportunities for graduate and undergraduate students. Despite global ecological and economical values of waterfowl, university-based waterfowl programs in North America have declined since the 1990s for various academic, administrative, and economic reasons. From a 2000 survey, the majority of 76 universities with natural resources curricula across the United States and Canada reported they employed ≥ 1 faculty who specialized in waterfowl ecology and management, but only half said they would seek another person with this expertise if their current faculty member departed the institution. A follow-up survey of the same universities in 2012 revealed that a further decline of about 20% has occurred. We all are affiliated with universities with endowed programs centered around or involving waterfowl, wetlands, and/or wildlife conservation. Our objectives for this special session are to: (1) present brief case-histories describing the teaching, research, and outreach vision, mission, and roles in each of our endowed programs; (2) discuss positive impacts of these roles on waterfowl and wetlands science and conservation and graduation of students into professional positions; (3) highlight accomplishments and frustrations, with suggestions for management or resolution of the latter; and (4) discuss needs for retaining existing and establishing additional university-based waterfowl programs in the future. Additionally, we will attempt to include a “perspectives” commentary by a donor(s) responsible for an endowment or a representative from a NGO which endorses continued need for these endowments to sustain this valuable university niche for waterfowl science and conservation.

Food and Drinks served at 18:30 in Caucus room

Presentations, Panelists, and interactions with the Audience will begin at 19:00.

