Implications of Demographic and Generational Change Among Current and Future Wildlife Professionals for the Future of Wildlife Management Agencies

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Are fisheries & wildlife agencies facing a “perfect storm” of personnel issues?
The Perfect Personnel Storm?

High retirement rate of Baby Boomers
High Retirement Rates

- 43% of all NWRS personnel plan to retire between 2009 & 2020

- 46% of all state agency personnel plan to retire between 2004 & 2015

- 75% of personnel in leadership positions
The Perfect Personnel Storm?

- High retirement rate of Baby Boomers
- Low interest in advancing to leadership positions
Low Interest in Advancement

Are you interested in moving up and are you willing to relocate…

To a district office?
- Yes: 63%
- No: 37%

37% of all employees

To state headquarters?
- Yes: 46%
- No: 54%

27% of all employees
Employee Concerns About Relocating

• Cost of living—higher where regional & headquarters offices are located
  – Difficulty in selling home
• Loss of income by significant other
• Disruption of personal life for family
The Perfect Personnel Storm?

- High retirement rate of Baby Boomers
- Low interest in advancing to leadership positions
- Lack of recent hiring due to poor economy & budgets
Most state & federal agencies dealing with budget cuts

Figure 1:
46 States Have Faced Budget Shortfalls This Year

Note: Includes states with shortfalls in fiscal 2010.
Source: CBPP survey
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities | cbpp.org
The Perfect Personnel Storm?

High retirement rate of Baby Boomers

Low interest in advancing to leadership positions

Lack of recruitment among college students

Lack of recent hiring due to poor economy & budgets
Lower Recruitment Among Students?

VT CNR Enrollment

SDSU F&W Enrollment
Are today’s students different from those of the past?
Few students targeting management agencies as their career of choice

Fisheries Students

- Agency: 33
- Other Employer: 20
- No Idea: 48

Wildlife Students

- Agency: 28
- Other Employer: 34
- No Idea: 38

Virginia Tech Sophomores
VT F & W Sophs participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Avid Participants</th>
<th>Occasional Participants</th>
<th>Non-Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hunting</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird Watching</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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84% of state fish & wildlife agency employees considered themselves to be hunters.
Approval of Hunting

VT Wildlife Sophs 2009-10
- 33% Strongly Approve
- 71% overall approve

- 45% Strongly Approve
- 78% overall approve
Are VT students representative?

- Nationwide survey of students in introductory F & W courses in progress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Northeast</th>
<th>Southeast</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cornell</td>
<td>Virginia Tech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. Maine</td>
<td>NC State U.</td>
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<td>U. Ark. Pine Bluff</td>
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<td>Texas A &amp; M</td>
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<td>Mississippi State U.</td>
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<td>South Dakota State U.</td>
<td>Oregon State U.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southern Illinois U.</td>
<td>Cal State Humboldt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ohio State U.</td>
<td>U. Arizona</td>
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Interested in participating?

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