

# The Wildlife Society

## ARTICLE II. CODE OF ETHICS

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**Section 1. CODE OF ETHICS** --All members of the Society must pledge upon application, renewal, or recertification to uphold and conduct their professional and membership-related activities in accordance with the Code of Ethics as prescribed by the Society and set forth in Sections 2 and 3 below. A person accepting membership in the Society incurs the obligation to conduct his or her professional and membership-related activities in a responsible and ethical manner. The Code of Ethics sets forth the required principles of conduct for Society members.

**Section 2. CODE OF ETHICS: GENERAL PROVISIONS**—Members of the Society have a responsibility for contributing to an understanding of human society's proper relationship with natural resources, and in particular for determining the role of wildlife in satisfying human needs and addressing the management of wildlife-related impacts. All members of the Society shall adhere to the following principles and practices in the conduct of their professional and membership-related activities. All members shall:

1. Subscribe to the highest standards of integrity and conduct and will proactively promote and address ethical behavior.
2. Recognize research and scientific management of wildlife species, their environments, and their stakeholders as primary goals.
3. Encourage and sustain the use of sound biological, physical, and social science information in management decisions.
4. Disseminate information to promote understanding of, and appreciation for, values of wildlife and their habitats.
5. Strive to increase the knowledge and skills needed to advance the practice of wildlife management.
6. Promote competence in the field of wildlife management by supporting high standards of education, employment, and performance.
7. Support fair and uniform standards of employment and treatment of those professionally engaged in the practice of wildlife management.
8. Refrain from speaking for or representing the Society or any of its Chapters, Sections, or Working Groups in any way, or implying such representation, without appointment or approval by the Council of the Society, its officers, or the Executive Boards of Chapters, Sections, or Working groups.

**Section 3. CODE OF ETHICS: STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT** – Members of the Society who are employed or otherwise engage in professional activity shall adhere to all provisions of the Code of Ethics, including the following Standards for Professional Conduct. These standards express the intent, practices, and procedures of the Code of Ethics as they particularly apply to wildlife professionals. Wildlife professionals shall at all times:

1. Uphold the dignity and integrity of the wildlife profession. They shall endeavor to avoid even the

suspicion of dishonesty, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, or unprofessional demeanor.

2. Refrain from plagiarism in verbal or written communications and shall give credit to the works and ideas of others.
3. Refrain from fabrication, falsification, or suppression of results, and shall not deliberately misrepresent research findings, or otherwise commit scientific fraud.
4. Exercise high standards in the care and use of live vertebrate animals used for research, in accordance with accepted professional guidelines for the respective classes of animals under study.
5. Protect the rights and welfare of human subjects used in research and obtain the informed consent of those individuals, in accordance with approved professional guidelines for human subjects.
6. Be mindful of their responsibility to society, and seek to meet the needs of all people when seeking advice in wildlife-related matters. They shall studiously avoid discrimination in any form, or the abuse of professional authority for personal satisfaction.
7. Recognize and inform clients or employers of the wildlife professional's prime responsibility to the public interest, conservation of the wildlife resource, and the environment. They shall exercise professional judgment, and avoid actions or omissions that may compromise these broad responsibilities. They shall cooperate fully with other professionals in the best interest of the wildlife resource.
8. Provide maximum possible effort in the best interest of each client or employer, regardless of the degree of remuneration.
9. Accept employment to perform professional services only in areas of their own competence, and consistent with the Code of Ethics. They shall seek to refer clients or employers to other natural resource professionals when the expertise of such professionals shall best serve the interests of the public, wildlife, and the client or employer.
10. Maintain a confidential relationship between professionals and clients or employers except when specifically authorized by the client or employer or required by due process of law or the Code of Ethics to disclose pertinent information. They shall not use such confidences to their personal advantage or to the advantage of other parties, nor shall they permit personal interests or other client or employer relationships to interfere with their professional judgment.
11. Refrain from advertising in a self-laudatory manner-beyond statements intended to inform prospective clients or employers of one's qualifications-or in a manner detrimental to fellow professionals and the wildlife resource. They shall clearly distinguish among facts, hypotheses, and opinions. They shall provide professional advice and guidance only when qualified to do so by training and experience.
12. Refuse compensation or rewards of any kind intended to influence their professional judgment or advice or to secure preferential treatment. They shall not permit a person who recommends or employs them, directly or indirectly, to regulate or impair their professional judgment. They shall not accept compensation for the same professional services from any source other than the client or employer without prior consent of all the clients or employers involved.
13. Avoid performing professional services for any client or employer when such service is judged to be contrary to the Code of Ethics or detrimental to the well-being of wildlife resources and their environments. If a wildlife professional believes that his or her employment activities conflict with the Code of Ethics, that person shall advise the client or employer of such conflict.
14. Advise against an action by a client or employer which violates any statute or regulation.

**Section 4. ENFORCEMENT** -- Violations of this Code by a member may result in censure, or censure and suspension from membership in the Society. All reported violations will be addressed by the procedures outlined in Clause A and Clause B.

CLAUSE A -- Ethics Board – The President will form an Ethics Board of no less than 5 members of the Society and no more than 7 members of the Society, and appoint one of the members as Chair.

CLAUSE B – Procedure for Addressing Code of Ethics Violations

1. An allegation of misconduct against a member of the Society may be filed by transmitting a written statement to the President.
2. The President shall transmit copies of the allegation and all supportive materials to the Chair of the Ethics Board
3. Upon receipt, the Chair of the Ethics Board shall transmit copies of the allegation and all supporting materials to all Ethics Board members.
4. Within thirty days of receiving all materials, the Ethics Board will determine if the allegation constitutes a violation of the Code of Ethics.
5. If the Ethics Board finds merit in the allegation, the member will be notified within thirty days and sent all pertinent material.
6. The member will have thirty days to file a response to the allegation to the Ethics Board.
7. The Ethics Board will review the member's response, and determine if the Code of Ethics has been violated.
8. The member will be notified within forty-five days of the decision of the Ethics Board, and if the Code of Ethics was deemed violated, the Ethics Board will impose such disciplinary action that includes either censure, or censure and suspension from membership in the Society.
9. The Chair of the Ethics Board will notify the President, in writing, of the Board's decision.
10. The member may appeal the decision of the Ethics Board within thirty days to the Council. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Council will review all pertinent materials regarding the allegation and render a decision via a majority vote at either of its regular meetings.
11. The member will be notified within forty-five days of the decision of the Council.