

WFA Election 2012

Office of President

Linda Sweanor:

I have been WFA's interim president since its inception in 2007. I obtained a dual degree in Wildlife Biology and Zoology from Colorado State University in 1980 and an MS in Wildlife Sciences at the University of Idaho in 1990. My master's thesis was on social organization of pumas in New Mexico. From 1985-2004 I worked for private (Hornocker Wildlife Institute, 1985-2000) and academic (University of California at Davis, 2001-2004) entities, and with the cooperation of state agencies, studying puma population ecology, prey relationships, social organization and human interactions. I have co-authored several scientific papers, written popular articles, and co-authored the book *Desert Puma: evolutionary ecology and conservation of an enduring carnivore* (2001). I recently (2008-2010) assisted with a felid (puma, bobcat, domestic cat) disease transmission study for Colorado State University and have been volunteering on a Colorado Division of Wildlife puma study since 2005, most recently working on a pilot study investigating the feasibility of using scent/rub stations to collect DNA from pumas. My professional goal is to contribute to the sound management and conservation of wildlife, particularly carnivores, by assisting in well-designed field research efforts and through the dissemination of scientific information.

Position Statement: As a founding member of WFA I feel strongly about the need for a science-based association to foster communication and collaboration among the individuals and organizations involved with wild cats and their conservation. WFA has made an incredible start in the past 4 years and I am proud of that. But there is still a lot to be done. To make this a viable organization in the long-term, we need to make structural adjustments, including developing clear duties and responsibilities for Council, and encouraging the development and growth of WFA committees. I want the opportunity to be WFA's first elected president so I can help hone this organization and provide a solid foundation on which WFA can build.



Linda with puma cub, Laurel with bobcat.

Office of Vice-President

Laurel Klein:

I am a Ph.D. Candidate at the University of California, Los Angeles and expect to complete my program fall 2012. My research focuses on the impacts of urban development on disease susceptibility in bobcats in the urban, fragmented landscape around Los Angeles. I have had a life-long ambition to study and work towards the conservation of wild felids. I began work with two species of wild felids in 2006 as an intern with the National Park Service in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. The position involved trapping mountain lions and bobcats and radio-telemetry of captured individuals. I have continued to work in the same study area for my dissertation research, expanding my research skill set with a project that has involved extensive field and lab work. I trapped bobcats for more than 2 years for my dissertation project, and now am completing laboratory efforts that include genetic analyses, immunological assays, and pesticide and disease exposure surveys. I have also increasingly become involved with community outreach and public education and to advance these efforts, have created and maintained a website (UrbanCarnivores.com) that informs the general public of local carnivore research and threats to their populations. My research necessitates the collaboration between governmental agencies and multiple university research groups. As a researcher and collaborator, I understand the need for open communication between groups working on similar research topics and species. I am energetic in my dedication to wild felid research and understand that collaborations between biologists, government agencies, and educators are paramount to wild felid conservation efforts.

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Office of Vice-President Latin America

Anthony Giordano:

Anthony formally began his professional career in conservation after receiving an Honors B.Sc. in both Biology (Zoology) and in Environmental Science (Biology) from Long Island University at Southampton College. He also has a M.Sc. in Conservation Biology and Applied Ecology from Frostburg State University. Over the past 15 years Anthony has worked on carnivore conservation issues all over the world, most of which have involved felids. He is a Ph.D. student and Fulbright recipient (2011) at Texas Tech University, and is studying the ecology and population genetics of jaguars in the Paraguayan Chaco. Anthony also directs an emerging nonprofit institution dedicated to international carnivore conservation through which he is involved in the management of no less than eight different felid conservation projects in Latin America, Asia, and Africa. These and other projects he helps direct are rooted in a holistic approach to regional wildlife conservation, from project design and research, through capacity-building and community awareness, to conservation strategy development and effecting change in government legislation and enforcement policy. Anthony has been an regional representative of the WFA since its inception, is a former Wild Felid Legacy Scholarship recipient (2010), and makes regular contributions to the Wild Felid Monitor.

Position Statement: I am just excited at the very concept of an organization like the WFA and that I have had the opportunity to be part of its community. As a Vice President, I believe I can accurately and actively represent the perspective and context of international felid conservation issues. This includes capacity-building, species and country-based research needs assessments, and immediate priorities for in-situ conservation. I am particularly excited about the opportunity to include more international researchers and thus greater regional representation in the WFA, and will make expansion and furthering the WFA's goals a mission of mine if elected. I also have and will continue to make training and capacity-building a high priority, and believe few things are more important than self-reliance and empowerment among regional biologists to protect their own natural heritage, particularly wild felids. On a more personal note, I am perhaps most looking forward to the opportunity to exchange knowledge with my fellow WFA members, as well as the potential to apply and teach what I can learn from them to others.

Office of Secretary

Susan Prange:

I received my B.S. and M.S. in Biology from the University of South Alabama and my Ph.D. in Wildlife Biology from the University of Missouri. I completed post-doctoral training at Ohio State University and am currently employed by the Ohio Division of Wildlife. I serve as the state's furbearer biologist, but the majority of my research is dedicated to threatened and endangered forest wildlife species. Over the past 5 years I have worked extensively with the state endangered bobcat, with my research focused on the distribution, abundance, genetic stability, and habitat associations of our recovering bobcat populations. Although I have worked with a number of carnivore species in the past, my current and growing involvement with felids fulfills a lifelong desire to work toward the conservation of these amazing animals. I have served on several executive boards and committees within The Wildlife Society and the American Society of Mammalogists.

Position Statement: I hope to similarly serve the Wild Felid Association, and will strive to carry on the work of the current and previous leadership in an effort to ensure the effective conservation of felids worldwide.



Anthony & Suzie

Office of General Council

Aimee Rockhill:

Aimee graduated from SUNY Plattsburgh with an undergraduate degree in Environmental Science in 1998. She worked on the Tobacco Genome Initiative Project for 3½ years before returning to graduate school at North Carolina State University. She received her M.S. in Forestry and is currently completing her Ph.D. in Fisheries, Wildlife and Conservation Biology, both at North Carolina State University. Aimee became interested in wild felid conservation during her PhD when she studied bobcat management and behavioral ecology. Her current research focuses on the efficacy of non-invasive survey techniques used for estimating relative abundance and occupancy, understanding behavioral changes in movement and habitat use, and assessing anesthesia protocols necessary for efficient capture and release of bobcats. Aimee believes outreach and extension are important components of education and has participated by giving annual guest lectures and presentations to elementary, high school, and undergraduate students; often focusing on carnivore conservation and management. Also, she has presented her research results at numerous professional meetings and conferences. Aimee is currently the Mammalogy Instructor at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) and has taught Mammalogy and Mammalogy Labs at North Carolina State University for 2 years.

Position Statement: I believe strongly in the Wild Felid Research and Management Association's mission of promoting sound management, conservation, and restoration of wild felids, and believe I can help the Association achieve this goal by serving as council member.