

CSTWS Membership Survey – October 2019

Summary of Results

Board of Directors: Sonja Leverkus (President), Rick Baydack (Past-President), Dennis Brannen (Vice President), Ali Hughes-Juneau (Secretary), Art Rodgers (Treasurer), Don Sexton (Board Member at Large), Evie Merrill (Board Member at Large & Canadian Section Representative to TWS Council)

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Background

The CSTWS Board of Directors felt it was appropriate timing to conduct a membership survey based on a number of factors such as:

- The CSTWS is a newly Incorporated Not-for-Profit organization. The Bylaws for the new Incorporated CSTWS were approved on July 11, 2019. The CSTWS Membership Survey provides valuable information for the future growth of the newly Incorporated CSTWS.
- The CSTWS received a substantial endowment and the CSTWS Board of Directors aims to determine the most fiscally responsible way to save/grow/utilize these funds.
- The CSTWS held a Strategic Planning Workshop in March, 2018. A 'living' 5-year Strategic Plan was derived based on the workshop outcomes. The CSTWS Board of Directors aims to assess consistency of the CSTWS Strategic Plan with collective membership opinion. The CSTWS Strategic Plan highlights three primary areas of focus under the following headings:
 - Communication (internal and external)
 - Education (training, workshops, collaborative partnerships)
 - Membership (recruitment, retention, value proposition)
- March, 2018 marked the start date of our first paid position in CSTWS history, an Executive Coordinator position, hired to assist with activities aimed at growing the CSTWS. The membership survey offers the CSTWS Board of Directors with an opportunity to consider membership action priorities to allow the Board to strategically allocated task function for the Executive Coordinator
- The last CSTWS Membership survey was conducted 5 years ago, in 2014. Conducting a CSTWS Membership survey this year offers an opportunity to assess similarities and differences in CSTWS Membership perspectives and interests 5 years after the last survey was conducted.

Survey Approach

The 2019 CSTWS Membership Survey was developed with the assistance of the 2019-2020 Board of Directors with contributions from the Committee Chairs and questions adopted and modified from the 2014 CSTWS Membership Survey. The survey was distributed via Survey Monkey <https://www.surveymonkey.com/welcome/> during October 2019. The survey was

distributed to 286 individuals based on the CSTWS active Membership listing for October 1, 2019. Two weeks following the initial distribution, a reminder email with the survey was sent again to all 286 individuals. There was no prize offered to CSTWS members for filling out the survey. The survey consistent of 21 questions with the host, Survey Monkey, indicating the average time to complete the survey to be 9 minutes.

Overview of Survey Results

The following bullets offer a high-level overview of the 2019 CSTWS Membership Survey:

- A total of 286 CSTWS memberships were sent the survey with 99 members responding for a survey response rate of 35%
- 97% of respondents were members of parent TWS with 100% of respondents current CSTWS members
- Top three reasons for being CSTWS members were: information exchange, networking, and the link to parent TWS
- 82% of respondents were also members of a provincial/student chapter, with the highest proportion of participation relative to provincial/student chapter membership size, coming from the BC Chapter
- 6% of respondents were students
- The two lowest levels of satisfaction across CSTWS activities were award opportunities (79.8%) and fiscal responsibility (77.78% total satisfaction) – both high levels of satisfaction but the lowest of the listing overall
- 1-3 emails a month ranked most satisfactory for level of communication
- Questions 9 and 10 should have been worded for respondents to list their top 3 or top 5 selections to allow for more effective information to be gathered
- 60% of respondents worked as a wildlife biologist
- 88% of respondents had heard of TWS Professional Certifications, although only 32% were TWS Certified (14 CWB, 3 AWB)
- 75% of respondents have never applied to be TWS Certified, although 67% of respondents felt certification was valuable - of those that did apply, 20% were successful and 8% unsuccessful in their application, with the number one reason for the last of success being the lack of required coursework
- 38.5% of respondents were supportive of CSTWS dues increase to \$25 for professionals and \$10 for students
- Several additional ways were identified as favorable by respondents as a means of increasing income – most favored approached include: silent auctions/raffles at AGM, professional training workshops, solicit sponsorships, increasing due, unified dues (one membership across all chapters/student chapters/Section)

Comparisons between 2014 & 2019 Survey Results

The following bullets offer a general comparison of CSTWS membership responses between the 2014 and the 2019 CSTWS Membership Surveys:

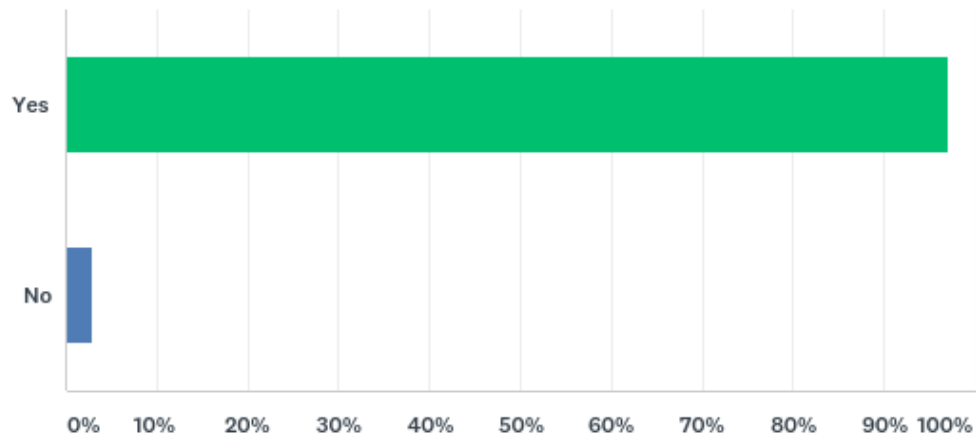
- The 2014 CSTWS Membership Survey had between 26-32% response rate (high/low across questions); the 2019 CSTWS Membership Survey had between 31-35% response rate (high/low across questions)
- Top three reasons for being CSTWS members in 2019 were: information exchange, networking, and the link to parent TWS in comparison to 2014 which were: information exchange, networking, and advocate for wildlife
- Respondents in 2019 had participating in a wider variety of CSTWS events/activities and at greater numbers than respondents indicated they had in 2014
- The two lowest levels of satisfaction across CSTWS activities were award opportunities and fiscal responsibility where as in 2014, respondents listed the CSTWS Reception at TWS and mentoring students as lowest
- Consistent between both surveys, respondents indicated 1-3 emails per months as the most acceptable level of email communication
- 2014 Respondents indicated they would seek certification if their employers were supportive and that CSTWS working with other certification organizations in Canada was a favorable approach
- In 2014, 53 of the 111 Respondents indicated they would support a large membership dues increase of up to \$50/CSTWS membership for professionals and \$10 for students in comparison to the 2019 survey where respondents indicated highest preference for a \$25/CSTWS membership increase for professionals and \$10 for students
- In 2014, the most favorable ways to bring in additional revenue were identified as silent auctions/raffles at AGM, solicit sponsorships, and professional training workshops

CSTWS Membership Survey Responses

October 2019

Question 1

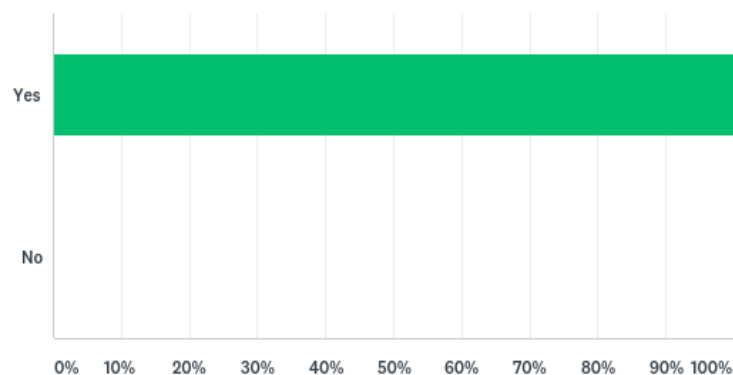
Q1 Are you a member of parent TWS?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	96.97%	96
▼ No	3.03%	3
TOTAL		99

Question 2

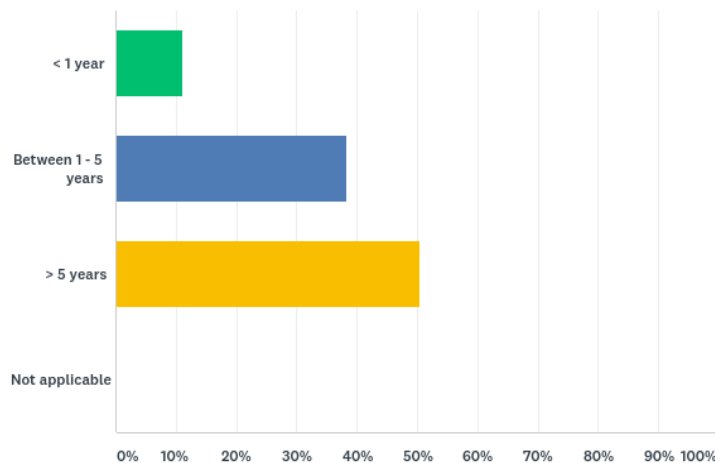
Q2 Are you a member of the Canadian Section of The Wildlife Society (CSTWS)?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	100.00%	99
▼ No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		99

Question 3

Q3 If yes to Question 2, how long have you been member of the Canadian Section of The Wildlife Society? (if you answered no to Question 2, please move on to Question 5)



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ < 1 year	11.11%	11
▼ Between 1 - 5 years	38.38%	38
▼ > 5 years	50.51%	50
▼ Not applicable	0.00%	0
TOTAL		99

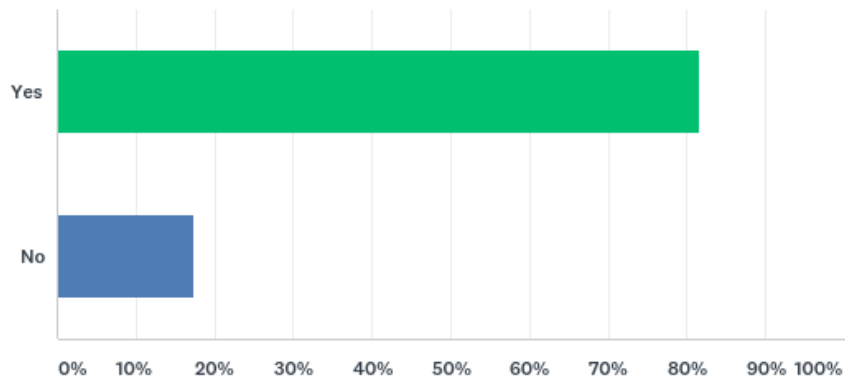
Question 4

If you are a member of the Canadian Section of The Wildlife Society, please name the top three reasons why you are a member.

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Link to The Wildlife Society	Responses	52.53%	52
Networking	Responses	59.60%	59
Advocating for Wildlife and Environmental Policy	Responses	43.43%	43
Information exchange	Responses	60.61%	60
Training and Educational Opportunities	Responses	40.40%	40
Awards	Responses	7.07%	7
Job Information	Responses	1.01%	1
Mentoring	Responses	8.08%	8
Supporting Students	Responses	20.20%	20
Not applicable	Responses	3.03%	3

Question 5

Q5 Are you a member of a provincial or student chapter of TWS?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	81.63%	80
▼ No	17.35%	17
TOTAL		98

Question 5	
Chapter	Number of Responses
MB	25
SK	6
ONT	10
BC	20

AB	23
UNBC	2
UofW	1
NFL	3

Question 6

Please indicate below all of the activities/services of the Canadian Section of The Wildlife Society you have participated in over the last three year:

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Read a newsletter	Responses	98.98%	97
Attended a CSTWS Educational Webinar	Responses	90.82%	89
Visited the CSTWS website	Responses	86.73%	85
Followed-up on a CSTWS Policy Clip	Responses	83.67%	82
Attended a CSTWS Annual Conference	Responses	85.71%	84
Attended a CSTWS Annual General Meeting	Responses	79.59%	78
Received a CSTWS Award	Responses	77.55%	76
Served on a CSTWS Board or Committee	Responses	81.63%	80
Presented a paper or posted at a CSTWS Event	Responses	79.59%	78
Nominated a professional for a CSTWS/TWS Award	Responses	80.61%	79
Attended a student quizbowl	Responses	77.55%	76
Asked the CSTWS to consider an important conservation issue for action	Responses	79.59%	78
Other?	Responses	25.51%	25

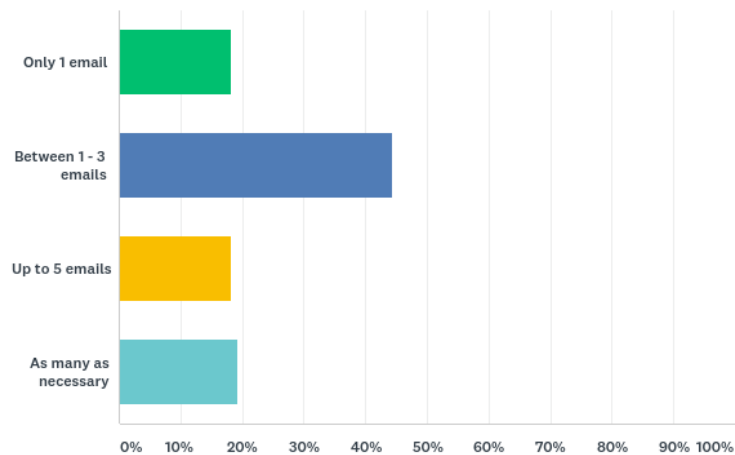
Question 7

Please rank us on how well we are meeting (doing fine) or exceeding your expectations in the following areas:

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
a. Communications	Responses	98.99%	98
b. Webinars	Responses	89.90%	89
c. Conference and networking opportunities	Responses	91.92%	91
d. Engaging CSTWS members in activities	Responses	88.89%	88
e. Informative website	Responses	85.86%	85
f. News delivery	Responses	89.90%	89
g. Supporting student activities	Responses	81.82%	81
h. Advocating for wildlife	Responses	90.91%	90
i. Mentoring students	Responses	80.81%	80
j. Fiscally responsible	Responses	77.78%	77
k. Award opportunities	Responses	79.80%	79

Question 8

Q8 What is the number of emails you are willing to receive per month regarding business of the Canadian Section of The Wildlife Society?



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
▼ Only 1 email		18.18%	18
▼ Between 1 - 3 emails		44.44%	44
▼ Up to 5 emails		18.18%	18
▼ As many as necessary		19.19%	19
TOTAL			99

Question 9

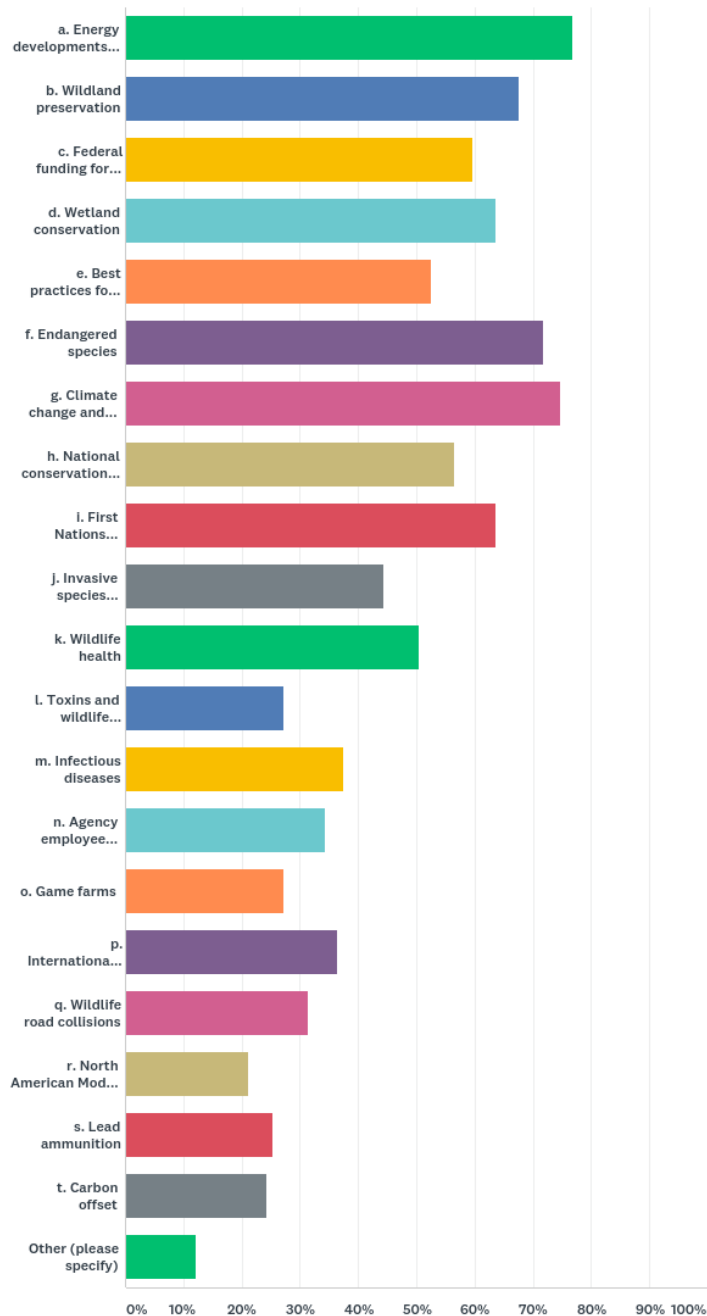
Please indicate what level of priority you think the Canadian Section of The Wildlife Society should place on the following items in the next 5 years:

ANSWER CHOICES ▼		RESPONSES ▼
a. Involvement in national policy making through active engagement in conservation affairs directly	Responses	100.00% 99
b. Membership Recruitment and engagement in the Section	Responses	96.97% 96
c. Establish ties with other Conservation organizations for policy	Responses	96.97% 96
d. Educational/training opportunities/programming for members	Responses	98.99% 98
e. Promote Wildlife Certification program in Canada	Responses	98.99% 98
f. Fundraising Initiatives	Responses	94.95% 94
g. Facilitate additional Chapters and Student Chapter formation	Responses	95.96% 95
h. Actively solicit involvement by First Nations in the Canadian Section	Responses	96.97% 96
i. Establish student scholarship(s)	Responses	93.94% 93
j. Develop strategic partnerships with like-minded organizations	Responses	94.95% 94
k. Unified membership across all Canadian provincial/student chapters and the section (cost share among levels but all one membership)	Responses	94.95% 94
Other?	Responses	8.08% 8

Question_9	
Other:	Human Dimensions and Communication to the Public
	Endangered habitats & FS6 gas. - >22,000 X more harmful than CO2
	promotion of professionalism through TWS /certification
	they are all important but need to avoid too many initiatives.
	Technical wildlife issues writ large
	Not "national conservation planning", but rather provincial/territorial and regional -- or how the different jurisdictions do, and should, work together better. And not just "First Nations" engagement -- FNs are one of three broad groups of Indigenous Peoples in Canada, including Metis and Inuit. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indigenous_peoples_in_Canada
	Impacts of human population growth on wildlife
	Sustainable use
	Should be forced to pick 5 or so - otherwise all
	Public education
	science communication to non-scientists and citizen science engagements

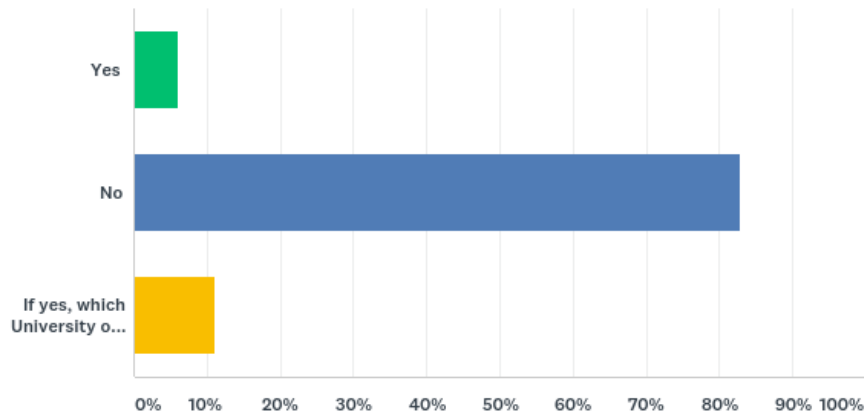
Question 10

Q10 Indicate which of the following topics are the priority issues that you think the Canadian Section should be paying close attention. (Please check all the boxes that you feel are priority issues)



Question 11

Q11 Are you currently a COLLEGE or UNIVERSITY student?

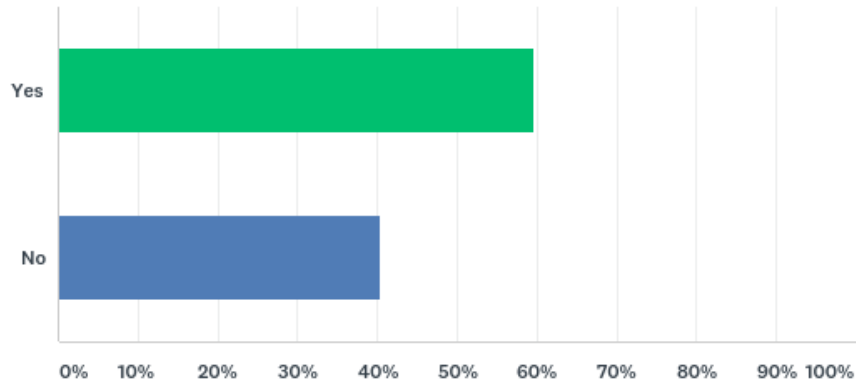


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Yes	6.06% 6
▼ No	82.83% 82
▼ If yes, which University or college do you currently attend? Responses	11.11% 11

Question 11	
University	Number of Respondents
Charles Sturt	1
U of M	3
U of A	1
UNBC	2
U of Waterloo	1
U of Regina	1
UNB	2

Question 12

Q12 Are you currently working as a wildlife biologist?



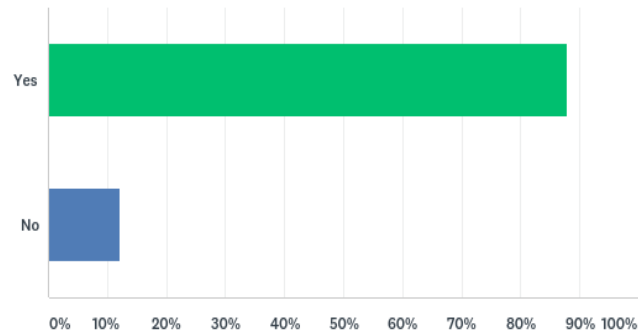
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	59.60%	59
▼ No	40.40%	40
TOTAL		99

Question 12		
Job Title	Location	Number of Respondents
Wildlife Bio/Ecologist	Arkansas	1
	MB	9
	BC	9
	AB	7
	ONT	8
	SASK	2
	NS	1
Professor/Academic Research	Quebec	1
	AB	3
	MB	2
	NS	1
	BC	2
	NB	1
Consultant/Self-Employed	AB	1
	MB	3
CFS	ONT	1
Land Mgmt	SASK	1
Conservation Zoologist	Yukon	1

Curator	AB	1
Regulatory	not identified	1

Question 13

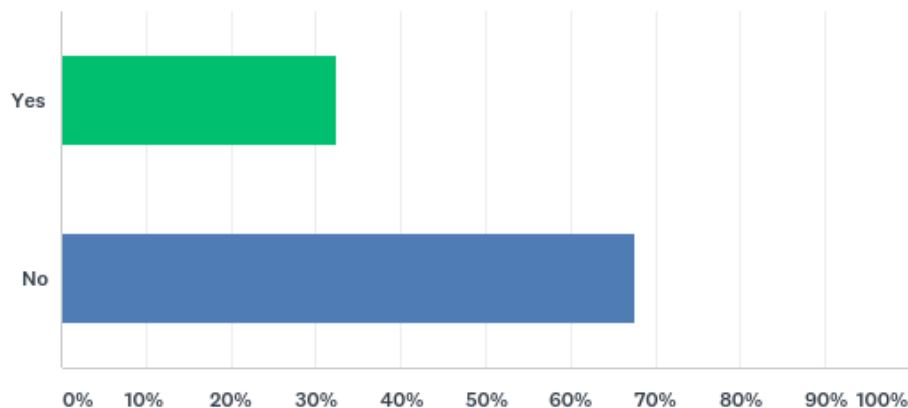
Q13 Have you heard of TWS Certification program and the professional designation of AWB® or CWB®?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	87.88%	87
▼ No	12.12%	12
TOTAL		99

Question 14

Q14 Are you currently a certified professional biologist?

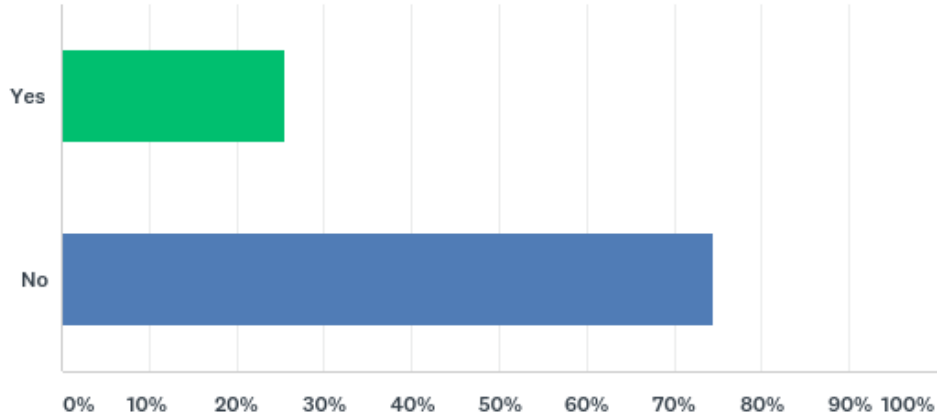


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	32.32%	32
▼ No	67.68%	67
TOTAL		99

Question_14	
Certification Type	Number of Respondents
AWB	3
P. Bio (AB &BC)	11
CWB	14
R. P. Bio (AB & BC)	6
BC CAB	1
RPF	1

Question 15

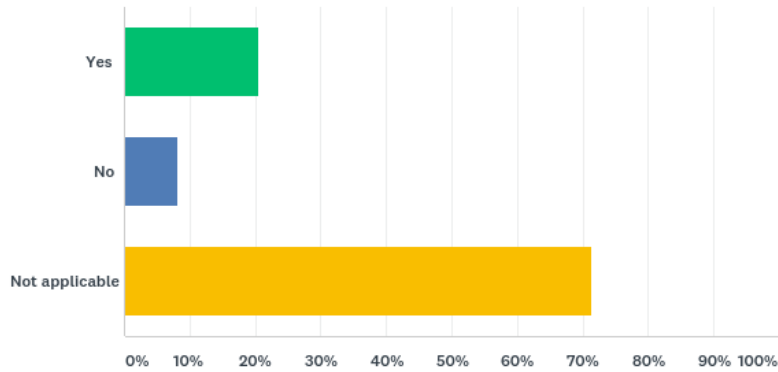
Q15 Have you ever applied to be a AWB® or CWB®?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	25.51%	25
▼ No	74.49%	73
TOTAL		98

Question 16

Q16 If you have applied to be an AWB® or CWB®, were you successful in your bid to become an AWB® or CWB®?

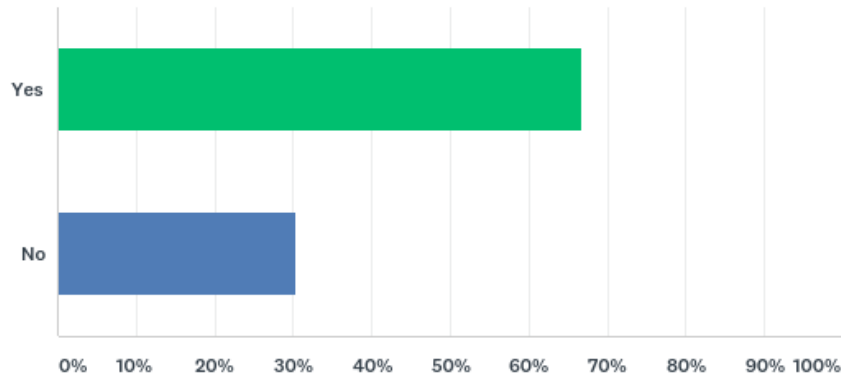


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	20.41%	20
▼ No	8.16%	8
▼ Not applicable	71.43%	70
TOTAL		98

Question 16	
Reasoning	Number of Respondents
Waiting on Decision	1
Did not have all course requirements	3
Could not get CWB references	1

Question 17

Q17 Do you think professional certification is worth perusing?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	66.67% 66
No	30.30% 30
TOTAL	99

Question 17	
Respondent Comments	State and Federal jobs in the US do not really put any weight on them, but they could carry weight if TWS members in hiring roles focused on those certs for hiring decisions.
	Provides you with a title 'a status' that you have earned and are worthy of.
	Lifelong learning and ongoing certification is key to the growth and development as an individual but also how this relates and applies to working in the industry
	Goes with you, anywhere.
	Retired..., still learning and being asked by 4 profs to write up my knowledge.
	not at this point as job positions are very competitive, thus screen those less competent
	Too limited in scope. I practice as more than only wildlife bio.
	Too costly; there are enough existing professional biologist certification programs in place
	I think the certifications are important to differentiate between a person who has taken courses and one who has worked in the field.
	It is most useful when it is recognized by governments as meeting the professional requirements for the province.

Demonstrates indiv has met academic, profession criteria to practice; creates professional accountability
Importance of having consistency in standards and expectations of professionals
Not sure - I don't know enough about it. Students seem to find it worthwhile. Does the certification program allow for diversity of opinions on certain wildlife topics (e.g., hunting, wolf culls)?
Credibility and consistency and ethical oversight
Without any real enforcement of the rules, it just makes another hoop for new bios to jump through.
I have other professional certifications
it could be a national standard for wildlife biologists that currently doesn't exist at the moment
Defend broad criticism in lack of professional standards
Open up job opportunities in USA
Professional certification = accountability. To many agencies operating without trained wildlife biologists in wildlife biologist positions.
standardized skills, sets expectations.
Demonstrates competency and accountability
It will become a requirement in Canadian provinces in the coming years.
it is very important for wildlife biologists to be proud of their professional. Becoming a CWB is a step in the right direction.
Elevates standards & image of professionalism
Not necessary, expensive, time-consuming, low bar to meet, not useful distinction
Accredited Biologists carry more weight in court proceedings and in environmental/wildlife impact statements
Yes, but it seems very focused (too much) on academic achievements
No requirement for it to conduct work. No guarantee that a certified individual is truly capable.
Somewhat. There are provincially accepted certification.
I soon be legislated to be a member of the BC College of Applied Biology. CWB does not meet this standard
I've seen no evidence certification benefits the public, the field, or practice
Provides evidence of education, public trust
little recognition / benefit in Canada
I think work experience is more valued than certification

	Unsure. The programs for following up on professional wrongdoing don't work very well with BC's College of Applied Biology or the Association of Professional Biologists. Do we need another certification program or should we be working to fix the existing one? Is this going to serve all (or many) CSTWS members, or really just those working in industry/consulting? At the end of the day, how does it help wildlife?
	We already have RP Bio (BC) and P. Biol. (AB). What's the advantage of adding another?
	No clear returns for the effort, for me
	Yes, but many employers do not require it for employment.
	Brings credibility to the Wildlife profession through an established high standard of certification requirements
	credibility
	Life and career are hectic enough without added stress
	only if it is a legal requirement
	It solidifies both an individual's personal skills and abilities and establishes a professional reputation for Wildlife Biologists
	Mismatch with provincial (BC) standards
	Education and experience count more
	standard of practice and professional accountability
	Provides credibility to your work
	sets an industry standard
	Credibility and further linkages to TWS
	Many government biologists think that professional certification if they are certified by the Wildlife Society
	Important to pursue not just peruse professional certification. Demonstrates commitment to professional approach to a career and encourages professional development.
	It's a toss-up. Certification is not required for employment in conservation in Canada, and the certification process can be challenging.
	Provides credibility to the public.
	I think it's a money grab and completely unnecessary. Education, publication record, work history and experience are much more important. I would only ever consider a provincial professional designation because those are sometimes a requirement of employment. TWS certification is not recognized and I can see no benefit to it.
	Essential to show professional credibility
	Standard knowledge requirements and CPD
	For those involved in shaping public policy
	Maintains a specific standard or qualification
	Promotes a interdisciplinary approach to wildlife management and provides credibility

	I would like to, but the only mentors available in the area are a 4 plus hour drive from me. The biggest holdup is finding a CWB to act as a reference
	Not convinced of effective value for effort
	Peer and external recognition of professionalism
	standardization and ensuring qualifications , trust for public, ensuring professionals stay current
	To be a professional means that one can be sued for malpractice
	it may be a good idea but it is not relevant in most jurisdictions or fields
	Would not be qualify
	Meaningless designation when provincial requirements (professional designations) do not recognize
	Not currently required for my practice

Question 18

Please rank in order, actions that you feel would be most valuable to encourage/assist wildlife biologists in becoming professionally certified.

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
a. University course programming/planning	Responses	91.67%	88
b. Government mandated requirement	Responses	92.71%	89
c. Training workshops/field experiences	Responses	91.67%	88
d. Higher salary allocation for certified professionals	Responses	92.71%	89
Other?	Responses	16.67%	16

Question 18	
Additional Suggestions	Canada-wide "biologist" designation, not just wildlife.
	Getting students involved with TWS early in their schooling and showing them the value of certification.
	Mentoring by certified bios.
	Promote awareness
	Government requirements would facilitate University response of course offerings.
	Getting involved in mentoring students and young working biologists
	describe the benefits of certification
	Still not convinced what the point is, at the end of the day how are things better for wildlife if we're all certified?
	Higher acknowledgement/recognition from public

Question 19

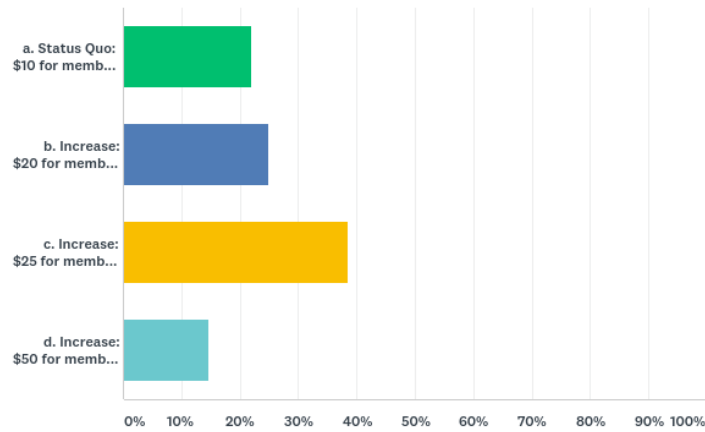
Please indicate, by the level of effectiveness, the role that you believe may be most effective for the Canadian Section to play in developing and promoting The Wildlife Society's Certification Program as a national program for wildlife biologists in Canada.

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
a. Work with other biologists organizations for Certification in Canada	Responses	92.55%	87
b. Promote TWS Certification as a national standard	Responses	92.55%	87
c. Work with Canadian academic programs to help meet TWS Certification	Responses	91.49%	86
d. Support but do not actively promote TWS Certification	Responses	85.11%	80
e. TWS Certification is an individual choice that does not involve the Canadian Section	Responses	81.91%	77
Other?	Responses	18.09%	17

Question_19	
	Canada-wide biologist designation
	Promote general awareness of the certification, and opportunities
	As an R. P. Bio, I am not clear on the value of pursuing a second accreditation. You must clearly develop and communicate the advantage and importance of acquiring the TWS certification (as organizations in BC require only the R. P. Bio, and nothing else).
	By (A) are you suggesting certification as a Prof Biologist (not as Wildlife Society certification)? I don't know enough about the wildlife certification to have a solid opinion on whether it is worthwhile, and therefore to be encouraged or required
	Establishment of a committee made of other biological certification organizations. Chaired by a CWB.
	Do not waste your time. Once BC grants right to practice for applied biologists the other provinces (and jurisdictions internationally such as UK) will be implementing their own based on the BC model. Wildlife biologists are covered by the BC College of Applied Biology.
	I don't really understand the question, haven't bought into it. This seems a bit leading.
	I'd rather see TWS components incorporated into existing provincial programs (RP Bio/P. Bio.)
	Lobby Canadian Wildlife Directors to obtain/gauge support in each Canadian jurisdiction
	The responses in this section don't appear to correlate with the question

Question 20

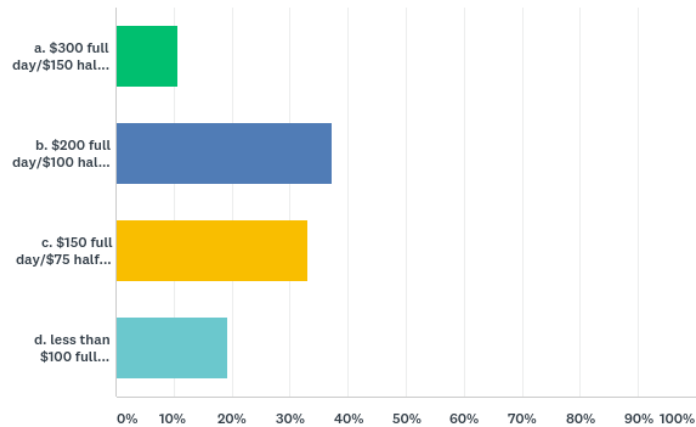
Q20 Indicate the HIGHEST LEVEL of dues you would be willing to pay to support the CSTWS for member benefits.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ a. Status Quo: \$10 for members and student members	21.88%	21
▼ b. Increase: \$20 for members and student members	25.00%	24
▼ c. Increase: \$25 for members and \$10 for student members	38.54%	37
▼ d. Increase: \$50 for members and \$10 for student members	14.58%	14
TOTAL		96

Question 21

Q21 Please indicate how much would you be willing to pay for full/half-day professional training workshop (including room, coffee breaks, instructor, class materials).



ANSWER CHOICES ▼	RESPONSES ▼	
▼ a. \$300 full day/\$150 half day	10.64%	10
▼ b. \$200 full day/\$100 half day	37.23%	35
▼ c. \$150 full day/\$75 half day	32.98%	31
▼ d. less than \$100 full day/\$50 half day	19.15%	18
TOTAL		94

Note: Comment provided: Where is an unsupported retirement fee?

Question 22

If additional revenues are needed to support new member services (student scholarships, new travel grants, etc.) how likely would you support the noted fundraising options?

ANSWER CHOICES ▼	RESPONSES ▼	
a. Hold auctions during the annual meeting	Responses	98.96% 95
b. Professional training workshops	Responses	98.96% 95
c. Solicit sponsorship with nothing in return	Responses	96.88% 93
d. Increase of Section dues	Responses	95.83% 92
e. Life time membership	Responses	94.79% 91
f. Unified membership among section/chapter/student chapter (Cost share among levels but all one membership)	Responses	95.83% 92
g. Solicit sponsorship for website/newsletters ads	Responses	94.79% 91
h. Conduct annual raffles during the year	Responses	96.88% 93
i. Annual fund raising drive among members outside AGM	Responses	94.79% 91
Other?	Responses	1.04% 1