

# **THE MONTANA CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY**

## **60th Annual Conference**

### ***“Fostering Diversity in Species, People and Perspectives”***

**February 22 - 24, 2022**

### **MTTWS Goes Virtual (Again)**

*Greetings and welcome to the 60th Annual MTTWS Conference! Thank you for being part of our annual meeting! Although we really had hoped to be together again this year, we’ve put together yet another virtual conference. Thankfully, we’ve learned some things over the past year and hope you will find great value in the insights and connections you make this week (and beyond). I have greatly enjoyed serving as President-elect this year – developing the ideas for the theme and plenary session, making new connections, working with the Executive Board, and learning so much about this chapter and the incredibly dedicated wildlife professionals in Montana. I hope we’ll all be able to connect in-person again soon. Fostering diversity in species, people, and perspectives. As a profession, we’ve long recognized the value of diversity in the species and ecosystems where we work. Many organizations, including The Wildlife Society, are having important, but often challenging, conversations about the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) with regards to people. Several studies have supported the idea that diverse perspectives lead to increased productivity and innovation, enhanced problem-solving, as well as outcomes that are more relevant to society. In many cases, these conversations have led to developing policies and initiatives that reduce barriers to participation, support recruitment and retention, and better ensure that diverse voices are heard. This year’s conference theme engages us in these conversation and focuses on one of the MT TWS chapter’s goals: developing a diversity of perspectives, backgrounds, and individuals unified behind our core mission. The plenary session features panelists from diverse backgrounds, with diverse personal and professional experiences. They will share their diverse perspectives and challenges they (or others) have faced, but also propose suggestions for reducing barriers to participation and potential ways we can all help foster diversity in our profession. I’m excited about what can emerge from these conversations.*

**President-Elect: Andrea Litt (Montana State University)**