The 2020 IWC conference in SC is shaping up to be one, if not the most successful one to date. Captain Ellis, current IWC President, has been working diligently on our upcoming conference for the last two years. He is setting up a fundraising softball game between the Clemson University Softball Team and Game Wardens. A portion of the fundraiser proceeds will go to the Outdoor Dream Foundation. Outdoor Dream Foundation grants outdoor adventures to youth who have been diagnosed with terminal or life-threatening illnesses. In addition to extremely important guest speakers, this year’s conference will mark great strides IWC has made through efforts of our members with both our informative conferences and successful fundraisers. Our own efforts for growth in addition to support from our North American partners will change the face of IWC now and into the future.

A lot has been happening with IWC in 2019 with momentum at its highest peak. It started with a great meeting at the 2019 conference in Lake Tahoe. IWC received a $10,000 donation to start building our new matching grant program fund as well as support from other major NGO’s. New! IWC has created its first cash reward program for callers that report major egregious violations to a state or provincial IWC member organization and could receive up to $500 upon conviction. This is just another way for IWC to be able to provide a much needed benefit to its members that either have no reward program or may need a little more help with additional reward funding to solve major cases. As the reward fund grows, so will the additional amount to be offered.

We have gained new strategic partners for wildlife conservation with RMEF, NWTF, NWF and possibly DU and Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA). These organizations are like-minded major conservation groups that support a comprehensive law enforcement approach to protecting wildlife from poaching. Annual support from these major NGO’s is vital to our growth and sustainability. I will continue working with each of them throughout the year in order to grow their commitment to IWC and our mission.

As you know, our conferences are designed to provide a strong informational network across the country with IWC state and provincial members on poaching trends and new state-of-the-art enforcement equipment available for investigation and apprehension of poachers and their activities. We are now doing much more than that for our members.

Our annual conferences now host an annual fundraiser to coincide with our annual meeting. This added self-supportive program has proven a win-win for both the host member state and IWC. It benefits the organization by continuing its support for state and provincial members with their enforcement needs. Self-
reliance with our fundraisers goes a long way when talking to prospective donors and supporters. It simply adds validity to what we do and who we are.

This year much needed organizational funding was raised from a fundraising softball game, now an annual event, between the Maine Warden Service and New Hampshire Fish and Game. It was covered by several local TV stations and other media outlets. This event was to benefit the Make-A-Wish Foundation and each participating state wildlife crimestopper program along with IWC. This event was not part of a conference but rather an additional extra effort by Maine OGT and the Warden Service to continue their support of IWC.

NWTF, as an active strategic partner, donated $3000 to begin the creation of a stronger relationship with IWC. In addition, the federation has offered to host our first sporting clays fundraiser at their national shooting complex in Edgefield, South Carolina on March 6, 2020. This is a public fundraising event so please get the word out to all folks who may be interested in getting a 4-man/woman team together, sponsoring a team, and/or other aspect of the event as advertised on our website at www.wildlifecrimestoppers.org. Join us for fun, good food and shooting prizes along with supporting wildlife law enforcement and conservation for the benefit of all outdoor enthusiasts. I hope each of you will try to get at least one team sponsored to attend the event and represent your state or provincial wildlife crimestopper program.

GRANTS

The ability to offer grants to our state and provincial members is based upon our growth from our fundraising, support from major NGO’s, and memberships much like every other non-profit. We are diligently working hard to raise awareness of IWC, our mission, and our international relevance in wildlife conservation law enforcement. With this enhanced awareness, along with our youth educational outreach program in the public-school system, our goal is for IWC to stick in the minds of nature conscious and outdoor enthusiasts as the only organization created and managed by game wardens and conservation officers for the benefit of all stakeholders.

In 2020 IWC will be accepting grant applications for the following:

* Up to $2000 for Wall of Shame trailer upgrades
* Up to $2000 for Wildlife Decoys

The deadline for submitting a grant application is January 27, 2020. Please see our website www.wildlifecrimestoppers.org for an application and information.
IWC applied for a $40,000 grant from Bass Pro/Cabela’s Outdoor Fund for the purchase of four additional trailers for our members. However, we were only granted $10,000. Information on applying for this grant is also on our website.

NWTF CONVENTION

- IWC will be represented in February, 2020 at the annual NWTF National Convention in Nashville, Tennessee. President Ellis and I will be presenting an IWC program to the law enforcement section during the convention, Executive Assistant Candice Henderson will be disseminating information and brochures to the general public as well as convention vendors about IWC. She will also be working on signing up new IWC members, distributing challenge coins to major contributors, and discussing various levels of support for conservation.

- Just FYI, President Ellis redesigned our new challenge coins. The new coins return to the American and Canadian Flags (flying) and North American wildlife on the back. They are better than ever before and something to be proud of. Contact Candice Henderson at wildlifecrimestoppers@gmail.com if some are needed for IWC promotion and support.

- As you can see, we are growing and in the right direction for continued success. This cannot be possible without continued support from each of our members. Your past and continued efforts have kept IWC strong and where it belongs - at the forefront for wildlife conservation through conservation law enforcement across North America.

My Sincere Thanks to each of You!

Lewis Rather

Lewis Rather
IWC Executive Director