

**UTAH DIVISION OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES**  
**Making Communication Work for Wildlife Conservation**

***Graduate Research Assistantship for Lindsay E. Young***



**Background**

The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) has authority over the management, conservation and protection of fish and wildlife populations in Utah. As an essential programmatic element of this agency's mandate, the UDWR Conservation Outreach Section:

- 1) communicates to public audiences the value (social, economic, and ecological) of fish and wildlife populations as well as those natural habitats upon which they depend,
- 2) enhances public awareness of, interest in, and understanding of the importance of sustainably managing fish and wildlife populations in concert with changing landscape uses and natural phenomena, and
- 3) engages communities, inclusive of citizens and visitors, in two-way programs that ensure the conservation of such populations and their landscapes - both those in common and at-risk.

**Need**

To conduct a literature review that summarizes relevant findings from primary and secondary research and comparative analyses. UDWR will use the literature review to determine best practices for: 1) determining who potential wildlife conservationists are, 2) determining how to best communicate with them, 3) delivering wildlife conservation information to the public to ensure resource sustainability, public safety, and human benefit; 4) conveying socially acceptable and ecologically compatible wildlife recreational behavior ethics; and 5) adopting as well as spreading the application of ecologically sound stewardship practices by private and public land managers.

**Deliverables**

A comprehensive literature review report describing and analyzing research studies that apply diverse outreach-communication methodologies that are relevant, transferable, and applicable to involving citizens and constituencies in conserving natural resources, specifically focused on but not limited to fish and wildlife populations and their habitats, including mechanisms and tools used with different scales, audiences, and locations. The review report will also assess the potential effectiveness for long-term community engagement in, adoption of, and application of successful fish and wildlife conservation efforts within Utah. Products envisioned include: 1) a review of literature that evaluates and compares: a) audience characteristics and behavioral patterns; b) values-beliefs-attitudes toward wildlife and their conservation; c) potential alternative agency communication methods, i.e., delivery mechanisms and outreach tools; and 2) an annotated bibliography. These products will help in the design and implementation of a UDWR-sponsored quantitative research study of Utahns about their attitudes and perceptions of wildlife conservation programs scheduled in Fiscal Year 2009\*. \* *Due to budgetary constraints the timeframe for the conduct of this research has been postponed.*

**Required Qualifications**

1. Masters or Ph.D. student in a related environmental or communication discipline.
2. Well-versed in a variety of social science research methods, particularly quantitative.
3. Familiarity with the structure and content of a comprehensive literature review.
4. Excellent writing and editing skills, especially applied in an analytical report context.

**Preferred Qualifications**

1. Experience with or prior engagement in a governmental natural resource management agency.
2. A knowledge of or aptitude for applying the principles of social marketing in an applied managerial context.
3. An ability to understand and relate to the disciplines of wildlife management and/or conservation education.
4. An understanding of the application of the human dimensions of wildlife research in planning and management.

**Duration of GRA**

Spring Semester 2008 (effective from January 1 through May 15, 2008) – half-time (average of 20 hours per week)

**GRA Remuneration** (*GRA Sponsorship via Grant Agreement with the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources*)

- \$6,125.00 total (NO OVERHEAD COSTS ARE TO BE DEDUCTED FROM GRANT FUNDS TRANSFERRED)
- Limited expenses (contingent upon nature and magnitude as approved by UDWR Grant Agreement Contact Designee)

**Supervision** (*Co-supervisors*)

Dr. Julia Corbett, Associate Professor - Department of Communication, University of Utah

Mr. Dana Dolsen, UDWR Wildlife Planning Manager, Director's Office &

Adjunct Professor, Dept. of Environment & Society, College of Natural Resources, Utah State University

**Selected Graduate Research Assistant:**

- *University of Utah, College of Humanities, Department of Communication, Lindsay E. Young, Ph.D. Candidate.*