

SCI GOLDEN GATE ENDOWMENT AT U.C. BERKELEY

Background Leading to the Decision made and launched in May 1990:

Golden Gate Chapter was chartered in May, 1987, to further the three goals of education, conservation, and the protection of hunter's rights. Under our charter we are required, amongst other things, to have both a conservation and an education project each year.

Our first three years we supported a number of such projects, but they were disparate, not inter-related, and the Board felt there was no common theme or discernable direction to our charitable efforts.

As two out of three of our Charter goals were to further education and conservation, and since U.C. Berkeley is undeniably one of the premier educational and research institutions in the United States, it was fairly natural that we began to look at some form of continuing relationship with Cal. Further, Cal had a very active wildlife management research program under the "Wildlife and Fisheries Program", which was headed by two internationally-renowned Professors: Dr. Reg Barrett (THE authority on wild pigs, as well as a former hunting guide), and Dr. Dale McCullough (A recognized authority on deer-worldwide). Both were/are chapter members.

We determined that a number of Wildlife Management Graduate Students were having great difficulty coming up with the dollars necessary to enable their projects.

It is obvious that the professional wildlife management community is absolutely crucial to SCI. Hunting seasons, their durations, quotas, areas, etc., are set based upon professional research. In case of any questions, proceedings or testimony before Fish and Game, Parks and Wildlife, Department of the Interior, etc. Their opinion, unsurprisingly, carries great weight. Under California Administrative Law, any controversy regarding the viability of any game population, or even any significant change in a hunting season now requires an Environmental Impact Report, and (to have any standing) this must be professionally prepared. Further, of course, we look to them for meaningful research into the viability, health and future of California's Big Game animals.

If we could ease the financial burdens of those seeking to enter this community, it could only benefit our conservation and education goals. A number of side benefits were citations of SCI support in the technical publications, and association with a prestige research institution, particularly in deer research. (The huge Hopland Field Station is extensively involved in deer and pig research).

The most innovative and permanent answer would be to establish an endowment. In an endowment, the body of the fund is not touched, and only the interest is dispersed annually, making this a perpetual fund. Further, it would also give a common focus for the chapter's charitable efforts.

We approached Cal with exploratory discussions sometime in early 1990. We finally agreed to try to meet their minimum of \$100,000 on a best-efforts basis, hopefully meeting this target by early 1996.

The final document signed between U.C. Berkeley and ourselves defines that the "the Safari Club International Fund" provides grants-in-aid to Graduate students in Wildlife Management, studying California Big Game species only. It also establishes that "Recipients of the Safari Club International fund grants-in-aid must demonstrate academic ability and a bona fide need for financial assistance."

Selection of candidates was by the Wildlife Management head Professor (since the inception of the program this has been Chapter Member Reg Barrett.)

At the May 1990 SCI GG BOD Meeting the proposal was considered. After debate, the program was unanimously approved by the Board along with an initial donation of \$25,000.

SCI GG continued to contribute to the Endowment as possible, including some matching grants from SCI. The additional contributions and good investment performance enabled the principal to exceed the \$100,000 goal in 2000.

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Five students, and projects, have been assisted to date.

1. Brian Boroski's PhD Dissertation developed and proved a Wildlife-Habitat Relationships Model for Columbian Black-tailed Deer in Trinity County, California.
2. Kathleen Jennings' PhD Dissertation assessed ecology of and public response to Urban Black-tailed Deer in El Cerrito and Kensington, California.
3. John Drew's MS thesis on wild pigs. His main result is that wild pigs can, and a small percentage do, carry live Lyme disease spirochetes for a couple of weeks, especially in the winter period. His research shows they should not be considered vectors of this disease and that hunters can be protected with the simple use of rubber gloves when doing the field dressing, especially in the winter time.
4. Clint Epp's PhD Dissertation on desert bighorn in southern California. His main contribution will be to describe the dispersal rates of bighorn in the California desert between all the mountain ranges. The practical payoff will be a prioritization of which ranges should receive regular transplants to maintain their populations.
5. McCrea Cobb's work is in progress. It involves the tule elk at Point Reyes National Seashore. He is documenting the differences in reproduction and survival rates between the Tomales Point herd and the Limantour herd. He will be looking for any dispersal of elk from PRNS into Marin County.