Post-Enrichment Report

Between September 28\textsuperscript{th} and October 4\textsuperscript{th}, I was fortunate enough to attend the National American Fisheries Society and The Wildlife Society Joint Annual Conference in Reno, Nevada. As the current president of CSU’s student chapter of The Wildlife Society, I try to attend as many state, regional, and national conferences as possible and lead a group of our students while at these events. I had attended several before this one, but this was my first national meeting and the whole experience was very rewarding.

The conference itself had over four thousand attendees, so navigating through the convention center and scheduling everything that I wanted to do was a bit overwhelming. However, once I got the hang of things, I attended dozens of presentations every day, learning about topics such as urban wildlife management, large mammal issues, light pollution’s impacts on wildlife, and much more! As I am currently a senior at CSU, I have completed an honors thesis investigating the impacts of artificial light at night on the wildlife in Fort Collins; I am in the process of having these results published in a peer-reviewed scientific journal. Being able to see so much similar research at this conference, I was able to gather notes about methods and future paths that may lead me to not only publication, but also graduate school. Additionally, I was able to reconnect with a past CSU faculty member, friend, and co-author on this work, which was refreshing and beneficial. I was also fortunate enough to have an abstract for my research accepted, and I presented this work at a poster session where I networked and met many diverse researchers.

Thanks to the generous contribution from the Honors Department, I was not burdened by finances while I was at the conference. Three other CSU students and I spent 7 days in Reno, NV learning about wildlife biology (and we had some fun too!). I was proud and excited to present my independent undergraduate research on a national level and learn so much useful information about the field of wildlife biology and urban ecology. I am in contact with scientists that I met at this conference and am implementing techniques I learned into my own research. While slightly overwhelming of an experience, I am so thankful that I was able to attend.