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Perry Barboza
PO Box 757000
University of Alaska
Fairbanks Alaska
907-474-7142; Fax 907-474-6967
psbarboza@alaska.edu

1 RH: Barboza • First Writing Assignment

2 **First Writing Assignment for Principles and Techniques of Wildlife**
3 **Management (WLF 222)**

4 PERRY S. BARBOZA, Department of Biology and Wildlife, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, AK
5 99775, USA

6 **ABSTRACT**

7 Writing skills are essential to professional wildlife managers. In this first assignment, you will
8 practice writing an essay for other wildlife professionals as an article in the Journal of Wildlife
9 Management.

10 **KEY WORDS** format, guidelines, instructions, writing

11 **The Journal of Wildlife Management: 00 (0): 000-000, 200X**

12 Communication is one of the most important duties of professional wildlife managers. The data
13 you collect on animals and habitats must be compiled, analyzed, summarized and interpreted in
14 written reports to your organization. Internal documents are also submitted for external review as
15 manuscripts for journals and books. You may be asked to further summarize those reports for
16 other audiences that range from the administrators of your organization, to public officials (e.g.
17 political representatives, game boards), private organizations (e.g. foundations, special interest

18 groups) and both adults and children from the general public. Your written work may be
19 transformed into press releases, e-mails, blogs, tweets and broadcasts of both audio and video
20 material. Effective writing is now another survival skill for science.

21 The act of writing is a process of understanding because you can only write a clear, accurate and
22 balanced argument after you understand a topic. The first and most demanding steps of preparing
23 a document involve research and planning to form the argument and structure of the article.
24 Allow yourself sufficient time to discover and think through a topic. As with any skill, writing
25 skills are developed with practice and feedback from your audience. Your argument must be
26 presented in a format and style that is appropriate for the audience. This document is prepared in
27 the style and format for a submission to the Journal of Wildlife Management (Chamberlain and
28 Johnson 2008). Constructive criticism from your readers is essential to understanding your topic
29 and to improving your ability to write clearly.

30 GAME is a pneumonic guide to the elements of preparing a professional communication
31 (Jacobson 2005). Ask yourself the following questions as you plan your assignment:

- 32 • **Goal:** what do you want to achieve with this product?
- 33 • **Audience:** what group do you want to influence?
- 34 • **Message:** what are the message and the style of presentation?
- 35 • **Evaluation:** how will you know that you have reached your audience and achieved your
36 goal?

37 **INSTRUCTIONS**

38 Prepare a document in the form of a commentary for the Journal of Wildlife Management.
39 Follow the guidelines on the publications site (<http://joomla.wildlife.org/>) of The Wildlife

40 Society (Chamberlain and Johnson 2008) and the styles and formats of recent commentaries
41 published by this journal (Boertje et al. 2010, Ruggiero 2010, Vantassel et al. 2010). You may
42 also use the format of this document as a template. Commentaries are essays on policies or
43 practices that affect wildlife or habitat by reviewing journal articles, regulations, position
44 statements, technical papers and press reports to provide a perspective on a problem. Limit the
45 text of your article to 3000 words when references are excluded (there are 828 words in this
46 manuscript from line 1 to 71).

47 Select a topic within the area of baiting and supplemental feeding of wildlife. Choose a problem
48 with a species or group of animals in Alaska. For example, is winter-feeding of mallard ducks an
49 acceptable practice on the Chena River in Fairbanks? The Wildlife Society has summarized
50 several aspects of the topic of feeding wildlife in their 2007 position statement “Baiting and
51 supplemental feeding of game wildlife species” (<http://joomla.wildlife.org/>).

52 Discuss the topic for your commentary with the instructor after you have completed some
53 preliminary research. Use the on-line resources of The Wildlife Society and other organizations
54 to generate questions and key words for searching the collections and resources of the university
55 libraries (<http://library.uaf.edu/>). Contact the Biosciences Library at 186 Arctic Health Research
56 Building for further assistance with collections pertaining to wildlife biology
57 (<http://library.uaf.edu/biosci>).

58 Submit your manuscript electronically by 11:00 h on 22 February. First draft manuscripts should
59 be e-mailed to psbarboza@alaska.edu as a single file in the pdf format labeled as “author-
60 surname_wlf222_Feb11.pdf”. Use the comments to revise the article and ask one of your
61 classmates for a review of the revision. Thank your reviewers in an acknowledgements section at

62 the end of the text. E-mail the final revision of the article to your instructor by 11:00 h on 22
63 March. Submit the document in the pdf format labeled as “author-surname_wlf222_Mar11.pdf”.

64 Your article will be graded for content (70%), style (15%) and format (15%).

65 Please ensure that you do not plagiarize. Take care to appropriately cite the ideas, words and
66 images of other authors in your article. Further information on plagiarism and academic conduct
67 can be found at <http://library.uaf.edu/ls101-plagiarism>.

68 **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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70 Library with the assistance of Anne Christie (librarian) and her staff. Kay Kenyon provided
71 constructive comments on this article.

72 **LITERATURE CITED**

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