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The International Association for Bear Research and Management
2022 Election Candidate Statements

Note: Individual statements are listed in alphabetical order by last name of candidate for each Council position. You can click on the candidates' name to go directly to their statement.

Council Position, Candidate Name

<i>President Candidate, John Hechtel</i>	2
<i>Vice President Americas Candidate, Stewart Breck</i>	3
<i>Vice President Americas Candidate, Shane Frank</i>	4
<i>Vice President Americas Candidate, Heiko Jansen</i>	5
<i>Treasurer Candidate, Gordon Stenhouse</i>	6
<i>Councillor Candidate, Andrea Corradini</i>	7
<i>Councillor Candidate, Anne G. Hertel</i>	8
<i>Councillor Candidate, Mihai I. Pop</i>	9
<i>Councillor Candidate, Emily Puckett</i>	10
<i>Councillor Candidate, Lorraine Scotson</i>	11
<i>Councillor Candidate, Abbey Wilson</i>	12



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President Candidate, John Hechtel

Retired Alaska Fish and Game

United States of America

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I decided to run for a second term because I believe some continuity right now is important and useful, and I'd like to make more progress on some of the tasks we've been working on lately.

When I was elected President in late 2019, we had a Conference scheduled for September 2020, and were embarking on a new phase with the hiring of an ED and moving forward with the Transition. Barely a couple months into my term the COVID pandemic struck and how quickly everything changed -- for IBA and people's lives. I don't think any of us suspected how profound an effect, or how long impacts would continue.

Hiring an Executive Director to increase fundraising for salaries and grants, and to implement IBA's Transition didn't work out as planned. And our Kalispell conference had to be held virtually as well, but IBA has weathered the pandemic. We've continued to improve and strengthen our organization, though we've had to reassess the Transition plans.

Looking for ways to keep moving forward in more modest, measured ways while doing our best for members and bears has been our focus. And we've been trying to address ways to lessen the workloads that make it difficult to attract and keep officers like Treasurer. I'm optimistic overall and convinced that what we've learned these last couple years, and changes being made will make us better and stronger long-term. A lot of what it takes to run IBA isn't obvious to members, so we will be making efforts to ensure those interested can understand how IBA works.

I'm proud of IBA, our bear community, and all we've accomplished to date. However, as important as past accomplishments are, we must focus on the future, and the challenges our members and bears will be facing. And we must keep looking for ways to help and support our younger members --the future of IBA is ultimately in their hands.

Some of my priorities include: continue to grow our membership; make IBA's institutional knowledge more readily accessible to incoming officers and members by working on the IBA Operations Manual; expand our fundraising to cover operational costs and grow our grants program; work on budgeting and long-term financial sustainability including building up an endowment-like operating reserve fund; use our upgraded website and social media to increase educational content and help us raise our profile as a trusted source for high-quality evidence-based bear knowledge; keep IBA relevant for managers and students; cooperate more with other bear conservation groups; explore ways to help support more non-IBA bear workshops/meetings.

I'd be honored to continue serving as your President. And I welcome member feedback both positive and negative as well as any ideas on how to improve IBA.



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Vice President Americas Candidate, Stewart Breck

USDA-National Wildlife Research Center and CSU-Center for Human-Carnivore Coexistence

United States of America

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I am a carnivore researcher with the USDA-National Wildlife Research Center. My research focuses on human-carnivore conflict, understanding impacts of conflict on people and predators, and developing non-lethal methods for carnivore management. I am an affiliate with Colorado State University Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Department where I advise students and helped start the new Center for Human-Carnivore Coexistence and serve as a co-director. I am a member of the Human-Bear Conflict Expert Team/IUCN-Bear Specialist Group.

In 2001, I began working with black bears in Yosemite National Park. This experience hooked me on working with bears. In 2004, I started work on black bears in Colorado (along with great people from Colorado Parks and Wildlife) on two long term projects focused on bear behavior, population impacts of urban environments, and management solutions focused on reducing garbage availability. I am also studying grizzly bear-livestock interactions addressing questions about impacts of bears on livestock and how to minimize conflict. And, with the USGS polar bear project in Alaska, I am studying land-based movement and interactions with oil and gas development and small coastal villages.

If elected, I would be honored to serve IBA. It has long been my favorite professional organization, because it's effective and attracts dedicated and wonderful professionals. My interests would be better integrating sociology and human dimensions into the field of human-bear conflict and continuing efforts to enhance bear conservation initiatives outside the US and Canada. Questions I would ask are: what are the critical needs for biologists in Mexico and South America and how can we leverage resources from North America? I would operate by listening to others more experienced but also looking for nexuses with other groups I'm involved with.



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Vice President Americas Candidate, Shane Frank

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

United States of America

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I was born and raised in Colorado, where I formed my notion and appreciation of nature. For over a decade, I have been involved in international bear research projects and other taxa contributing to 15 peer-reviewed publications, mostly based out of Scandinavia. I have been fortunate to have a formal education from several countries, allowing me to broaden my perspective on issues facing both wildlife and people. I have learned (Brazilian) Portuguese and can survive a Norwegian conversation. This is just to say that from having lived and worked elsewhere, and from speaking other languages, I have a global perspective – even though my roots and home are in the US. Throughout my international experience, I have held professional roles within the fields of social work, education, law enforcement, and wildlife research and management. Geographically, I have come full circle, and I am currently a wildlife research scientist for Colorado Parks and Wildlife, a State management agency.

At IBA conferences that I have attended, I marveled at the diversity of the member base and aim to continue its expansion and philosophy of inclusion. Stemming from the IBA transition, there is substantial opportunity to hit the ground running to do good work. If elected, I aim to leverage my international and diverse experiences to help organize, coordinate, and integrate IBA's components to help achieve the overarching mission: to increase our knowledge on bears and to more effectively conserve them.

[Shane Frank's ResearchGate](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Shane-Frank-2) (or <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Shane-Frank-2>)



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Vice President Americas Candidate, Heiko Jansen

Washington State University

United States of America

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I've always been fascinated by seasonal phenomena, whether it was watching the annual migration of birds or the yearly appearance and disappearance of woodchucks, wood frogs and black bears on our family treks to Maine and New Hampshire as a child. It was nonetheless frustrating that for half of the year (or more!) their lives were invisible to me. Thus, the study of mammalian seasonality was practically ensured - and what more iconic species to study seasonality than bears? For the past 15 years the Washington State University Bear Research, Education, and Conservation Center has made that vision a reality. With talented faculty, students, volunteers, and wildlife professionals we have created an environment that fosters cross-disciplinary research focused on bears. As an IBA member for nearly 13 years I have benefitted from its grants program, published our bear research in the Society journal, *Ursus*, and presented at IBA conferences. Indeed, an IBA conference is always the highlight of any year (or two or three) because it allows me to not only learn more about these iconic animals but to also see the passion with which the bear community worldwide views its role in maintaining the well-being of all bear species. Their hard work keeps the bears of the world from disappearing before our eyes.

These are difficult times, and no single person can provide all the solutions. Thus, as everyone continues to do their important work despite facing challenges it is even more important for IBA to play a leading role in facilitating communication among bear biologists, managers, researchers, etc. everywhere. In that context I will work with the President, Council and IBA membership to enhance the functionality and prominence of this great organization.



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Treasurer Candidate, Gordon Stenhouse

Independent Wildlife Consultant
Canada

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I have been fortunate to have had a number of positions over my career to study bears (polar and brown bears) in Canada since 1980 and have also been a member of the IBA during this time. As an IBA member I have received many benefits that have added to my knowledge of ursids around the world and fostered working relationships (friendships) and scientific collaborations.

I have recently retired from my research scientist position with the Alberta Government and leader of the FRI Grizzly Bear Research Program where I worked with an outstanding team of scientists for the past 23 years. I am now working as an independent wildlife consultant and still involved in bear research and management in several jurisdictions in Canada. This “part time” consulting work has now provided me an opportunity to work on publishing some new research papers and having some time to contribute to the IBA, an organization that I strongly support and believe in. As some may recall I also served two terms on the IBA council in the past.

I am letting my name stand for Treasurer position with the IBA executives to work with and assist Jennapher to keep our accounts accurate and up to date but most importantly to ensure that the IBA can continue to grow and meet the goals and desires of our membership. I believe my past experience in managing program research budgets that totaled over \$25million will allow me to make an important contribution in this role.



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Councillor Candidate, Andrea Corradini

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Italy

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I was raised in a little village in Central Italy, near the Apennines. Growing up in a forest region and witnessing natural dynamics first-hand sparked my curiosity to the point that I decided to pursue a research career. After completing my M.Sc. in Wildlife Management, I moved to the Romanian Carpathian to monitor large carnivores in an EU co-funded project. That was a life-changing experience that introduced me to large carnivore management and research, which I then applied to brown bears as I began my Ph.D. on the reintroduced Trentino bear population. Since 2017, I have been focusing on the effects of human disturbance and habitat connectivity on bear movement and behaviour in human-dominated landscapes. More recently, I had the opportunity to study the long-term effects of population density on the body mass of Yellowstone grizzly bears with US colleagues. I have been a member of IBA since 2018, when I attended my first conference in Ljubljana and had the fortune of co-chairing two sessions as a student. IBA provides a unique platform for sharing knowledge and networking in a familiar context, while also serving as a global reference for science-based management and conservation. If elected to serve the Council, I commit to ensure that this platform remains a benchmark, as well as to promote IBA's scientifically based vision, inclusivity, and geographical equity, particularly for younger members. I will be honoured to play a part in IBA's long history, and I hope to inspire future bear biologists in the same way that others have inspired me.



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Councillor Candidate, Anne G. Hertel

Ludwig-Maximilian's University Munich

Germany

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I am postdoc working on questions related to the emergence and maintenance of individual variation in bear behavior. For this I am combining movement, diet and life history data. I have a long-standing relationship with the Scandinavian brown bear research project but for my current research I am widening my scope to incorporate data across brown bear populations to better understand environmental and anthropogenic drivers of individual specialization. I am currently based at the Ludwig-Maximilian's University in Munich, Germany. I have been a member of IBA since 2014 and have served on Council since 2020. I enjoy working with fellow bear researchers on bringing IBA forward. The past two years were demanding on all of us but I hope that we can move forward with the transition process over the next years and I would be delighted to continue as a part of that team. I am especially interested to develop new programs which will bring the IBA community even closer together and will connect young scientists and more experienced scientists to more effectively work together.

<https://www.behavioural-ecology.bio.lmu.de/people/postdocs/anne-hertel/index.html>



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Councillor Candidate, Mihai I. Pop

Association for the Conservation of Biological Diversity, Romania

Romania

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I started the work on bear management in 2006 as an employee of the Environmental Protection Agency. Since 2012 I work at the Association for the Conservation of Biological Diversity, an NGO dedicated to improving large carnivore conservation in Romania. Occasionally I collaborate with the team from the Centre for Environmental Research and Impact Studies at University of Bucharest. Presently I`m a working in a small research grant studying the ecological and social factors related to human-wildlife interactions in urban space.

It might sound strange for most of you, but I don` t remember when I became member of IBA. It seems like I`ve been part of this family forever. I`m one of the many beneficiaries of the IBA existence. My first official contact with IBA members took place in 2010, at the Conference in Georgia, where I felt a lot of good energy and saw the collaboration between bear experts. As a member of the Association, I have now several tools available to meet other specialists, learn new methods, stay informed and implement projects on bear research and conservation. I believe that the IBA leaders must continue to connect bear experts since conservation policies are changing worldwide, and as experts we must get involved in these changes to give value to our work.

This is my first time running for the IBA Council and I would like to thank those who nominated me as a candidate. I hope there will be many voters! All the best from Romania!



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Councillor Candidate, Emily Puckett

University of Memphis

United States of America

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Website: <https://puckettresearch.org/>

I have benefited immensely from my membership in IBA and look forward to contributing to the society into the future such that others also benefit from this global network of bear biologists. My research focuses on the evolutionary genomics of bears, specifically American black bears, and aims to turn this basic research into data useful for conservation and resource managers. I am currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Memphis, USA.

I joined IBA in 2011 to attend the Eastern Black Bear Workshop. Since then, I have attended and presented at multiple Eastern and Western Black Bear Workshops, the international conference (2019 and 2021), and the 2nd Sun Bear Symposium. The ability for a researcher such as myself to better understand the concerns of managers and the importance of decreasing human-bear conflict has been immensely valuable. Further, the needs for genomic information as articulated by conservation practitioners guides the questions that my lab asks and answers. To date my contributions to the society, include never turning down an opportunity to peer review for *Ursus*; and serving as a genetics consultant on the Bear Specialist Group from 2016-2020.

I would be excited to serve as a councillor and begin formally contributing to the future of the IBA. My affiliations as a researcher and North American are biases that I am cognizant of and will commit to bolstering both the management and global communities represented by the society.



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Councillor Candidate, Lorraine Scotson

Saola Foundation for Annamite Mountains Conservation

Scotland/Lao PDR

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I am a wildlife biologist focused in Southeast Asia. Since 2005, I have worked on reintroduction, human-bear conflict and population monitoring with Sun bears and Asiatic black bears. My PhD with the University of Minnesota predicted bear distribution, population trends and habitat connectivity at varying scales. I have advised Lao students in bear research, and trained rangers and students in bear surveys. I served six years with the Bear Specialist Group, including a term as the Sun bear Expert Team co-chair. I led the IUCN Red List Re-assessment and range map update for the Sun bear.

Presently, I work with the critically endangered Saola, a rare tropical bovid from deep in the heart of bear country in Lao PDR and Vietnam. I co-led the launch a US organization, the Saola Foundation for Annamite Mountains Conservation, dedicated to advancing scientific tools and methods to track and monitor wild Saola.

I currently serve of the IBA Council and Grants Committee. The IBA was instrumental to my bear research, and I have benefited from numerous grants. My interactions with the IBA network (family) fostered a deep sense of value in my research, providing inspiration, collaboration, and expertise.

If elected, I will contribute energy and expertise to the IBA Council and strive to channel back the many benefits I have experienced from my time as an IBA member. Due to my experience in organizational development, I expect there to be valuable, mutually beneficial opportunities for knowledge exchange as the IBA continues with its organizational growth and development. I would also seek opportunities to empower the next generation of bear researchers within my focal region of Southeast Asia. I would be tremendously grateful for your vote.



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Councillor Candidate, Abbey Wilson

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My passion for bear research and conservation began as a doctoral student at Mississippi State University, where I studied giant panda chemical communication. This passion evolved during my postdoctoral fellowship with University of Saskatchewan and fRI Research, as I led the health component of an integrated project that studied the habitat, movement, and physiology of grizzly bears residing in Alberta, Canada. I am currently the Carnivore Biologist for the Government of Northwest Territories and Adjunct Professor at the University of Saskatchewan. My research is focused on developing novel techniques to monitor and manage bear populations on shared landscapes. My appreciation for the IBA grew as I became a member in 2015 and presented at my first IBA conference in 2016. Since then, I have presented at two additional IBA conferences (2017 and 2021), published in *Ursus*, and reviewed manuscripts for *Ursus*. I have also contributed to the conferences themselves, both as an abstract reviewer and session moderator for the most recent conference.

I am honored to be nominated for the IBA Council and if elected, I am excited to contribute to the growth of the IBA. I hope to serve on Council by bridging the gap between academic research and applied management through my position in government, promote further understanding of human-bear coexistence in northern Canada, and improve the diversity and equity of the IBA by encouraging involvement of remote communities. Through these goals, I aim to play an active role in our highly collaborative and global association.

[Return to IBA Election Page](#)
