

2007 NOAA Fisheries Employee of the Year Nomination Narrative

Nominee's Name: Last, First, Middle:

Nomination Category:

Wilson, Craig

Administrative/Support Employees, GS 11-15 or equivalent

Since his arrival at the Northwest Fisheries Science Center, Mr. Craig Wilson dramatically improved the service and capabilities in the center library, the direct result being great improvements in the abilities of center scientists to do research. In 2007, he and his support interns once again provided exemplary library service. Craig also negotiated several difficult challenges in a manner that was not only professional but clearly motivated by his advocacy of library users. Craig's ability to provide superlative day-to-day assistance to scientists and his proactive and passionate support of the library's mission more than qualify him for Employee of the Year.

As a scientist who regularly uses both the bricks-and-mortar library and the library website in the course of conducting research, I have been repeatedly amazed at Craig's efficiency and ability. I cannot emphasize this enough: Craig has become an indispensable asset to my work. In 2007, I made numerous requests to Craig for help in locating references that our library did not carry, or tracking down books that had been checked out years earlier and not returned. Craig typically had the requested references in my hands or my email inbox within hours; I have email records of at least four such transactions and I can specifically recall his assistance with interlibrary loans in 2007 that enabled me access to decades-old graduate theses from two universities. On two occasions, when the articles were not available as pdfs, Craig went over to one of the libraries at the University of Washington, photocopied the articles, and brought them back to me. I still am amazed at that service because it is so courteous and personal in the sterile age of electronic information transfer. Plus, it allowed me to continue to work rather than take the time to go to a library with which I am not familiar and track down articles. I am 100% certain that Craig has performed this same task for everyone who has asked it of him, which gives them all the same feeling of professional support and courtesy and also allows them to continue devoting their time to their work. I have attached several anecdotes written by other researchers and staff echoing this sentiment; please refer to the page at the end of this narrative for those quotes.

Craig has been a steadfast advocate for researchers in terms of maintaining and augmenting journal subscriptions and search engine capabilities, and 2007 was no exception. I can recall in early 2007, several electronic journal subscriptions were suddenly no longer available; my understanding was that there were no funds available to keep the subscriptions current. Obviously, that situation presents a severe challenge to scientists who rely on access to a broad and highly diverse body of literature. As far as I could tell, Craig responded immediately and earnestly to this matter, and seemed instrumental in getting the subscriptions quickly restored while maintaining an open line of communication to library users about the status of the subscriptions while never casting any blame or making any excuses. This really made me feel like Craig was looking out for me as a researcher.

Also in 2007, I recall Craig making an appeal to NWFSC staff to let him know how useful different Web of Science search capabilities were, so that unwanted subscriptions could be cut and library expenses could be minimized. This underscored that Craig was seeking to keep library operations as cost-effective as possible while continuing to offer stellar service. In a lean and challenging funding environment, such measures are clearly important.

I was also one of many scientists whose office spaces were lost due to the closure and subsequent removal of the trailers in 2006. I and several colleagues were relocated to the library. Craig really opened the doors for us and accommodated to our needs. He was very welcoming and never raised a whisper of protest at the loss of floor and desk space or the added noise and commotion. At one point I can recall five different researchers with "office spaces" spread around the library. We remained in the library until July of 2007, and for that entire period, Craig was completely welcoming, was gracious in sharing resources such as the printers, and kept in touch with us over matters such as the air temperature and the availability of shelf space. Again, this really made me feel like I had a tremendous supporter and advocate in Craig.

Perhaps above all, that last sentence epitomizes what Craig means to me and to so many other members of the staff at the NWFSC: Craig is a tremendous supporter and advocate. He truly cares about all of us and about his role in supporting the quality of our work. In 2007, and in every year that he has been here, he has sought to make the library a more effective and efficient tool. He does so because he recognizes that a good library should be a necessity and not a luxury. He recognizes that our needs as library users are evolving, just as the technology with regard to information sharing and transfer is evolving. He has truly dedicated himself to making the library as strong and dynamic a resource as possible, and he has been proactive about this through new programs and terrific training of library interns. When I have a request, he can drop what he's doing (which he always, cheerfully, does) and help right away; if the library were poorly organized or running in any sort of crisis mode, he couldn't do that. Whether it is a simple task (like finding something in the stacks or un-jamming the old photocopier) or a complex request for a long-forgotten or esoteric reference, Craig is always amazingly professional, reliable, selfless and considerate. He makes my science better. He makes the library a place I look forward to visiting. He is most fitting and deserving of the award of Employee of the Year for 2007. I share this opinion with many dozens of NWFSC staff members (see attached pages).

Thank you very much for considering this nomination.

Sincerely,

/S/ Chris Harvey

Dr. Chris J. Harvey, FRAM Division

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Further accounts of support provided by Craig Wilson to NWFSC staff members in 2007:

"In 2007, Craig personally located more than 25 crucial reference materials, some from as far away as Virginia, to assist my research on hatchery law. He always gives library research his full attention. Every time, I receive library materials within 24 hours of requesting them from Craig."

--Jon Drake

"In order to initiate a project, I needed to track down several grey literature reports. These reports were from a wide variety of agencies. When I finally gave up my own search and asked Craig for help, he quickly sent web links and pdfs for most of the reports. He then contacted several libraries and tracked down the last few reports. It took him several weeks of library searching and nagging to find the reports but they arrived on my chair one morning. It was an enormous help and well above even a high standard of helpfulness."

--Ashley Steel

"A couple weeks ago, he sent an email to the NWFSC as a whole reminding us of a service that the library performs speedily and free of charge. In a nutshell, if you email the library staff to request an article / book chapter that you can't find online, they will find it, scan it, and email it to you within an hour or two. How's that for service? Now imagine my situation: I'm sitting in a cabin in the Andes, trying to revise a manuscript and wishing I had better access to a paper published in 1971. I looked for it via Google and had no luck, so I emailed the library. Sure enough, within an hour I had my very own copy. Amazing. To be fair, it wasn't Craig who did the footwork, but one of the library interns. Nevertheless, I'd guess that the idea for this type of service came from him."

--Krista Bartz

"Once someone had actually cut out the article I wanted in a UW journal, so he was pretty quick to go an alternate route and get me the article I needed."

--Dawn Noren

"Although I do not have a specific, detailed anecdote to share, Craig has always been cordial, willing to help, and accommodating in every way in my interactions with him. This would be a well deserved and overdue award for Craig."

--Kurt Gores

"I have some long book chapters for which I cannot get an official pdf. Without a pdf, these publications are largely invisible to the scientific community. I had tried scanning them but ended up with huge files of many megabytes that were impossible to email to anyone. Craig showed me how to use a scanner the library has that makes high quality pdfs of large documents but creates files of manageable size."

--Robin Waples

"He has sure helped me find some obscure gray-lit reports and ancient journal stuff (pre-1930). I don't know if he made a pact with the devil, but I usually see the stuff a few days after I request it."

--Mark Scheuerell

"Craig has routinely 'saved the day' for me by locating references not available through our online subscriptions - and paper versions are often hand delivered. In early 2007, Craig adeptly worked with NWFSC staff to resolve a crisis that had resulted in canceled subscriptions for numerous journals while simultaneously fielding numerous complaints by desperate-reference-seeking-scientists."

--Beth Sanderson

"He is always able to find some thesis or gray literature item that I couldn't get otherwise."

--Kelly Andrews

"Craig is one of those unique 'support personnel' who make a point of making our job easier. He was nice to us when we were in the Library [during the office space crisis]. He could easily have seen it as an invasion of his domain, but instead he made us welcome. I have constantly been surprised by the speed with which he fulfills requests for items that our library does not actually have. I've usually gotten things within hours not days or weeks."

--Nick Tolimieri

"He has been absolutely superb in helping me track down key references, as well as being generally very helpful navigating library resources here and elsewhere. He's very deserving of this award."

--Jeff Hard

"Our library is an extraordinary resource but in many cases our limited budget and space require tracking down materials from other sources. I have always been amazed at how effectively, quickly, and cheerfully Craig is able to find even the most obscure materials through electronic sleuthing and interlibrary loans. I don't think he has failed yet in finding materials I've requested. He is resourceful, smart, always positive and goes the extra mile in every interaction I've had with him. He is thoroughly deserving of this award."

--Andy Dittman

"Craig was terrific helping me rapidly obtain two books the NOAA libraries did not have. Being a new employee, I did not know Craig and was not familiar with the workings of the library. He dropped everything he was doing to take my request, talk about the books, and investigate the option of buying permanent copies for the library. He emailed me back within an hour saying the books were on order. One book came in, but there was a snag with the other that Craig quickly remedied. I was greatly appreciative of his attention and professional courtesy to provide me with the materials I needed for my work and develop. I strongly support Craig in this nomination."

--Jason Cope

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Further accounts of support provided by Craig Wilson to NWFSC staff members in 2007:

"Craig performs many services for the NWFSC staff, and it is clear that his performance in 2007 has been crucial to the success of research activities at the center. I think the best thing I can say about Craig is that I actually don't really think too much about the library anymore. Before Craig was hired, the library was a constant source of frustration, and really hindered my research. Since Craig was hired, all those concerns have evaporated. Craig has reshaped the library so that it is very effective in supporting the work we do at the center. I see 2007 as the year when all Craig's hard work has come to fruition. For instance, on many occasions this year, I've asked Craig to locate copies of very very odd papers in very very odd journals. I was surprised when he found the papers, but I was even more surprised when I got copies of the papers within 2 hours. I don't know how he did it (nor do I really care). However, the great thing is that I no longer have to care. Craig does his job so well that I don't have to care because he clearly cares so much."

--Phil Levin

"I would add the fact that he has offered to make runs to the UW library to get us copies of journal articles that the Center doesn't subscribe to (and I don't think that anyone ever asked for that level of service). I would also add that he has an intimate knowledge of the technical information needs of Center staff, which significantly increases our work efficiency."

--Blake Feist

"Under Craig's leadership, the Center successfully preserved approximately 200 historical publications (pre -1921). These publications provide important historical perspectives on NOAA's scientific work, and include a set of reports from the H.M.S. Challenger expeditions of 1873-1876 as well as a full set of U.S. Fish Commissioner annual reports spanning 1871-1921. Due to their years of prior use, these publications had cracked or damaged bindings that made them inaccessible to staff. As part of NOAA's Preserve America's Heritage program, Craig coordinated the preservation of these damaged historical publications, ensuring their accessibility to staff and interested public well into the future. In addition, Craig housed these historic publications in a central location within the library, effectively advertising their availability to staff and showcasing the Center's heritage resources to visitors during public tours."

--Vicky Krikelas (who notes that this occurred pre-2007)

"Over the past year, Craig has promptly answered my questions about electronic access ranging from configuring bibliographic software for downloading from public databases to solving connections problems with publishers. His answers are concise, clear, and nearly always work the first time I try them. He is truly a highly capable information manager, and always willing to share his knowledge and experience. He makes our tasks as researchers much easier...I have NEVER waited more than 48 hours for a reference that was accessible in Seattle, even when I said that there was no rush. Craig figures out how to obtain the document electronically or physically obtains, and he makes it seem easy."

--Linda Rhodes

"Even though I am not a scientist, I do from time to time need help in the library w/ scanning and finding docs for Bob (usually in a pinch!). Craig always drops everything and helps me out. He is friendly and very professional and never acts like I'm bugging him."

--Diane Tierney-Jamieson

"Craig's assistance with tracking down numerous hard to find references has been above and beyond the call of duty. His service is not only always fast, but also friendly. While many parts of the federal bureaucracy conspire against efficient completion of our work, Craig's diligent efforts have saved me significant amounts of time and he's always a pleasure to work with."

--Brad Hanson

"Craig was thoughtful enough to solicit recommendations from scientists for electronic subscriptions. We recommended adding a journal, Journal of the American Water Resources Association, and Craig immediately made it available to us. Also, Craig has located 3 obscure references that were out of print for me over the last two years."

--George Pess

"Another of the many ways Craig performs his job so helpfully and effectively is his dogged, yet congenial approach to one of his least pleasant tasks - getting people to return library books. An example from a recent email: '...when books that are not checked out cannot be found on the shelf, consternation ensues. And mass e-mail is sent.'"

--Doug Dey

"Craig gets things fast and pain-free. I see him walking to the UW library often to pick up references for us; the turn around time for requests is sometimes unimaginably fast! Craig has simplified our electronic subscription access, made use of the limited resources we have, and, probably most importantly, COMMUNICATES changes and simplifications in our system or holdings to those of us that use the resources. But a favorite anecdote of mine that highlights his encyclopedic knowledge occurred when I was walking across the breezeway and Craig came out of the library entryway as I was passing by with a large white dahlia I had brought in for Ronda; we exchanged morning pleasantries, but he followed that up with complimenting the flower I was carrying, specifically citing it as a nice example of the dahlia variety (that he, of course, named, and I did not know). It was one of many examples that makes it a pleasure to go to the library in general and Craig in particular for assistance and advice."

--Tom Good

"Craig performs many services for the NWFSC staff, and it is clear that his performance in 2007 has been crucial to the success of research activities at the center. I think the best thing I can say about Craig is that I actually don't really think too much about the library anymore. Before Craig was hired, the library was a constant source of frustration, and really hindered my research. Since Craig was hired, all those concerns have evaporated. Craig has reshaped the library so that it is very effective in supporting the work we do at the center. I see 2007 as the year when all Craig's hard work has come to fruition. For instance, on many occasions this year, I've asked Craig to locate copies of very very odd papers in very very odd journals. I was surprised when he found the papers, but I was even more surprised when I got copies of the papers within 2 hours. I don't know how he did it (nor do I really care). However, the great thing is that I no longer have to care. Craig does his job so well that I don't have to care because he clearly cares so much."

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We offer our signatures in added support of the nomination of Mr. Craig Wilson for 2007 Employee of the Year:

Isaac Kaplan

Melissa Haltuch

Isaac Kaplan

Melissa Haltuch

Jason Cope

Paul CRITTARO

John Wallace

Thomas Helsler

OWEN HAMEL

Phillip Levin

Both Sanderson

GEORGE PRSS

Tim Beechie

Casimir Rice

Doug Sey

Thomas Good

JONATHAN DRAKE

[Signature]

[Signature]

John Wallen

[Signature]

Quinn S. Hamel

[Signature]

Beth Sanderson

Thompson

[Signature]

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Good

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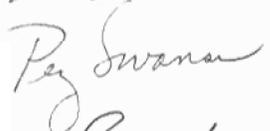
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We offer our signatures in added support of the nomination of Mr. Craig Wilson for 2007 Employee of the Year:

 Kathi Lefebvre

 Michael Rust

 Penny Swanson

 Sarah Morley

Morley

 Bill Reichert

Bill Reichert

 Jeffrey J. Hard

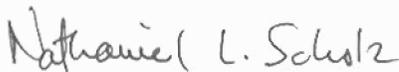
Jeffrey J. Hard

 Brad Hanson

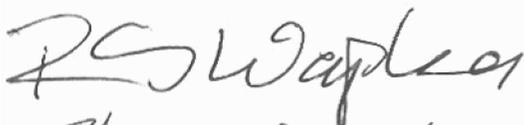
Brad Hanson

 Cheryl A. Morisaki

Cheryl A. Morisaki

 Nathaniel L. Scholz

Nat Scholz

 R. S. Waples

R. S. Waples

 W. A. Dickhoff

W. A. Dickhoff

 Linda Rhodes

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 Aimee Fullerton

Blake Feist

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Margaret M Krahn

JoAnne Butzerin

John G. Williams

John W. Feranson

Michelle McClure

Michael Scheuerell

Mary Moser

Brian Burke

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Kate H. Macneale
ANDY DITTMAN

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Gina M. Ylitalo

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Dawn P. Noren

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