

## OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I suppose that it is typical that when a person who has served in a leadership role steps down from that position, his or her thoughts move into a period of reflection. What was, what could have been, what worked well, what could have been done differently, and all of the other minutiae on which we second-guess ourselves. I find myself in this position as fall spreads across the diverse New Mexico landscape. I take several deep breaths and think about where we have been and what we've all accomplished as an organization over the past few years, as well as the excitement of the years to come under the leadership of Catherine Waters, our new president-elect.

I have served as a director for four years, as vice-president for three years, and now as president since 2006. When I first came on to the WFO board, I had wide eyes and more than a bit of a feeling of intimidation to serve with the luminaries on the board who sat around the table. Things settled down a bit, and as I got more involved and more seasoned, the camaraderie increased, and my respect for diverse opinions and recognition of different skill sets broadened my horizons. In these nine years, I have continually been amazed at the energy of the board as well as the skill with which its members handle the diverse challenges and issues that arise regularly within WFO. These folks are incredibly talented, and I have been quite fortunate to have been able to have them working with me (and for you) during this time. I am humbled and proud to have worked so closely with the directors, the officers, everyone associated with our outstanding publication *Western Birds* (a great number of very talented and dedicated people), and everyone else involved with making WFO such a first-class, field-oriented ornithological organization. When I think of these dedicated volunteers, the term "melting pot of talent" comes to mind, and that diversity and dynamism are, and will remain, a key to the vibrancy of the organization.

I am stepping down but not away, and will continue to be involved with the organization through participation in several committees and with the development of various projects. Thankfully this is the case, as a quick separation from my friends on the board seems too abrupt, and as the immediate past president I can stay involved and still remain in the thick of things with you, the membership. I sincerely thank the board of directors, the officers, and also you all, the *membership* of WFO, which is the heart and soul of this great organization. Remember that the key to continued success for WFO is the participation of our membership. Get involved in the organization and stay engaged. Give us your ideas, time, and expertise! As an organization, WFO will only be as strong as the talents and contributions of its collective membership. Thank you for your trust and support over the past few years. I look forward to seeing you all at future meetings, on various field trips and in the field throughout the western United States. Until then,

*Very sincerely yours,  
Dave Krueper  
Corrales, New Mexico*