

## **Steering Committee Call 6/26/13**

### **Opening by Chair**

Roll Call – David Whitehurst, Paul Johansen, Gwen Brewer, Kendrick Weeks, Mark Thurman, Diana Day (Cal DuBrock), Katherine Haffner, Mike Harris, Tai-ming Chang (Bill Jenkins), Perry Wheelock (Lisa Mendelson-Ielmini.), Ken Elowe, David Hartos (Tom Shope), Rachel Muir, Clyde Thompson, Evan Crews (Bruce Schofield), Mike Lavoie, Rodney Bartgis, Ginny Kreitler, Doug Besler, Todd Fearer, Andrew Milliken, Gwen White, Mike Slattery, Rick Durbrow, Jess Jones,

David W. - We will begin with updates from Steering Committee Work Groups. Since we are staff limited, the Steering Committee will need to take on a greater role to accomplish some of the vital tasks of the LCC.

### **Update from Various Work Groups**

**No Regrets (Rodney B.)** – Providing criteria to the assessments so we can ask how we should be selecting for the high conservation target areas. As this matures, doing a check to make sure there is a level of consistency and make sure there are no glaring omissions in our process. Not going to worry about the data gaps. There is a set of particular items that we are hoping that the working group can help us with. We can use assistance in identifying appropriate sources. As the project is pulled together, have a draft reviewed by SC members.

Action - Think about who in your organization can review criteria and look over sources in reviewing some of the draft recommendations and if some of the Steering Committee members are willing to help, they are more than welcome to participate.

Jean B. – Ginny has already made connections within her organization about datasets.

Gwen B. – Also where we have identified forest interior birds would be useful products for states to compile together?

Rodney B. – Potentially, but we haven't developed a selection criteria yet.

Rachel M. – There is some linkages between development of indicators and sites that are relatively undisturbed. Recommend Indicators work group and No Regrets work together in that regard.

Steve H. – In terms of time frame, when are you looking to get products out?

Rodney B. – This is something we like to get out by the end of this year, so looking at completed assessments so far.

Rachel M. – Have you used the National Heritage Network for these needs yet?

Rodney B. – Have not started to sort through any of these assessments. Feel free to send to us those suggested resources that we should be considering.

**Indicators/Surrogate Species (Rachel M.)** – Dr. John Lyon has volunteered to lead this. He sees the Appalachian as an area that overlaps the interest and activity of the Bureau of Land Management. We are using Indicators as our milepost to determine where we are as a partnership. Components are helpful for us to understand what

kind of indicators and at what level. An indicator could be a population or populations, a suite of species, or of water or terrestrial environment. Selecting indicators based on existing networks of information, accessibility, cost-effectiveness, and aligns with the needs of our partners. Where we stand now is there is a document we developed for our meeting and had a series of goals and dates, an 11-step process that we would like to work through. We are at Step 4 where we are interviewing stakeholders.

Jean B. – The amount of support or communities involved in working with datasets, do you have support for that?

Rachel M. – We have good support for aquatic and terrestrial areas. Human dimensions is something we are building. Bridgett has been principally organizing that group. We could still use some more support particularly on the Human Dimensions support.

Mike H. – Are these the 3 broad systems where we will be identifying indicators?

Rachel M. – As a first cut, we have 3 broad ones.

David W. – Are you receiving support from our established partnerships such as EBTJV and AMJV and reaching out to them?

Rachel M. – People from those groups have joined, but not something we have done by going through the leadership.

Bridgett C. – On the core members of the indicators work group, we have 5-6 people with expertise in each of those 3 areas. Query the expert database so each of the groups can augment themselves. Both the CHJV and AMJV are represented as well as Parks on Terrestrial.

David W. – I think it will be important to involve the leadership of those taxonomic groups.

Ken E. – Surrogate species can help us design components of the landscape, also help us when we apply notions like densities and occupied areas, help us answer how much of different habitat types to build to support viable and sustainable populations. Surrogate doesn't conflict with indicators but is complimentary. We crafted an agreement with FWS and States on Surrogates, and I will be contacting state directors to make this a seamless approach. Breaking new ground with the scale of this.

Mike H. – Is there a specific role for the LCC in the surrogate species process?

Ken E. – I think it is useful for an LCC to consider the place that species and perhaps the idea of surrogate to help design those landscapes more efficiently. The other part of it is that LCCs were designed to add capacity for all of our separate organizations. LCC collaborative to put our best heads together and certainly that is hoped for and used in conservation design work.

Mike H. – Would that be a review role, sounds like you will be contacting state directors for input, will you go be going through the LCCs?

Ken E. – Within FWS they have tasked each region to pick a landscape, recognition is to take it a bit slower. I would suspect because of the responsibility that the states have it is really good place to make sure FWS and the states are on the same page and to make sure as an LCC that it is incorporating what the states need. LCCs need to add that capacity.

David W. – One thing that could be problematic is that if you are trying to do these surrogate species on a landscape type level, and if those states have 4 LCCs they might not be comfortable having different surrogate species for different habitat types.

Ken E. – It is incumbent on us to try and make it seamless.

Ginny K. – What role do you see Non-profits in this process this year?

Ken E. – Many organizations have expertise that they can lend. State agencies makes a decision based on the amount of information they are willing to take in. I hope we are moving it in a productive manner. I can make sure Jean has the latest copy and put up on our website – just recently got distributed like a week ½ ago.

**Governance (Gwen B.)** – Increase representation on the Steering Committee and easiest way to solve that one is ask about who we have and who we don't have.

Paul J. – Reach out to some of the state FWS agencies who are not represented and that type of invitation should probably come from the chair. In regards to expanding out to the other agencies who might play a role, just make some informal asks and then can go from there.

David W. – Gordon would be on the committee from New York, I think we got a commitment from that.

Gwen B. – You might recall that we approved renewal for Steering Committee leadership, but didn't want a complete turnover every 2 years. Best way is to stagger the terms of the Executive Sub-Committee. So you don't have a whole new group every 2 years. May have people serve initially for 1 year and then go out, or for 3 years and then they go out. Looking way to stagger terms. Did not have specifically something within the government document because wanted to discuss with Steering Committee.

Paul J. – I like the idea of 2 on and 2 off. Need to go through and put the detail in place and make a full report out to the Steering Committee.

David W. – Is group comfortable with way we our governing ourselves and treated properly and fairly. If not, please get in touch with Gwen or Paul and we can determine what adjustments we should make.

**Data Sharing (Mike H.)** – I have been investigating our NaturServe agreement and contacting other states to find out what agreements they have so folks will be hearing from us next month.

Kendrick W. – Collecting different examples of data sharing agreements including the one for the RFP. One I found interesting was the climate science center data sharing policy, very straight forward. Would be happy to get other examples from Steering Committee members on data sharing agreements.

David W. – Important component for all LCCs so we can do modeling and long-term projections like that. Ongoing issue and the more definition we can provide around our policy the more smoothly things will work down the road.

Ken E. – I really agree, comes up with almost all LCCs. That is a tough call and one thing Steering Committee might have to keep considering is where it wants to draw a line in the sand between what it needs to do it work and what it might put out in an RFP for those kind of things.

**Communications (Clyde T.)** – Went ahead and after the communication session at the Workshop, Matt and I took all that input to revise the messages and send to Work Group. I'll have Matt provide more of the details of this process.

Matt C. – We updated the messages using the great feedback from members during our session and simplified and refined the messages. We then sent out to communication coordinators and specialists in our working group and gave them a week to review and provide any feedback. All the feedback was encouraging, made some slight tweaks to the messages and now providing Steering Committee members with the final messages to use when talking about the LCC to these audiences. Think of them as an elevator talk to get your foot in the door. Clyde and I are now going through the Work Plan to identify what would be the next best task for this group to accomplish and we will get back with the Steering Committee once that has been decided.

Jean – Question on the next task of the communication work group – I was in the break out work group that discussed that. I thought there was a recommendation that came out to that specifically – do you recall that discussion. Strategic Place to launch.

Clyde T. – Some of the next steps are big and how do you break these into doable steps that are concrete and measureable. We will review notes to see if next steps were identified and go from there.

**Terrestrial Mapping (Ken E.)** – Put in proposals for that effort. NE States have spent a lot of time on it and seeing if there is some kind of ground that other LCCs can build upon

**Social Resources (Perry W.)** – Had 3 meetings, made them aware of what I have been learning from my participation in the LCC, identify individuals who may join the Human Dimensions group. Also doing a scan of what other LCCs are doing on the topic of Human Dimension.

David W. – Be great to get cultural resources and social sciences more involved.

**SWAP Consultation (Paul L.)** – Contract to do the SWAP work is moving along on the proposed timeline. Doing analysis of the SWAPs to connect those plans to a larger regional context. The language is to take it a step further and include all the existing on the ground projects. Meeting with that group periodically to get updates. Quarterly report will be available on that shortly.

Andrew M. – The SWAP synthesis efforts in the NE region involves several components, one involving this roll up idea to use the same language and roll up to something regional. Then there is a roll down, information that can be rolled down to each state. That includes analysis of habitat condition and for the species habitat suitability. The LCC is working with State Wildlife Technical Committees here in the NE.

**Brief Update from the Coordinator (Jean B.)** - Been following on the instructions of Steering Committee to follow up with major partners. SARP/GCPO LCC had a joint

meeting in Memphis. One of the things we needed to address was one of the Steering Committee final decisions to maintain boundary to include portion of the Central Hardwoods Joint Venture. That was an excellent meeting and people were appreciative of thoughts. Specifically reaching out to reinforce commitment to work more closely with CHJV/SARP/and GCPO LCC Steering Committee. It was well received and hope to work with all the various staff to make that happen SARP Companion website was launched at the same time, not just linking websites but a planning platform.

EBTJV Meeting – Another opportunity to talk about our next generation for how we will use the Web Portal – not just as a communication platform but as a planning tool. How we as an LCC can serve the partnerships and partners. We have a new tab which is specifically GIS & Planning and Paul has been working on that to bring in various tools and resources. Anything we do on the AppLCC gets populated on EBTJV and SARP sites as well.

Downscale Scenarios of Climate Change – Mid-Atlantic and Mountains are not well modeled in Global Climate Scenarios. SE CSC are able to leverage funds and have gotten some of the top researchers in the nation to do it for entire AppLCC extent.

Rachel M. – Contacted John Tirpak in regards to developing indicators between GCPO and AppLCC and sharing information and developing dual indicators.

Jean B. – Our ability working more with other LCCs will expand over time.

National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy – Basically the NFWP Climate Adaptation Strategy – requesting distribution of strategy and to work with SC Members in talking about how we can integrate those initiatives into our work and provide feedback at the national level to our strategy.

David W. – Seems like it requires staff time and I would be interested in any comments regarding this. Think 5-Year Work Plan is adaptive and concert in effort and decide how much time we give to this in terms of progress we make on our own plans.

Mike H. – Were there comments made to this national strategy or how it should be implemented.

David W. – Comments on how we should respond with limited staff capacity.

Ken E. – Support the Climate Change strategy. Given constraints that you said, would it be useful what we were doing already that might be supporting it without altering it at all.

Andrew M. – It did not take us long to do the crosswalk, it is just simply taking the relevant goals and strategies and actions from the climate plan and under that putting strategy and goals that the NA LCC is doing. So idea was to provide that back to Climate Strategy Management Team, but wanted to have discussion with SC if we wanted to do this but that we would possibly change things in the future to keep with National strategy.

Mike H. – Ken prepared a crosswalk to do in the SA LCC and created a letter and sent to them.

Jean – We can demonstrate that we are nested in there – so I can try and do that.

David W. – Staff seem to be pretty comfortable, are you all comfortable for Jean to do the crosswalk and provide that if necessary run by Executive Sub-Committee and then send in based on that review.

Clyde – Be comfortable with Jean doing that.

Jean – So I'm just vetting that through yourself or the executive.

David W. – Seems group is comfortable with just vetting that through me.

### **Brief Update on FY12 RFPs (Bridgett C.)**

Aquatic Ecological Flows Project - Cornell Fisher has decided to retire. We will receive Phase 1 of that scope of work and Dr. Fisher has made contact with another PI in Cornell to cover the work and Bridgett has communicated with other investigator and so bottom line is there is no change in contract. New PI will take on that work and understand scope of work and expect no change in timeline and deliverable.

Energy Project – That project has made good progress, very active TOT involvement. Obtained data from mining states and are hosting a small webinar for TOT tomorrow. Planning to have meeting in August to do a pre-model presentation and will wrap up in 2014.

Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment – Developing interim report and asked them to rework components of report and that is due at end of month. If any SC members have staff they would like to see involved in that activity, they can email me this week. Looking for additional people to be involved. Wrap up in April 2014.

Data Needs Assessment – Project should be done by next January, will have deliverables in 5 months time.

Stream Classification – Identified 60 people with some level of interest, going to narrow those people down. Want someone to be involved can plug someone in with that vendor.

Riparian Resiliency – That contract was executed this spring, didn't have time elapse to report in last cycle, anticipating report out on next reporting cycle. First report will be followed by deliverables in September.

Jean B. – Paul and I working with Jason Coombs on this, bringing on the web climate vulnerability tool. Jason and I have a weekly call and seems to be working smoothly. Have final product by fall.

### **Status on FY 13 RFPS (Paul J.) - Cave/Karst – Our decisions was not necessarily unanimous with moving forward on the proposal, but at the end of the day we are recommending the proposal.**

Bridgett C. - This proposal has deviated from the scope of work that SC saw, 3 areas of concern that we specified in the RFP. Issue of Point Occurance data, could not overcome to get them to provide all data, develop relationships with PI that over time they would be more comfortable with providing data and expanding analytical capacity. Did ask that PIs consult with neighboring LCCs to make sure any product we developed can be transferred and applied to neighboring LCCs.

David W. – Any comments associated with that decision.

Jean B. – For Threats/Benefits – though we had 5/6 strong applications, top one was to work through an interagency agreement with Threats Assessment Center in

identifying threats and benefits to our geography. That will be pursued through agreement, I think it is an opportunity to create a stronger linkage.

**Discussion for Next Meeting**

David W. – I get the impression we might need face-to-face and looking at early December. We will review as our perceived deadlines and need for complex decision making. If that research confirms what we have discussed, look forward to late November/early December.