

Bios

Brett Boston



Mr. Boston is the founder and president of Group Solutions®. He is an internationally recognized pioneer in the use of innovative processes for team-based collaborative activities. Brett has acted as the facilitator for former President Jimmy Carter's sessions in conjunction with The Atlanta Project and the Carter Presidential Center. Most recently he has worked with leadership teams at Randstad North America, The International Olympic Committee, Deloitte & Touche L.L.P., The Coca-Cola Company, U.S. Air Force Intelligence, Emory University and a host of conservation and recreation agencies. . Brett brings vision, energy and a highly strategic level of thinking to any project. He is considered the leading electronic meeting facilitator in the world.

Brett is a graduate of Emory University with degrees in Economics and Political Science. He did graduate work in Economics at American University and Georgia State University..

Vern Herr



Since 1993, Vern has specialized in innovative approaches to project facilitation, internet collaboration and non-traditional approaches to planning and governance issues. He has worked extensively on collaborative approaches to national environmental and resource issues. His clients include The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries, Law Engineering and Environmental, National Marine Manufacturer's Association, B.A.S.S., The Centers for Disease Control, The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, The Outdoor Technology Group and state resource Agencies in Oregon, South Carolina, Georgia and Louisiana.

Vern is a Management graduate of the Rochester Institute of Technology.

Appalachian ISC Meeting & Workshop Background July 11th-13th 2012

BACKGROUND: The Appalachian Landscape Conservation Cooperative (AppLCC) has completed its first year's work of developing a collaborative conservation framework and governance structure to more effectively address landscape-level planning and conservation delivery challenges. The Cooperative member organizations and agencies have assembled a decision-making body of conservation leaders to serve on an Interim Steering Committee (ISC) which has worked to develop the mission, vision, and objectives for the AppLCC. The US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has made the commitment to support the AppLCC in funding both the coordinator and science coordinator position as full-time FWS positions. The Coordinator was hired in FY11 and the Science Coordinator was appointed in January of 2012. AppLCC program funds for FY12 have been used to support a GIS/Data Management Technician that is being provided through a part-time student, hired under the FWS Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP). AppLCC Project Funds from FY11 fund a 2-year, part-time communications specialist, hired through Virginia Tech University. The first year was also marked by a successful workshop that assembled more than 150 top conservation managers and scientists working across the Appalachian Region to identify the science that is still needed to advance the conservation effort. Support for this meeting was provided through AppLCC Program Funds, FWS North East Regional Office Science Application unit, and a grant from the US Geological Survey (USGS) Northeast Area Office. A comprehensive "Portfolio of Science Needs" was produced as the framework (envisioned to be a 'living document') to be revisited annually by the various experts (Communities of Practice) that will make recommendations for the ISC to consider in making funding decisions and aligning landscape-level conservation planning efforts among the member organizations and interested partners.

"SECOND LEG OF THE STOOL" -- BEYOND FUNDING RESEARCH: The AppLCC has made significant progress in pursuing its mission. The next step is to develop a 3-5 year work plan that identifies and prioritizes the role and contribution of the various Cooperative members and distribution of work and resources. This is a critical step in order to most effectively achieve the AppLCC's mission and realize its vision, and increase the collaborative efforts and efficiencies in conservation planning and coordinated conservation delivery that are necessary for success. The work plan will reflect the Cooperative's conservation priorities, identify key conservation targets or milestones to measure achievement, and identify opportunities for collaborative and coordinated conservation efforts and planning, that will be informed by, and reinforce the focus of delivering science to the Cooperative members, partners, and stakeholders. Thus these priorities will further support and reinforce the areas of science information and conservation tools the broader AppLCC conservation community has identified through its earlier Science Needs workshop and consultations.

CONTRACT SERVICES: AppLCC Leadership, in consultation with FWS, instructed staff to secure the services of a neutral third party presence through whom vested stakeholder interests are considered; to assist in the development of the overall collaborative process design; to act as a sounding board for ideas and provide input and review of materials and product; and to coordinate information and lessons learned among the 21 other Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs) and Climate Science Centers (CSCs) on a national level. Through an agreement with the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (U.S. Institute), a program of the Udall Foundation, (an independent federal educational foundation established by

Congress), the AppLCC secured the contract services of Group Solutions, Inc. to serve as neutral facilitators. The role of the neutral facilitator will be to take the lead in providing the process design, facilitation, and drafting services described in the tasks set forth below. The neutral facilitator will also integrate Dr. Rob Baldwin at Clemson University as part of the facilitation team, who will participate as a technical advisor on how to incorporate the science of landscape-scale conservation planning as identified in the tasks below. The Group Solutions facilitation team will work under contract with the US Institute to facilitate the development and drafting of the *AppLCC 3-5 Year Work Plan*. (Final Work Plan will require review, revisions as appropriate, and approval by the ISC for adoption.)

CONTRACT GOALS: The overall goals of this contract are twofold: to increase understanding and operational capacity among the AppLCC ISC members to function as a planning and decision-making body charged with taking on this new role in conservation, and to develop a *3-5 year Work Plan* that includes: (1) Based on the criteria formulated through the facilitation process determination of conservation priorities for the region that clearly align with the AppLCC mission and vision; to be addressed in the near-term, (2) Identification of specific conservation targets or milestones that track progress in addressing the priorities for foundational work to be funded and completed by the LCC partners over the next 3-5 years [Conservation Delivery Targets]. (3) Identification of specific organizational metrics to track the effectiveness or measures of success of the AppLCC as a coordinating body and reflect the organization's mission [Organizational Targets]. (4) Develop a process that defines working relationships among the ISC members, to include: (a) Organizational capacity, mandate, and mission and regional presence; (b) Resources and capacity within the AppLCC both in terms of scientific and management or technical, and (c) Cooperative Membership, Partner, and Partnership commitments and opportunities to create greater efficiencies and enhanced conservation on-the-ground

SCOPE OF WORK: [Task A] work with the AppLCC staff and the technical advisor to develop detailed surveys (phone and web-based for Tasks B&C). [Task B] conduct "sensing" (phone) interviews with (i) AppLCC ISC members and key partners or organizational representatives to determine key information relevant to the work plan, capacity, and opportunities -- estimates a range of 30-60 individual (phone) or group interviews; (ii) also prepare and administer a survey of the individuals identified in the AppLCC Experts' Directory (that include the list of November 2011 Science Needs Workshop Participants -- estimated at 190-200) to determine key issues and priorities, and solicit a broader stakeholder input via website invitation (applcc.org). [Task C] design, facilitate and document a 2-hour webinar to share the assessment findings and recommendations with the AppLCC ISC members (held on June 28th). [Task D] design, facilitate and document a 2-3 day in-person meeting with the AppLCC ISC and key partners or organizational representatives -- the purpose of that meeting is to formulate a working draft the 3-5 year Work Plan (workshop dates: July 11th-13th). [Task E] coordinate, facilitate and document a 2-hour stakeholder outreach live-stream broadcast to allow the AppLCC ISC to present their draft Work Plan for comment and feedback (date TBD by the ISC). [Task F] design, facilitate and document a follow-up webinar with the AppLCC staff and ISC to incorporate stakeholder comments into the draft Work Plan. [Task G] finalize the draft Work Plan and distribute it to the AppLCC ISC for review by August. Work with AppLCC staff to finalize based on ISC review.