

**APPALACHIAN LCC ISC MEETING NOTES**  
**OCTOBER 4, 2012 [Virtual Meeting via Conference call 9:00-11:30 EST]**

**ISC Attendees:**

Whitehurst(VA), Waldrop(KY), Brewer(MD), Weeks(NC), Thurman(TN), Johansen(WV), Reynolds(OH), Durbrow(EPA-R3), [Schabereel - for Harris(NPS-NE), [Campbell - for Mendelson(NPS-NCR)], Albright(NPS-SE), [Bennett – for Elow(FWS-R5)], Shope, Russ(USGS-NE & ATL Muir), Lee(USFS/SRS), [Crews – for Schofield(TVA)], LaVoie(EBC), Stang(EBTJV), [Chang – for Pomponio (EPA-R3)]

[Staff = Brennan, Costanzo, Cimitile]

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/REPORT OUT:**

AppLCC Interim Steering Committee (ISC) Virtual Meeting (Oct. 4th) – The AppLCC ISC met to make decisions regarding several important topics:

- 1) the requested boundary adjustment from the Central Hardwoods JV to the Gulf Coast Plains and Ozark LCC to request sponsorship of the proposal;
  - VOTE: A letter will be transmitted to the CHJV requesting that the LCC sponsoring agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service take the lead in reevaluating the original criteria used to delineate LCCs and consider the benefits of adjusting those boundaries or leaving them as delineated. Concerns for the impact that a boundary change would have on management of aquatic resources and watersheds was voiced by several Committee members.
- 2) adoption of the AppLCC (3-5 year) Work Plan generated out of the 3-day (July) Steering Committee Workshop;
  - VOTE: The Appalachian LCC (3-5 year) Work Plan was approved pending some final comments and edits being submitted by USGS.
  - VOTE: The ISC decided not to revisit editing of the Mission or Vision statements based on feedback gathered at the ISC's July Workshop and to allow staff to finalize.
  - FOLLOW-ON ACTION: Staff presented a summary document (HO\_3c) of Task Groups necessary to support tasks adopted in the new Work Plan and asked for ISC volunteers; Mark Thurman and Eric Cruise volunteered; Jean will re-craft the Task Group document to clarify what is needed so that ISC members can further consider volunteering or offering staff to assist.
- 3) expenditure decision of the FY12 program funds -- The ISC deliberated regarding three funding proposals under active consideration: 1) Nislow et al., Development of a web-based tool for riparian restoration prioritization for climate change resilience (\$35K); 2) Krstolic and Austin, Model flow regime alterations associated

with climate change and implications for aquatic organisms and habitat in Appalachian streams (\$49.3K); and 3) Anderson et al., A terrestrial habitat map for the Appalachian LCC (\$149K for Phase I).

- VOTE: Members voted to approve Nislow et al. for funding
- VOTE: ISC also authorized staff to pursue contracting support for a Data Needs Assessment, setting aside up to \$75K for this purpose.
- DECISION: Regarding the need for terrestrial habitat mapping, although many declared this a high priority need, the group voted to elevate consistency and data sharing issues to the lead agencies, U.S. Fish and Wildlife (Doug Austen) and U.S. Geological Survey (Doug Beard) through a letter from the ISC Chair.
- FOLLOW-ON ACTION: Decisions on the outstanding balance of approximately \$69K will be made at a future meeting.

4) consideration of the application request for membership on the ISC by National Audubon Society (Ginny Kreitler).

- VOTE: The ISC considered a request from the National Audubon Society to be represented on the ISC, and voted to approve this request.

## **MEETING NOTES:**

### **PART I.**

ISC Chair, David Whitehurst opened the meeting by inviting Jean Brennan, LCC Coordinator to introduce the ISC to the new AppLCC website launched [applcc.org], and Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture (EBTJV) companion website [easternbrooktrout.org]. The new sites will greatly enhance the ability of the LCC and JV to communicate with its partners, host information sharing, and support workgroups. In addition, features will soon include data portals and interactive GIS decision support tools.

### **PART II.**

Whitehurst presented the topic of the petition by the Central Hardwoods JV to the ISC of the Gulf Coast Plains and Ozark LCC to support their request to adjust the AppLCC boundary to allow this JV to be entirely within the Gulf Coast Plains and Ozarks LCC. A draft response letter was presented in advance to the ISC for discussion.

Chair: Is the ISC was comfortable with the approach presented in the draft written response to CHJV?

Discussion:

- the portion recommended for removal includes the larger stream systems of the UTRB -- firmly believe this need to be managed as a unit. Propose we reply with justification from aquatic resource management standpoint with reasons to maintain current boundary.
- strongly agree; original boundary was soundly placed.

- understand that JV's petition is valid but we believe aquatics issue is of more importance.
- agree strongly, but if we come out too strongly we preclude Ken Elowe and the sponsoring agency (FWS) from acting as lead to reassess the original LCC boundaries decision – we should leave door open.
- agree, but do address aquatics.

Whitehurst: Is anyone opposed to this approach? None, therefore ISC will move forward as discussed. **APPROVED.**

### **PART III.**

LCC Coordinator, Jean Brennan gave a quick overview of the Work Plan and activities leading to its development.

Whitehurst: Are we comfortable with the Work Plan?

- What if we have corrections, suggestions?
- LCC Coordinator: We can still take those, especially errors or omissions.

Whitehurst: Can we vote with understanding that corrections/omissions can be addressed?

- Stang: Motion we approve with adjustments.
- Johansen: Second.

Whitehurst: Discussion? Any objections? None. **APPROVED.**

### **PART IV.**

LCC Coordinator, Jean Brennan introduced HO\_3c on Task Groups identified as responsible for making progress on the Work Plan and asked for volunteers to work with LCC staff on products.

Whitehurst: Noted the LCC has limited staffing and needs this additional support.

Whitehurst: Do Members need more time to review and consider? Or are people ready to volunteer?

- LCC Coordinator: offered to re-form the written presentation and email out For ISC to consider.
- Thurman: I'd be interested in working on these; specifically the Strategic Engagement Task Group (e.g. diversity of conservation agencies at state level in TN).
- Crews: I see areas (e.g. Data Sharing) where staff can assist; I can provide TVA assistance.
- Muir: Notably absent from these Task Groups is "Research" - beyond data.  
LCC Coordinator: Language that supports the Science Needs Portfolio is incorporated into the Work Plan and the Research COP will advise future updates of the SN Portfolio. However, this discussion addresses the Task Groups as generated by the Work Plan. These Task Groups are to deal with higher level, over-arching tasks needed to advance Work Plan objectives. --- agreed to discuss/endure programmatic alignment of the SN Portfolio and the Task Groups/Work Plan.

### **PART V.**

Science Coordinator presented an overview of each of the three funding proposals under consideration (see Executive Summary for list), and ended by reminding the group that these were briefly presented at the July Workshop, along with a

discussion of potential funding support for tasks identified in the Work Plan - specifically the Data Needs Assessment.

Whitehurst: We are now open for discussion.

1) Nislow et al., Development of a web-based tool for riparian restoration prioritization for climate change resilience (\$35K)

- Muir: The NESCS entertained the Nislow/Hudy proposal and it made it to the full proposal stage, was well received, but ultimately not selected. It supports the EBTJV and research interests of the USGS Leetown and Conte Lab work underway.
- like aquatics, climate change focus with tool as output for relatively low figure -- inclined to support.
- Hudy builds on other work and is in total pretty comprehensive for EBT range.

Whitehurst: Can this tool be used to support gas development mitigation?

- Stang: Yes, could identify areas at highest risk – for climate change/temp increase impacts.
- like delivery of on-the-ground tool as a great LCC product.

Thurman: Can it serve as model for other ecoregions?

- Muir: Yes, it has already been applied in Piedmont Region in Chesapeake Bay.

Whitehurst: Clyde Thompson could not be here, but he relayed that he likes both aquatics proposals [other is Krstolic]. Any motions on that one?

- Stang: I move to fund the Hudy proposal.
- Lavoie: Second.

Whitehurst: Does anyone object to passing the motion to approve the Nislow/Hudy proposal for funding? None. **APPROVED.**

2) Krstolic and Austin, Model flow regime alterations associated with climate change and implications for aquatic organisms and habitat in Appalachian streams (\$49.3K);

- Krstolic's fills in important gap for CSCs but as USGS rep, I have to recuse myself from voting.
- [No other Members offered to support Krstolic's at this time.]

3) Anderson et al., A terrestrial habitat map for the Appalachian LCC (\$149K for Phase I).

- Regarding the Terrestrial Landscapes proposal, one concern is the proliferation of habitat mapping. We need collaboration at the National and especially Regional scales to ensure these efforts aren't duplicative and are compatible. Makes sense that it is one of the first steps for the LCC, but concerned that coordination is lacking.
- Terrestrial habitat mapping is a priority but share concern and there are products already available. Another RFA with more focus, especially

regarding habitat structure might be needed. Riparian restoration is also important [Nislow/Hudy].

- WV has to work in NE and SE Regions. NE has good Model; Most concerned with Eastern US development. Not comfortable saying AppLCC should direct limited funding now on any of these. Would rather bank \$ and/or hear from staff what they think.

Whitehurst: Doesn't seem to be a lot of support to move forward on the TNC proposal.

Whitehurst: Is National meeting of LCCs coming up? [Yes, New Orleans in November.]

- We can ask FWS and USGS to make recommendations at the National level to develop common language.
- [several members all agreed]
- The Fish Habitat Partnerships at the National level are developing basic standardizations. We could pause, but this needs to be a high priority as baseline for future work by the CSCs and others.
- It would be ideal to get National parameters but how long do we wait?

Whitehurst: Do we want to elevate this issue then to FWS (Doug Austin) and USGS (Doug Beard)? Can Jean draft a letter for this from ISC?

Whitehurst: Do we have a motion to move forward as discussed?

- Muir: Motion.
- Second.

Whitehurst: Can we allocate any funds to support the Work Plan?

- LCC Coordinator: Staff has done some research and estimates that we'd need \$50-75K to pursue the Data Needs Assessment.

Whitehurst: Is Committee willing to set aside \$75K out of the \$144K remaining (after funds approved for Nislow/Hudy)?

- Stang: Motion
- Johansen: Second.

Whitehurst: Any further discussion? Anyone opposed? Hearing none, **APPROVED.**

[BALANCE after these two funding decisions approved, approximately \$69K]

LCC Coordinator: In the interest of time, we can bundle the last agenda (HO\_5a regarding the need for ISC Volunteers to help with our Governance/Charter revision – which must be revised and approved by next Sept) item into further outreach to ISC on Task Groups.

#### **PART IV.**

A decision is needed regarding the Audubon Society's written request to be represented on the Appalachian LCC ISC.

Whitehurst: Last issue is whether ISC wants to add Audubon as a Member?

- LCC Coordinator: Audubon meets the criteria that the ISC Leadership applied initially in considering NGO/Private organizational representative on the ISC "manages lands or natural resources, or represents a large-scale initiative..."
- support Audubon's bid; a move in the right direction.

Whitehurst: Does Committee want to accept or defer?

- Johansen: I move to add Audubon.
- Durbrow: Second.

Shope: Where is the guidance on adding (NGO) members?

- LCC Coordinator: It is in the ISC Charter.  
[from: pg 7. "Non- Governmental, Other Organizations, Partnerships, Associations or Industry). Inclusion of an organization type or nomination of representative of an individual organization or group types will be made on a case by case basis to help the Appalachian LCC meet its mission and goals."]

Whitehurst: Any further discussion? Any objections? **APPROVED.**

*END OF MEETING.*

Notes accepted by Chair and approved for distribution 2012-10-19, jb