

EBTJV Steering Committee and Conservation Strategy Working Group Meeting Minutes

August 17-18th, 2005
IAFWA Conference Room 283
Washington, D.C.

August 17th participants:

Mike Weimer, Steve Perry, Steven Kline, Fred Harris, Dave Cross, Ron Dunlap, Doug Besler, Eric Schwaab, Robert Carline, Kim Ryals, Doug Stang, Doug Beard, Patrick O'Rourke, Alan Heft, Lee Keefer, Mark Hudy, Hannibal Bolton, Steve Moyer, Nat Gillespie, Lisa Moss, Maureen Gallagher, Kelly Niland, Jeff Waldon, Lila Borge Wills, Karen Hockett, and Andy Loftus (facilitator)

Meeting began with Eric Schwaab asking for agreement with the proposed agenda for the meeting.

All agreed and work group reports followed.

Data Work Group (Mark Hudy and Doug Beard):

- Mark Hudy presented the progress of the Data Work Group with a PowerPoint presentation.
- GIS predictive models are done for the mid-Atlantic region; New England will be completed by December or January.
- A draft report was handed out to the Steering Committee along with a map and envelope to return comments.
- Doug Beard gave an update on website development. The URL will be up in a couple of weeks.
- Dave Cross suggested sending a letter to the FS Chief to express appreciation for the FS and Mark Hudy's data efforts. Letter should be from the Steering Committee with representative agency signatories to show cooperation (Fred, Steve, and Eric will sign).
- Mike Weimer asked about inventory standards to keep up with population monitoring.
- Mark said more money was needed to complete the GIS work (approximately \$50K). The Steering Committee agreed this was a good idea and felt there were probably funds to do so.

Action Items:

- Comments on the draft were requested by September 20.
- Edited draft will be sent to the states by November 15.
- Provide feedback to Doug Beard on the website (after it is posted).
- Letter to the FS Chief to express appreciation for the FS and Mark Hudy's data efforts. Eric Schwaab will write the letter.
- Is there additional money available for GIS work? (*who is responsible?*)

Conservation Strategy Work Group (Doug Besler):

- A draft was sent out in March and they received only a handful of comments.
- The work group has been awaiting the data report and direction from the steering committee before proceeding with the Conservation Strategy (CS).
- Wants to hire Nat Gillespie to help write report. Funding is available.

- A discussion ensued about the scope of the report and what should go to the states before the December meeting and the goals of the December meeting.
 - Three-tiered approach: state, regional, range-wide.
 - Where can EBJTV lend support?
 - Need to have a clear tactical approach to avoid data results being used to list species.
 - Can we focus in on 1 or 2 high priority issues or hot spots where potential support is high?
 - What are states doing now with existing resources? Can we compile this information? What would be the top priorities if had more resources? Survey to states?
 - Ask states to identify quickest results for the least amount of money (by December meeting).
 - Outreach Committee needs to identify available funding sources and notify the states (e.g., corporations like Walmart). States need help understanding where the money is and how to approach getting it.
 - Content of CS report will be addressed in tomorrow's session along with December meeting agenda.
 - What are the goals? No net loss? Rehabilitation?

Action Items:

- Hire Nat Gillespie.
- Outreach Committee will identify available funding sources and compile them to be delivered to the states.
- Survey to states.
- Draft of new CS by October 15 and will be discussed during October 20 Steering Committee conference call.
- Draft of CS to states with Data report as an appendix prior to December meeting.

Habitat Work Group (Hannibal Bolton):

- Waiting on Conservation Strategy completion and Steering Committee direction
- Triage protocol has been drafted and comments have been solicited within the work group.
- Protocol will be sent to committee after work group meets.
- Tried to get list of ongoing projects but huge task. Suggest having states input into database. A discussion ensued on how to do this.

Action Items:

- Work group meeting (face-to-face or conference call).
- Triage protocol to steering committee by December.

Outreach and Education Work Group (Kim Ryals):

- Completed fact sheet and sent with cover letter to over 100 partners.
- PowerPoint presentation on Venture is completed except for narrative recording.
- Want steering committee input.
- Used “Venture” in manuscript, but feel need a new acronym or identity for EBTJV.
- When completed presentation will be emailed, or link will be emailed to Partners and December meeting attendees.
- There were requests for the fact sheet to be posted somewhere on a website so that others could be referred to it.
- Rewrote amendment for Component 3 after Federal Aid did not approve it. Eric felt new version would satisfy Federal Aid.
- No one had comments on substance of new deliverables.

Action Items:

- Draft of presentation will be sent to Steering Committee for comments by August 22.
- Presentation and fact sheet will be posted on the website and partners will be emailed the link.
- Component 3 amendment edits will be completed by Trout Unlimited and CMI will submit to Federal Aid.
- Kim Ryals was tasked with linking the presentation on the fishhabitat.org website and was given contact information to do so

Grant Status Update (Jeff Waldon):

- Components 1 and 2 (Data work group and Conservation Strategies) are on track or ahead of schedule and within budget.
- Component 3 still needs to have an approved amendment, and is therefore behind.
- Jeff asked that the partners provide some ball park figures on in-kind contributions since January 1, 2004 for reporting purposes.

Action Items:

- Amendment approval for Component 3 (CMI and Trout Unlimited will do).
- All partners are asked to submit to Jeff estimates of in-kind contributions (time, \$) since January 1, 2004.

National Fish Habitat Initiative Update (Eric Schwaab)

Hannibal started the update:

- NFHI gaining momentum at national level.
- Try to funnel money from NFHI to continuing EBTJV efforts.
- He put together an executive summary.
- Conservation Summit in St. Louis – we should have display and fact sheet there and consider modeling our website efforts to gather info on ongoing projects.

Eric:

- EBTJV can demonstrate what NFHI can do on the ground with measurable progress.
- NFHI is about bringing partners together to communicate needs and opportunities.
- Direct funds where can most make a difference.

- Core work group – Doug Austin.
- Partners coalition: fishhabitat.org, Core work group – Doug Austin.
- Link the Venture powerpoint presentation on the fishhabitat.org website.

Facilitator Andy Loftus asked if the PIs felt that the EBTJV was on track.

- Eric Schwaab felt it was way ahead of schedule with the data assessment and wanted tomorrow's meeting to focus on setting the stage for the December meeting.
- Steve Perry agreed and he was pleased at the progress with the data. He felt the working groups and steering committee were working well together.
- Fred Harris felt we had a good basis to build on but would be challenged to develop and implement strategies. He thought it was good we included an education and outreach component.
- Jeff Waldon pointed out that our Venture was more data driven than other prior efforts, which was important.
- A discussion ensued about changing the EBTJV stated goal statement from qualitative to more quantitative.
- Should we set the bar at no net loss or set goals to evoke more action?

Andy Loftus: Are there any concerns?

- Great effort to date, but how do we make sure the effort is tracked? We need to institutionalize data collection and reporting so states can routinely update progress.

Andy Loftus: Is the Committee structure good?

- For now, in the development phase good, but what about implementation and long term?

Andy Loftus: How are the resources?

- Jeff Waldon suggested developing a 5-10 year plan.
- Conservation Strategy needs to jump into implementation with milestones or targets. Feds need to see milestones with timelines and outcomes.
- Need ambitious and bold goals – not just no net loss.
- Need to select watersheds and present 5-10 year plans with goals and budget to Congress.

August 18th Participants:

Mike Weimer, Steve Perry, Steven Kline, Fred Harris, Dave Cross, Doug Besler, Eric Schwaab, Robert Carline, Kim Ryals, Doug Stang, Doug Beard, Patrick O'Rourke, Alan Heft, Lee Keefer, Hannibal Bolton, Steve Moyer, Nat Gillespie, Maureen Gallagher, Lisa Moss, Jeff Waldon, Lila Borge Wills, Karen Hockett, and Andy Loftus (facilitator)

Andy Loftus provided an overview of where we are now and deadlines discussed yesterday:

Where are we now?

- Fairly comfortable with status of initiative
- Impressed with data collection
 - But what do we do with it now?
- Time to begin planning for “institutionalizing” the effort
 - Identify funding sources/resources for implementation
 - Refine goals – quantitative
 - Governance
 - Integrate with NFHI

Assignments/Deadlines

- Invitation for December meeting – sent out in late August
- Sept. 20 – comments to Mark Hudy
- State Survey
- Oct. 15 – Doug Besler sends CS draft to Steering Committee
- Oct. 20 – Steering Committee conference call
- Nov. 15- Data report and CS to full group
- Dec. 7-9 – Full group meeting at NCTC

Goals for today are to provide guidance to the CS work group and plan the Dec. meeting.

- Dave Cross felt we needed a more detailed look at the red area on the map in the southeast (NC, SC, TN, and GA) so he asked Mark Hudy to look at this area more closely as a pilot project to demonstrate to the states what is possible with the data.
- Need to use map to target areas for more detailed analysis.
- It was suggested that threats be differentiated between historic and active (i.e., currently occurring).
- Is genetics an issue? Group decided needed to avoid that debate and focus on habitat issues.

Conservation Strategies document discussion

- Bob Carline presented the work group's concerns – mostly that it was a moving target. The work group needed definitive direction on the CS document content.
- What is the goal or scope of the CS document?
- A discussion ensued about whether it should include actual conservation strategies or just a summary of the threats and allow states to give input to the strategy. What should be presented to the states? Should we propose strategies before December meeting? There was concern that we include the states and be sure to give them an incentive to get involved.

After a lengthy discussion and debate it was decided to:

- Change the name of the document to a threats assessment.
- Suggest broad goals to the states in December and solicit their input on specific strategies.
- Edit the purpose statement in the document.
- CS will incorporate Data report – attach as appendix
- Conduct a survey of states to find out current projects and budgets addressing BT issues and include in the report. What is working for the states and what isn't? What would they do with adequate funding?

Action Items:

- Edit the purpose statement in the document – Bob Carline will work on.
- Conduct a survey of states (CS work group will conduct the survey).

What are the overall goals?

- Need an overarching vision statement and goal for the Venture.
- Need an overarching vision for outreach and education to promote.
- What do we take to the public?
 - Caution about map which looks really bad for BT and may prompt listing efforts.
 - In danger, but not a disaster, still millions of fish out there.
 - BT as an indicator of coldwater systems – our water supply.
- Need to have illustrative examples to promote potential outcomes from EBTJV.
- Doug Beard proposed several goals that were debated and revised:
 1. Slow rate of negative changes in status of BT watersheds (restoration goal)
 2. No change in number of intact watersheds (conservation goal) or increase in number of intact watersheds
 3. Fill in monitoring and assessment gaps (monitoring goal)
 4. Expand and integrate additive partners into EBTJV
 5. Insure a broad-based understanding of BT declines and impact on people.
 6. Assure a long term strategy to monitor and assess progress toward goals
 7. Build a coalition to advocate for funding and needs of the initiative
 8. Protection of existing populations

- Need habitat-based goals
- Sustainable, fishable populations?
- Range-wide habitat goals and strategies?

Action Items:

- Doug Beard and Hannibal Bolton will work on re-writing the goals and will present to the group.
- Dave Cross and Doug Stang will work on Venture vision statement and circulate to group.

Agenda for December meeting (see draft agenda at end of notes):

It was decided to:

- Start the evening of the 7th to make best use of time. Data and state survey will be presented in the evening so states have the opportunity to discuss.
- What to include in the letter was discussed. The letter will try to entice states to come.
- Need to reach out more aggressively to other partners: TPL, TNC
- Invite posters to highlight successes.
- Have break-out sessions, probably organized by region.
- Provide travel grants for 2 people per state.

- Goals for the December Meeting:
 1. Overview of 1st range-wide assessment to be used for state planning purposes.
 2. Report on actions items from last full group meeting in June, 2004.
 2. Set priorities for action and implementation.
 - a. Review triage approach.
 - b. Identify initial focus areas to achieve results.
 3. Will solicit feedback from the states – hear what others say needs to happen.
 4. Demonstrate success stories.
 5. Plan next steps.
 - a. Action plan.
 - b. How to monitor progress.
 - c. Opportunities for research, including range-wide.
 6. Bring together all partners – NGO, state, federal, and others. What can each partner do to assist in the effort. What can the Venture do to help? Discuss opportunities to work together.

Action items:

- Letter to states – invitations (Kim Ryals).
- Mike Wiemer will confirm NCTC open on the 7th.
- Solicit posters of success stories – Bob Carline.
- Contact NGOs – TNC, TPL (Eric?)
- Organize facilitators – CMI and Hannibal.
- December committee – Jeff will chair, Kim, and Hannibal.
- Travel grants– Kim, Lila, and Mike will work out details and how to phrase in letter and organize travel grants.

Meeting adjourned at 2pm

**AGENDA
EASTERN BROOK TROUT JOINT VENTURE
ANNUAL MEETING
DECEMBER, 2005**

Evening Prior

7:00pm-8:30 pm

Report on action items/update since June 2004

Present Data report-Mark Hudy

Present threats document -

December 8

Morning

8:00 Welcome and introductions

8:15 Results of state survey

8:45 Questions and Discussion

9:15 Tools Available for Brook Trout Restoration

-- Federal agencies – what can they contribute (FWS, USFS, NRCS)

10:00 Break

10:20 Tools Available for Brook Trout Restoration

-- Models of success: potential activities

11:00 Small group discussions

-- What needs to happen-actions for implementation

12:00 Lunch

1:00 Continue small group discussion

2:00 Report from small groups

3:00 Break

3:20 Questions/discussion

4:00 Wrap up day 1

4:30 Adjourn

December 9

8:00 Welcome and housekeeping

8:15 Summary of previous day

8:45 Strategies for setting priorities
- triage approach

9:45 Plan next steps

-- what needs to be done?

10:00 Break

10:20 Small group discussions
action plan, etc.
How to monitor progress
Opportunities for research, etc.

12:00 Lunch

1:00 Report of breakouts

1:30 Synthesis/Guts of the action plan

2:00 Adjourn