

**A Fish Habitat Partnership**

**Steering Committee Meeting**

**October 25th and 27th 7:00 – 9:30 pm**

The EBTJV Steering Committee met twice during the annual partnership meeting. The attendance list and meeting notes below are the cumulative products of both meetings.

Attendees: Doug Stang, Tom Sadler, Ted Koch, Jason Detar, Rick Kirn, Mark Hudy, Jim Habera, Tai Chang, Jacob Rash, Fred Harris, Merry Gallagher, Doug Besler, Paul Pajak, Keith McGilvray, Mike Shingleton, Dianne Timmins, Callie McMunigal, Jeff Adams, Hannibal Bolton, Jaime Geiger, Rachel Muir, Mike Slattery, and Jennifer Greiner.

Operational Discussion:

1. **Identification of a EBTJV Vice-Chair**

Doug Besler, NC, was elected Vice-Chair of the EBTJV Steering Committee (SC). Mark Hudy made the motion and Tom Sadler seconded it. The vote was unanimous.

1. **Any changes needed to by-laws or management structure?**

The Steering Committee proposed a number of changes to the management structure document of the partnership. Most of these changes represent corrections to reflect the current structure and operations of the partnership:

* Edit the vision to read…*“healthy coldwater systems with fishable brook trout populations throughout their historic eastern geographic range.”*
* Update the document to reflect the merging of the Mid-Atlantic Workgroup into the Northern and Southern Workgroups: Pennsylvania was moved from the Mid-Atlantic to the Northern Work Group; Ohio was added to the Northern Work Group; Delaware was dropped from the Northern Workgroup; and West Virginia, Maryland and New Jersey were moved form the Mid-Atlantic to the Southern Work Group.
* Add a statement that the SC strives to make decisions by consensus.
* Teleconferences are now quarterly with one annual face-to-face meeting.
* Change “lobbying” to “advocacy”
* Subcommittee and Workgroup Chairs are expected to attend / participate in Steering Committee meetings and conference calls.
* Change usage of subcommittee and workgroup to reflect the names of our teams.

Once the recommended changes from the meeting are incorporated into the by-laws, the document will be circulated for a 60 day review by Steering Committee members prior to voting.

1. **Roles and responsibilities of EBTJV** –

* **Fund Manager** – The Steering Committee discussed various options for a fund manager for the EBTJV. There was broad support for the Fisheries Conservation Foundation (Foundation) to become the new fund manager for the partnership. A meeting will be scheduled with the Foundation to discuss the potential opportunities and concerns that some states may have.
* **CMI** – A report from CMI on all of their activities is included as an attachment to these notes.

1. **Communication**
   1. **Conference Calls / Meetings** - The group decided to continue with the quarterly SC conference calls and one annual face-to-face all partners meeting each year. Workgroups and Subcommittees are encouraged to meet via conference call as often as they need to accomplish their work tasks for the year.
   2. **Yahoo Listserv** – Lila Borge-Wills set up a new listserv for the partnership through Yahoo Listserv. This will replace the one she was managing through CMI. Lila, Dianne, Callie and all chairs will have moderator access to the new listserv.
   3. **Website** - A decision was made to hire Jeff Dobson to be the new EBTJV website manager. His rate is $1,000 per year. Callie will try to pay for the first year with funds remaining from the meeting.
   4. **Facebook** – Tom Sadler will continue managing the Facebook page for the EBTJV.
   5. **Data CDs** - A request was made for CMI to produce 100-200 of the ETBJV data cd’s for the partnership if funds remained from the grants they have been managing. Callie will check on this and ensure that the CDs are produced.
2. **Development of annual spending plan**

* **Annual Spending Plan** – The SC discussed the desire and need for an annual spending plan. The Grants and Development Committee will develop the plan which will include the amount and potential sources of funds necessary to cover the annual meeting, travel support, website maintenance, assessment, etc.
* **Coordinator** - The SC discussed different options for coordination of the partnership including raising funds to hire a full-time coordinator. A decision was made to use FWS staff from the Appalachian Partnership to provide EBTJV coordination services. The SC Chairs will meet with FWS staff to discuss expectations and roles.
* **Funding for Non-Habitat Projects** (Assessments, Research, etc.) – At this time, applications for these types of projects will be passed on to other partnerships / funding sources where eligible.

**Programmatic Discussion:**

1. **Review & Approval of FY2011 EBTJV Projects**
   1. **Incomplete Project Applications**

Next year, a statement will be added to the announcement that clearly explains that incomplete applications will not be accepted.

* 1. **Project scoring** – sufficient scorers? changes or updates needed?

The review team membership is sufficient, but changes are needed to the scoring sheet. Jake Rash is leading the effort to revise the scoring criteria. Comments should be sent to him as soon as possible.

* 1. **Ranking Approval** - The SC reviewed and discussed the draft project ranking from the review team. The review team recommended that 4 projects be removed from the list because they were either non-habitat projects or they were not appropriate for EBTJV funding. Mark Hudy made a motion to approve the project ranking as submitted by the review team. Tom Sadler seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.
  2. **Timing of Announcement** –

The SC discussed various options for the timing of the project application announcement. The SC decided to try to advertise the opportunity early next year. Callie will work with the Review Team to get the application and ranking criteria updated in time for the early schedule next year.

1. **Project Overlap Between Multiple FHPs**

The SC held a brief discussion on how to handle project applications that were in an area covered by more than one FHP. Projects in this situation should be able to apply to both partnerships for funding. We will add a question to the application next year so that applicants can identify when they are applying to more than one partnership.

1. **Funding Cap on Projects**

The Steering Committee Members discussed various options for the project cap which is currently $50,000 per project. In the end, it was decided to leave the $50,000 cap in place for another year.

1. **Project Tracking Map & Need for GPS Coordinates**

Dianne and Keith are working on this. The new project completion form will assist us with this information for all current and future projects. FWS will ensure that the project completion form is a requirement for the cooperative agreement with the partner organization.

1. **EBTJV Assessment Update – status, scope, level, time line**

The SC is interested in moving forward with the updated assessment. Mark will provide an estimate on cost for the updated assessment. EBTJV will send a letter to USFS requesting Mark’s support / time on this important project this year. FWS (Jaime Geiger) may provide funding for travel support to complete this assessment.

**Report on CMI Activities related to the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture**

The Conservation Management Institute (CMI) is a research center within the College of Natural Resources and Environment at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia. CMI has been involved with the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture for a number of years primarily providing assistance with Internet and database work and coordination of meetings. This document provides a brief synopsis of activities undertaken on behalf of the EBTJV over the past year related to 2 sponsored grants.

*National Fish and Wildlife Foundation*

All deliverable tasks and final reporting for this grant was completed and submitted to NFWF in June 2010. The 36 page report outlined the support provided by the grant for several EBTJV meetings held in 2008-2009. We appreciate the assistance provided by Callie McMunigal and Stephen Perry to complete this report.

*Multi-State Conservation Grant (through 12/31/10)*

This grant provided resources for additional printed materials, meeting support, and website development and maintenance.

This grant funded the printing of 25,000 copies of the “Roadmap to Restoration” for dissemination to policy makers and the public. This document provides specific guidelines for habitat management for the eastern brook trout in addition to outlining the threats, status, and conservation goals. This document is also available via the website at <http://www.easternbrooktrout.org/docs/EBTJV_RoadmapToRestoration_FINAL.pdf>.

The grant also provided resources to maintain and update the EBTJV website. Activities completed as a result of this grant include:

-Design, maintenance and hosting of the current look and feel of the website

-Updated information, online articles and documents for the site as requested

-Creation of an updated online proposal submission mechanism that allows applicants to create accounts and submit the required proposal forms. Other added functionality included the ability for users to submit more than one proposal (system keeps everything separate based on ‘proposal name’) and a mechanism to allow ‘reviewers’ the ability to see multiple electronic versions of the proposal documents simultaneously time to increase efficiency of the proposal review/approval process.

Funds from this grant were also used to support participation in EBTJV meeting held at Cacapon State Park in West Virginia in November of 2009. There were 41 people registered for this meeting representing 21 agencies and organizations including 10 state natural resource agencies.

The remaining funds from this grant are being used to support travel grants and meeting expenses for the 2010 meeting at Mountain Lake. Upon completion of this meeting, CMI will complete all final reporting requirements for the grant and submit all required information by the project end date.