MEMORANDUM

To: LCC Network and Partners

From: U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution

Subject: LCC National Council Charter Proposal

Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs) were established as a network of partnerships to collaboratively address conservation at a landscape-scale across North America, the Caribbean, and U.S. affiliated Pacific Islands. The existing LCC network is comprised of twenty-two regional LCCs, which are self-directed, stand-alone partnerships whose work is guided by an LCC steering committee. Currently, there is a network-wide coordinating team comprised of LCC Coordinators, but this group cannot address critical national-level needs for coordination and support across the LCC network. Ever since the LCC effort was initiated in 2009, multiple parties have pointed toward the need for a National Council to serve the LCC network. During the November 2010 LCC workshop at the National Conservation Training Center in West Virginia, a working group was engaged to develop the initial concepts for a National Council.

In response to these efforts and ongoing discussions about the value of a National Council, in 2011 the U. S. Department of the Interior (DOI) engaged the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (U.S. Institute) to conduct an independent, third-party neutral assessment of national partners and DOI leadership to gauge potential support, concerns, and suggestions for convening an LCC National Council. The assessment findings indicated there were critical national-level needs to support the long-term viability of the LCC network, which included: (1) overarching coordination of LCC efforts; (2) consistency between LCCs for coordination and communication to support a cohesive purpose; (3) articulation of shared outcomes; (4) support for collaboration across geographies; and (5) advocacy for LCCs.

Given the general support for such a body, the U.S. Institute convened a representative national "strategy team" to collaboratively develop a path forward and create a proposal for a national body that would balance the broadly recognized tension between the need to preserve and protect the self-directed nature of the LCCs with the need for an integrated, interdependent network. Members of the strategy team were selected to represent the broad array of partners interviewed for the assessment. Strategy team participants are listed below.

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Federal Agencies
Kit Muller, Bureau of Land Management
Cat Hawkins-Hoffman, National Park Service
Doug Parsons, National Park Service
Roger Griffis, NOAA Fisheries Service
Dave Cleaves, U.S. Forest Service
Monica Tomosy, U.S. Forest Service
Doug Beard, U.S. Geological Survey
Robin O'Malley, U.S. Geological Survey

Non-Governmental Organizations
Mark Humpert, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Gary Taylor, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Sara Vickerman, Defenders of Wildlife
Bruce Stein, National Wildlife Federation
Garritt Voggesser, National Wildlife Federation
Kurt Russo, Native American Land Conservancy
Mary Klein, NatureServe
Leslie Honey, NatureServe
Mark Kramer, The Nature Conservancy
Christie McGregor, The Nature Conservancy
Christy Plumer, The Nature Conservancy
Terra Rentz, The Wildlife Society
Steve Moyer, Trout Unlimited
Zach Cockrum, Trout Unlimited
Jad Daley, Trust for Public Land
Breece Robertson, Trust for Public Land

LCC Staff
Doug Austen, National LCC Network
Ben Thatcher, National LCC Network
Debra Schlafmann, California LCC
Genevieve Johnson, Desert LCC
Deanna Spooner, Pacific Islands CCC
Ken McDermond, South Atlantic LCC
Karen Murphy, Western Alaska LCC

Tribal
Don Motanic, Intertribal Timber Council
Ulalia Woodside, Pacific Islands CCC/Kamehameha Schools

States
Doug Vincent-Lang, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Josh Avey, Arizona Game and Fish Department
Larry Voyles, Arizona Game and Fish Department
John Rogner, Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Kenny Ribbeck, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Mallory Martin, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission

Over the course of four meetings and numerous conference calls, the strategy team delved deeply into the issues of unmet needs, and whether additional support was needed for the LCC Network. The strategy team discussed needs for coordination, guidance, and support that cannot be met by the LCC network structure. Through their deliberations, the strategy team, working via consensus, reached the conclusion that there was strong need for a national council to serve and advance the LCCs and the LCC network. Recognizing that the LCCs are self-directed partnerships and that participants come from agencies, organizations and Tribes with their own inherent authorities, the National Council respects such authorities and will work collaboratively to provide coordination, strategic guidance and recommendations. As such, the National Council will have no authority over individual LCCs.

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The strategy team developed the attached draft charter that identifies proposed structure, membership, purpose, goals, and objectives for the LCC National Council to meet these identified needs. The strategy team is now soliciting feedback from the LCC network and the broader conservation community to further refine the proposed council charter.

The process for soliciting and considering feedback is as follows:

- Share draft charter with LCC network, current and potential partners
- Host three webinars to solicit input on the draft charter
- Strategy team will revise draft charter based on input received
- Strategy Team will use the revised charter to convene the LCC National Council

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LCC National Council – Draft Charter

Introduction

Conservation challenges facing today's natural and cultural heritage, including the impacts of climate change, are enormous. They represent a force of change more consequential than any previously encountered. The magnitude of the challenge is so unprecedented and great that it requires us to come together, harness our collective power, and approach conservation in ways we never have before.

Existing governance structures struggle with landscape-scale management and the multiple scales of collaboration and coordination required. A network of twenty-two self-directed Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCC) was established to help address these complex conservation and collaboration challenges. This network is working across geographies and jurisdictions at a new regional scale and delivering unprecedented regional collaboration. The LCC network is helping to create enabling conditions to support the success of conservation efforts and initiatives underway across the landscape.

The LCC National Council will serve the LCC Network by learning from them and helping to identify the ecological and institutional challenges faced by the LCCs that should be addressed at the national scale. Serving as the national voice for the LCC Network, the council will seek to support changes that can be made at the national level to facilitate the work of the LCCs. The council will provide a platform for highlighting LCC successes and challenges. Sustained funding is needed for the LCC Network, and the council will work to ensure that local and regional partnership efforts are supported at the highest levels.

Looking inwardly, the LCC National Council will provide national level coordination to identify opportunities to reduce duplication, leverage resources and capacities, and improve efficiencies and conservation outcomes across the LCCs.

Recognizing that the LCCs are self-directed partnerships and that participants come from agencies, organizations and Tribes with their own inherent authorities, the National Council respects such authorities and will work collaboratively to provide coordination, strategic guidance and recommendations. As such, the National Council will have no authority over individual LCCs.

This is an initial charter that will serve as guidance to convene the LCC National Council. All these elements, including council membership, will be revisited by the National Council within the first two years of operation.

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Purpose

The LCC National Council will support the cooperative large-scale conservation efforts of the LCC network by working with them to enhance coordination among the LCCs and to identify ecological and institutional challenges that should be addressed at the national scale. Serving as the national voice for the LCC network, the council will seek to support actions that can be taken at the national level to facilitate the work of the cooperatives.

Goals

The following National Council goals emerged from the LCC Network and from national level partners. They identify needs essential to sustaining the viability of the LCCs that the existing network cannot address without additional national level support.

- Integrate national conservation initiatives and partnerships (i.e. State Wildlife Action Plans, Migratory Bird Joint Ventures, National Fish Habitat Partnerships, and The Nature Conservancy's Ecoregional Assessments) with the LCC network and provide a venue for higher level conversations about reducing programmatic duplication and improving efficiency.
- Promote, support and ensure recognition of the LCCs as an effectively functioning, coordinated, and connected network that enhances landscape-scale conservation.
- Build a national-level constituency for the LCCs that:
    - Focuses on strategic policy engagement
    - Shares LCC achievements
    - Promotes the LCCs within federal agencies and Congress
    - Catalyzes greater commitment by partners to the regional LCCs
- Communicate consistent messages about the LCC enterprise at the national level
- Increase Tribal government, Alaska Native, First Nation, and indigenous peoples' engagement in LCCs.

Organizational Structure

LCCs: There are twenty-two individual, self-directed LCCs. Each of these LCCs has a steering committee as well as working groups. Each LCC also has a staff Coordinator and Science Coordinator. At the national staff level, there is a National LCC Coordinator and an Assistant LCC Coordinator.

LCC staff: The LCC staff have organized into an LCC Coordinators Team (LCT) and a Science Coordinators team. The LCT has also selected an Executive Committee to work directly with the National LCC Coordinator and the LCT collectively on operational aspects of network governance, and other matters as appropriate, while respecting individual LCC steering committee governance authority.

LCC Network: Collectively, the partners in the twenty-two LCCs, the twenty-two Steering Committees and their staff, and the National LCC Coordinator and Assistant LCC Coordinator comprise the LCC Network.

LCC National Council: The council will coordinate, collaborate and provide strategic guidance to the LCC Network and all its partners. Additionally, the council will work to engage other organizations, agencies, tribes, and NGOs to further support collaborative landscape scale conservation.

Working Groups: When the council has identified a high-priority issue, action, or product, they may form a workgroup to conduct discussions and prepare recommendations for consideration by the council. Workgroups will carry out tasks as assigned by the council. Workgroups may be permanent or non-permanent and may disassemble when an issue is resolved or a product completed.

Membership

Selection Criteria

The following are characteristics the National Council seeks in all members. Individuals selected for the council will be collectively evaluated relative to these required characteristics:

- Be an active participant and an advocate for the LCC mission.
- Have a commitment and willingness to collaborate.
- Be able to think beyond the boundaries of his/her agency, organization, or Tribe.
- Be able to represent a broad array of natural and cultural resources.
- Have decision-making authority/influence within their agency, organization, or Tribe.
- Be committed to soliciting input from and reporting back to their agencies, organizations, Tribes, and colleagues.
- Have experience in collaborative processes at different scales.
- Be involved with an agency, organization, or Tribe that:
    - Is engaged in the LCC enterprise.
    - Has resources and/or a mission that aligns with the LCC network.
    - Has science/knowledge capacity and/or is actively engaged in resource management activities.

The following overarching characteristics are desirable in some of the members to ensure the National Council has these attributes:

- Be able to represent a North American perspective that includes international interests (i.e. It is recommended that the Council select a member(s) that come from the non-contiguous United States and/or Mexico or Canada).
- Have science/knowledge communications capacity.

Participation: All members (or their designated alternate) are expected to be present at a majority of the meetings, conference calls, or other forums in which discussion and/or decision making occurs.

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Alternates/designees: The Council will be effective only with consistent and engaged participation. Members should designate alternates who are fully informed, can act on behalf of their member, and can participate consistently.

Composition

The LCC National Council will consist of twenty-three participants as outlined below:

- 6 Federal agency directors – The participating federal agencies were selected based on their authority to make natural resource management decisions about large landscapes.
    - Federal agency directors from the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration will hold permanent seats on the council.
- 4 Tribal participants
    - Tribal participants will not be limited to tribal leadership, but also can be participants from tribal organizations.
    - Tribal participation may include Tribes, Alaska Natives, First Nations, Pacific Islanders, Caribbean peoples, and other indigenous representatives.
    - **Selection entity:** Initially, Tribal representatives on the National Strategy Team will develop a selection process, initial call for applications, and review and select members. Thereafter, review and selection will be the responsibility of the National Council.
- 4 State agency directors
    - State agencies will be nominated by each of the four respective AFWA regions.
    - **Selection entity:** Each regional state fish and wildlife association's executive committee (i.e. Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies) will review and select their respective participants.
- 4 NGO participants
    - **Selection entity:** Participating NGOs on the LCC Strategy Team will conduct the initial call for applications, will review applications, and will make final selections. Thereafter, review and selection will be the responsibility of the National Council.
- 1 LCC participant
    - LCC participants could be steering committee members or LCC staff and will be selected by the LCC Network. The LCC participant should have the ability to speak for broader LCC issues. In addition, attendance from the LCT/Executive Committee is expected.
    - **Selection entity:** The LCT will recommend an individual for participation. If the LCT cannot reach consensus, then their list of recommendations will be forwarded to the Executive Committee for final selection.

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- 2 “major partnership” (MP) participants
    - MP participants will include participants from major partnerships such as Migratory Bird Joint Ventures, National Fish Habitat Action Partnerships, and other relevant partnerships.
    - **Selection entity:** The LCC Strategy Team has determined that, initially, MP participants will come from the Joint Ventures and the National Fish Habitat Partnerships. Future Major Partnerships will be determined by the LCC National Council. The participant for the Joint Venture will be selected by the Joint Venture Management Board. The National Fish Habitat Action Partnership participant will be selected by the National Fish Habitat Action Partnership Board.
- 4 International Participants
    - International participants will include two from Canada and two from Mexico.
    - **Selection entity:** LCC staff, on behalf of the council, will send letters to all Canadian and Mexican partners participating in LCC Steering Committees and ask them to suggest participants. Additionally, LCC staff and Strategy Team members will reach out to Canadian and Mexican conservation entities via trilateral organizations such as the Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation Management and the North American Free Trade Agreement’s Commission for Environmental Cooperation to seek participation.
- 2 “At Large” participants
    - An additional two member seats are designated as “at large” and will be filled at a future date by the LCC National Council.
    - “At large” participants may come from organizations and interests not currently represented, such as local governments, international partners, industry, the philanthropic community, and other federal agencies such as the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Department of Transportation, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the U.S. Geological Survey.

In addition to the above designated voting members, the LCC National Council is encouraged to actively invite participation from other strategic partners as appropriate. While not voting members, other partners involved in landscape-scale conservation are encouraged to attend and participate in the LCC National Council.

The Strategy Team recognizes the direct tie between the LCCs and the Climate Science Centers and encourages attendance by an appropriate National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center representative.

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Terms

Initial term lengths:

The National Council's first participants will be selected for either a 3-year or 2-year term to initiate a staggered term rotation. After the first 3-year terms are served, all terms will be two years in length.

Initial term durations are as follows:

- Federal agencies – Permanent members
- Tribal representatives – two 3-year terms and two 2-year terms
- State representatives – two 3-year terms and two 2-year terms
- NGO representatives – two 3-year terms and two 2-year terms
- LCC representative – 2-year term
- Major Partnership representatives – 2-year terms
- At large seats – 2-year terms

Roles & Responsibilities

The LCC National Council is responsible for reporting to Congress, States, Tribes, and other partners on the status and accomplishments of the LCCs. Recognizing that the LCCs are self-directed partnerships and that participants come from agencies, organizations and Tribes with their own inherent authorities, the National Council respects such authorities and will work collaboratively to provide coordination, strategic guidance and recommendations. As such, the National Council will have no authority over individual LCCs.

Specific key roles are outlined below.

Chair – The Chair of the National Council holds the following responsibilities:

- Prepare a written meeting agenda for all matters to be addressed by the council.
- Prepare and issue all notices, including meeting notices, which are required to be given to the council and public.
- Preside at all meetings of the council, and unless otherwise directed by the council, present items of business for consideration by the council in the order listed on the meeting agenda.
- Appoint working groups as required.
- "Call the vote" when consensus is not achieved,
- Represent the LCC network to the Administration, Congress, key decision-makers, etc.

Vice chair – The Vice-chair will fulfill all the responsibilities of the chair in his/her absence.

Staff - The National LCC coordinator, or his/her designee, will provide staff support for the National Council and assist the Chair in finalizing meeting arrangements, tracking votes, documenting meeting discussions, distributing council notes and products, and identifying opportunities to speak on behalf of the LCC network.

Decision-making

The National Council's decision-making process will consist of the following elements.

Quorum:
Two-thirds of the LCC National Council must be present for decision-making to occur.

Decision-Making Process:
The National Council will seek consensus for all decisions. This implies thoroughly exploring issues and working actively and constructively to find mutual agreement. If full consensus is not possible, then the National Council will move to the decision-making model as outlined below:

- In the absence of consensus, a teleconference or in-person meeting is needed to make decisions. Email conversations may only be used to make decisions where consensus exists.
- If a quorum has been reached, agreement must come from 75% of the number of participants present.

Meetings: The National Council will meet quarterly (two in-person meetings and two web/conference call meetings), particularly as the Council is initially becoming established. The National Council can elect to meet more or less frequently as needed. The Council may reduce the number of in-person meetings to once per year if travel restrictions or funding is a barrier for achieving quorum. Decision-making as noted above can occur via e-mail or conference calls between quarterly meetings if actively facilitated by the Chair.

Travel support: The National Council may provide travel support for non-federal partners as needed to support capacity to participate.

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