



Report of the MAFWA State Wildlife Action Plan Technical Working Committee

Meeting Dates: May 5-8, 2008

Meeting Location: Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge (Prairie City, Iowa)

Attendance: A total of seventeen individuals representing ten Midwestern states participated in the meeting. The list of attendees is included in the meeting report (Appendix 1).

Executive Summary: The first meeting of the MAFWA State Wildlife Action Plan Technical Working Committee was held May 5-8, 2008. The meeting was chaired by Mark Humpert (NE) and co-chaired by Doug Harr (IA). The meeting provided a forum for sharing information about wildlife action plan implementation, interstate collaboration and to discuss issues related to effective action plan implementation. The organizational guidelines for the technical working committee were reviewed and no changes are recommended at this time. Presentations were given and discussions were held on action plan prioritization, state-based funding initiatives, climate change, St. Louis action plan workshop results, action plan synthesis report, university distributed learning project, multi-state competitive state wildlife grants, federal aid strategic planning, collaboration with joint ventures, dedicated wildlife funding and action plan review and revision. The first business meeting of the group was held and three letters were drafted on behalf of the president of MAFWA and eleven information items were forwarded to the directors for consideration. Katy Reeder (IA) and Dennis Figg (MO) were recommended to serve as chair and vice chair for 2008-09. Participants felt that the meeting was productive and served an important need. The agenda for the meeting is included in Appendix 2.

Director Action Items:

The following actions are requested by the directors:

- 1) Submit letters on behalf of MAFWA to Senator Tim Johnson (SD) and Senator Debbie Stabenow (MI) expressing appreciation for introducing the Teaming With Wildlife Act (S.2670).
- 2) Submit a letter on behalf of MAFWA to Senator Barbara Boxer (CA) expressing support/appreciation for including wildlife funding in climate change legislation.

Director Information Items:

The following items are being brought to the attention of MAFWA directors:

- 1) Staff at the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) provide critical support to action plan coordinators in the Midwest and in other regions. The Technical Working Committee would like to express its appreciation for the hard and thoughtful work of Naomi Edelson and Dave Chadwick during their tenures at AFWA. They have served the interests of Midwest Fish and Wildlife agencies well. It is our hope that they will be replaced as soon as possible to ensure that advocacy for dedicated wildlife funding and

outreach for action plan implementation will continue.

- 2) The technical working committee feels that one national wildlife diversity meeting be devoted each year to general wildlife diversity issues and a second meeting to wildlife action plans. Currently two meetings are held annually, covering both topics. Since wildlife diversity and action plan implementation in some states are managed by different individuals, it would improve efficiency if separate meetings were held.
- 3) The technical working committee feels that either a national meeting of wildlife action plan coordinators be organized or that regional meetings be held in 2009 to facilitate information exchange and to discuss emerging issues (e.g. climate change, funding, plan revision, interstate collaboration, etc.) related to action plan implementation.
- 4) The technical working committee supports the inclusion of education, nature-based recreation and wildlife conservation in any dedicated funding legislation. The Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program includes all three components and should be the preferred funding vehicle.
- 5) The technical working committee believes that viable watchable wildlife programs in each state can complement hunting and fishing recruitment efforts and lead to broader agency support and mission accomplishment. There is a need for improved communication and coordination between states on watchable wildlife issues but it's unclear what AFWA's role is. The technical working committee feels that AFWA should play a role in coordinating watchable wildlife activities between the states.
- 6) Cornell University is conducting a study of how collaboration has affected the implementation of the State Wildlife Actions Plans. The project is being funded by the Wildlife Habitat Policy Research Program of the National Council for Science and the Environment. The purpose of the project is to develop a typology of collaborative efforts, identify characteristics of successful efforts and identify collaborative efforts that can be used for more intensive case study. Dennis Figg (MO) has compiled a list of potential collaborations in the Midwest to be used as potential case studies.
- 7) Conservation on private lands is critical to the successful implementation of state wildlife action plans. The conservation title of the federal Farm Bill provides the single largest potential source of funding to do conservation work on private lands. The technical working committee would like to see linkages made to wildlife action plan implementation in Farm Bill conservation title programs during the rule making process. The technical working committee offers it assistance during the rule making process.
- 8) Climate change will be one of the most challenging threats to wildlife in the Midwest. Wildlife action plans in most states did not adequately address this issue. Revisions to wildlife action plans will likely be necessary to identify adaptation strategies necessary to lessen the impacts of climate change. There is a need to establish a link between the technical working committee and AFWA's climate change subcommittee so that the best

information is available to states when they revise their action plans.

- 9) A visioning subcommittee was established to develop a document that articulates the role of the Midwest in conserving the nation's biological diversity. This document would help convey the importance of the Midwest to policy makers and potential funding entities.
- 10) A workshop was held in St. Louis in January 2006 to discuss and develop a list of priority actions for interstate collaboration on wildlife action plans. The workshop was funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Doris Duke Charitable Trust. The priorities that were identified at the workshop were discussed by the technical working committee. The technical working committee will serve as the group overseeing the review and implementation of these priorities. A list of the priorities are included in Appendix 3.
- 11) The technical working committee recommends that Katy Reeder (IA) serve as the chair and Dennis Figg (MO) as the vice chair beginning in July 2008.

Time & Place of Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be hosted by the Missouri Department of Conservation in late April or early May 2009. The location of the next meeting will be situated so as to minimize travel distance for the majority of states.

Appendix 1

MAFWA Wildlife Action Plan Technical Working Committee attendees list

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Doug Harr | (Iowa) |
| Rich Leopold | (Iowa) |
| Katy Reeder | (Iowa) |
| Jim Renn | (Illinois) |
| Ken Brunson | (Kansas) |
| Lauri Yasui | (Kansas) |
| Danna Baxley | (Kentucky) |
| Jane Norris | (Minnesota) |
| Carrol Henderson | (Minnesota) |
| Gene Gardner | (Missouri) |
| Dennis Figg | (Missouri) |
| Mark Humpert | (Nebraska) |
| Rebecca Schroeder | (Wisconsin) |
| Karen Cleveland | (Michigan) |
| Mike Sweet | (US Fish and Wildlife Service) |
| Greg Patterson | (US Fish and Wildlife Service) |
| Nancy Gilbertson | (US Fish and Wildlife Service) |

Appendix 2

MAFWA Wildlife Action Plan Technical Working Committee agenda



Midwest Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies Wildlife Action Plan Technical Working Committee



DATE: May 5-7, 2008

MEETING PLACE: Neal Smith NWR, Prairie City Iowa

LODGING: Sleep Inn & Suites, Pleasant Hill, Iowa

REGISTRATION FEE: \$35.00

MEETING PURPOSE: To facilitate program priorities and common objectives identified in the Wildlife Action Plans, activity that will result in coordinated conservation actions and recommendations to MAFWA on wildlife and fish diversity from the member states.

AGENDA

| Monday-May 5 th , 2008 | | |
|------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| Time | Agenda Item | Speaker/Discussion Leader |
| 12:00pm | Registration Starts | |
| 1:00pm | Welcome & Review Agenda | Doug Harr (IA) & Mark Humpert (NE) |
| 1:15pm | Introduction to Neal Smith Refuge | Nancy Gilbertson (USFWS) |
| 1:30pm | Introductions (who are you, what do you do, what you hope to accomplish) | All |
| 1:45pm | Overview of MAFWA/Other Topics | Richard Leopold, Director Iowa |
| 2:15pm | MAFWA Expectations/Review of Organizational Guidelines | Rebecca Schroeder (WI) |
| 3:15pm | --BREAK-- | |
| 3:30pm | State Funding Initiatives | Doug Harr (IA), et. al. |
| 4:30pm | Action Plan Prioritization | Rebecca Schroeder (WI) |
| 5:15pm | Adjourn | |
| 6:30pm | Dinner @ Latin Kings | Near hotel |
| 8:00pm | Social & Informal Discussions @ Hotel | |
| Tuesday-May 6 th , 2008 | | |
| Time | Agenda Item | Speaker/Discussion Leader |
| 8:00am | Welcome/Review Agenda/Housekeeping | Doug Harr (IA) |
| 8:15am | State Reports/Share SWAP Implementation Successes/Failures | All |
| 10:00am | State Reports/Share SWAP Implementation Successes/Failures | All |
| 10:15am | --BREAK-- | |
| 10:30am | State Reports/Share SWAP Implementation Successes/Failures | All |

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| 11:00am | State Reports/Share SWAP Implementation Successes/Failures | All |
| 12:00pm | LUNCH (Catered) | |
| 1:00pm | Adapting SWAP's to Climate Change | Mark Humpert (NE) |
| 2:00pm | Next Steps for St. Louis Report/National Synthesis Report | Dennis Figg (MO) |
| 3:00pm | --BREAK-- | |
| 3:15pm | Preparing for Regionally Competitive State Wildlife Grants/State Wildlife Grant Strategic Planning | Mike Sweet (USFWS) |
| 3:45pm | Joint Ventures and SWAP's examples from Mississippi Alluvial Valley | Dennis Figg (MO) |
| 4:15pm | Performance Measures/Regional Monitoring: Should we collaborate like the Northeast? Apply for multistate grant? | Mark Humpert (NE) |
| 5:15pm | Adjourn | |
| 6:30pm | Dinner (Place to be selected by group) | |
| 8:00pm | Working Sessions ?? (To be determined by group) | |
| Wednesday-May 6 th , 2008 | | |
| Time | Agenda Item | Speaker/Discussion Leader |
| 8:00am | Dedicated Wildlife Funding (Discussion) | ALL |
| 9:00am | Plan Review/Revision Discussion | Jane Norris (MN) |
| 10:00am | --BREAK-- | |
| 10:15am-12:00pm | Business Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Discuss Organizational Guidelines/Recommendations for Changes ➤ Discuss/Approve list of partners to invite to workgroup (if any) ➤ Discuss contents of Workgroup Report ➤ Approve Recommendations to MAFWA Exec. Comm. ➤ Approve Resolutions (sent to Chair of Resolutions Comm.) ➤ Other New Business ➤ Discuss Next Meeting Date/Location ➤ Adjourn | Mark Humpert (NE) & Doug Harr (IA) |
| 12:15pm | Lunch (catered) | |
| 1:15pm-4:00pm | Field Trip-Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge (optional) | Nancy Gilbertson/Karen Vist-Sparkman (USFWS) |
| <i>Thanks for Coming-Have a Safe Drive/Flight Home</i> | | |

Appendix 3

List of region-wide priorities and status identified by Midwest states at the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation/Doris Duke funded wildlife action plan workshop held in St. Louis in January 2006.

Region-wide Priorities

1. Develop monitoring protocols (standardized techniques & frameworks) and compatible databases for at-risk species

ACTION: Stay in contact with Northeast states and determine if their model can apply to the Midwest

2. Establish baseline information for species of conservation priority and other nongame species

ACTION: No regional collaboration planned at this time

3. Determine causes of population declines

ACTION: No regional collaboration planned at this time

4. Work with partners and private land owners to prioritize and implement land protection, incentives (existing and new), acquisition, and restoration projects.

ACTION: No regional collaboration planned at this time

5. Retain, tailor and focus existing private lands programs

ACTION: Should communicate that the loss of the federal Landowner Incentive Program will be a set-back to action plan implementation. Should communicate the need to make the greatest use of farmbill conservation title programs for action plan implementation

6. Coordinate regional standard/unified landscape - land cover/vegetation/land use, both terrestrial and aquatic, classification and characterization map for the region, and a schedule for regular updates.

ACTION: Need to communicate progress being made in this area

7. Produce geographic information system mapping with layers for wetlands, riparian areas, sensitive areas, public ownership, breeding bird data, fish and wildlife distribution and abundance, species ranges and aquatic habitat parameters, and incorporate with Gap Analysis Program

ACTION: Potential for future multi-state grant

8. Coordinate regional management/action plans to prevent invasive species (flora and fauna), respond to invasive species, and development of more effective tools to combat invasive species

ACTION: Some efforts are underway

9. Coordinate and integrate invasive species monitoring (GIS) and surveillance.

ACTION: Some efforts are underway

10. Form a State Wildlife Action Plan Working Group

ACTION: Completed. MAFWA Wildlife Action Plan Technical Working Committee formed.

11. Recommend changing legislation, grant parameters and agency focus to incorporate education and recreation under “conservation”.

ACTION: Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program included as the vehicle for funding in climate change legislation and Teaming With Wildlife Act. Send letters to members of Congress expressing support.

Species and Habitat Priorities

1. Great Rivers Monitoring (KY, MO, IL, IN, OH, et al.) Contact: Matt Thomas (KY)
Matt Thomas from KY was identified as the point of contact. Work is continuing in Kentucky but it's unclear if a regional partnership meeting was held. Iowa will follow-up with Kim Bogenschutz to see if she can report additional progress. Kentucky will also follow-up.

ACTION: It was decided to retain as a regional priority. Iowa will follow-up with Kim Bogenschutz to see if she can report additional progress; Kentucky will also follow-up.

2. Prairie Pothole Grassland Ecosystem (non-bird SGCN) Contact: Karen Kinkead (IA)

It was suggested that that this priority might best be handled by the Prairie Pothole JV. There was a question as to whether the JV would handle non-bird SGCN.

ACTION: Jane Norris (MN) will follow-up and then recommend if this should be retained as a regional priority.

3. Grand River Grasslands (IA, MO) Contact: Doug Harr (IA)

Meetings were held, a blueprint was developed and a grant application was submitted. A grant award was received and the project is underway.

ACTION: Progress will be reported in the future.

4. Cherokee Grassland (MO/KS) Contact: None

A stakeholder meeting that included MO and KS was recommended. It was decided that collaboration should not be pursued.

ACTION: Remove from the list as a priority

5. Lake Plain Prairie (WI/MI/IN/OH) Contact: Amy Clark Eagle

It's unclear if a meeting was held. Amy Clark Eagle is no longer working in MI. ACTION: Rebecca Schroeder (WI) agreed to take the lead and investigate the need for holding a meeting.

6. Kankakee Sands (IL/IN) Contact: None

It's unclear if a meeting was held or if a project is underway. This is considered to be an important regional priority. The Nature Conservancy may be interested in leading.

ACTION: Jim Renn (IL) agreed to investigate the potential for a collaboration and will help set up a meeting if needed.

7. Grand River National Grasslands (ND/SD) Contact: Dave Ode

It's unclear if there has been progress.
ACTION: Remove from the list as a priority.

8. Shortgrass Prairie (CO/NE/KS) Contact: Shane Briggs (CO)
Collaborate on monitoring and project implementation. Shortgrass prairie partnerships exist in several states and an effort is underway to start a regional partnership.
ACTION: Progress will be reported in the future.

9. Reclaimed Minelands (IL, et.al) Contact: None
Determine whether there is an interest by mining states to participate in a workshop.
ACTION: Remove from the list as a priority

10. Driftless Area Conservation (MN, et.al) Contact: Emmet Mullin (MN)
Some work is underway, it's unclear if a regional meeting was held or is needed.
ACTION: Carrol Henderson (MN) will follow-up and report back to the group.

11. Oak Savannah Habitat Contact: Ray Rustin (MI)
Collaborate on surveys, restoration and monitoring. The status is unknown but it should be retained as a priority.
ACTION: A volunteer is needed to follow-up and report back to the group.

12. Northeast Sand Barren Grasslands (WI/MI) Contact: Chuck McCullough (WI)
Hold a meeting to discuss collaboration. Status is uncertain.
ACTION: Rebecca Schroeder (WI) will follow-up and find out if a meeting is needed.

13. Great Lakes Shoreline Coastal Wetlands (MI/OH/ONTARIO) Contact: Liz Hay Melasky
A meeting was held and the project remains a priority.
ACTION: Karen Cleveland will follow-up and help coordinate another meeting if needed.

14. Great Lakes Dunes, Wetlands & Beaches (MN, WI, IL, IN, OH) Contact: Owen Boyle (WI)
Need to arrange a meeting, project still a priority.
ACTION: Owen will continue as the lead.

15. Grand Traverse Islands (WI/MI) Contact: Eric Epstein (WI)
Eric has retired but project is still a priority.
ACTION: Rebecca Schroeder (WI) will take the lead and expand to the Niagara Escarpment.

16. Northern Hardwood Conservation Contact: None
Develop management recommendations.
ACTION: Remove from the list as a priority.

17. Big River Conservation on Confluence of MO & MS Rivers (MO, IL) Contact: None
Work is underway.
ACTION: Report progress in the future.

18. Big River Confluence of Ohio and Mississippi Contact: None

No one volunteered to take the lead, no longer a priority.

ACTION: Remove from the list as a priority.

19. Restoration of hydrology/habitat along low gradient streams Contact: Kim Bogenschutz (IA).
It's unknown if any progress has been made. A lead person was never identified.

ACTION: Priority is too broad. Remove from the list as a priority.

20. Unchannelized Missouri River (NE, SD, IA) Contact: Mark Humpert (NE)
Two groups have formed and have been meeting (Missouri River Futures, Missouri River Life).
Some restoration/monitoring work is underway. Groups were contacted about applying for a
multistate grant but were not ready.

ACTION: Mark will contact groups again and make them aware of new multistate grant
opportunity through State Wildlife Grants.

21. Riparian Wetlands Habitat Conservation (MO, KS) Contact: None

A stakeholder group meeting was held.

ACTION: Progress will be reported at next meeting.

22. Marmaton River (MO, KS) Contact: None

Hold a stakeholder meeting. Meeting was not held.

ACTION: Remove from the list as a priority.

23. Maumee River (MI, OH) Contact: None

Meeting probably did not happen, no longer a priority.

ACTION: Remove from the list as a priority.

24. Wabash River corridor (IN, IL) Contacts: Katie Smith/Brent Fisher (IN)

No collaboration yet, but should be kept as a priority.

ACTION: Jim Renn (IL) will contact Katie Smith.

25. WREP along OH/Mississippi River (KY, IL, TN) Contact: Brian Smith (KY)

Brian has left his position in Kentucky, it's unclear how much progress has been made.

ACTION: Danna Baxley (KY) will replace Brian as the contact and will determine if there is
interest in holding a meeting.

26. Red River Restoration (MN, ND) Contact: Emmett Mullin (MN)

Some activity is underway.

ACTION: Carroll Henderson will contact Emmett for an update.