

*Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
National Conservation Needs (NCN) Committee Report – 2009*

Meeting Time and Place – The NCN committee meets as necessary via teleconference and/or email. Committee members are: Dave Risley (OH), John Buhnerkempe (IL), and Dan Zekor (MO), Chair.

Executive Summary - The NCN Committee was created in January 2004 by then President Dean Hildebrand (ND). The charge to the committee was to become intimately familiar with the NCN and Multi-state Conservation Grant Program (MSCGP) processes and annually advise our Association on a recommended course of action for submitting NCNs. For the 2010 grant cycle, the MAFWA Executive Committee approved submittal, in joint association with the Climate Change Committee, of the Regional Climate Change Workshops NCN. We are pleased to report this NCN was selected as one of the seven NCNs for the 2010 cycle. In addition, the Committee was asked to review and score 8 Letters of Intent (LOI) submitted for 2010 MSCGP cycle as related to the Climate Change NCN. The review was completed and the results returned to AFWA staff by the May 27 deadline.

Director Action Items – Reaffirm support to MAFWA members for direct participation and engagement in the NCN and MSCGP process.

Director Information Items – Due to the retirement of NCN Committee Chairman, Tom Niebauer of the GREAT STATE of Wisconsin, committee membership changed slightly. John Buhnerkempe, from the GREAT STATE of Illinois was added by President Mike Conlin, and Dan Zekor of the GREAT STATE of Missouri accepted the high honor of chairman.

Early in 2009, the committee worked with the MAFWA states to identify any possible NCN topics. Wisconsin proposed several ideas and the committee assisted in determining their potential. Climate change was the strongest candidate but the specific direction for the NCN was unclear; we were aware of past interest in this topic by other committees and regional associations, so we needed to assess their current interest and the possibility of overlap or joint submission. A fast and furious flurry of emails helped to quickly sort out the issues, resulting in MAFWA Executive Committee support of the subsequently successful climate change NCN. Our thanks to Barb Zellmer, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Dave Schad, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and Bob Brantly, SEAFWA for facilitating our work.

During the 2007 meeting in WI, the Directors approved a motion to: (1) develop appropriate informational guidelines to aid understanding of the NCN process and (2) educate the Directors, Director/Liaisons, committee and work group chairs and others to enhance understanding of the NCN process. This remains an unfulfilled assignment; however, the AFWA staff, specifically Christina Zarrella, have greatly improved the development and distribution of information regarding the MSCGP and NCN process. At this point, it would seem redundant to develop any further supporting information. However, the MSCGP is very important and its success hinges on the willingness and ability of the members of AFWA committees and regional associations to directly participate. For this reason, the NCN Committee will continue to vigorously pursue

MAFWA membership understanding of and engagement in the process by: 1) regular and frequent communications to MAFWA members about the process and related deadlines for submittals, 2) assisting with development of draft NCNs according to AFWA guidelines, and 3) facilitating review of the LOI, if requested by the MAFWA President or Executive Committee.

This concludes the report of the MAFWA NCN Committee.
Respectfully submitted by Dan Zekor, Chair; June 4, 2009.