

Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies: Climate Change Technical Working Committee Report May 2023

Meeting Time and Place –

The MAFWA Climate Change Committee met virtually on the following days (Appendix 2 has meeting agendas):

- 09/22/22 – 2:30-4:00 pm ET – IA, MI, IL, SD, MN, Midwest CASC
- 11/03/22 – 1:00-2:30 pm ET – IA, MI, SD, MN
- 03/09/23 – 2:30-4:00 pm ET – IA, IL, MI, MN, NE, SD, Midwest CASC
- 04/13/23 – 3:00-4:30 pm ET – IL, MI, MN, NE, WI, Midwest CASC
- 05/04/23 – 3:00-4:30 pm ET – IA, IL, MI, MO, MN, NE, SD, WI Midwest CASC
- 05/22/23 – 3:00-4:30 pm ET – IA, IL, MI, MO, MN, SD

Attendance – see above

Committee members identified in Appendix 1.

Executive Summary –

Over the past few years, there have been a lot of tools that have been developed related to climate adaptation, and agency staff are now inundated and confused about what is relevant to their work. The MAFWA Climate Committee wanted to better support translation of climate adaptation into tangible actions for on-the-ground conservation and management. This year, we worked on developing 2 trainings for agency staff across the region (Appendix 3):

1. The first training will be a training held for the entire MAFWA region that links broad-scale threats like climate change into annual work planning. We plan to hold 2 virtual trainings that any staff within the MAFWA region can attend, which will be lead by NIACS and the MAFWA Climate Committee. This approach will allow staff from across the region to learn from each other and hear from regional experts in adaptation.
2. The second training will be focused on supporting planning for change rather than past conditions using the Resist-Accept-Direct (RAD) framework. These trainings will be virtual or in-person trainings and will be held either at the state-scale or multi-state scale, depending on state needs, and will be led by MAFWA Climate Committee. This allows for state staff to have conversations pertinent to their needs and connects local staff with their adaptation expert.

We plan to implement these trainings over the next year.

Director Action Items –

1. Resolution #1: Enhancing the ability of Midwest FW agencies to implement long-term sustainable management (Appendix 4).

Director Information Items

1. The MAFWA Climate Committee partnered with the MAFWA Diversity Committee to develop a competitive State Wildlife Grants proposal on Assessing Climate Vulnerability and Adaptive Capacity of 538 Midwest Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

Time and Place of Next Meeting -

TBD

Appendix 1: MAFWA Climate Committee Active Members

IA – Katy Fullin
IL – Leon Hinz
MI – Chris Hoving, Amy Derosier
MO – Matt Vitello
MN – Mike Larson
NE – Caroline Jezierski
SD – Eileen Dowd Stukel
WI – Tara Bergeson
USGS Midwest Climate Science Center – Olivia LeDee

Appendix 2: Agendas for meeting

09/22/22 Agenda

1. Round robin catch up
2. Framing what we are talking about: Adaptation
3. Review training idea
4. What are the shared needs?
5. What assets could we take advantage of?
6. Brainstorm: what would this group see as relevant trainings for the work you do?
7. Review Jamboard
8. Next steps

11/03/22 Agenda

1. Reconnect / temperature check
2. Review of last meeting and framing for today's meeting
3. Follow up on action items from last meeting
4. Review of survey results & discussion
5. Updates from NAF Meeting [Chris]
6. Next steps

03/09/23 Agenda

1. Reconnect / temperature check
2. Review of last meeting and framing for today's meeting
3. Review of action items
4. Walk through questions in document, discuss, and update
5. Next steps

04/13/23 Agenda

1. Reconnect / temperature check
2. Review of tools we have listed in our training plan
3. Revisit learning objectives and audiences and update as needed
4. Review resolution and asks for Directors
5. Presenting to Directors at annual meeting
6. Next steps

05/04/23 Agenda

1. Reconnect / temperature check
2. Report out on updating Director's on resolution and training
3. Review final draft of resolution
4. Review RAD slide deck for training
5. Chair for next year?
6. Next steps

05/22/23 Agenda

1. Reconnect
2. Update on action items from last meeting
3. RAD Framework – regional vs stateside approach?
4. How can we support each other to be ready to implement these trainings?
5. Talking points for Directors on trainings
6. Next steps

MAFWA Climate Committee Training Plan

Updated 05/26/23

The Why

There have been a lot of tools that have been developed over the last couple of years related to adapting our work to changes in climate to ensure sustainability, and agency staff are now inundated and confused about what is relevant to their work.

We want to better translate what we know at the national/regional scale related to adaptation into tangible actions on the ground to ensure our management is sustainable in the long-term. To do this, we will develop virtual trainings that walk agency staff through the use of a couple of tools and show them how they can use the tools in their own work.

Framing what we are talking about: Adaptation

There are two approaches to climate change: mitigation (reducing emissions and increasing carbon sequestration) and adaptation (changing what we do or how we do it because the climate has changed or is expected to change). Adaptation tends to be less political and also more relevant to the work fish and wildlife agencies already do. Our trainings will be focused on adaptation.

Training 1: Connecting adaptation, annual work planning, and on-the-ground actions

We see an opportunity to support translating long-term and broad-scale climate and ecology science into actions and activities that are relevant to local fish and wildlife managers in their annual work planning. This training will focus on 2 tools that can support on-the-ground implementation and annual work planning: the recently developed [adaptation checklist](#) developed by EcoAdapt and four state wildlife agencies, and the recently developed “quick version” of the [NIACS adaptation workbook](#). The former tool is designed for managers who are extrinsically motivated (i.e., told to adapt) and the latter tool is designed for those who are intrinsically motivated (i.e., want to adapt).

Two virtual trainings will be held and open to any staff within the MAFWA region and will be led by NIACS and the MAFWA Committee. This approach will allow staff from across the region to learn from each other and hear from regional experts in adaptation.

Learning Objectives:

- Participants will understand that climate change represents a risk to their everyday activities rather than a stand-alone conservation program, including the difference between mitigation and adaptation.
- Participants will understand how smart adaptation can ensure long-term sustainability of investments.
- Participants will understand how to link projects with which they are familiar to adaptation strategies and example actions.
 - Including linkages to annual work plans and/or specific projects.
- Participants will know where to find answers to their questions related to climate projections and adaptation strategies.

Audience:

Core audience: boots-on-the-ground and planners, which includes public and private land managers, biologists, foresters, and planners.

The following audiences would also benefit:

Program managers, regional managers, division direction or agency head, research / monitoring staff, communications and outreach staff.

Training 2: Planning for change rather than past conditions: using RAD as a planning framework

[The Resist-Accept-Direct \(RAD\) framework](#) is a decision-making tool that helps resource managers make informed strategies for responding to ecological changes resulting from climate change. The National Park Service and several federal land management agency partners recently published a report titled Resist-Accept-Direct (RAD) to approach these issues on their lands. It is a useful tool when planning and prioritizing where to put resources in a sustainable way.

Multiple virtual or in-person trainings will be held either at the state-scale or multi-state scale, depending on state needs, and will be led by the MAFWA Committee. We will provide opportunities for state staff to have conversations pertinent to their needs and connects local staff with their adaptation expert.

Learning Objectives:

1. Participants will understand the ways current conservation paradigms assume a lack of trend in climate, and the management challenges this creates.
2. Participants will learn how to apply the resist-accept-direct framework to facilitate planning that incorporates long-term directional change in climate and ecosystem structure and composition.
 - Examples will be included that consider different levels of staff (e.g., regional planning vs local land managers)

Audience – may vary by state

Planners, public and private land managers, fisheries biologists/ manager, policy makers, managers, decision-makers.

The following audiences would also benefit: communications staff.

Appendix 4: Resolution #1:

RESOLUTION #1

ENHANCING THE ABILITY OF MIDWEST FW AGENCIES TO IMPLEMENT LONG-TERM SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT

WHEREAS, fish, wildlife, and their habitats are being threatened by the impacts of changing weather patterns and climate; and

WHEREAS, climate across the Midwest has changed and continues to change at a scale and pace that is without recent precedent; and

WHEREAS, these changes are directly affecting and will continue to affect wildlife, fish, and their habitats, and indirectly, by multiplying other risks (e.g., invasive species); and

WHEREAS, thoughtful changes in management to better meet the needs and risks of a changed or changing environment (adaptation) is needed for the future sustainability of fish and wildlife; and

WHEREAS, seeking efficient and resilient ways to adapt will help us better meet our Trust responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, in the face of change at a scale and pace that is without recent precedent, our decisions will need to consider different scenarios, instead of looking at how things worked in the past; and

WHEREAS, articulating adaptation strategies that are being implemented will facilitate better communication and understanding with stakeholders;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies hereby

1. Urges that staff within their agency take at least the Training 1 held by the MAFWA Climate Committee.*
2. Urges that staff who develop plans or set management direction within their agency take the Training 2 held by the MAFWA Climate Committee. *

**please see the MAFWA Climate Committee Training Plan Overview for a summary of the trainings.*