

## Western Governors' Wildlife Council Meeting

January 12 – 13, 2010

## Meeting Summary and Next Steps

| Decision Items & Next Steps   | Who   |
|---|---|
| <p>Upcoming Conference Calls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>February 5, 12 – 2pm MT – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review follow-up letter to Dan Ashe – approve for WGA internal review and submission.</li> <li>Discuss information from DOE and consider pilot funding options.</li> </ul> (Non-sagebrush states may choose to skip the next agenda item.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review comments on NASECA legislation and determine final comments for submission to SAC on Feb 9.</li> </ul> </li> <li>February 9, 2 – 4pm MT – Review &amp; Approve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>White Paper</li> <li>Stakeholder Advisory Group charter (and slate of members)</li> <li>SFIG charter</li> <li>Workplan</li> <li>DSS Subgroup Charter</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   | WGWC members  |
| <p>State/Federal Implementation Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WGA will draft a letter to Deputy Director Ashe addressing the following matters, for WGWC review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Directive for local federal offices to engage in state pilots.</li> <li>Focus future LCC efforts into the existing DSS development process.</li> <li>Appreciation for support being offered by Dave Stout for DSS development efforts and interest in additional support to help coordinate state and federal initiatives</li> <li>Offer to show Montana DSS demo remotely to FWS staff</li> </ul> </li> <li>WGA will incorporate proposed edits into the SFIG charter and white paper and will bring language to WGWC for consideration on a future conference call.</li> <li>SFIG members will continue to communicate directly to Council on Federal issues, but will also name points of contact for each pilot to help assure local and regional coordination.</li> <li>Future SFIG meetings will be scheduled around WGWC meetings or will be held by conference call. The WGWC Chair and Vice-Chair will continue to be members of the</li> </ul> | <p>WGA staff</p> <p>WGA staff</p> <p>SFIG members</p> <p>WGWC members</p> |

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| SFIG, joined by Kim Titus (AK). If other Council members would like to regularly participate, they should notify WGA staff  |   |
| <p>Pilot Projects/DSS Subgroup</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before pilots can be refined WGA will send out a more detailed template for the proposals, including information on budgets, DOE reporting requirements and deadlines.</li> <li>• WGA staff will seek clarity from DOE on the timeline for receiving funding and the final grant amounts for the pilots.</li> <li>• With the DOE information and an options paper developed by WGA, the WGWC will consider a process for disbursing pilot funds to each state.</li> <li>• WGA will schedule a conference call with the DSS Subgroup/Pilot planners to inform them of these decisions and determine specific next steps and deadlines for refining pilot proposals.</li> <li>• DSS Subgroup will need to discuss how to make the eight pilots coordinate with each other – ensuring cross communication across pilots. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This can be accomplished in part by contracting with a circuit rider to assist in coordination of pilots.</li> <li>○ The next DSS Subgroup/pilot planner meeting will also move this discussion forward. This meeting may be sponsored by USFWS should an agenda be mutually agreed upon.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The WGWC needs to determine a process for SAG participation and establish other public involvement processes for individual pilots.</li> <li>• The WGWC will consider naming a single POC for each pilot project for purposes of WGWC and federal communications.</li> <li>• The WGWC will review the charge of the DSS Subgroup to provide clarity to the scope of their efforts.</li> </ul> | <p>WGA staff</p> <p>WGA staff</p> <p>WGWC members</p> <p>WGA staff</p> <p>DSS Subgroup</p> <p>WGWC members</p> <p>WGWC members<br/>WGA staff draft for review</p> |
| <p>NatureServe Connectivity Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some states and WGA staff will participate in the Feb project kick-off meeting. Progress will be reported back to the Council for them to stay briefed on the effort.</li> </ul>   | WGA staff   |
| <p>Draft Sagebrush Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>WGWC send comments (in concept form, no wordsmithing) to WGA staff by Jan 25.</u></b></li> <li>• WGA will compile comments into a memo for WGWC review.</li> <li>• WGWC conference call Feb 5, 12 – 2pm MT, to review memo.</li> <li>• Memo will be finalized and submitted to SAC by Feb 9.</li> </ul>   | <p>WGWC members</p> <p>WGA staff (Doug Miyamoto)</p>  |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SAC will consider comments and potential governor review at WGA February breakfast meeting in DC.</li> </ul>  |   |
| <p>Stakeholder Advisory Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b><u>Stakeholders are invited to submit comments on charter language and possible membership to WGA by January 31.</u></b> Comments and suggested edits/members, will be synthesized by WGA and brought to the WGWC for consideration on a future conference call.</li> </ul>  | <p>Public</p> <p>WGA staff</p>                    |
| <p>WGWC Workplan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WGA staff will make suggested edits and send out to the WGWC for consideration. WGWC members finalize the workplan on a future conference call.</li> </ul>   | <p>WGA staff</p>                                  |
| <p>Future Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly conference calls typically the second Tuesday of each month at 2 mountain time will continue.</li> <li>A spring in-person meeting of the Council is not currently anticipated.</li> <li>The next in-person meeting will be in Alaska on either end of the WAFWA summer meeting, either in Anchorage or Juneau – exact location and timing TBD.</li> <li>WGA staff will work with Joe Maurier and MT Governors office to schedule wildlife –related activities for the Governors Annual Meeting June 26 – 29 in Whitefish, Montana. We will keep WGWC members apprised of those plans in case you are interested/able to attend, but there will be no formal WGWC meeting planned in Whitefish. A meeting could be scheduled for Whitefish however, if it becomes relevant.</li> <li>The WGWC is considering a fall meeting – perhaps in Idaho if Governor Otter would be interested in hosting, or in Wyoming where WY could demo their DSS.</li> <li>Holly Michael will represent WGA/WGWC at the WMI climate meeting prior to the North American Wildlife Conference in March and will be staffed by WGA.</li> </ul> | <p>WGA staff &amp; Kim Titus</p> <p>WGA staff</p> |

*A list of attendees is available at the end of this summary.*

#### Meeting Summary

##### **Remarks by Daniel Ashe, USFWS Deputy Director**

USFWS Deputy Director Daniel Ashe presented to the Council on coordination between DSS development and USFWS initiatives, particularly Landscape Conservation Cooperatives that are being stood up this year. Mr. Ashe indicated that he sees the LCCs as attempting the same mapping effort as the state DSS, each effort being a complimentary step in building a national network of wildlife information that is secure

and that state and federal agencies can utilize. For the LCC effort, SWAP information will be the foundational data layer in the mapping system.

Council members asked for measures to be taken to make most efficient the state resources necessary to participate in the LCC effort, while also focusing on developing their DSS. Specifically, they asked to wrap the LCC and DSS efforts into one initiative to make the resource and staffing commitment easier for states, and to provide funding support for states. Additionally, the Council indicated that states are concerned that national initiatives like this one will erode their authority to protect wildlife and manage habitat projects such as those funded by SWGS money. The Council recommended that to reduce redundancy and to protect state authority the USFWS should be using their resources to fit the LCC initiatives into the DSS development effort.

### **AZ Game & Fish DSS Demonstration**

Josh Avey and his staff provided a demonstration of the DSS tool that Arizona has developed. This tool is currently on-line and publicly available, and includes such functionality as querying for species present in a particular location, and inputting that information to an environmental impact assessment tool.

### **SFIG Meeting Update**

Paul Orbuch reviewed a number of editorial changes to the charter that were recommended by the SFIG. The Council accepted those, and those changes will be reflected on the final SFIG charter. The SFIG also considered suggestions to help clarify the Council's DSS White Paper and the Council agreed to consider clarifications on their next conference call. The SFIG also discussed the need for close coordination on the pilot projects at the national and regional/local level and the need to ensure that federal LCC efforts were closely aligned with and supportive of state DSS efforts,

Next Steps:

- WGA will draft a letter to Deputy Director Ashe addressing the following matters, for WGWC review:
  - Directive for local federal offices to engage in state pilots.
  - Focus future LCC efforts into the existing DSS development process.
  - Appreciation for support being offered by Dave Stout for DSS development efforts and interest in additional support to help coordinate state and federal initiatives
  - Offer to show Montana DSS demo remotely to FWS staff
- WGA will incorporate proposed edits into the SFIG charter and white paper and will bring language to WGWC for consideration on a future conference call.
- SFIG members will continue to communicate directly to Council on Federal issues, but will also name points of contact for each pilot to help assure local and regional coordination.
- Future SFIG meetings will be scheduled around WGWC meetings or will be held by conference call. The WGWC Chair and Vice-Chair will continue to be members of the SFIG, joined by Kim Titus (AK). If other Council members would like to regularly participate, they should notify WGA staff

### **Pilots/DSS Subgroup**

12 states participated in the DSS Subgroup/pilot planning meeting on January 11. John Pierce (WA) reported to the WGWC on the group's progress and next steps. During the meeting DSS Subgroup/pilot leaders reviewed the current white paper and pilot criteria from the DOE grant. They developed a matrix of the white paper principles, scope and outcomes for each pilot in order to determine that a range of DSS principles will be tested in the eight pilots. Some pilots focus more on step 1 (data collection) and some focus on step 3 (development of the DSS tool) in the white paper. However, the majority of pilots focus on step 2 (analysis) which includes edge-matching and joint discussions about categorizing existing data within the pilot states. Pilot outcomes will include the identification of inventories of state data, the commonalities and differences between what data and systems state currently have, suggested actions to reduce differences, and agreement on edits to principles in the white paper for the Council to consider.

The group also considered structuring the pilots to be dynamic, so that after the initial duration of the DOE grant money the pilots can grow and expanded with additional funding. Ultimately the DOE-funded pilots should be considered seed funding to build state DSSs that are coordinated across the region. States could create a workplan of tasks required to develop their full DSS development, and then identify what tasks are most relevant for utilizing DOE money as seed money for building the DSS. Those tasks can be undertaken in the pilots, and DOE money can be leveraged to bring in additional resources to ultimately fund the full DSS workplan.

#### **Next Steps:**

- Before pilots can be refined WGA will send out a more detailed template for the proposals, including information on budgets, DOE reporting requirements and deadlines.
- WGA staff will seek clarity from DOE on the timeline for receiving funding and the final grant amounts for the pilots.
- With the DOE information and an options paper developed by WGA, the WGWC will consider a process for disbursing pilot funds to each state.
- WGA will schedule a conference call with the DSS Subgroup/Pilot planners to inform them of these decisions and determine specific next steps and deadlines for refining pilot proposals.
- DSS Subgroup will need to discuss how to make the eight pilots coordinate with each other – ensuring cross communication across pilots.
  - This can be accomplished in part by contracting with a circuit rider to assist in coordination of pilots.
  - The next DSS Subgroup/pilot planner meeting will also move this discussion forward. This meeting may be sponsored by USFWS should an agenda be mutually agreed upon.
- The WGWC needs to determine a process for SAG participation and establish other public involvement processes for individual pilots.
- The WGWC will consider naming a single POC for each pilot project for purposes of WGWC and federal communications.

The WGWC will review the charge of the DSS Subgroup to provide clarity to the scope of their efforts.

### **Patrick Crist – NatureServe Project on Integrating Connectivity Into SWAPs**

The initiative is funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and will begin with a kick-off meeting in Boulder, CO February 3 – 4,. It aims to work with seven states to pilot ways to integrate connectivity planning into SWAPs. The seven interested states are Idaho, Montana, Washington, Arizona, Colorado New Mexico and Utah, with Wyoming participating as an observer. Outcomes will be the development of a set of guidelines that can be tested by SWAP programs. Also developed will be a set of definitions for connectivity. While state wildlife agencies are the primary participants, there will also include a number of partners ranging from regional groups like WGWC, NGOs and experts in the field of connectivity.

Next Steps:

- Some states and WGA staff will participate in the Feb project kick-off meeting. Progress will be reported back to the Council for them to stay briefed on the effort.

### **Review of North American Sagebrush Ecosystem Conservation Act**

San Stiver, WAFWA, provided an overview of the work a WAFWA task force has undertaken to prepare draft legislation for protecting sagebrush ecosystems. WGA Staff Council (SAC) asked the WGWC to review the legislation and provide their recommendations.. Some Council members acknowledged that they have some concerns about the current draft legislation, specifically that there is no dedicated source of funding for state implementation of the program. The Council agreed that they will prepare a memo for SAC that includes general concerns or recommendations for the legislation.

Next steps:

- WGWC send comments (in concept form, no wordsmithing) to WGA staff by Jan 25.
- WGA will compile comments into a memo for WGWC review.
- WGWC conference call Feb 5, 12 – 2pm MT, to review memo.
- Memo will be finalized and submitted to SAC by Feb 9.
- SAC will consider comments and potential governor review at WGA February breakfast meeting in DC .

### **Stakeholder Advisory Group**

WGWC members listened to input and responded to questions from meeting observers on the current draft SAG charter.

Next steps:

- **Stakeholders are invited to submit comments on charter language and possible membership to WGA by January 31.** Comments and suggested edits/members, will be synthesized by WGA and brought to the WGWC for consideration on a future conference call.

### **Stakeholder Presentations**

The Council heard presentations from Janice Przybyl, Sky Island

Alliance, presented on the current success of wildlife corridor protection in the Tortolita Wildlife Linkage, and Alice Chamberlin, Two Countries One Forest, and Gillian Woolmer, Wildlife Conservation Society, presented on current work in the Northern Appalachian region in New England to identify sensitive lands and wildlife corridors in a transboundary mapping effort with Canada. Additionally, former Council member Joanna Prukop discussed her new position with Freedom to Roam as Director of their Business for Wildlife initiative. She will be working with the corporate sector, initially in energy and electricity, to engage businesses in the protection of wildlife corridors.

### **Workplan**

Council members reviewed a draft workplan that outlined their activities over the next 18 months. A number of suggestions were made that were preliminarily agreed to by the Council.

Next Steps:

- WGA staff will make suggested edits and send out to the WGWC for consideration. WGWC members will finalize the workplan on a future conference call.

### **Open Forum**

The Council's open forum time provides an opportunity for Council members to share relevant topics or activities they are interested in with their colleagues. If there is enough interest, these updates may turn into activities for the full Council.

John Pierce, DSS Subgroup member with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, presented on the five state effort he is leading to track the effectiveness of SWGS money. The project is split into three phases, starting with five states and then broadening to additional states if there is interest. The effort will ultimately develop a process for tracking the effectiveness of all grant money. By developing a map of conservation projects funded by SWGS money and other grants, that information can be compared to state DSSs to serve as an additional measure of the effectiveness of SWGS grants.

John Emmerich (WY) reported that he has replaced Joanna Prukop as Chair of the AFWA Energy Committee. One focus of that Committee will be to engage in discussions on federal legislation to gain funding for DSS development and the general capacity issues state wildlife agencies are facing.

### **Future WGWC Meetings**

Spring meeting – The Council determined that with the success of the monthly conference calls there is no need to schedule an in-person meeting this spring. The DSS Subgroup will likely meet to work on launching the pilot projects.

Summer meeting – At least seven Council members are planning to travel to Alaska in July to attend the WAFWA Summer Meeting in Anchorage. WGA staff will work with Kim Titus to determine opportunities to meet in-person either before or after the WAFWA meeting, either in Juneau or Anchorage.

Fall meeting – The Council believes it may be a good idea to have a larger stakeholder meeting in the fall, similar to the one in Helena. They will revisit the need for a fall meeting later in the year. Sharon Kiefer suggested that perhaps Governor Otter would host, as he will be the new WGA Chairman. Additionally, Wyoming might be interested in hosting and demonstrating their DSS.

Other Meetings – WGA was asked to speak at a Wildlife Management Institute meeting on climate change, scheduled just prior to the North American Wildlife Conference. Holly Michael volunteered to represent WGA and the WGWC at that meeting.

### **Public Comments**

Meeting observers were welcome to engage in discussion during the meeting, and many did. Additionally, at the end of the meeting the public was given an opportunity to provide any comments.

Monique DiGiorgio, Western Environmental Law Center, encouraged the WGWC to explore more transboundary issues. The NGO community has a great interest in the WGWC's connectivity work and those efforts could be shared with Canadian provincial government. She also suggested pursuing a sidebar on wildlife mapping issues with Canadian premiers at WGA's annual meeting.

Matt Clark, Defenders of Wildlife, seconded the suggestion on transboundary efforts and recommended facilitating conversations with Mexico.

Gary Graham, Western Resource Advocates, reminded the WGWC that their efforts are critical to addressing the urgency of developing more renewable energy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



## **Meeting Attendees**

### WGWC Members

Alaska – Kim Titus  
Arizona - Bob Broscheid  
Idaho – Sharon Kiefer  
Kansas – Keith Sexson  
Montana – Joe Maurier  
Nebraska – Dave Dingman  
Nevada – Dave Pulliam  
New Mexico – Tod Stevenson  
Oklahoma – Richard Hatcher  
Oregon – Holly Michael  
Utah – John Harja  
Wyoming – John Emmerich

### Observers

Daniel Ashe, USFWS  
Keith Aune, Wildlife Conservation Society  
Josh Avey, Arizona Department Game & Fish  
Carmen Bailey, Utah Department of Natural Resources  
Michael Bean, DOI  
Bruce Beard, DOD  
Ryan Bidwell, Colorado Wild  
Paul Bier, University of AZ  
Matt Bishop, Western Environmental Law Center  
Laura Canaca, Arizona Department Game & Fish  
Alice Chamberlin, Two Countries One Forest  
Patrick Crist, NatureServe  
Tom Darin, DOE  
Monique DiGiorgio, Western Environmental Law Center  
Amy Duffy, DOD  
Lori Faeth, DOI  
Chris Friel, ESRI  
Kelly Goddard, BP  
Gary Graham, Western Resource Advocates  
Betsy Hands, Montana Governor's Office  
Janet Hess-Herbert, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Chris Iverson, USFS  
Bob Jenks, New Mexico Department of Game & Fish  
April Johnston, American Wildlands  
Jon Kindler, Colorado Division of Wildlife  
Gabe Lovasz, DOD  
Tom Lupo, California Department of Fish & Game

John Pierce, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife  
Joanna Prukop, Freedom to Roam  
Janice Przybyl, Wildlife Linkages Program, Sky Island Alliance  
Kirk Robinson, Western Wildlife Conservancy  
Gregg Servheen, Idaho Department of Fish & Game  
San Stiver, WAFWA  
Dave Stout, USFWS  
Carl Sylvester, ESRI  
John Tull, Nevada Wilderness Project  
Bill van Pelt, WAFWA  
Jeff Williamson, Phoenix Zoo  
Gillian Woolmer, Wildlife Conservation Society

WGA Staff

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Madeleine West