

## Steering Committee Meeting July 14-15, 2015

### **Major Action Items**

Focus Priorities and Projects for Near Future: Explore opportunities to seek funding to accomplish projects and priorities as well as engage partners in these activities to recognize their importance. Executive Committee will work to approve those arrangements for the funded projects and dedicated staff time.

#### Projects Funded and Staff Time Dedicated Towards:

- Funding Phase 2 of Conservation Planning/Landscape Design Modeling work by Clemson University – integrating aquatic and cultural resources components into the research
- Funding Phase 2 of Environmental Services/Risks research across AppLCC landscape by Forest Service
- Identifying and geospatially referencing valued cultural resources within the Appalachian region with support of graduate student assistance (proposed Collaboration with Tim Murtha/PSU)
- Staff time dedicated to supporting the implantation of a “Landscape Conservation Design (LCD) Partnership across the entire Tennessee River Basin
- Staff time dedicated to supporting workshops for delivering science information and research products including funded decision support tools (ex. Energy and Riparian) to public and key stakeholders.
- Steering Committee Members and Staff time dedicated to supporting facilitation of discussions around energy development tool and data with partners and industry.

New Partner Organizations on Steering Committee: Steering Committee approved the nominations of

- Dr. Dan Odess of the National Park Service National Office (HQ)
- Kyle Schrass of the National Wildlife Federation (Central Appalachian region) to Steering Committee

New Steering Committee Members for vacant Organizational representation:

- Jon Ambrose, Georgia Department of Natural Resources (replacing Mike Harris)
- Dr. Steve Faulkner, U.S. Geological Survey-NE Region (replacing Dave Russ and Rachel Muir)
- Bridgett Costanzo, Natural Resources Conservation Service (organization invited but membership open)
- Bryan Burhans, Pennsylvania Game Commission
- Dr. Mark Hudy, Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture (voting alternate for representative/Chair)

Nominating new Chair, Vice Chair, Executive Committee Officers: A slate of potential officers were nominated to serve a 2-year term beginning in April 2016. The Chair and Vice-Chair are to “shadow” the current Leadership in the intervening months by way of a transition when the current Chair and Vice-Chair step-down. An email vote for this new slate of officers and then those elected would take their posts beginning in April. Those members who have volunteered for specific posts include – Gwen Brewer (Chair), Clyde Thompson (Vice Chair), Executive Committee – Thomas Minney, Perry Wheelock, Mark Thurman, Bill Jenkins, Evan Crews, Ginny Kreidler.

Date and Time Next Meeting: Next face-to-face meeting will take place in April. Staff to setup call with Steering Committee sometime in September to discuss the work in funding projects selected above. Staff will setup a call with Executive Committee in advance of full Steering Committee call.

**Major Planning and Design Decisions**

Priority Resources (Priority Landscapes/Systems and Modeling Targets/Surrogate Species)

As part of the conservation design work presented by the Clemson research team, the Steering Committee approved the expansion of the landscape-level design and modeling work, as well as approved the associated Priority Resources (modeled systems and associated targets including surrogate species) as follows:

Priority Resources [Systems]	Targets [Surrogate species]
Unfragmented forest (connectivity)	Black bear
High-elevation forest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Golden-winged warbler</li> <li>• Red spruce</li> </ul>
Mature lowland forest	Wood Thrush
Early successional habitats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young Forests</li> <li>• [Facultative Generalist]</li> <li>• Open grassland/shrub</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spotted skunk</li> <li>• Prairie warbler</li> <li>• Golden-winged warble</li> </ul>
High-elevation streams [mid- high]	Brook trout
Low-elevation streams [mid-low]	Hellbender
Cave/Karst systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [Cave obligate] Aquatic species (richness measure)</li> <li>• [Cave obligate] Terrestrial species (richness measure)</li> </ul>
Forested Wetlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [irregularly flooded forested or scrub/shrub] PFO/PSS – NWI [National Wetland Inventory]</li> </ul>

Priority Landscape – Landscape Conservation Design (LCD) Focus

Steering Committee agreed to commit to supporting the conservation design, coordination and facilitation as it relates to the work across the Tennessee River Basin. The proposal to make a focused effort in this geography was supported by the Steering Committee member state representatives but also received strong endorsement from other members outside the geography as an important learning opportunity and model that can be applied to other strategic locations as the LCC and the Partnerships mature.