

## **Appalachian LCC Dec. 14 ISC Conference Call – Meeting Notes**

### **Roll Call and Intro/Changes in ISC Membership**

David Whitehurst (VA)  
Paul Johansen (WV) (and also representing AMJV)  
Karen Waldrop (KY)  
Gwen Brewer (MD)  
Kendrick Weeks (NC)  
Mark Thurman (TN)  
Ellen Mecray (NOAA – NCS)  
Ken Elowe (FWS-R5)  
Dave Russ (USGS-NE Area)  
Clyde Thompson (USFS)  
Rodney Bartgis (TNC)  
Ginny Kreitler (National Audubon)  
Doug Besler (representing EBTJV)  
Bill Reeves (representing SARP)  
Pat Ruble for Scot Williamson (WMI)  
David Day for Leroy Young (PA BC)  
Tai-ming Chang for Randy Pomponio (EPA R3)  
Evan Crews for Bruce Schofield (TVA)  
Pat Campbell for Lisa Mendelson-Ielmini (NPS-Capital Region)  
Marilyn Lawal for Mike Piccirilli (FWS R4)  
Mike Robinson for Tom Shope (OSMRE)  
GUESTS:  
Jane Fitzgerald (Coord. CHJV)  
Pat (Co-Chair, CHJV)  
Greg Wathen (Coord. GCPO LCC)

### **TOPIC 1: 5-Year Work Plan Finalized: Discussion on Work Groups needed to implement Plan**

Jean Brennan: The Appalachian LCC has three guidance documents. In our first year we created an outline on what the governance would be and have been operating under that governance document since then. This document talks a lot about the structure and committees we have. In November of our first year the AppLCC hosted a Science Needs Workshop to assemble the various researchers and science managers across our landscape (more than 150 participants attended this meeting). The participants worked diligently to create the initial Science Needs Portfolio (2012), which will be revisited each year and revised. [EDITORIAL ADDITION: The process approved by the ISC in 2011 to identify science needs is to reassemble (virtually) the various experts (AKA “Communities of Practice”) to Review the current Portfolio, Revise accordingly, Rethink and Re-rank the list of science needs (1<sup>st</sup> by thematic area, and then again as an interdisciplinary or integrated landscape-level planning entity) to generate a list of science need recommendations that will

then be given to the Steering Committee to approve the needs to be further developed with the help of a Writing Team to flesh-out a detailed Project Description, Deliverables, and Timeline to pursue for FY funding solicitation (RFA/RFP).]

The AppLCC is currently publishing its 5-Year Work Plan that was developed through the July 2012 Workshop. It identifies the priorities the Steering Committee expressed based on a 3-day facilitated workshop, held in Blacksburg VA. At that meeting, 34 members and partners attended and gave input. The Workshop served to review/revisit/revise the AppLCC Mission and Vision, capture the expressed conservation priorities of the ISC Member organizational representatives, and identified specific Goals, Objectives, and Tasks which constitute the 5-Year Work Plan. With the dedicated time of staff and the contractors (Group Solution: Brett Boston and Vern Herr) the Plan was finalized and approved by the ISC in October. Part of that Work Plan was to rely on Work Groups to advance specific elements. There are 4 goals in the document. The first requires the creation of a data sharing strategy and toolset for the next 5 years, goal 2 delivers landscape plans, goal 3 focuses on engagement and dialogue across our region, and goal 4 assesses and aligns conservation goals to reflect our membership. Handout #3 for this call/meeting specifically pulled out objectives and grouped them into 4 main work groups. The 1<sup>st</sup> group pertains to aligning and assessing conservation goals, 2<sup>nd</sup> is communications, the 3<sup>rd</sup> is data needs, the 4<sup>th</sup> is financial, and the 5<sup>th</sup> pertains to governance. [The LCC is required to finalize governance and Steering Committee, so if we could get a Work Group to finalize that it would be greatly appreciated.] Under the Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> agenda is the process recommended after the October call on how to proceed in building these Work Groups.

Paul Johansen: Any questions related to Jean in terms of the background and the Work Plan? Ok, Jean work us through the proposed process of identifying Work Groups.

Jean: On this call we want to talk about the scope of work and also if there are ISC members who would volunteer to serve in a leadership role on these work groups. David Whitehurst suggested soliciting a leader for each group and work with AppLCC staff to fill out the rest of the Work Groups or other SC members could assign staff members in those roles. So first would be to identify leaders for each of the Work Groups and then go ahead and take any additional members who would be interested and then over the next few months try to have each Work Group come up with an agenda. The idea is by our next meeting in April each Work Group would report out on how the Work Group has assembled themselves and how they plan on moving forward. I need to now see if this process is acceptable to the committee.

Paul: I want to get a feel for the comfort level of the process, the process where we would identify leaders for these Work Groups and fill out those Work Groups with staff folks or agency folks that can participate on those Work Groups and report

back to the Steering Committee as described in the agenda. Any thoughts with regard to process?

Ellen Mecray: Because this is user driven and we want engagement through state levels, do you want leaders to come through state with support from Feds?

Paul: My vision would be to have voting members of the ISC in the leader roles, not necessarily to be state agency folks but it is important that they should be voting members of the ISC.

Kendrick Weeks: I am ready to volunteer with these Work Groups, especially #3 regarding the Science and Technical Data Work Group.

Paul: Ok well sounds like the process is pretty well settled, any other volunteers for these specific tasks?

Gwen Brewer: I will volunteer for #5, the governance Work Group.

Paul: On the financial side I think we are going to delegate that down to the Executive Sub-Committee. So we are looking at #1 and #2 for volunteers, communications and the programmatic alignment group.

Clyde Thompson: I can talk to Jean about the timing of all the deadlines for the Work Groups. Rodney Bartgis would be good on the financial group.

Paul: We will do some arm-twisting maybe for the remainder of these groups. As I know it from what Jean described, we will work with the leaders to flesh out the rest of the Work Groups, and if anyone on the call is interested in working on one of these Work Groups you will definitely have the opportunity and let the leaders know and have some follow up correspondence I'm guessing by emails to have anyone who would like to participate have that opportunity. I think there are going to be plenty of folks to help this move along.

Jean: There is a lot in terms of programmatic alignment and strategic engagement. Those are both very important for the LCC so we can know about changes in State Plans and this is something in the Appalachian Region to strategically reach out to other sectors and other partnerships is really what we want to be doing. #1 is really important and I would hope the leadership would rally and get some engagement.

Clyde: Touching on David Hayes video we need to be visibly relevant.

**DECISIONS:** Leaders for Work Plan Steering Committee work groups (WGs) will be as follows: WG #1: Mark Thurman and David Whitehurst; WG #2: (potential) Clyde Thompson; WG #3: Kendrick Weeks; WG #4: Executive Steering Committee; WG #5: Gwen Brewer.

**TOPIC 2: CHJV Proposal to GCPO to revise boundary lines: Update on Ken Elowe's consultation**

Paul: Would like Ken Elowe to update us regarding CHJV boundary change proposal.

Ken Elowe: What I have been doing in response to your request in help with the issue of the boundary, I am deep into this process now, talked to maybe 7-8 people so far representing the CHJV as well as State Directors, folks at FWS Region 3 and 4. What is interesting is whenever I talk to someone I get 3 or 4 names I should talk to, obviously there is a lot of interest in this issue. I am doing some fact finding in terms of history and development of the boundary, and some of the issues that would help us decide if it is still appropriate or needs to be changed. My hope is that by the end of January I will come back to the ISC with a recommendation to move forward.

Jane Fitzgerald: Ken when you were saying each person you talk to suggested 3-4 people, is that interest to boundary changes to LCC in general or this particular request by CHJV.

Ken: Just this particular request. People are thinking about the issues of conservation and what needs to be coordinated regarding these boundaries. Back in the development phase they were looking at LCC boundaries at not being very hard boundaries and it is an important thing to sort out in this. So more on that soon and please if any of you on the call or SC have issues or opinions or consideration that you think I need to take under advisement please let me know.

Paul: Thanks you Ken, on behalf of David and I and the rest of the ISC we appreciate you taking the lead to scope this issue out that is rather complex and has a lot of varied interests and points of views and at the end of January we will all look forward to your recommendation. Perhaps to open the item and vet this issue, I will ask if Greg Wathen might have any points he like to point out regarding the proposed boundary change.

Greg Wathen: I talked to Ken last week and we all want an outcome that meet partner's needs and conservation planning needs. The approach you are taking is fine and our primary concern and objective is that we properly stitch together conservation outcomes; we need resolution for the issue that properly does that.

Ken: Greg brings up a very good and constant reminder relevant to all LCCs, which is how we stitch together conservation approaches across LCC boundaries.

Paul: Anyone else have comments regarding boundary change issues? Once again Ken thanks for taking the lead again.

**DECISION:** Ken Elowe will return to the AppLCC ISC with final recommendations by the end of January 2013.

### TOPIC 3: National FWS Efforts/Surrogate Species Workshops: Update and Discussion

Paul: What is the process the Appalachian LCC might use regarding identifying our Surrogate Species? I will once again turn this over to Ken on these Workshops and the roles of LCCs in moving this initiative forward.

Ken: If you are not familiar with this the USFWS is trying to make a systematic approach to plan for multiple species on a landscape scale. This is decades old but we are only now getting the technical capability ready to apply it. The LCCs are obvious bite size geography to tackle these landscape planning issues. It is not a necessity for the LCCs to approach this, but the USFWS is really trying to facilitate the Service, the states, and NGO partners to do more efficient planning for the species that we are responsible for as well as the habitat and systems that support them. As far as next steps go, we need to figure out the LCC geography how we would go about this to make conservation planning more efficient in the Appalachians. The South Atlantic LCC is developing a method for picking species; the North Atlantic LCC has already started this in the Northeast region, taking a stab at the first clustering of habitat and species to see what might work. The Appalachians need to decide if they want to build on that effort and take what has been used already as a jumping off place as an efficient way to determine surrogate species. You can learn from a similar process and make it work for what you want to accomplish. Look at the surrounding LCCs and what they have used and build something that works for your particular geography. Would you like just an update or a discussion on this, how would you like to approach this Paul?

Paul: I think we need to spend some time on this issue, I like to open it up to comments or concerns with you Ken if you feel comfortable answering those questions.

Ken: Absolutely and if you are not familiar with what the North Atlantic LCC has done so far I can quickly go over that.

Paul: Lets see how the questions first go Ken.

Doug Besler: The other regions that have been doing this, has there been an effort to acquire a suite of species? For aquatic and terrestrial was there an effort to pick certain groups?

Ken: Absolutely, it is in all kinds of states of evolution across the country. In the Northeast we took the Federal Trust Priority Species and went to SWAPS and took a suite of species in conjunction with the states that occurred in 60 percent of SWAPS. That had 400 species. Then we went into a clustering exercise to see what species used what type of habitat classifications, and looking at that common habitat classifications clustering types of habitats and species that use that area. We are

now sorting out where certain species, how few species we can get by on to represent the majority of species we are protecting. We didn't approach aquatic species as comprehensive as we should so we have a group working on it currently.

Doug: Did you all have an ultimate goal, ideally we would like 5 surrogate species or is there a finite number you had in mind?

Ken: No finite number, we looked at marginal return of adding more species and how many more you add to the bunch represented. You can pick some that represent general matrix and others that occupy unique niches that don't bring along many others. There is a diminishing return for adding species. If this is for efficiency sake, there is no one right number, it is going to vary a lot by the species and habitats and systems you have present in a geography.

Mark Thurman: In selecting surrogate species did you stay at Matrix habitats?

Ken: No we didn't, in accommodating those 400 initial species from the States and Services, we tried to put them all somewhere. In initial modeling and landscape efforts, we chose 10 species initially and selecting another 20 this year. We are trying to bring in as many species as we could with as few surrogates as possible, which was not an end point but a starting point.

Ginny Kreidler: I'd be interested in a methodology of the approaches taken of the Northeast and Southeast that compares the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches.

Ken: That would be helpful, something we don't have at the moment. From a USFWS standpoint, the Director is trying to keep momentum up on this, as it was something we have been trying to do for 4 or 5 years now. So the timing would be good to coordinate that.

Jean: Our staff has done a similar sort of initiative for identifying relevant species using a 75 percent overlap criteria and did some ecological groupings. As for looking at North and South approaches for identifying surrogate species, we have been participating in Workshops, working with Rua in the South Atlantic LCC and looking at their methodology. I have asked our GIS Specialist Paul Leonard to help with that analysis. We are currently conducting that on a staff level and can report out.

Paul: Does the AppLCC staff have the capacity to put this thing on the fast track and get the job done or are there some brick walls that are in the way in order to get the job done?

Ken: No, the AppLCC staff does not have the capacity to do this by themselves. We need a much broader effort to accomplish this; we need to find a way to do this. We need to develop a process everyone aligns with and then figure out how we do the

work. The work of clustering sounds complex, but there is not a lot of analysis that has to be done. The clustering process is an expert driven process for experts to identify species-habitat associations. There is more information than what is currently presented in models. So we need to develop a process that brings experts together to identify these associations.

Paul: Is there funding available to bring these experts together? I suspect there was a fair amount of discussion in regard to capacity, I don't know what the funding issues in regard to that was but you managed to get the job done. Is there is a process or set of activities that took place that we might be able to look at from the Appalachian perspective?

Ken: With the North Atlantic it started with working with the Wildlife Associations, when LCC came into being they rolled representative species into a larger project of Designing Sustainable Landscapes. So representative species clusters become a fairly large part of that Project. I can work with both Coordinators to tease out what it would take to do some of that clustering and what it might take for both capability and cost to do a similar type process.

Jean: The aquatics are a very big part of what we are charged with managing unique and endemics. We funded an aquatic classification study; we did start that funding and moving forward on that. The aquatics are a very big part of our agenda.

Marilyn: Our Regional Directorate teams asked each of the representatives on the LCCs, how the LCC viewed their role on the selection. They also wanted to know after the identification of surrogate species, what the LCC role will be in monitoring and evaluating the process of the species selected?

Ken: My hope is that the LCC is looking at its fundamental objectives of designing landscapes that can conserve the trust species we are asked to manage. The LCCs can always remain an integral partner in initially developing and constantly refining the process to see how those resources are being used. It is an integral part of the LCC work to see if that is working, continue to refine it, and see what we need to do to monitor to see that it is working. That the LCC is a partnership means that the partners need to use their capacity and input on this. Up to the LCC to coordinate and facilitate that work.

Rodney Bartgis: How is the service considering this in the context of other approaches and other efforts? It is not the sole thing that you are doing. For example, if you have a surrogate species and have some major threat forthcoming, how is that going to be considered?

Ken: It really comes down to a fundamental idea, this is not an approach that takes away priority but to better accommodate those priorities. We have priorities for many things that are still going to be responsibilities. It is not going to be a sole approach and not the only thing that we use. It can be used as a monitoring tool,

could be monitoring efficiencies that can help us. More to help us accommodate vast number of responsibilities that we can't do individually.

Paul: Good discussion, I would suggest that there may be a need for the ISC to take some formal action in communicating to Region 4 and 5 to be actively engaged in this process, to convey at that level that the Appalachian LCC is prepared to engage in this process and help move this Surrogate Species Process along, reaffirm that this is the way we want to do business and stay engaged in the process and I would suggest unless there is an objective, that we communicate with the Regional Directors that there are some capacity issues that we need to address and maybe they can help us in that.

Ken: I think that is a great idea and state it just as you said Paul.

Marilyn: Here in Region 4 I would concur as well.

**DECISIONS (2):** 1) Ken Elowe will work with both Region 5 LCC Coordinators (NALCC and AppLCC) to determine what capacity is required to conduct species-habitat clustering in support of surrogate species approach, and what it might take for both capability and cost to do a similar type process. 2) LCC Staff will draft a letter from the ISC to the Regional Directors in Regions 4 and 5, US Fish and Wildlife Service about support for surrogate species approach but express concerns for capacity at the AppLCC to fully participate.

**TOPIC 4: National LCC Coordinators Meeting: Update and Discussion of Video presentation by David Hayes**

Jean: I had posted in the Steering Committee Private Workspace the video that was presented from the DOI Deputy Director Message to the National LCC Workshop. I thought the message was critical in our mission and the timeline for the LCC work. The point of that was to allow our Steering Committee members to hear that message as well and put in the agenda some of the key points that I took away from that. The essence of the message is how to make sure the LCCs are visibly relevant, our ability to express our contribution to the conservation objective. He also stated that we needed to be well positioned in the next year or year and a half and also be well positioned to identify the gems of our natural resources that we are charged with helping to safeguard. I think trying to be more strategic within that time frame, to allow the Steering Committee members to hear how we are positioning ourselves but at the end of the discussion bring back to hear your guidance on how you wish us to move forward as we go into our solicitations for our Request for Applications. This is guidance you may wish to talk about on issues of uniqueness or unique opportunities for the LCC to demonstrate, and what projects and initiatives that would not have been possible without the LCC.

Paul: Any follow up on what Jean just said and what David Hayes presented in his video.



Ken: I will bring in a couple of things that were discussed in other LCCs around this same issue. I think every LCC got this issue loud and clear, been in existence for a couple years now, and how is that working out. Is there a value to this partnership that means a difference on the ground? Some LCCs have started discussions on that and it has started a national movement, under the State Wildlife Grant Programs going to enter a revision of their SWAPS starting now for next 2 years. The LCCs are positioned to allow us to talk regionally about species of common need, habitat associations, their threats, and management needs across their distributions rather than a state-by-state geography. So looking to the LCCs to generate a common platform so SWAPS can be stitched together at that scale. The new BMPs for SWAPS reflect a lot of this thinking about what LCCs can help stitch together regionally. That is one added value for a regional approach to conservation.

Jean: There are several points within the Work Plan where we talk about that, under the strategic alignment and engagement goal of ways to engage and help with that. Specifically stating the SWAPS as being one of those elements.

Greg: Thinking about this I thought David Hayes was right on the mark as well. There are a couple of areas we are going to in the Southeast that are developing a Southeastern Conservation Strategy. There is some national scale of types of ideas, such as a Habitat System Information, that grew out of a Wildlife Habitat Program. There are some large efforts that help to bring the LCCs together and provide a consistent message and kind of important for LCC Steering Committing in how you put them all together. I think Hayes is looking for ideas and initiatives that bring LCCs in relevance.

Gwen: Certainly with the timing of the SWAPS coming on and activity related to that, there is an opportunity to engage in a different way with the states that should be taken advantage of.

Ken: There is another one that just has come up in the last couple of weeks. The Hurricane on the Northeast coast, the Senate and House are now considering damage restoration bills and we have received request to link LCC capacity to help direct investment funds to help prevent further storm damage in the future and resiliency to climate change. If we have all these people in common with LCCs, why not go to the LCCs rather than agencies individually.

David: If you can pull that off I think you would make a big splash to the value of LCCs.

Greg: We are doing something similar in the GCPO with the Restore Act due to the BP Horizon Event, looking at LCC for putting key input for conservation priorities and where we need to look at our conservation activities in the future. Where LCCs can play an important role.

Ken: We have capabilities with this collaboration that is much larger than agencies have by themselves. Are there some short-term products that we can put on the ground that will be needed and put on the ground right now? What are some immediate needs that no one agency can tackle by themselves but we can really move the needle on in a short term.

Paul: I wonder if there is a need for LCC in general, Appalachian in particular, to lead a regional approach to mitigation? There could be some opportunity for mitigation activities could be looked at for a regional standpoint, rather than just restoring local areas. I don't know exactly how we might approach that, but we need to get some actions that are visible in a timely manner. Grappling with regional mitigation efforts might make sense.

David: The best way to look at that might be with strip mining or should we look for mitigation of methane gas extraction?

Paul: I think you picked two that certainly impact W. VA. Coal mining is starting to drop off due to market conditions, but we are certainly seeing transmission lines going in, so we should maybe pick one of these, maybe gas, and look at it from the transport ends and tying it into these transmission lines, and can cross multiple states. It is just a thought and I think it would resonate well within the Appalachians.

David: Mitigation for footprint issues associated with energy development.

Jean: We did in fact fund two somewhat relevant studies. One was to look at the footprint of coal and natural gas and wind. The second was as it relates specifically to Shale Development and Fracking, the aquatic impacts and flow studies. We will have the Energy Forecast project complete in 1 year, the Ecological Flows in 1 ½ year.

Ginny: There is a real need to look at how to modify the processes around permitting of pipelines. There is incomplete jurisdiction over this. There is a pretty tight timeline for intervening; we need to be thinking about changing the way the system is set up. I think it is going to take some time and if other members in the LCC think it is of sufficient value, but the process needs to be changed and we need to be proactive in it.

Dave Russ: There is a draft research science plan doing shale gas, focusing on Marcellus and Utica and other shale gas, includes a whole range of science issues including potential impacts on ecological resources. Awaiting approval of a national shale gas approval plan that is waiting approval by the White House. Pending approval, we will go forward with the Appalachian one. Partnering with State Agencies, NGOs, and Universities as well. We can provide more information on this Appalachian/Shale Gas Plan in the future.

David W: Does that plan get much into habitat issues associated with footprint impacts?

Dave Russ: It definitely does. The plan has a much more robust characterization of that type of work in terms of the scope of the plan.

Paul: Will that plan be available for review.

Dave Russ: Needs to get out of the White House first, but dealing with the Fiscal Cliff situation is first and once that passes by they can redirect their attention back to this.

Ginny: Could we have that as an action item that once it becomes available we can make available to the ISC.

Dave Russ: That would be all right with me.

David W: If we can review it, can we expand on the habitat aspect or approve the habitat requirements within.

Dave Russ: Yes

David W: This is the short-term initiative that we want and can write a letter to Deputy Director asking if there is value that we could add to this.

Dave Russ: This is a high priority for the President, his all of the above energy priority. We have a Steering Committee within the Federal Government that is pursuing this effort, we meet weekly and David Hayes office is right on top of it. This has been going on for more than a year. There is a formal memorandum agreement among the agencies, what this is doing is a new research program to engage stakeholders, industry, ngos, tribes. Once this is out of the White House it will be put through a full public review.

Paul: If we choose to send the letter directly to David Hayes we can reference his video. As a result of your video and becoming aware of this effort to look at these issues related to hydrofracking, we welcome the opportunity to get engaged.

Dave Russ: I prefer that way. This plan is not stalled in the White House, just to be clear the Appalachian Plan is a primary regional example within the National Plan.

Paul: Does this approach sit well with folks on the Steering Committee? Like to see Staff put together a letter addressing this issue for David's Signature. David is that ok with you.

David W: Sure is.

Dave Russ: I will be happy to keep the group updated with the plan and where it stands with the White House.

Paul: Great and if Jean or staff could develop the letter and bounce it off of you first, so it can set the right tone and finalize it for David's signature.

Ginny: When the plan does come out and ready for review, if that is something we want to do with a Committee or formal group I will volunteer for that group.

Paul: Thanks. Any more ideas on this issue Jean.

Jean: No I think this will help tremendously. If Bridgett is on the phone, is there any other clarifications regarding this.

Bridgett: No I have taken detailed notes and I have what I need.

Ken: This is a good discussion and we are thinking of creative ways to be more relevant. But another aspect is how relevant are we to our state partners and agencies and what don't you have to produce that we can help. Don't want to lose site of what the individual partners need in the short term (i.e., contributing to SWAPS and creating common platforms that would be immediately valuable in the short term.)

Jean: I like to reaffirm Strategic Alignment and Engagement goal, and that is what that Work Group focus would be on, needs and engagement and show the relevance and context and how important that Work Group would be in moving both of those agendas forward.

**DECISIONS (2):** 1) Dave Russ, USGS, will share pending "shale gas plan" documents with the AppLCC ISC once the documents are released for review and comment. 2) LCC Staff will compose a letter, to be reviewed first by Dave Russ, that will be sent to DOI Deputy Secretary David Hayes asking how the AppLCC can be fully engaged in the Department's work to develop planning documents to address energy issues, especially natural gas development.

**Next Meeting: April – Discuss Dates and Venue**

Paul: Thanks everyone for that discussion. Lets talk about our next face-to-face meeting and our potential dates and meeting area in Blacksburg.

Jean: At this meeting

- We will have the various report outs looking at the various Work Plan objectives.
- At that time we can bring out the various recommendations that come out of the Science Needs Portfolio review.
- We will be talking about the governance document and charter. Will be an important one to get to.

We did come up with options and explored those weeks at the University Facility the cost becomes prohibitive, and we just are offering this date and facility for this meeting but open to discussion.

Ellen: Is this meeting replacing to the one we have in the summer or in addition to.

Jean: This would be replacing the summer time meeting. This would be our annual face-to-face meeting.

David W: I have found a neat plantation out of Dulles a really nice place if we would like to move the meeting to a major airport.

Jean: We had picked Blacksburg prior because of (the ease of) our Southern States to drive there (with a more reasonable/manageable travel time).

Clyde: Are we planning on doing a Poll for this as I already have some conferences that month in April?

Gwen: Natureserve conference is taking place in Baltimore April 16-20

Jean: Is there a problem with the week of the 22<sup>nd</sup>?

Paul: Is week of 22<sup>nd</sup> ok with you? A doodle poll will be the best route to go forward but seeing if there are any red flags. If Dulles makes more sense for those who fly in, we can consider the alternative as well. Having it centrally located does make sense for a lot of us, but doesn't mean we can't have other options.

Jean: I'm going to move forward on checking out the VT venue of the week of the 22<sup>nd</sup> for now and if there are any objectives to that just let me know.

#### Staff Updates

Jean: In October we just launched the new web portal, and have done a lot of development on that, the most important thing about it is conceptually it is more than a website.

- Created a Companion Eastern Brook Trout JV Site to share data and resources, important going forward to do modeling and data sets to have available for managers and partners.
- We have also started working with SARP with developing a companion site for them and come January they will have it as well.
- We have also spoke with several other partners regarding this including NOAA, Energy Portal with Audubon, ARRI, Ohio River Basin Fish Habitat, so as to create a common platform where everyone's resource can be shared. A lot of interest in this and been very proud of how that has been developing.

Doug Besler: Just wanted to say that EBTJV had a meeting recently and this came up and we have overwhelming positive feedback for this site and express our gratitude for the Appalachian LCC doing that.

Jean: Really appreciate that and thanks for providing guidance to our Webmaster and programmer. The EBTJV has been our model to build out.

Last things I wanted to report on was various follow up tasks from October's call.

- We made a decision to support Keith Nislow with Forest Service for "Stream Restoration and Prioritization Visualization Tool" and this will build on the data sets the EBTJV has been building over the years.
- The letters/emails to Drs. Doug Austen (National LCC) and Doug Beard (National Wildlife and Climate Change) were sent under the AppLCC Chair's signature, encouraging close coordination and alignment of data sets and geospatial information. I would ask Bridgett to give an update on how at the national level the LCC network is trying to address this.

Bridgett: There is a Work Group that is looking to develop BMP for Data Management and they now have a Document prepared and turned into LCC Coordinator Office. It is currently under review and waiting approval and guidance on steps for implementation. Might be available for Review by Steering Committee Members in January and February. Developed by Science Coordinators and GIS Specialists among LCC.

Jean: Bridgett can you give an update on Funds that we have already allocated for FY11-12, quick overview of those projects.

Bridgett: We have 3 projects underway, Ecological Flows, Energy Forecasts, and Climate Change Vulnerability, Aquatic Classification is just commencing. We have the first quarterly reports for those and Technical Oversight Teams have reviewed and provided guidance and comments. They have suggested additional collaborators and in some instances eliminating a specific methodology over another one and filtering of gauge data.

Jean: Thanks Bridgett, if there are any other questions or specifics Bridgett will be available. The reports and Technical Oversight Committee comments will be posted on the Portal as we go forward.

Paul: I like to thank everyone for their attention. Other thing I like to do is thank Jean and the staff; I am always amazed by the amount of work that they get done. I call this conference call to a close.