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**EBTJV Steering Committee**

**Conference Call Summary**

**October 18, 2011**

**10:00 am - Noon**

**Participants:**Doug Stang, Jake Rash, Liz Macklin, Doug Besler, Merry Gallagher, Tom Sadler, Keith McGilvray, Mike Shingleton, Alan Heft, Callie McMunigal

1. **Review of Action items from June, 2011 conference call**

The Lynn Camp Prong letter of support from EBTJV was sent to NPS on 7/27/2011. No knowledge of receipt was provided by NPS. TU sent a support letter as well. Doug Besler reported that the project was completed, so we believe that the support helped.

**Action Item:**

* **Doug S. will send a copy of the letter to Tom Sadler so that he can follow up with Orvis on the status of the potential project funding.**

Project disclaimers were placed on the website and with the application materials. It did not seem to deter applications this year.

A list of 8 projects was provided to Orvis for consideration of funding. One of those project had a letter of support from a local fly shop. Doug has not heard back from Orvis on this list. Tom Sadler offered to follow up with Orvis.

Appalachian LCC Contacts – Doug Stang is on the Interim Steering Committee. Doug Besler is the alternate. SARP also has a seat on the Interim Steering Committee.

Future Meeting – We would like to hold our next meeting in conjunction with SDAF Trout Committee Meeting and East Coast Trout Committee Workshop. We will discuss this later in the agenda.

1. **Revision of NFHAP Objectives- effort to date and next steps**

Action Plan is being revised for the next 5 year window. They are trying to revise the objectives as a result. A workgroup was put together and a survey done to develop draft objectives. Additional comments have been considered as well. Doug has not seen the final product that should be presented to the NFHAP Board next week. Most comments from the work group were fairly supportive of the objectives, but there were questions and concerns with definitions and numerical criteria established particularly for the 2nd objective (i.e., 2% of degraded habitats). Based on the comments, the team was going to go back and tie the 2nd objective back to the first objective because none of them were meant to be stand alone objectives. The national plan should be a roll up of individual fish habitat partnerships.

1. **Fish Habitat Partnership Performance Measures and FHP Evaluation**

Doug circulated the overall process and evaluation form that the Board wants all FHP’s to complete as a self evaluation. Steve Perry is heading up the evaluation subcommittee for the Board. EBTJV provided comments back to the subcommittee on the evaluation criteria. It does not appear that our comments were really considered as the measures are very similar to the draft ones that were sent out for commenting. Doug had a conference call with Steve Perry and the other partnerships that have to do this evaluation. By December, we need to address each of the 10 evaluation questions and provide answers to Steve Perry. Our self evaluation submission will be reviewed by the Board’s five person review team. They will review our strengths and weaknesses and give us feedback on how we can improve our performance by early February. There will be a conference call to discuss the outcomes. The next step will be that the Review Team will brief the Development Team on how this test drive goes by late April. This will be presented to the Board at the summer 2012 meeting.

There seems to be a desire to use this performance evaluation as part of the funding allocation scheme. That indicates that we need to pay attention to this and we may need to tweak our processes to better align with and address some of these evaluation metrics.

**Action Item –**

* **Doug Stang, Doug Besler, Tom Sadler, and Callie McMunigal will work on completing the self evaluation of the EBTJV by mid-November if possible. We will then use that evaluation to see how we need to tweak our process or criteria for next year.**

1. **Review and discuss 2012 EBTJV Project Rankings and Recommendations offered by Project Review Team**

There were 23 projects submitted. Nine members participated on the Review Team and ranked the projects. Jake sent out an email with an attached spreadsheet that has the results of the review and ranking process by the Review Team. Three projects were removed from the ranked list that is being submitted to the SC. One project was not complete. The other two were removed from the list because their overall score was below 100.

There were questions about a couple of the projects:

St. Mary’s, VA – There was concern that this project in Virginia may have received funding from EBTJV in the past due to its name, St. Mary’s Re-liming. It was since confirmed that the project was not funded by the EBTJV in the past. As such, the project can remain on the list for EBTJV this year.

Oats Run in WV – This project scored really well and is currently ranked 6th on the list. The Review Team had concerns regarding the technical design of the triple culvert design rather than a bottomless arch or bridge. This design is due to the limitation of transportation to the project site. Rail access is the only means of getting all equipment and materials to the site. The cost of replacing the culvert with a bridge or bottomless arch became prohibitive. WVDNR supports this design and will bury the culvert 4 feet below the surface and construct a stream channel through the culvert. There was some discussion about how to be proactive in our project solicitation in the future by placing some language in the advertisement that gets to the minimum standards for replacing culverts or completing other types of habitat projects.

West Brook, MA – This project didn’t rank high as a habitat restoration project, but the team felt like it was a very valuable project to fund because of the science / research questions it addressed. The Review Team would like assistance from the rest of the partnership identifying possible funding for this project. This project is part of Ben Letcher’s research and would help us understand if we can truly reconnect populations by removing culverts.

The SC voted unanimously to approve the list as forwarded by the Review Team.

Future updates to the process include engaging the Science / Data Team to develop an interactive map to help applicants identify which watershed they are working in and determine the priority score easily. Other small tweaks will be made as we work to improve the process each year. The team appreciated the extra time to review the projects and likes the early application window that allows this time.

**Action Items –**

* **Merry Gallagher will send draft culvert replacement specs to the SC for review.**
* **Doug will call Jaime Geiger and talk to him about the West Brook project and potential funding from NFPP or other sources.**
* **Merry Gallagher will draft a letter for Doug from EBTJV to Jaime Geiger / Jan Rowan (NFPP Coordinator) asking for support for the West Brook Project.**
* **Doug Stang will send the SC approved project list for FY12 to the Service (Jaime Geiger, Linda Kelsey, and Callie McMunigal).**

1. **EBTJV participation with the Appalachian Landscape Conservation Cooperative**

EBTJV and SARP have seats on the Interim Steering Committee. There is a research science needs workshop coming up on November 29-30 in Blacksburg, VA. They will be developing a science needs portfolio throughout the LCC landscape. Invites have been sent out to a few folks to participate in the workshop.

**Action Items –**

* **Callie will forward email with ALCC Workshop registration** **to Doug Besler and Mike Shingleton.**

1. **Status/ options for EBTJV website**

We currently have two years of hosting and maintenance from Jeff Dobson. He has successfully migrated the website from CMI to his private server.

The Board is working with DJ Case to develop a new website similar to Major League Baseball’s site with a main site and links to each individual partnership. DJ Case will develop a site for an FHP for $5,000 and train ~ 10 people to maintain it. They will provide annual hosting / maintenance for $2,500 per year.

**Actions:**

* **Callie will forward the email from Ryan Roberts that outlines the option with DJ Case for website development, training and hosting to the Steering Committee.**
* **Tom Sadler will look at some other options with DJCase and others for website.**

1. **Status / options for EBTJV data formerly available via USGS-NBII**

USGS lost the NBII funding that supported the development and web hosting of the mapping tool that we has on our website. As a result, this feature is no longer available on the website. A funding request was submitted to NEAFWA for $10K per year for two years as a way to keep this going until we could find a more permanent solution. We should hear whether we will get this funding within the next several weeks.

1. **Northern Work Group report/ update**

No updates.

1. **Southern Work Group report / update**

No updates. Still working on habitat objectives.

1. **Committee reports (Science / Data, Outreach, Grants and Development)**

No updates.

1. **Next Annual Meeting**

We discussed the opportunity to have our next all partners meeting with the SDAFS Trout Committee Meeting and the East Coast Coldwater Workshop in June of 2012 in Frostburg, MD. There is now some concern that we are trying to stuff too much into one week. The East Coast Workshop will begin at noon on Monday, June 11th noon and conclude at noon on the Wednesday, June 13th. They are tentatively suggesting that the SDAFS Trout Committee meeting take place on the morning of Monday, June 11th . EBTJV could potentially meet the afternoon of the Wednesday, June 13th and all day on Thursday, June 14th . The East Coast Workshop will be hosted at the University. The EBTJV meeting will be hosted at the University’s Lab. Alan needs times and numbers as it gets closer. There will be no cost associated with the meeting space. Alan will offer lodging space in the dorms ($ 20-30 / night) and also provide a list of local hotels. Arrangements will be posted on the SDAFS website soon and emailed out to the EBTJV members.

**Decision: The SC decided to move forward with this agenda despite the full week in order to get around travel restrictions.**

1. **Fish Passage Opportunity from Hurricane Irene**

Hurricane Irene damaged or destroyed a number of culverts and other road crossings in a handful of states. An opportunity currently exists to provide fish passage at these locations as FWMA works with local governments to replace the road crossings. By providing funding to cover the cost difference between a standard culvert and a fish friendly structure, EBTJV could have provide a significant amount of fish passage for a relatively small amount of funding. EBTJV members are conceptually supportive, but hesitant to set aside limited project dollars to be allocated.

**Actions:**

* **Callie will call Jaime Geiger and ask for guidance as to how EBTJV can best handle this. outside of the project ranking process.**