**Whitewater to Bluewater**

Science Objective Call #1

October 25, 2013

**Participants:** Julie Devers, Steve Perry, Scott Schwenk, Moe Nelson, Callie McMunigal, Lindsay Gardner, Emily Granstaff, Jason Deter, Jake Rash, Rachel Muir, Caroly Shumway, Emily Greene

**Background:**

In 2012, our three Fish Habitat Partnerships – EBTJV, SARP, and ACFHP -- formed an alliance to promote a more cohesive implementation of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan. Through Multistate Conservation Grants, we are taking a more coordinated approach towards implementing our individual strategic plans, habitat assessments, and outreach activities.

In our first Multistate Conservation Grant we proposed to collectively advance each partnership’s habitat assessments through identification of mutual data needs, data acquisition, and landscape-level-analysis techniques for the benefit of fish, mussels, and other aquatic animals. To achieve this objective, we proposed holding regular webinar meetings of the Science and Data Committees of the three FHPs in order to identify, share, and assemble existing data pertaining to threats to fish habitats.

We’re engaging in some terrific cooperative activities already, but in fulfillment of this objective, we’d like to schedule three calls with select members of each FHP’s Science & Data committees, to occur 3 times before the end of the year (October, November, December), as follows:

• Call #1 (October): Each Partnership will present an overview of their current science projects.

• Call #2 (November): Partnership representatives will discuss how useful the products have been and identify opportunities to collaborate.

• Call #3 (December): Partnership representatives will determine what science and data needs or gaps, and how the three FHPs can attempt to address.

**Notes from Call #1:**

Emily Greene provided an overview of the project, similar to the background noted above, and turned the conversation to Emily Granstaff

Emily Granstaff started the call with a powerpoint highlighting the make-up of the SARP Science and Data Committee, and their tasks. She then gave a review of SARP projects:

-SARP project tracking database: includes funding source, people involved, accomplishments of projects, and habitat and species benefits. It’s a work in progress.

-SARP Conservation Focus Areas: goal is to work within each focus area and do more refined aquatic assessments.

-BMP Library: Regional in scope, developed in cooperation with TX

- River Classification: collecting river metrics that can be used in a river classification framework. This project came out of work with their Southern Instream Flow Network. This is also a work in progress.

- Stream Temperature Logger Sites: determining where to add more temperature loggers on NWRs in the southeast

- Riparian Assessment: analysis of the type of landcover in riparian areas. Map shown illustrates disturbed/non-disturbed areas.

- Risk of Flow Alteration Assessment: includes % impervious surface, evapo trans, and water consumption within an NHD catchment

- Southeast Aquatic Connectivity Assessment Project (SEACAP): Use datasets (SARP inventory of GIS datasets, national inventory of dams, national anthroprogenic barriers dataset, and state dam safety programs), to standardize and linear reference to NHDPlus for the purpose of inventorying and prioritizing the removal of barriers, mainly focusing on dams (work in progress).

- Multistate Aquatic Resources Information System: online resource that contains over one million fish sampling and water quality records

- Native Black Bass Initiative: variety of different projects going on with this initiative

- Compilation of Partner’s Data: as they get data from partners, they compile in order to help determine where to put future projects

- With LCCs coming online, SARP is shifting towards application and less data development: beginning to apply urban data to the Downstream Strategies products, and towards selecting on-the-ground projects (under consideration)

- Aquatic Data and Decision Information Compilation Tool: an online place to house all of the data they’ve collected over the years, and decision support tool (in development), in the meantime they’re using the LCCs and their conservation planning atlases.

- SARP Science Needs: a subcommittee of the SARP Science and Data Working Group is working on updating this.

Questions: Emily Greene asked about what passage dataset is included in the SEACAP project. Julie was really interested in their project tracking database. Rachel noted that the USGS data that Emily had mentioned is now available.

Steve presented on the work that the EBTJV has been working on.

* Catchment Scale Brook Trout Status Assessment: the mid-Atlantic and southern states are in the process of verifying the analysis of their data sets and the northern states have provided their datasets
* Brook Trout Habitat Patch Layer: end product will be an NHD+ layer with brook trout occurance. Ches Bay Program is considering using some of this data.
* Climate Change Vulnerability: brook trout populations are classified into four quadrants based on direct measurements or model predictions of sensitivity exposure.
* Riparian Planting Tool: purpose is to locate and prioritize locations where tree plantings would be most beneficial range wide.
* Optimal Stream Survey Design for Detection of Fish Population Trends
* Proposed Monitoring Design and Methods: sentinel sites sampled yearly across Brook Trout range
* Genetic Monitoring Metrics: effect of mean population size to look at genetic diversity and relative abundance
* Fragmentation and Patch Size shape Genetic Structure of Brook Trout Populations
* NALCC Habitat Assessment
* Project Tracking Data Fields
* Some national level work
* Ches Bay work

Questions: Caroly asked where the riparian buffer tool could be accessed.

Emily provided an overview of three ACFHP Projects:

-Assessment of Existing Information

-Species Habitat Matrix

- NALCC/Downstream Strategies

Caroly suggested a matrix showing the projects of each of the FHPs, and what was of interest.

Caroly suggested that the riparian planning tool and climate change tool would be of interest to ACFHP.

Keith or Mark of USGS have climate data.

Scott mentioned NE Connectivity project, NE CSC, and other regional project as other projects that could be added.

Emily Granstaff noted that a lot of the work has been very broad, and they’re trying to get to more local scale assessments. She wondered, from a broad standpoint, how the EBTJV evolved to the catchment level scale. Rachel provided some information regarding how Mark Hudy’s group got to the level that they’re on.

Emily Granstaff sees similarity between some work SARP has been considering doing, such as getting into the streams and ground truthing barriers, might be similar to the EBTJV Range assessment. Jason Deter provided background on the metadata and background on the project, to provide to Emily and the public.

Action Items:

* Emily Granstaff will send her presentation around to the group
* Caroly, Rachel, and Emily will put together a Matrix capturing the major research questions and data used for the different FHP projects, and send out to the group to check which products are useful to their individual FHPs.