



NORTHEAST PARTNERS IN AMPHIBIAN AND REPTILE CONSERVATION

2007 Annual Meeting
Mountain Lake Biological Station, VA
August 20th – 22nd, 2007

2007 MEETING MINUTES: ACTION ITEMS AND WORKING GROUPS

Working Groups

Below is an alphabetical list of all NEPARC working groups and summary of their activities and plans.

Box Turtle Working Group – Facilitated by Valorie Titus (Binghamton University)

For 2006, the Box Turtle Working Group's second year, several education projects were planned. Projects included producing several PDF fact sheets on such topics as mowing and backyard habitats. In addition, the group planed to provide information to be incorporated into the national PARC traveling booth and to develop a draft educational package for monitoring and surveying box turtles.

- Set up web based file sharing program
- Change in chair- now Val Titus
- Re-grouping this year- get focused on a few small projects
- Last year: Most goals not completed
 - Mowing fact sheet-no
 - Backyard habitat fact sheet-no
 - Ghost population fact sheet-no
 - Traveling demo poster-no
 - Education packet (information was collected)
 - Teacher contacts-no
 - Client list- no

Action Items:

- Goal: Create brochure and mailing list for wildlife rehabbers
 - Literature/program search for education programs
- Brochure data 10/1/08
- Create links for education/rehab lists 10/1/08
- Final Brochure for rehabbers to editorial board 11/1/08

Emerging Disease (new group) - Facilitated by Meredith Whitney.

Chytrid Working Group- National Effort. Meeting in November in Tempe, AZ
Try to get a national map- collect information on the distribution of bd. Goal: monitor baseline health and disease of herps.

Action Items:

- Contact potential partners- PCR analysis 11/07
- Sampling and monitoring protocols 8/08
- Funding- possible SWG- grant due date

Forestry Certification Standards - Facilitated by Mary Beth Kolozsvary (New York State Biodiversity Research Institute)

The Group was formed to promote the use of PARC's Habitat Management Guidelines (HMG) the Northeast. The Forestry Group's first objective is to determine how the HMG



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aligns to published performance measures and indicators for sustainable forestry certification (e.g., Sustainable Forestry Initiative). The Forestry Group will then draft and recommend additional measures and indicators to propose for inclusion in updated sustainable forestry certification standards to better protect amphibian and reptile habitat during forestry operations.

- Timber management- Meet certain criteria when managing timber lands- get certificated for being environmentally conscious
- Take some of the recommendations incorporated into certification programs
- Lack of participation- good feedback in discussion- prioritize the categories and get those incorporated- seasonal wetlands, streams and seeps, etc...
- HMG's are pretty general- more publications available to give even more guidance to the recommendations
- Want to keep it going- need more time to get things done- put on hold for now
- If there is any interest in joining the group, we would be happy to get the help and starting moving it along

Habitat Management Guidelines Distribution – Facilitated by Scott Smith (MD DNR, Natural Heritage Program)

The Northeast Habitat Management Guidelines were published in 2006. To assist land managers in understanding and implementing these guidelines, this working group is developing a companion training module tailored to the Northeast region.

- Distribution of the HMG's
- Try to get people to use with trainings
- Orders- every state except for MA, PA, RI, VT put in orders
- Trying to get every state director a copy
- Tracked- what meetings and presentations have been done
 - Kurt Buhlman- presentation at last NEPARC meeting
 - MA- EPA meeting- Stafford Madison- gave out literature
 - NY- Val Titus- Student Conclave- TWS
 - NY- Vernal Pool Workshops- Al Breisch
 - CT- NEAFWA- Scott- presentation; booth Val, Alison, Scott
 - NY- Wetland Forum- Al Breisch
- Has copies of the training module for distribution

Important Herp Areas – Facilitated by Mike Marchand

- Hasn't been much progress
- Similar to important bird areas, but may not advertise locations
- Identify areas in the region- interest at the national level
- Initiative hasn't moved forward
- Told not to proceed initially on it because it was to be delegated at the national level
- Started going forward in some states- now can move forward

Model Land Use Guidelines - Facilitated by Liz Johnson (American Museum of Natural History)



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A goal of this group is to better link the land use planning and the herpetology communities by providing useful information for both. Initial projects included generating a list of biodiversity conservation and planning literature (and post to our website), develop a contact list of people that can answer questions regarding local regulations, and identify existing Best Management Practices that may have disadvantages for herps (e.g., stormwater practices).

- Started about 2 years ago
- Most decisions are at the local level
- Are there any model ordinances that have worked to protect herp species?
- 1st year- call for information- listservs
 - little feedback on the notices
- generate a list of ways to protect biodiversity as a whole
 - put together a list of land use references
 - different books/ publications for planners
 - In editorial review within NEPARC
 - Looking for people to serve as contacts for states
- Find best management practice examples- see how they might have disadvantages in regards to herp conservations
 - Some subdivisions are trying to be "environmentally friendly" to see what was working to incorporate into subdivision design

Action Items:

- Finalize reference/contacts & put on web by 9/07
- Gather guidelines for herp friendly development practices (+examples) by 1/08
- Assess NJ state regs/bmp's for +/- impacts on herps 1/08
- Develop preliminary dissemination plan for web-based information by 11/08

Roads and Road Salt Working Groups - Facilitated by Valorie Titus

The Northeast Roads Working Group is new - The Road Salt Working Group was formed at the 2006 NEPARC meeting. The group planed to produce a white paper on the effects of road salt on human and wildlife health and alternatives to current road salt practices. Alternatives will address the merits and drawbacks of sand and other chlorides, as well as creation of designated low salt application areas as a means of protecting drinking water and other resources. Also planned is creating a PowerPoint presentation on this issue written for a non-scientific audience.

- Road Salt Working group
 - Nancy Karraker- was chair; have moved out of the country
 - Sent to Transportation meeting in Maine to present her work
 - Bibliography of sources created by Nancy- at editorial board for review now
- National Roads Task Force
 - New effort at national level
 - Kimberly Andrews and Val Titus chairs
 - Ultimate goal- set of recommendations for planning process for road construction

Action Items:

- Set up file sharing web site 8/07
- DOT documents to pattern from 1/08
- Small success stories 1/08



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- Existing literature/case studies 1/08
- Draft of outline/table of contents to identify gaps 8/08

Snake Education (new group)

Concern with snakes and how people react to them- educate public how to identify etc... Goal: First response- here's the snake- what do I do? Brochure/website base

- Interactive key
- Pocket guide

Action Items:

- Draft have it to the editorial board in 6 months
 - Photographs of snakes to Scott Smith
 - Text form other sources
- Come up with funding Ideas

State Wildlife Action Plan – Facilitated by Lori Erb, Holly Niederriter, Mike Marchand

The State Wildlife Action Plans Working Group was formed at the 2006 NEPARC meeting. The groups' goal is to provide guidance regarding State Wildlife Grant projects involving herp conservation on a regional level. A list of regional priority herp species was developed based on: a) State's Wildlife Action Plan Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) lists and Risk Assessment, b) identification of northeast species of responsibility using range maps (those species whose core range falls within the northeastern states will have a higher priority for conservation actions). The working group is now compiling additional information about each species on the list to help prioritize species needs. This information will be presented in table form to the Wildlife Diversity Technical Committee. The group plans to identify and recommend priority conservation actions and other ways for NEPARC to address needs of these species of northeastern responsibility.

- Every state in country had to complete a Wildlife Action Plan (WAP).
- The WAPs help states focus conservation efforts and decide which projects to fund with State Wildlife Grant (SWG) money. SWG money is appropriated yearly to states to aid in conservation of *Species of Greatest Conservation Need* (SGCN), which were listed in each state's WAP.
- This working group was formed to recommend regional herp conservation project priorities (focused on species, projects, habitats, other (?)). The hope is that states can use the list(s) produced to help decide which projects to fund with State Wildlife Grant money.
- Since 2006 meeting, produced list of species for which the NE has the most responsibility. List was produced using the following criteria
 - Species/subspecies whose geographic ranges fell approximately 50% or more within the northeast region
 - Species/subspecies with less than 50% of range within the northeast, but with limited total North American ranges were included
 - Geographic range consideration included both U.S. and Canadian distribution



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- Species of conservation need that occur within a single state in the region were **not included**
- Federally listed species were **not included**
- Subspecies were recognized and included
- About 30 species listed

Action Items:

- Review list and listing criteria 9/5/07
- Use master list to add habitat types column mid 9/07
- Use master list to compile extra data columns mid 10/07
- Review of grant proposals that came to NE tech comm. 10/3/07
- Review 1999 species of conservation concern 10/3/07

Notes from Open Discussion

New Products/Working Groups Discussion

New ideas for working groups proposed and vote taken on which to address during this meeting. Others had sign up sheets but there was concern about spreading people too thin.

Important Herp Areas **4 votes**

Emerging diseases- focus on Chytrid **7 votes (semi-NEW - had WG session)**

Hg informational brochure **6 votes**

Consuming snapping turtles?

AZA year of the frog to raise awareness on herp conservation issues

SWPARC has a working group doing some work with this- opportunities for collaboration with other regions (**maybe with emerging diseases**)

Regulation info- web-based **3 votes**

Process of identifying audience, distribution- how to deal with our products?

Tally up the different properties specifically for herps in region (in conjunction with IHA's?)

Herp Atlas- standards on regional basis **5 votes**

Rattlesnake roundups- PA- possible position statement?

Unsustainable use brochure

National PARC?

Example: SWPARC pamphlet- what to do when encounter venomous animals?

Increased potential encounters with increased development- specific to NE

Snake education brochure **21+ votes (NEW - had WG session)**

NEPARC Business

Nomination and election of new co-chair

- Co-chairs represent NEPARC at PARC meetings, conference calls. Some travel involved. Helps organize the annual NEPARC meeting and facilitates monthly NEPARC steering committee conference calls.



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- Nominees were:
 - J. D. Kleopfer – Congratulations, J.D.!

NEPARC Steering Committee

- Membership should include:
 - 2 co-chairs (2 yr terms with staggered terms)
 - Host of upcoming NEPARC meeting
 - 2 or 3 additional members to represent diverse membership (state/federal/academic/other)
 - New steering committee members:
 - Glenn Johnson (SUNY Potsdam)
 - Lori Erb (Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife)
 - Mark Ferguson (Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife)
 - Duncan Simpson (Towson University)
 - Chris Urban (Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission)
 - Tina Walther (Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission)
 - Chris and Tina are 2008 meeting hosts
 - Continuing steering committee members:
 - John Kleopfer (NEPARC co-chair, Virginia Dept. of Game & Inland Fisheries)
 - Mary Beth Kolozsvary (New York State Biodiversity Research Institute)
 - Mike Marchand (New Hampshire Fish & Game)
 - Holly Niederriter (NEPARC co-chair, Delaware Division of Fish & Wildlife)
 - Priya Nanjappa Mitchell (PARC States Agencies Coordinator)
 - Scott Smith (Maryland DNR-Wildlife & Heritage)
 - Valorie Titus (Binghamton University)
 - Linda Weir (USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center)
 - Alison Whitlock (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service)
 - Meredith Whitney (The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore)
 - Ex-officio steering committee members:
 - Al Breisch (NY DEC)

NEPARC Editorial Board Chair- Valorie Titus

- Joel Snodgrass
- Bob Cook
- Alison Whitlock
- Mary Beth Kolozsvary
- Meredith Whitney
- Glenn Johnson
- Joe Mitchell

Listserv?

- Any interest in managing listserv?
- Ariana Breisch- see if Techworks could host?

Future NEPARC Meetings

- 2008 Pennsylvania
- 2009 New York or Maine



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Likes and Dislikes of the NEPARC 2006 Meeting

- Location was good
- 2 days – good for some; other preferred one full day and 2 half days.
- Date meeting – earlier in August better for University folks but not agencies
- Raffle was good
- Student participation up this year
- Dorm-style (inexpensive) lodging option was helpful
- Weekdays vs. weekends (jobs/schools/hotel rates). Hotel rates lower during week but non-agency folks found work days difficult.
- Poster session second night? Not all poster presenters found it easy to get there first night.
- Session for submitted papers? Call for papers with a specific topic – don't want too many talks; need to be directed towards NEPARC goals
- 20 min talks vs. 30 min for each speaker
- Get a rep from other regions to attend our meetings and visa-versa
- Formal letter to MLBS staff thanking from NEPARC

Thanks

NEPARC would like to acknowledge the efforts involved in assembling the 2007 meeting minutes. Valorie Titus took minutes during the meeting. Revisions to the draft minutes were completed by Michael Marchand, Linda Weir, Mary Beth Kolozsvary and Holly Niederriter.

Silent Auction

Participants were invited to contribute items for a silent auction to raise money to allow NEPARC to reduce registration fees for students who presented. Auction items included herp t-shirts, posters, books, beverages, and other items. The auction, along with a tent raffle, raised \$391.25. Recipients (students presenting posters) received \$50 each. Recipients were: Valorie Titus, Kelly Schmidt, Jessica Homyack, Scott Goetz, Evan Grant, Leeana Pletcher and Karen Duncan. Thank you to all who contributed items!