

## Meeting Minutes

### Coordinating Committee Meeting Pennsylvania Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit

June 16, 2011

9:30 AM

#### Room 217 of the Forest Resources Building

Chairman: Mike Tome, USGS

- \* Mr. Calvin DuBrock, Director, Bureau of Wildlife Mgmt., Pa. Game Commission
  - \* Mr. Carl Roe, Executive Director, Pa. Game Commission
  - \* Mr. Leroy Young, Pa. Fish & Boat Commission
  - \* Mr. John Arway, Executive Director, Pa. Fish & Boat Commission
  - \* Dr. Mike Messina, Director, School of Forest Resources, PSU
  - \* Dr. Michael Tome, Cooperative Research Units Eastern Supervisor, USGS
  - \* Dr. Steve Williams, Wildlife Management Institute
  - Dr. Duane Diefenbach, Unit Leader, PACFWRU
  - Dr. Tyler Wagner, Assistant Unit Leader, PACFWRU
  - Mr. John Karish, NPS, I&M Program
  - Dr. Paola Ferreri, Assoc. Prof. - Fisheries Management, School of For. Res., PSU
  - Dr. Victoria Braithwaite, Prof. – Fisheries & Biology, School of For. Res., PSU
- [\* Coordinating Committee Members]

- 1.0 Approval of minutes from June 14, 2010 meeting – minutes approved
- 2.0 Proposed Budget – budget approved
- 3.0 Completed Projects (see Agenda).
  - 3.1 Ruffed grouse habitat management - State Game Lands 176 (Barrens).
  - 3.2 Spatial distribution of female white-tailed deer harvest and deer hunters.
  - 3.3 Effects of antler restrictions on yearling buck survival, buck harvests and hunter satisfaction in Pennsylvania.
  - 3.4 Crayfish effects on other invertebrates and basal resources in the presence and absence of trout.
- 4.0 New and Continuing Projects (see Agenda).

- 4.1 Estimating abundance of deer on Gettysburg National Military Park.
- 4.2 Influences on the timing of denning in female black bears and its effect on harvest rates and estimates of population size.
- 4.3 Habitat management practices on reclaimed surface mines to benefit grassland birds
- 4.4 Dispersal of black bears in Pennsylvania
- 4.5 Dispersal of female white-tailed deer in Pennsylvania
- 4.6 Harvest and survival rates of hen wild turkeys in Pennsylvania
- 4.7 Using auxiliary known-fate data to improve harvest estimates from tag-recovery models
- 4.8 Spatial and temporal components of variation in Great Lake percid populations: implications for conservation and management
- 4.9 Distribution of PCB congeners in Pennsylvania streams and fish: implications for risk assessment and fish health
- 4.10 Seasonal movement patterns and habitat use of brook trout and brown trout in north central Pennsylvania
- 4.11 Comparative Energetics of Lake Trout Morphotypes
- 4.12 Habitat use, movement and genetic composition of lake trout in the Niagara River and Niagara Bar
- 4.13 Managing the Nations Fish Habitat at Multiple Spatial Scales in a Rapidly Changing Climate
  
- 5.0 Proposed Projects (presented at meeting)
  - 5.1 The effects of cross-scale interactions on freshwater ecosystem state across space and time
  - 5.2 Effects of deer and other environmental factors on forest regeneration
  
- 6.0 Approval of Proposed Projects – projects approved
  
- 7.0 Roster of Current Graduate Students
  - Fisheries**
    - Tyrell Deweber – PhD Fisheries
    - David Lieb - PhD Ecology
    - Bob Mollenhauer – MS Fisheries
    - Devin DeMario – MS Fisheries
    - Megan Kepler – MS Fisheries
    - Kelley Salvesen – MS Fisheries
    - Lori Smith – MS Fisheries
  - Wildlife**
    - Jason Hill – PhD Ecology
    - Bret Wallingford - PhD Wildlife

David Stainbrook – MS Wildlife  
Wendy Vreeland – MS Wildlife  
Frances Buderman – MS Wildlife  
Clayton Lutz – MS Wildlife

8.0 Service on Graduate Committees other than advisees.

**Diefenbach**

G. Stokke, MS Wildlife and Fisheries Science  
A. Weber, MS Wildlife and Fisheries Science  
B. Mollenhauer – MS Fisheries

**Wagner**

Brooks Fost, PhD  
Keith Price, PhD  
Cairsty Grassie, PhD  
David Stainbrook, MS  
Laura Madden, MS  
Jason Hill, PhD

9.0 Courses Taught by Unit Staff

Wagner – Quantitative Methods in Ecology, Spring 2011

10.0 Comments from Cooperators

**Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission**

Leroy Young – The agency currently has a number of issues of top priority that, in some cases, will rely on assistance from the Unit

- The agency is implementing their new trout plan
- Prioritizing unassessed streams, especially those at high risk due to development and gas well drilling
- Developing sampling protocols (Tyler is assisting with this task)
- Developing new plans for warmwater species
- FERC re-assessment of dams on Susquehanna River
- Susquehanna River has problems with disease and pollution regarding the bass fishery (Tyler Wagner's research on great lakes fisheries may be relevant to research needs)
- Agency is looking at hatchery costs and reducing N and P annual loads to meet water quality standards (that are not yet finalized)
- Lehigh River reservoirs and how water releases affect trout fisheries

John Arway – PFBC has identified a number of human dimension needs and regrets that the Unit was not able to hire a human dimensions person last year. The agency sold 100,000 fewer licenses this year, likely due to bad weather during opening trout season. Consequently, the agency is looking towards alternative funding, especially because a lot of water use does not cost industry yet it is a public resource. Marcellus shale gas development is a huge issue for the agency. Finally, the research capabilities of the Unit are important to the PFBC because they do not have a strong research program internally.

### **Pennsylvania Game Commission**

Cal DuBrock – The agency has hired a biometrician and has identified a large number of tasks that they are prioritizing. Several species plans have been completed in the past year and the grouse and quail plans will be presented to the Board of Commissioners soon. The agency is looking at some landscape management plans rather than just species plans. Disease issues are coming to the fore with chronic wasting disease just 10 miles from the Pennsylvania border and feral swine occur in the same area. White nose syndrome in bats is another problem. The agency is looking to increase its human dimensions work with the hiring of Coren Jagnow.

Carl Roe – The agency recently published a report on wind energy, of which they have 30 cooperators who have entered into agreements to employ best management practices. Marcellus shale and its effects on land use are a big concern (in particular seismic testing and pipelines). The agency is being cautious regarding drilling on state game lands and to date has not had direct impacts on SGL lands because extraction has been underground.

### **Pennsylvania State University**

Mike Messina – The early buyout retirement offer will result in 3 retirements 31 December in the wildlife program. Jackie Grant (instructor) is leaving but the School has permission to replace the instructor position and likely 1 faculty member. At this time, the university is anticipating a 10-15% reduction in the state budget and the proposed reorganization of the college will reduce it from 12 to 9 departments. Forestry, wildlife, and wood products would be merged with soil scientists from the Crop and Soil Sciences department.

### **U.S. Geological Survey**

Mike Tome – the 2012 president's budget looks good for USGS but that will likely change as negotiations with Congress continue. The agency is planning for cuts but there is support from within USGS for the Unit program. Human resources is swamped with job applicants under the new application process, which has greatly slowed hiring. The CRU program is continuing to increase its adaptive management and structured decision making capabilities so that Units can better integrate research with management decisions.

11.0 Comments from guests

**National Park Service**

John Karish – The NPS is glad to be co-located with the Unit in the School and appreciates the high-quality research conducted by the Unit on NPS research issues. We look forward to many more years of such cooperation.

12.0 Adjourn

13.0 An Executive Session of the Coordinating Committee followed immediately after adjournment