

Meeting Minutes

Coordinating Committee Meeting Pennsylvania Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit

June 19, 2012

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

Dr. W. David Walter, Assistant Unit Leader, PACFWRU

Dr. Paola Ferreri, Assoc. Prof. - Fisheries Management, School of For. Res., PSU

Dr. Marc McDill, Assoc. Prof. – Forest Science, School of For. Res., PSU

[* Coordinating Committee Members]

- 1.0 Approval of minutes from June 16, 2011 meeting – minutes approved.
- 2.0 Proposed Budget – budget approved
- 3.0 Completed Projects (see agenda).
 - 3.1 Estimating abundance of deer on Gettysburg National Military Park.
 - 3.2 Spatial and temporal components of variation in Great Lake percid populations: implications for conservation and management
- 4.0 New & Continuing Projects (see agenda).

Diefenbach

 - 4.1 Influences on the timing of denning in female black bears and its effect on harvest rates and estimates of population size.
 - 4.2 Dispersal of black bears in Pennsylvania
 - 4.3 Dispersal of female white-tailed deer in Pennsylvania
 - 4.4 Using auxiliary known-fate data to improve harvest estimates from

- tag-recovery models
- 4.5 Harvest and survival rates of hen wild turkeys in Pennsylvania
- 4.6 Habitat management practices on reclaimed surface mines to benefit grassland birds
- 4.7 Genetics of an insular population of bobcats and coyotes
- 4.8* Developing an adaptive management approach for meeting deer and forest management objectives
- Wagner**
- 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
- 4.14 The effects of cross-scale interactions on freshwater ecosystem state across space and time
- 4.15* Fish community assessment in the Eastern Rivers and Mountains Network and integration with existing monitoring data
- 4.16* Modeling species response to environmental change: development of integrated, scalable Bayesian models of population persistence
- 4.17* Characterization of spatial and temporal variability in fishes in response to climate change
- Walter**
- 4.18* Linking bovine tuberculosis on cattle farms in Michigan to environmental variables using Hierarchical Bayesian analysis
- 4.19* Developing an Adaptive Management Approach for Potential Surveillance and Spread of Chronic Wasting Disease in White-tailed Deer in Pennsylvania
- 4.20* Surveillance and monitoring of river otter populations in Pennsylvania
- 5.0 Proposed Projects (presented at meeting)
 - 5.1 Spatial analysis of large mammals to assess harvest vulnerability in relation to landowner distribution - Walter
 - 5.2 Allegheny Woodrat: Identifying Strategies to Conserve a Declining Species - Diefenbach
 - 5.3 Statewide Survey of Mammals Using Wildlife Cameras - Diefenbach
- 6.0 Approval of New (Noted by Asterisk) and Proposed Projects
- 7.0 Roster of Current Graduate Students and Post-Doctoral Researchers
- Diefenbach**

Jason Hill – PhD Ecology
Wendy Vreeland – MS Wildlife
Frances Buderman – MS Wildlife
Clayton Lutz – MS Wildlife
William Kanapaux - post-doctoral researcher

Wagner

Tyrell Deweber – PhD Fisheries
Devin DeMario – MS Fisheries
Megan Kepler – MS Fisheries
Kelley Salvesen – MS Fisheries
Lori Smith – MS Fisheries

Walter

Tyler Evans - 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
E. Barton, MS Wildlife and Fisheries Science

Wagner

Jeff Kirby, PhD
Didem Ikis, PhD
Krittika Petprakob, PhD
Brooks Fost, PhD
Keith Price, PhD
Cairsty Grassie, PhD
Jason Hill, PhD
Laura Madden, MS

Walter

Tyrell Deweber – PhD Fisheries
Nathan Fronk, MS Wildlife
Lori Smith, MS Fisheries

9.0 Courses Taught by Unit Staff

Wagner – Quantitative Methods in Ecology, spring 2012
Wagner – Independent Study: Great Lakes Fisheries, spring 2012
Wagner – Advances in Ecology, fall 2011
Diefenbach – Estimation of Fish & Wildlife Population Parameters, fall 2011

10.0 Comments from Cooperators

Pennsylvania State University – School of Forest Resources

Michael Messina – The School will become the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management on July 1st when SFR faculty will be joined with soil science faculty from the former Department of Crop and Soil Sciences as well as several other faculty in other departments in the college. Wood Products faculty will be moving to the Department of Ag and Biological Engineering. The early retirement offers meant that 3 WFS faculty have retired or will retire as of June 30th but negotiations are currently underway to hire 1 replacement faculty member to teach population dynamics and wildlife management. We hope to hire another faculty member next fiscal year. Dr. Justin Bohling was hired as a senior lecturer.

Adjunct status for Dr. Josh Johnson, PGC Biometrician, is progressing slowly because of department mergers and summer break. The new department will schedule an opportunity for Dr. Johnson to present a seminar once fall semester begins. An effort will be made to find an office in the Forest Resources Building if possible, but it was agreed that this is a stepwise process that begins with first getting Dr. Johnson adjunct status. Also, competition for offices in FRB is keen and granting of office space is ultimately up to the College and the Penn State Real Estate folks for rental agreement reasons.

Pennsylvania Game Commission

Calvin DuBrock – The joint meeting of Bureau of Wildlife Management staff and Unit staff this past spring was very helpful, especially to meet Dr. Walter.

- The PGC will be recruiting a new elk biologist soon.
- The PGC is conducting more human dimensions surveys, but are finding it a challenge getting respondents to understand and respond to internet surveys.
- The agency was recently petitioned by PA Biological Survey to list 3 bat species as endangered because of white-nose syndrome. The implications for how such a listing may affect the public is unclear and likely complicated. We expect to publish soon a notice of intent to propose a regulation to list these species to elicit public comments and concerns.
- The agency is hosting a wildlife diversity forum next week to address wildlife diversity issues and to facilitate updating the Wildlife Action Plan (due 2015).

Carl Roe – The wildlife diversity forum will hopefully generate synergy among NGOs for cooperating to achieve conservation goals. A related issue is keeping track of wildlife research being conducted in the state – there is no clearinghouse of information on research topics and results. The agency's human dimensions surveys have provided

useful information; the challenge has been to get decision makers to accept the information obtained. The PGC has 2 commissioner positions vacant on the board, although 1 nomination has been presented for the southeast region.

Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission

John Arway – Integrating science into public policy is a difficult task and the need for the knowledge of basic science is as important as ever. A good example is the smallmouth bass population decline in the Susquehanna River where there are political obstacles to addressing the problem. Science will help strengthen the debate and suggested the Unit can help in that regard.

The PFBC is looking for expertise and ways to market fishing and boating activities to anglers to address license sales and boat registration declines.

Leroy Young – The agency received \$1 million from the Marcellus impact fee to pay for permitting and the agency has re-organized the Division of Habitat Management to address permitting needs. The agency is implementing their Strategic Plan and the Trout Plan. They are undertaking a major effort to assess status of potential trout streams (unassessed waters program). The PFBC is developing statewide stocking plans for walleye, striped bass, catfish, and muskie? to more efficiently distribute fish. Sampling protocols have been revised for streams, is ongoing for major rivers, and lakes will be next. The agency is working with Ty Wagner to assess trout stocking efficiency. Aquatic invasives are becoming more of a problem with didymo found in several rivers and Asian carp moving up the Ohio River system.

Wildlife Management Institute

Steve Williams – Appreciate meeting with the dean last year and impressed with the ongoing research in the Unit and collaboration with state agencies. WMI will help as much as possible to facilitate transfer of research funds from state agencies to the Unit.

U.S. Geological Survey

Mike Tome – The Cooperative Research Units are within 8-9 units of being fully staffed. CRU held 2 new employee orientation sessions in Reston, VA this year. The new policy for publishing final reports and manuscripts (FSP) is becoming more restrictive and expensive. Because of recent political issues, attendance at meetings is under greater scrutiny and it likely to limit the number of USGS scientists that can attend meetings. The National Cooperators Coalition has been important to gaining internal and external support for the CRU program.

11.0 Comments from guests (none)

12.0 Adjourn

13.0 An Executive Session of the Coordinating Committee followed

