



Meeting: PARC Management Guidelines Meeting

Date: July 13, 2000

Location: Atlanta, GA

Proceedings

FINAL Minutes

Steering Meeting for the PARC Workshop on Management Guidelines for Conservation Of Amphibians and Reptiles

Overview

Fifteen individuals, representing nine **PARC** membership organizations met in Atlanta on July 13th to discuss development of "best management practices" or "conservation recommendations" for amphibian and reptile conservation (see participant list). We agreed it would be advantageous to convene a broader forum, i.e. a workshop, to explore this concept in more detail. The focus of the workshop is development of regional management guidelines, including habitat and practice-specific recommendations that could be used by State, federal, private and non-government organizations to promote amphibian and reptile conservation.

Background

To our knowledge, best management practices (BMPs) for amphibians and reptiles do not exist. States have delegated authority under the Clean Water Act to develop BMPs. As a result, most State BMPs are water quality based, and include general wetland and riparian area protection measures. Many BMPs incorporate bird conservation measures, but not amphibian and reptile conservation measures. Except for the State of Washington, all State BMPs are voluntary. With the continuing decline of many amphibian and reptile populations, we believe that existing State BMPs are insufficient for meeting herp conservation needs.

Missouri has amphibian and reptile management guidelines, separate from their state BMPs. The Nature Conservancy has a published guidebook for amphibian and reptile conservation, but it does not provide specific management recommendations for broad application on an ecosystem basis. The U.S.G.S. Biological Resources Division recently developed conservation measures for bog turtle habitat. Other recovery plans and conservation agreements have species-specific guidelines, but there are no comprehensive guidelines that address conservation needs for suites of species in particular ecosystems.

Presently, the National Wildlife Refuge System, National Forest System, and Department of Defense management plans are undergoing review and revision. It would be of great benefit to have consistent, science-based conservation recommendations developed in time to incorporate them into these land management plans. Regional management guides for amphibian and reptile conservation would be an excellent mechanism for facilitating such integration. Regional management guides would be a positive step in updating State BMPs, stewardship programs, Farm Bill conservation programs (WHIP, WRP, CRP) and industry practices.

Concept for a Workshop

The purpose of the workshop is to convene managers, scientists, agency leaders, industry, and organizations to initiate development of regional management guidelines for amphibian and reptile conservation. By involving a broad constituency base, we will foster interest and support in strengthening herp conservation throughout North America.

Objectives of the workshop include:

1. Develop a template for regional management guidelines.
2. Review the "state of the science" and "state of the art" to identify consistent conservation recommendations, as well as information gaps and research needs at national and regional scales.
3. Explore ways to integrate regional recommendations into State BMPs, land management plans, etc.
4. Identify ways to address effectiveness in implementation.

The workshop format would include:

1. An opening session to provide an overview and context for developing regional management guidelines.
2. A workshop session focused on evaluation of a prototype "state of the knowledge" herp conservation guide that includes recommendations and standard practices that can be integrated into land management.
3. Regional break out sessions, where participants take the next steps in developing regional management guides for their areas.

The workshop would include PARC Steering and Management Committee members, PARC Regional Working Group Chairs and regional representatives (15 per region, including fed, state environmental quality, state planners, state wildlife, non-government organizations, private industry, etc.). Business support (computers, printers, copiers) would be provided to facilitate work sessions.

Workshop Date

Workshop preparation

- **Steering – All participants in today's meeting agreed to continue on in a steering capacity, which would involve concurring on program, arrangements, support, invites, etc.**
- **Program – Peter Stangel, John Jensen, and Joe Mitchell agreed to prepare a draft program, including: Purpose statement and agenda. They will also coordinate invitations, professional facilitators, note takers. (Send suggestions for invites and facilitators to parc@srel.edu).**
- **Workshop foundation materials – Whit Gibbons, Kurt Buhlman, Joe Mitchell, and David Wilcove will prepare the "prototype" which will focus on the southeast region. Whit and Savannah River Ecology Lab will complete a synthesis of literature, including identification of conservation recommendations by region where they exist. These will serve as prework and foundational materials for the workshop.**
- **Local Arrangements – Monica Schwalbach and Kurt Buhlman will explore location options for the workshop, and bring proposals to the next Steering meeting.**

Possibilities include Illinois (the State Director has offered to support the effort), Detroit Zoo conservation facility, the National Conservation Training Center in Shepardstown, WV. Proposals should include: location, description of conference facilities, lodging options, meal options, and business support capabilities.

- Sponsorship/Funding – Need approx. \$50,000.00 to cover costs of A/V equipment, meeting rooms, photocopying, @ 30 people with travel assistance, facilitators, note-takers, publication of workshop products.

Next Steering Committee Meeting

August 31st, 2000. 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Office

2nd Floor Conference Room

1875 Century Blvd., Suite 400, Atlanta, Georgia.

7/13/00 meeting participants

Monica Schwalbach mschwalbach@fs.fed.us 202-205-1213

Daniel Friese Daniel.friese@hgafcee.brooks.af.mil 210-536-3823

John Jensen john_jensen@dnr.state.ga.us 912-994-1438

Katie Distler distler@nfwf.org 404-679-7120

Allen Robison allen_robison@fws.gov 404-679-7127

Dale Hall Dale_Hall@fws.gov 404-679-4000

Cindy Dohner Cynthia_Dohner@fws.gov 404-679-4156

Earl Possardt Earl_Possardt@fws.gov 770-214-9293

Erin Clark erin_clark@fws.gov 706-613-9493

Joseph Mitchell Jmitchel@richmond.edu 804-740-7086

Kurt A. Buhlmann buhlmann@srel.edu 803-725-5293

Peter Stangel stangel@nfwf.gov 404-679-7099

Jim Sweeney sweenj@champint.com 202-785-9888

Whit Gibbons gibbons@srel.edu 803 725-5852

Laura Mazanti is recently deceased and is not included