



## Meeting: National Steering Committee Meeting

**Date:** March 17, 2001

**Location:** Washington, D.C.

## Proceedings

The PARC National Steering Committee met at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington D. C. on March 16 to discuss a variety of issues, the detail of which is attached. There were 17 participants. Most of the issues discussed had a common thread: What/Who is PARC? Everyone agreed that in less than two years, PARC has grown both in size and influence but how to proceed from this point touched on the topics discussed. Who may speak for PARC? Where, exactly, is PARC located? Is PARC political? How to assure consistency in PARC publications? What about use of the PARC logo? Does PARC need a paid person to coordinate efforts? What about money? After four hours, some tasks were assigned to present members and many items were scheduled to be discussed at the September meeting in Chicago.

### In attendance:

Fred Stabler	202-452-7767	<a href="mailto:fred_stabler@blm.gov">fred_stabler@blm.gov</a>
Pat McElroy	202-452-1100	<a href="mailto:pmcelroy@hsus.org">pmcelroy@hsus.org</a>
Rosemary Forrest	803-725-2473	<a href="mailto:forrest@srel.edu">forrest@srel.edu</a>
Vincent Burke	202-275-2182	<a href="mailto:vburke@sipress.si.edu">vburke@sipress.si.edu</a>
Paul Robertson	512-912-7044	<a href="mailto:paul.robertson@tpwd.state.tx.us">paul.robertson@tpwd.state.tx.us</a>
Fred Kinard	843-871-5000	<a href="mailto:fwkinar@westvaco.com">fwkinar@westvaco.com</a>
(indicated Mac Baughman's support, same phone #		<a href="mailto:wmbaugh@westvaco.com">wmbaugh@westvaco.com</a>
David Cross	202-205-0951	<a href="mailto:dcross01@fs.fed.us">dcross01@fs.fed.us</a>
Whit Gibbons	803-725-5852	<a href="mailto:gibbons@srel.edu">gibbons@srel.edu</a>
Marshall Meyers	202-466-8270	<a href="mailto:mmeyers@meyersalterman.com">mmeyers@meyersalterman.com</a>
Bruce D. Taubert	602-789-3301	<a href="mailto:btaubert@gf.state.az.us">btaubert@gf.state.az.us</a>
Bruce Weissgold	703-358-1987	<a href="mailto:bruce_weissgold@fws.gov">bruce_weissgold@fws.gov</a>
Monica Schwalbach	202-205-1213	<a href="mailto:mschwalbach@fs.fed.us">mschwalbach@fs.fed.us</a>
Ernie Garcia	404-347-4081	<a href="mailto:egarcia@fs.fed.us">egarcia@fs.fed.us</a>
Elizabeth Estill	404-347-4177	<a href="mailto:eestill@fs.fed.us">eestill@fs.fed.us</a>
Robert Glasgow	202-205-0814	<a href="mailto:rglasgow@fs.fed.us">rglasgow@fs.fed.us</a>
Ken Brunson	366-672-0792	<a href="mailto:kenb@wp.state.ks.us">kenb@wp.state.ks.us</a>
Gideon Lachman	202-624-7890	<a href="mailto:glachman@sso.org">glachman@sso.org</a>

### Protocol for PARC Positions on Political Matters

A short discussion of this topic ended with agreement all around that many of the groups that comprise PARC are not allowed to take political stands, therefore PARC should steer clear of the political arena.

### Problem of Asian Turtle Trade

Bruce Weissgold told the Steering Committee that the Asian turtle trade, including the farming of North American species, is an issue PARC should address. He said there were rumors of herps being shipped into Louisiana for shipment to Asia. He said he would like for a copy of the BioScience article on the Global Decline of Reptiles to be sent to everyone who requests information. He said the

problem is the clear, unsustainable use of animals by Asia and called for solutions to come from PARC. He said another problem is that hybrids are being produced in great numbers through improper breeding.

Whit Gibbons suggested that Kurt Buhlmann of Conservation International should address this issue as he is a PARC member and is already working on the Asian turtle problem. Gibbons said a conflict prevented Kurt from being at the Steering Committee meeting.

### **Land Management Document**

Monica Schwalbach said she and a number of volunteers are working on the first general land managers guide for reptiles and amphibians. The group is using a bird guide as a model. She requested that PARC do general guidelines but for specific geographical areas. She said she wants representation from all levels, a workshop and sponsors. Ten state agencies, two private industries and various federal agencies have contributed a total of \$32,000 so far to publish this document. Illinois DNR is the host for the workshop and there will be five professional facilitators. This will take place in Chicago and she requested that the Management Steering Committee attend. She also said a thank-you letter from PARC needs to be sent to the sponsors.

### **PARC Alliances**

Fred Kinard reported that there is great interest from other groups, such as those concerned with fish and mussels, to align themselves with PARC . He said this could be an opportunity to strengthen our partnerships. Vincent Burke said such alliances can be confusing. Bruce Taubert suggested letting other groups know about PARC and Rosemary Forrest agreed to find out how PARC can be listed in the Federation Conservation directory.

Whit Gibbons said there is a need to print more of the 2-sided fact sheet on PARC that is widely distributed and Fred Kinard agreed to find out if Westvaco can fund such a printing. Rosemary Forrest agreed to find out the name of the printer and forward that information to Fred.

There was also a discussion regarding PARC's official address. At present, PARC mail comes in care of SREL. Whit Gibbons agreed to find out what it would take to have a dedicated PARC address.

### **Sustainable Use - Bruce Taubert**

Bruce Taubert said that "many reptiles and amphibians are being used in a manner that cannot be sustained." He called for final action to be taken at the meeting in September. He reported that the Management Committee, PTR-NE Committee, did a draft document on this topic and distributed it to all state wildlife people and all chairs of PARC committees with the intent that the document be sent out to all state and federal agencies. He said he used the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife document as a model. Mike Demlong is the staffer working on this document. He said the most contentious issue touched upon in this document is the reptile and amphibian harvest program. He said he has requested that all parties receiving the document send comments back to him by May 15. He said the document will then be revised and sent out again one month prior to the September meeting in Chicago so that a final document will be ready by the date of that meeting. Marie Hamilton of SREL will be in charge of sending the document out to the various chairs.

Taubert also voiced the opinion that rattlesnake roundups will be entirely replaced in two years due to the efforts of John Jensen and others in PARC as well as the awareness that some of the roundups are in violation of EPA regulations regarding using gas in the burrows. He said PARC has the opportunity to turn the growing interest in herps shown by these roundups into a positive. He said PARC members should be prepared to show the negative impact of the roundups and should respond with a consistent message. Marshall Meyers suggested that a survey of all 50 states would turn up laws already on the books that could prevent such abuse.

Taubert told the Steering Committee that Carolina Biological Supply needed to be corrected on a point regarding the release of animals back into the wild. He also requested input on a tri-fold that could be sent to places such as Carolina Supply that explain clearly who and what PARC is. He

suggested that perhaps Carolina Supply would be willing to pay for such a project. The Steering Committee is to vote on this by email and Rosemary Forrest agreed to send it out with the PARC logo to all on the Committee and to all Chairs. The deadline was set for April 17.

### **PARC Logo**

The use of the PARC logo was discussed. Some questions raised included "When to use the logo?" "Who may use the logo and on what?" "Should the logo be trademarked?" Marshall Meyers offered to have his lawyer do this for PARC. It was decided that a single sheet of items that PARC stands for should be developed and mailed to anyone requesting use of the logo. Vincent Burke said that PARC should be careful about logo use. He volunteered to work with Marshall Meyers and suggested that an ad hoc committee be formed to lend logo oversight. Bruce Weisgold offered to help. It was decided that no one outside PARC may use the logo until it is trademarked and standards developed. Vincent Burke said PARC must make the review process quick so as not to limit where the logo may properly appear.

### **PARC Coordinator Position**

A discussion about the need for a PARC Coordinator was held. Monica Schwalbach of the U.S. Forest Service said her agency is looking into funding a GS-13 level position for a Coordinator to work with all the federal agencies involved with PARC. She made it clear that this person would not coordinate among all the PARC agencies and groups, only the federal agencies. She said that it would still be good for one person to speak for all the federal agencies and she is working on a memorandum of understanding with which all the agencies can be comfortable.

Some voiced the opinion that such a coordinator should properly be called a Federal or National Coordinator rather than provide a single voice to set forth PARC's vision and programs, Vincent Burke warned that any move to step back from the volunteer nature of PARC could sap the organization of its unique energy.

This discussion turned into a wider discussion of PARC's need to be able to accept money, possibly as an independent nonprofit. At present, PARC does not have its own bank account but uses various accounts of PARC agencies to accept money and spend money. The problems of taxes and fees were also discussed as was the role of the Foundation in PARC's finances. Whit Gibbons and Rosemary Forrest agreed to determine a mechanism whereby small contributions could be made directly to PARC through SREL.

It was decided that press articles on PARC be posted on the Web and sent to Steering Committee members. SREL's Rosemary Forrest agreed to do this. Vincent Burke said

### **PARC Awards**

Whit Gibbons brought up the topic of giving PARC awards for responsible development. After some discussion, the group agreed that such awards would be premature in the absence of PARC guidelines for development. Vincent Burke suggested that a more general PARC award could be created and given to anyone for any worthy reason. The committee agreed that suggestions and guidelines would be developed for this purpose. A recommendation will be provided at the fall meeting.

A more general discussion about how to reach developers and real estate people with PARC's conservation message included the possibility of inviting real estate professional groups to join PARC. Another suggestion was that PARC should develop a presence at trade shows geared toward builders, real estate people and others. It was also suggested that regional PARC groups should be the PARC representatives in this to make it easier to cover more events and groups, such as the Garden Club of America. SREL agreed to actively recruit developers to participate in PARC meetings and activities. Whit Gibbons also mentioned that PARC had received an award from the Environmental Protection Agency.

Gibbons also introduced Rosemary Forrest who is partially funded with PARC money to do public relations. She agreed to publicize the land management guidelines and the sustainable use

document to get press for the September meeting. She also encouraged the members of the Steering Committee to forward success stories to her for publicity. Her email is [forrest@srel.edu](mailto:forrest@srel.edu) and her phone number is (803) 725-2473.

### **Products and Initiatives**

A discussion about various PARC products and initiatives, such as databases, books and brochures indicated much interest from all parties. Vincent Burke said PARC was becoming a publisher. The National Wildlife Federation sent a request for assistance in producing a backyard guide to reptiles and amphibians. They need photos and text. Whether this is to be a collaboration or an endorsement was debated. This was referred to the Southeast Education Committee with a request that guidelines be set for co-authorship. Vincent Burke agreed to draft a letter to the Education Committee about this and he will receive the materials on the proposal from Suzanne. He said the issue of cooperation in other publishing projects will certainly come up again and urged restraint. He cautioned the group to be prepared for more request and to become “reactive” not just “proactive.” Whit Gibbons said a PowerPoint presentation on reptiles and amphibians had been prepared and could be seen, and downloaded for others’ use, on the PARC Web site at [www.parcplace.org](http://www.parcplace.org). A discussion about producing a coffee-table book ended without agreement. Vincent Burke said such a book would be a big project that would take several years, probably not sell enough to make a profit, but could increase PARC visibility.

A discussion about PARC endorsing other groups’ projects or positions was held and some disagreement was evident. It was agreed to bring this up at the September meeting in Chicago. Some of the items that need to be addressed include the following:

- What are our positions?
- What is the process of issuing an endorsement?
- How do the committees run up the ladder to assure communication on all issues? and how to accomplish all this without destroying the freedom of the various groups within PARC .

It was decided that the Steering Committee needs reports from all PARC subcommittees before the September meeting and also decided that the minutes of all meetings should be readily accessible either by email, regular mail, or on the Web site.