



**Meeting:** National Steering Committee Meeting

**Date:** September 16, 2000

**Location:** Indianapolis, IN

## Proceedings

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### In Attendance

**James M. Sweeney**, International Paper Company  
**Katie Distler**, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation  
**Whit Gibbons**, Savannah River Ecology Laboratory  
**Earl Possardt**, US Fish and Wildlife Service  
**Susan Lieberman**, US Fish and Wildlife Service  
**Peter Stangel**, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation  
**Keith McKnight**, Ducks Unlimited  
**Duane Shroufe**, AZ Game & Fish  
**Bruce Taubert**, AZ Game & Fish  
**John Meagher**, US Environmental Protection Agency  
**Laura Herbeck Brookshire**, US Forest Service  
**Michael Lannoo**, Indiana University  
**Bob Brodman**, St. Joseph's College, Indiana  
**Ken Cox**, North American Wetlands Council  
**Monica Schwalbach**, US Forest Service  
**Adrienne Stefanm**, US State Department  
**Brian Keeley**, Bat Conservation International  
**Tom Darden**, US Forest Service  
**Marie Maltese**, US Fish and Wildlife Service  
**Eric Lawton**, Bureau of Land Management

## I. Reports from Working Groups

### Midwest Regional Working Group

*(submitted by: Laura Brookshire, North Central Research Station, U.S. Forest Service, Columbia, MO)*

A 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting for Midwest Regional Working Group will be held January 2001 in the St. Louis or Columbia, MO area. Some desired outcomes of this meeting will be the development of Midwest species list, identify top priorities for **PARC** Midwest, identify species and habitat priorities, identify and involve potentially interested groups in **PARC** (such as educators, department of transportation personnel, and agricultural associations), and progress reports from the Midwest research, management, monitoring, education, and policy groups on priorities and action plan tasks.

*The Joint Steering Committee encouraged the MW Working Group to contact other working groups within **PARC** to review their approach to ranking species so we can all take a coordinated approach.*

### **Research Working Group**

*(submitted by: Laura Brookshire, North Central Research Station, U.S. Forest Service)*

The research working group organized and hosted a **PARC** symposium at the 2000 ASIH meetings in La Paz, Mexico. The symposium lasted all day on 16 June and had a total of 23 speakers presenting their current research relating to the conservation of amphibians and reptiles. The realm of talks covered the 6 threat areas to amphibians and reptiles that were determined by **PARC**. Abstracts and summary recommendations provided by the speakers could be viewed on the **PARC** web site (or will be shortly if they aren't there already). The speakers gave excellent talks and the symposium was a huge success in the eyes of the research working group co-chairs and the **PARC** symposium participants.

Currently the research working group is planning a meeting that will coincide with the Herpetologists' League and the Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles in Indianapolis 26 July to 1 August 2001. Desired outcomes of this meeting will be to identify amphibian and reptile research priorities and develop an action plan, identify and involve other disciplines in **PARC** and in amphibian and reptile research (toxicologists, meteorologists, etc.), develop priority species and habitats.

*The Joint Steering Committee recommended the Research Working Group reach out to the state and federal agencies and the forest products industry in order to integrate **PARC**'s prioritization with their efforts. Greg Smith (now with IAFWA) would be a good contact as he is pulling together state research priorities. Dr. Ben Wigley (with NCASI) would be a good contact for industry research priorities.*

### **International Working Group**

*(submitted by: Sue Lieberman- US Fish and Wildlife Service's Office of Scientific Authority)*

Currently, the International Working Group of **PARC** is inactive. **PARC** has been struggling with the idea of an International Working Group since its inception. At previous Joint Steering Committee meetings, it has been the consensus of the group for **PARC** to focus on issues with direct relevance to amphibians and reptiles in North America, which might include working with Mexico and Canada on issues related to cross-boundary species. In addition, the group agreed that it is important for **PARC** to continue communicating with international groups.

*Members of the **PARC** Exec Steering Committee (Sue Lieberman, Katie Distler, and Whit Gibbons) will distribute a memo on the current status of this working group to the **PARC** listserv and to working group chairs. This memo will call for interested parties or recommended contacts that could assist in keeping **PARC** visible internationally.*

### **Southeast Educational Working Group**

*(submitted by: Katie Distler, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation)*

The SE Ed Working Group met recently to revisit priorities and action items set at the initial **PARC** workshop in 1999, and to explore ways of expanding the representation in the working group. The eight original action items, as defined by this working group, were: 1) Compile a list of all herp educational resources in the SE (and nationwide) to not only identify gaps in education, but also to alert educators about these resources; 2) create and distribute **PARC** Powerpoint presentation; 3) explore possibility of public service announcements as way to spread **PARC** word; 4) make presentations about **PARC** at environmental ed conferences; 5) evaluate SE zoos/aquariums to

determine if they are optimizing their resources specific to SE herp ed and outreach; 6) get **PARC** website linked into frog call websites being developed; 7) develop position paper on environmental education as a component of teacher education; 8) create a **PARC** education poster to be shared nationally. The group identified distinct projects in need of support, including an indigo snake educational project and the development of a brochure that highlights all available herp educational tools. The group will be meeting again at the upcoming Conservation and Management of Snakes of the Xeric Uplands Workshop at the Savannah River Ecology Laboratory on October 20, 2000.

### **Policy/Trade/Regulation Working Group**

*(submitted by: Bruce Taubert, Arizona Game and Fish)*

The PTR Working Group has been working on four primary topics:

1. 2. The Northeast WG prepared a very nice draft model State Regulation. The PTR WG is going to coordinate input from all **PARC** members and all 50 states. It is our intent to have a final draft for the Steering Committee to act on in March.
3. The PTR WG is developing a draft "Sustainable Use of Reptiles and Amphibians" document for input from **PARC**. We intend to get input from the Steering Committee in March. We will give all **PARC** members an opportunity to have input before December.
4. We are in the process of developing a committee to work on captive breeding. Our intent is to develop a document that outlines the importance (or lack thereof) of captive breeding to the **PARC** effort.

## **II. Follow-up from Previous Meetings**

### **PARC Partnerships statement**

*Jim Sweeney, International Paper*

Interested parties can now access a **PARC** Partnership Statement on the **PARC** website. Written by **PARC** steering committee members, this statement explains **PARC**'s commitment to bringing diverse partners to the conservation table. Please distribute as needed.

### **Biological Supply House letter**

*Bruce Taubert, Arizona Game and Fish*

See above notes under Policy, Trade, and Regulations Working Group. **PARC** has been contacted by three biological supply houses and efforts are underway to develop partnerships

### **PARC contact list for media/general public**

*Whit Gibbons, Savannah River Ecology Laboratory*

Whit will work with **PARC** to develop and post a list of **PARC** reps for interviews, press releases, etc. Rosemary Forest at the Savannah River Ecology Laboratory has been successful in generating attention to **PARC**.

### **Species and Habitat Conservation Priority Committee--Initial Report**

*Mike Lannoo, Indiana University*

In April 2000, the Executive Steering Committee recommended that a committee be developed to investigate prioritization schemes and to coordinate efforts among **PARC** working groups. The committee will not be responsible for specific prioritizations, but rather for investigating which methods are most appropriate. Mike Lannoo agreed to chair this committee. The goals of the committee are: 1) to explore ways of developing species and habitat conservation priorities; and 2) to establish these priorities by Regional Working Groups. In order to meet these goals, Regional Working Group chairs were contacted to discuss their approach to prioritization and determine their progress.

(see **Mike's FULL REPORT**)

It was suggested that **PARC** attempt to work within the boundaries developed by Partners in Flight. In addition, Mike has been working on compiling the book, Status and Conservation of US Amphibians. Distribution maps for all species are available on the web, and there will be a link on the **PARC** website for this information. In addition, a paragraph will be sent out to the **PARC** listserv concerning the availability of these maps.

### **III. PARC's Relationship to the Declining Amphibian Population Taskforce (DAPTF) and the Amphibian Research and Monitoring Initiative (ARMI)**

*Mike Lannoo, Indiana University*

DAPTF represents the oldest herpetological conservation effort. It was established over ten years ago and is nested under the Species Survival Commission of the World Conservation Union. DAPTF has an international focus and is divided into regional working groups (11 in the U.S.). DAPTF emphasizes amphibian conservation and provides modest seed grants for promising research, especially in areas of the world where amphibian diversity is high and research funding opportunities are low. DAPTF publishes FROGLOG, which is free to subscribers. (<http://www.open.ac.uk/daptf/>)

**PARC** was established a couple years ago using the Partners in Flight model. **PARC** emphasizes amphibian and reptile conservation through private-federal-state partnerships, and to date has been primarily a US effort. **PARC** is not a funding organization, rather a coalition of individuals from many different agencies and organizations. Currently, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) has agreed to help fund initial **PARC** priority projects and has set up a fund to hold contributions to the **PARC** effort. **PARC** is organized into working groups (5 in the US), and many of the people active in DAPTF are active in **PARC**. (<http://www.parcplace.org/>)

ARMI (Amphibian Research and Monitoring Initiative) is a US federal initiative that derives from a 1998 meeting held in Washington, DC and the philosophy that a "top down" approach to amphibian conservation is needed to compliment the "bottom up" approach of DAPTF. ARMI is the funded product of TADD (Task Force on Amphibian Declines and Deformities), and represents the collective efforts of around 17 or 18 usually independent Federal Agencies. ARMI is funded through a congressional allocation. Perhaps the most tangible product of ARMI is the emphasis on hiring new herpetologists into USGS positions. ARMI composes 7 US regional groups, each with a research-grade herpetologist. ARMI funding will go to federal biologists and their academic/industry partners. ARMI's early emphasis has been on establishing monitoring protocols and programs.

*The Joint Steering Committee agreed that it would be valuable to have representatives from DAPTF and ARMI at future Joint Steering Committees so they could report on their groups' activities. Invitations will be sent out to these groups for all future Steering Committee meetings. The Joint Steering Committee also encourages all working groups to include local representatives of DAPTF and ARMI in their meetings.*

### **IV. PARC Workshop on Management Guidelines for Conservation of Amphibians and Reptiles**

*Monica Schwalbach, U.S. Forest Service*

Monica discussed recent efforts by **PARC** to organize a workshop that would convene managers, scientists, agencies, industry and organizations to initiate development of regional management guidelines for amphibian and reptile conservation. The workshop is tentatively set for March 2001. Illinois DNR has offered to host the workshop in Chicago. Products would include a prototype regional guidebook for herp management practices, and action plans for each **PARC** region. Participants

would include **PARC** Steering and Management Committee members, Regional Working Group chairs, regional representatives and herp scientists.

Objectives of the workshop are to:

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

Funding is being sought to cover meeting costs such as equipment rentals, printing of workshop products, travel assistance, and facilitators. Please contact Monica Schwalbach, [mschwalbach@fs.fed.us](mailto:mschwalbach@fs.fed.us), for additional information.

Monica will set up a meeting with BLM in Washington to brief them on workshop planning activities.

## V. Other Business

### Update on PARC website and database development

*Whit Gibbons, Savannah River Ecology Laboratory*

David Scott, [parc@srel.edu](mailto:parc@srel.edu), is the contact for posting **PARC** information on the **PARC** website. David has organized a web-based "**PARC** Art Show," which will allow artists to showcase their work. Sales will not take place on the **PARC** website- interested parties will contact artists directly, and a percent of sales will go to support **PARC** priority projects. Check out the great art at [www.parcplace.org](http://www.parcplace.org). The group recommended that future shows include photography.

*Katie Distler and Whit Gibbons agreed to draft and distribute a subscription policy for the **PARC** website. This would hopefully give agencies and organizations an easier way to contribute to the site.*

*After thorough discussion by all present, it was agreed that David Scott and Whit Gibbons would be responsible for web content on a day-to-day basis. However, if a request to post something comes in that is of a questionable nature (content wise or policy wise) they will run it by the Joint Steering Committee for review and approval prior to posting on the web.*

### National PARC Coordinator

There was discussion on the benefits of hiring someone to coordinate **PARC** activities on a national level. Earl Possardt, USFWS, will discuss with the federal agency steering committee.

### Compilation of Federal/State Employees involved in Herp Conservation Work

The group agreed that it would be useful to identify federal and state employees involved in herp conservation work. **PARC** will work to make sure that these contacts are included on the listserv and distributed to working group chairs.