



Meeting: National Steering Committee Meeting

Date: December 5, 2001

Location: Wichita, Kansas

Proceedings

Attending:

Rocky Beach	Noel Holcomb	Earl Possardt
Richard Bischof	Dwayne Knott	Debbie Pressman
Ernie Garcia	John Jensen	Monica Schwalbach
Pamela Hall	Bruce Kingsbury	Bruce Taubert
Peter Harth	Mike Lannoo	Bruce Weissgold
John Herron	Mamie Parker	Scott Wright
Mark Hilliard	Chuck Pils	two "other" people

Topics discussed:

1. Update on development of the regional habitat conservation guidelines and recommendations for future use

- Monica Schwalbach and Bruce Kingsbury

- Presented and discussed at length. Following the March, 2001, workshop on this topic (see item #11 below), **PARC** regional coordinators are working with members to develop regional habitat conservation guidebooks. We anticipate publishing the first Regional Guide in spring 2002, and the balance between then and autumn 2003. These will be a "first generation" product, with more detailed editions developed subsequent to this effort. Funding is needed to complete this project. Total cost is estimated at \$207,000. Funding secured to date totals \$56,000. We initiated marketing for this effort at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources conference in April, 2002.

2. Forest Service plan to develop herpetofaunal survey protocols for USFS lands

- Ernie Garcia

- Ernie presented a handout.

3. Plans to create position of PARC Federal Coordinator

- Earl Possardt, Monica Schwalbach

- A discussion was held regarding the filling of a new position of a Federal **PARC** Coordinator. Monica reported that the funds are there and the position should be filled by spring. Role is to facilitate and promote herp conservation and support **PARC** Mission. Funding has been committed; position will be advertised in January. Includes EPA, USGA, US Forest Service, BLM, National Marine Fishery Service, Federal Highway Administration, Natural Resources, Bureau of Reclamation, USFWS. She said this would facilitate and promote greater herp conservation on federal lands and federal projects.

4. Tri-fold and Carolina Biological Supply update

- Bruce Taubert

- A tri-fold, *Don't turn it Loose!* has been completed. A discussion about how to distribute it was held with the committee calling for people to submit their ideas to the group.

5. Draft Model of State Herpetofauna Regulations for PARC

- Bruce Taubert

- These were presented and approved without opposition.

6. Policy, Trade and Regulations Update

- Bruce Taubert

7. Creating a National (non-federal) PARC Coordinator position

- A discussion was held regarding the need for a coordinator for **PARC**. There was some discussion about the nature of this position: would it be that of a fund-raiser or motivator coordinator? The need for regional coordinators was also discussed. Funding such positions was discussed. Also, the need for "embryonic development" was noted with a special nod at the role Whit Gibbons has played in **PARC**. The possibility of hiring someone part-time was discussed. A subcommittee was appointed to study the issue and report in April with the appropriate tasks such a coordinator would handle and with a game plan for hiring someone. The subcommittee members: Bruce Taubert, Marshall Meyers, Monica Schwalbach, Michael Lannoo.

8. PARC endorsing other groups' projects and use of logo

- A recommendation was made that requests and approval (or disapproval) for use of the **PARC** logo be a streamlined, pro forma process that does not involve the entire Steering Committee. The attached form will be placed on the **PARC** website so that anyone making a request can be referred to the site and send in the form. A semi-annual update of **PARC** logo decisions will be made to the Steering Committee. The Guidelines for Use of the **PARC** Logo will be included as part of the form. There appears to be worldwide interest in **PARC**. A discussion about whether **PARC** is ready for such interest was held. It was decided to keep approvals to North American requests until a more appropriate time. The current form and process were approved for use.

9. Proposal from Craig Hassapakis to make ARC an official publication of PARC

- Craig Hassapakis presented his case via conference call. A discussion was held regarding the merits of the publication, its past problems and the benefits of **PARC** having a journal of its own. No action was taken.

10. PARC's position statement on the sustainable use of reptiles and amphibians

- Bruce Taubert

- Approved without opposition.

11. Development of habitat guidelines for land managers and national workshop

- Monica Schwalbach, Kurt Buhlmann

- Monica and Kurt reported on the workshop that was held March, 2001. About 90 people representing the spectrum of **PARC** constituency met for three days to begin development of regional habitat management guidelines. Outlines of what the guides would look like, initial species lists and species-habitat groupings, and preliminary habitat management recommendations were developed for each of the five **PARC** regions. Follow-up actions were identified by each group for completing the work following the workshop. The **PARC** Management Steering Committee decided to use the balance of funds from the workshop to complete development of the Midwest Guide as the "exemplar" of this project. The Midwest Guide will be published this spring and (hopefully) be available for distribution at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources conference in April, where it will serve as marketing tool in helping to secure the balance of funds needed to complete one guide for each **PARC** region. Illinois Department of Natural Resources hosted the workshop; and Illinois Conservation Foundation provided fiscal support. Sponsors included: Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (**PARC**), Illinois Conservation Foundation, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Arizona Game and Fish, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Missouri Department of Conservation, West Virginia Department of Natural Resources, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife, Conservation International, Tie Tracks, U.S. Dept. of Defense -- Legacy Resource Management Program, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S.D.A Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Forest Service

12. PARC Listserv

- The current policy is to allow anyone to comment on any aspect of reptiles and amphibians, allowing unlimited open expression of views rather than controlling or censoring exchanges. Discussion revolved around the establishment of rules or not, as follows:
 - No change
 - Rules for topics (someone to oversee)
 - Rules for volume (automatic divert to message board or someone to oversee)
 - Rules for abuse and banishment

There is some support for each of the first three items. The majority agreed that there should be rules or appropriate topic suggestions established.

13. The PARC Website

- A report of website use was submitted by SREL to NFWF in November. Peter Stangel indicated that approximately half the funds (\$2,501.33 from NRCS, \$8,700.00 from Disney, \$5,000.00 from NFWF) have been donated for continuation of the site for another year but that an additional \$15,000 in supplements is also needed from other sources, such as USFWS, USGS, USFS, DOT, or state DNRs. Please contact Peter Stangel to indicate commitments in support of the Web site for another year.

14. Development of databases on reptile studies on DOI lands

- The web address (<http://www.mp2-pwrc.usgs.gov/parcarmi/home/>) illustrates the structure of what is being attempted in this joint venture between SREL and USGS at Patuxent. SREL is uncertain of plans for continuation of the project at this time but is prepared to continue if additional funding can be provided. Presented and discussed.

15. Asian turtle problem

- Kurt Buhlmann

- Copies of the IUCN Turtle Survival Alliance information brochure will be available for Steering Committee members at the meeting. Copies will be sent to anyone interested upon request.

16. PARC PRODUCTS AND NEW INITIATIVES

- *Creation of a **PARC** PowerPoint presentation is now available to anyone. Download from the **PARC** website at <http://www.parcplace.org/publications/index.htm>
- *Educational products were presented at the meeting.
- ***PARC** articles in regional and national magazines were presented at the meeting.
- *Public service announcements by celebrities - A CD of a 60-second recording of Coach Vince Dooley promoting **PARC** that has been distributed to Georgia radio stations was played at the meeting. This is the prototype of an idea proposed by the **PARC-SE** Educational Group. Rosemary Forrest has sent the public service announcement, which is played at no cost, to about 50 radio stations. Others are encouraged to produce similar PSAs for regional or national celebrities to whom they have access. Please contact parc@srel.edu if a suggested script is needed. Rosemary Forrest also notes that PSAs are played at no cost to the organizations that provide them but that the decision to play a PSA resides solely with the station. Most PSAs are read by on-air talent. Celebrity PSAs will have greater appeal but some stations have policies that will rule them out simply because they are prerecorded.

17. Herp Watch List

- Peter Stangel has noted that the Watch List of bird species has been successful in Partners in Flight in encouraging funding agencies and research programs to focus on particular species and habitats. For information on the bird watch list, see

<http://www.audubon.org/bird/watch/homepage/faq.htm>

- Concern was expressed about this list's intent and value for reptiles and amphibians. Lannoo expressed concerns about species and regional biases, species where some populations are healthy but others are not, etc. Need to make something like this more fine-tuned than for birds. Such a list could conflict with the **PARC** motto, "*Keeping common species common.*" No resolution was reached during the meeting.

18. The scope of PARC

- There was a discussion regarding the appropriate scale of **PARC**. Should it be national, international, or restricted to North America only?

19. Problem of cancellations

- A discussion was held regarding recent **PARC** meetings that were canceled due to lack of interest. This included a National Education Meeting.