

NORTH ATLANTIC LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION COOPERATIVE GRANT 2014 PROGRESS REPORT

Quarter: 2014 2nd

Grant Program, Number and Title: "Increasing Resiliency for Riverine Ecosystems"

Organization: University of Massachusetts Amherst

Project Leader: Scott Jackson, Extension Associate Professor

Abstract: In order to conduct assessments of river and stream continuity and set priorities for restoring aquatic and terrestrial connectivity at a regional scale such as that of the North Atlantic LCC project it is necessary to reconcile disparate approaches for road-stream crossing assessment and knit them together into a compatible system for use across state lines and over large areas. The goals of the project are 1) to create a network of individuals and organizations working together to assess barriers, set priorities and implement projects to restore river and stream continuity and enhancing the resiliency of transportation infrastructure and 2) create an infrastructure of GIS data, assessment protocols, scoring algorithms, databases and data sharing applications to support road-stream crossing assessments and priority setting for the restoration of aquatic connectivity.

Although the start date for this project is January 1, 2014 the contract between WMI and UMass was not finalized until early April 2014. The second quarter of 2014 is actually the first quarter for this project. Much of the time this quarter has been spent getting sub-contracts in place and initiating the hiring of Alex Abbott to work on the project. Some work has begun with collaborators in New York to incorporate them into the River and Stream Continuity network. We expect that in the next quarter we will be able to start work in earnest, beginning with the organization of a team of Northeast partners to serve as an advisory committee, research and preliminary analyses of existing stream crossing assessment protocols and scoring systems, and identification of watersheds that should be a high priority for future road-stream crossing assessments.

Were planned goals/objectives achieved last quarter? Yes

Progress Achieved: Much of this quarter was used to get sub-contracts in place and initiating the hiring of Alex Abbott to work on the project. S. Jackson met with collaborators in NY to create a network and coordination structure for managing crossing assessments in that state. This led to a training workshop on May 20th for collaborators who will be conducting stream crossing assessments in NY. A PDF version of the field data form was created for use with smart phones and other hand held devices.

| TASK | TASK DESCRIPTION | % DONE | PROGRESS NARRATIVE |
|------|---|--------|--|
| 1.1 | Assemble and coordinate a team of Northeast Partners | 0 % | |
| 1.2 | Create a broad network of individuals and organizations to conduct assessments of stream crossings | 0 % | |
| 2.1 | Identify sources of road-stream crossing data currently available in the region | 0 % | |
| 2.2 | Reconfigure River and Stream Continuity online database to accept data from NY and data collected using other protocols | 5 % | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked with collaborators in NY to establish a system to coordinate crossing assessments in that state • Provided training on stream crossing assessment for NY collaborators • Developed a PDF version of the field data form that can be completed in the field using smart phones and other hand held devices |
| 2.3 | Compile currently available data into the River and Stream Continuity Project's online database | 0 % | |
| 3.1 | Compile information on the various protocols and scoring systems currently | 0 % | |

| TASK | TASK DESCRIPTION | % DONE | PROGRESS NARRATIVE |
|------|---|--------|--------------------|
| | being used in the region or in neighboring regions | | |
| 3.2 | Crosswalk assessment data fields across protocols and implement scoring algorithms that will yield comparable scores for multiple data collection methodologies | 0 % | |
| 4.1 | Create categories for assessment protocols based on objective or level of rigor | 0 % | |
| 4.2 | Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the various protocols available for use in the region | 0 % | |
| 4.3 | Make recommendations on protocols that should be broadly used throughout the region | 0 % | |
| 5.1 | Identify road-stream crossings across the North Atlantic region and make available by state and for the region as a whole | 0 % | |
| 5.2 | Assign xycodes to all identified crossings across the region | 0 % | |
| 5.3 | Make recommendations for an online database that can store, score and make available data on road-stream crossings across the region | 0 % | |
| 5.4 | Identify existing data gaps and prioritize areas for new field surveys | 0 % | |
| 6.1 | Complete report of results and recommendations of next steps | 0 % | |
| 6.2 | Make road-stream crossing assessment and GIS data available for download | 0 % | |

Difficulties Encountered: Contracting between WMI and UMass took much longer than expected. Conditions in the WMI-UMass contract created problems setting up subcontracts, causing delays in getting the subcontracts in place.

Activities Anticipated Next Quarter: Kick-off meeting of project key personnel, organization of a team of Northeast partners to serve as an advisory committee, research and preliminary analyses of existing stream crossing assessment protocols and scoring systems, identification of watersheds that should be a high priority for future road-stream crossing assessments, and configuration of the online database to accept data from NY.

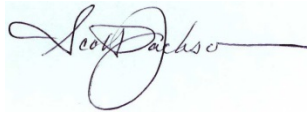
Expected End Date: 18 months from finalization of contract between WMI and UMass (September 30, 2015)

Costs:

Total life to date expenses (including this quarter): \$94.14 (\$81.86 direct costs)

Total Approved Budgeted Funds: \$150,000 (\$134,644 direct costs)

Are you within the approved budget plan and categories: Yes



Signature:

Date: July 15, 2014