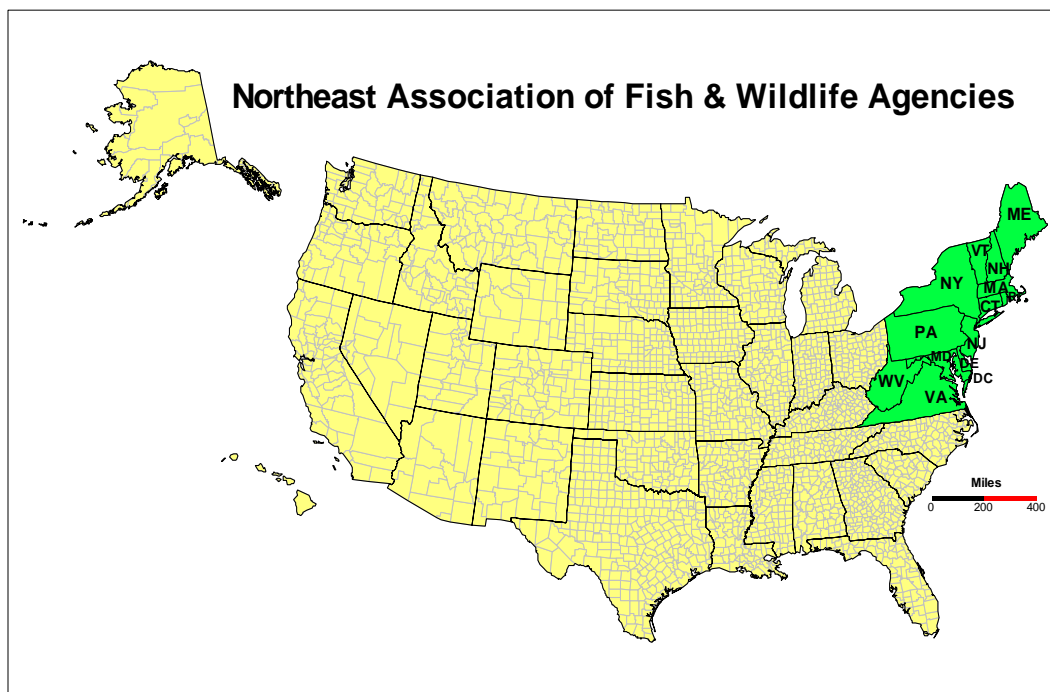




The Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Resource Agencies

State Wildlife Action Plans Meeting March 28-30, 2006



A Final Summary Report to the Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
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Executive Summary

State Wildlife Action Plan development was an unprecedented effort between states and partners. Through a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies set about to leverage that effort.

The culmination of the grant was a 2-day meeting held in Albany, New York during March 28-30, 2006. A total of 45 people attended the meeting, representing the Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and all states in the region except Rhode Island.

The meeting focused on identifying specific actions that, based on the collective priorities identified in the states Action Plans, would further fish and wildlife conservation in the region.

Through interactive voting and breakout group discussions during the meeting region-wide priority conservation actions were identified, using a list of 41 priority conservation actions developed by the Northeast Endangered Species and Wildlife Diversity Committee List and 31 priority actions added by states at the March 28, 2006 group session.

A lead person and next steps were identified for the 6 priority projects selected. The number in parentheses below indicated the original conservation action number assigned in the complete list for purposes of voting and easy identification:

1. (71) Select regional landcover, stream, and habitat classification system from existing suite of options and create regional GIS platform, then identify quality and critically imperiled habitat types and locations
2. (31) Identify top 20 invasive species and related issues that negatively impact GCN species and develop implementation actions and monitoring protocols to gauge effectiveness of management actions.
3. (40) Identify a system of Northeast conservation focus areas to support sustainable populations of GCN species.
4. (45) Develop regional in-stream flow standards, guidelines, and policy standards that allow for management of the quantity and temperature of flows that mimic natural conditions and protect aquatic life from thermal stress and other flow-related threats.
5. (21) Develop model guidelines for training local planning boards on how to incorporate GCN species and their key habitats into local planning.
6. (73) Develop Regional Indicators and Measures (of SGCN, Habitats, Threats and Strategy Effectiveness) to Ensure Successful Conservation

The lead person identified for the priority project will coordinate future work towards the development of blueprints for these regional conservation projects.

Appendix D

Priority Conservation Actions NEAFWA

Combined List Based of NE Endangered Species and Wildlife Diversity Committee and State “Add-ons” from March 28, 2006 Session

1. Select one species from each taxonomic group to consolidate data for the purpose of regional conservation planning (eBird was presented as a model approach).
2. ID indicators to monitor at the regional level.
3. ID regional high priority invertebrate species, map their potential habitats, and develop conservation actions to ensure population viability.
4. ID important migratory songbird stopover points/habitat in the NE.
5. ID 5 invertebrates from each state whose life history/habitat requirements is poorly known and direct research toward them.
6. Establish Regional Working Groups by taxa to develop common data collection protocols and databases for regional analysis, action and monitoring.
7. ID key bat migration areas in potential wind development sites in the NE.
8. ID species for which the NE holds the greatest responsibility for their survival.
9. ID species by taxa for which we have little information on status and distribution and develop standardized methodologies for data collection.

10. Compile population status and location data for Tier 1 species on the NE list and map their locations.
11. Develop a plan for organizational structure for regional conservation planning and organization.
12. ID important regional wildlife corridors or patches that are important for GCN species (GIS map/product).
13. Develop metrics to track changes in the landscape at a regional and sub-regional scale.
14. Select regional species and habitats most vulnerable to impacts of climate change and develop a monitoring scheme.
15. Develop a mechanism to enhance landscape level conservation at the local level for regional issues.
16. ID a host and develop an online NE data/monitoring warehouse/forum for GCN species for all taxa.
17. Develop guidelines for habitat protection through legislation/regulation and promote adoption in NE states.
18. ID habitat connectivity issues for GCN species.

19. ID focal areas for management for all taxa.
20. ID species with conservation issues that require regional actions.
21. Develop model guidelines for training local planning boards on how to incorporate GCN species and their key habitats into local planning.
22. Take the top 50 species that appear or will go extinct in the next 50-100 years and put them in a zoo. Develop educational and outreach programs to explain why they are in the zoo.
23. Develop workshops for educational outreach to relay importance of issues identified in the state CWCPs.
24. Regional analysis of roadless areas.

Appendix D: Combined list of Priority Conservation Actions

25. Define/evaluate organizational capacity and increase where needed to meet current conservation needs.
26. ID impacts of wind energy and communications towers on bat and bird migration and develop pre- and post- construction monitoring guidelines.
27. Find ways to reduce wildlife transportation conflicts and identify ways to improve connectivity.
28. Develop a relational database for all GCN species in the NE and their threats to facilitate conservation efforts.
29. Develop model guidelines for landowner incentives to protect GCN species and their key habitats.
30. Review efforts to establish legislation to cash in on non-consumptive wildlife use.
31. ID top 20 invasive species and related issues that negatively impact GCN species and develop **implementation actions and monitoring protocols to gauge effectiveness of management actions.**
32. Develop management guidelines for freshwater wetlands supporting GCN species.
33. Analyze potential regional impacts of loss of federal protection of vernal pools and isolated wetlands on GCN species.
34. Restore 100,000 acres of degraded wetland in the NE.
35. Develop educational outreach pamphlet /material describing climate change and potential impacts on GCN species in the NE.
36. Education and outreach for air and water quality impacts on GCN species.
37. Convene symposium of wildlife and public health experts to ID common issues and solutions.
38. Assess impacts of nuisance species to GCN species and their habitats in the NE.
39. Educate public on effects of acid rain on NE GCN species.
40. ID a system of NE conservation focus areas to support sustainable populations of GCN species.
41. X
42. Create methods to includes the protection of sensitive habitats that can be incorporated into deer mgt. formulas
43. Identify and develop land protection strategies for large blocks of unfragmented habitats, including tax incentives and disincentives, easements, and cooperative management and funding mechanisms.
44. Coordinate Regional Sturgeon Conservation & Genetic Testing
45. Develop regional in-stream flow standards, guidelines and policy recommendations that allow for management of the quantity and temperature of flows that mimic natural conditions and protect aquatic life from thermal stress and other flow-related threats
46. Develop surveying and monitoring protocols for wide-ranging estuarine and marine species.
47. Develop classification for freshwater, estuarine and marine habitats.
48. Develop silvicultural guidelines and establish demonstration areas designed to maximize habitat for neotropical migrant
49. Regional initiative to mediate/restoring native brook trout and associated GCN streams (Eastern Brook Trout Initiative)
50. Develop model in-stream flow goals for 3 inter-jurisdictional watersheds (e.g. Delaware, New, Connecticut Rivers) to sustain the diversity, structure, and abundance of GCN species and their key habitats

Appendix D: Combined list of Priority Conservation Actions

51. Develop a listing of habitat sizes to prevent habitat from being a species sink rather than a source.
52. Multistate recreational/educational trails website and map
53. Concern for quality, quantity, degradation, and conservation of estuarine and marine environments and associated species groups.
54. Develop and implement coordinated monitoring and mapping of nightjars and marsh birds in the northeast (strongly supported by NE-PIF; featured in many WAPs)
55. Promote public awareness about urban SGCN and their habitats (informational programs; bioblitz events and more gather data and inform public—builds informed constituent base)
56. Develop habitat classification and quantify spatial and trend data for early successional habitat.
57. Develop management goals for extent and distribution of early successional habitat.
58. ID bird species not adequately sampled by the Breeding Bird Survey and develop protocol to monitor and develop system to implement protocol. Find a way to share data collected. This recommendation could be repeated for many species of regional concern.
59. Enhance conservation of GCN terrestrial invertebrates by developing an online database that provides information to the public and facilitates the submission of data by the scientific community (ideally pick two focal groups like Lepidoptera and odonata that have high public profile and interest as a model for others)
60. Map historical and current distributions of diadromous GCN species and identify migratory barriers throughout the northeast region and establish habitat restoration goals.
61. Develop Northeast standards for revising state endangered and threatened species listing.
62. Provide on-going technical assistance to existing and future landowners and decision-makers on the importance of species and habitat conservation.
63. Develop regional riparian buffer protection guidelines that include headwater streams.
64. Create coordinated regional surveys of migratory passerines, shorebirds and other migratory birds (woodcock) and identify regionally important sites
65. Identify critical spawning habitat for rare anadromous species (Short-nosed Sturgeon)
66. Develop Regional Status of rare fish and identify associated habitats using common classification system
67. Develop regional plan for early detection, response and control of invasive/exotic species and over abundant predators to reduce impact on Species of conservation concern
68. Improve Transportation Infrastructure to Accommodate Passage for Fish & Wildlife (e.g. road crossings as barriers to movement)
69. Identify and Implement Strategies to Address Regional Air Quality/Pollution Issues Affecting SGCN (mercury, nitrogen, and acid rain)
70. Identify acid deposition priority areas (waterways and terrestrial habitats) and test mitigation strategies
71. Select regional landcover, stream, and habitat classification system from existing suite of options and create regional GIS platform (note differences from #41), then identify quality and critically imperiled habitat types and locations
72. Develop educational outreach material describing impacts of “pet collecting” on GCN in the NE.

Appendix E

NEAFWA Top 10 Priority Conservation Actions from March 29, 2006 Session

#1 (71) Select regional landcover, stream, and habitat classification system from existing suite of options and create regional GIS platform (note differences from #41), then identify quality and critically imperiled habitat types and locations

#2 (31) ID top 20 invasive species and related issues that negatively impact GCN species and develop implementation actions and monitoring protocols to gauge effectiveness of management actions.

#3 (40) ID a system of NE conservation focus areas to support sustainable populations of GCN species.

#4 (45) Develop regional in-stream flow standards, guidelines and policy recommendations that allow for management of the quantity and temperature of flows that mimic natural conditions and protect aquatic life from thermal stress and other flow-related threats

#5 (21) Develop model guidelines for training local planning boards on how to incorporate GCN species and their key habitats into local planning.

#6 (49) Regional initiative to mediate/restoring native brook trout and associated GCN streams (Eastern Brook Trout Initiative)

#7 (54) Develop and implement coordinated monitoring and mapping of nightjars and marsh birds in the northeast (strongly supported by NE-PIF; featured in many WAPs)

#8 (12) ID important regional wildlife corridors or patches that are important for GCN species (GIS map/product).

#9 (8) ID species for which the NE holds the greatest responsibility for their survival.

#10 (20) ID species with conservation issues that require regional actions.