

June 27, 2013

Mark Shaffer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Roger Griffis, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Arpita Choudhury, Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies

Management Team Co-Chairs, National Fish, Wildlife and Plants Climate Adaptation Strategy

Thank you for the opportunity to review the recently released National Fish, Wildlife and Plants Climate Adaptation Strategy (Strategy) and to provide feedback on the role of the North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative (NALCC) and LCCs across the country in implementing the Strategy. The NALCC Steering Committee has reviewed and discussed the document as well as your letter and attachment dated June 6, 2013 and offers the following comments.

First, we would like to commend you on a very well-written and organized articulation of climate change adaptation issues, challenges, goals, strategies and actions and on the inclusive team approach that you utilized to build consensus around the Strategy. The resulting document is an excellent framework for action by conservation agencies, organizations and partnerships across the country. As you note in the Strategy, “LCCs can play an important role in facilitating development of action plans to implement the Strategy appropriate to their geographic areas” and “have a good mix of membership to successfully facilitate implementation of this strategy through a collaborative process”.

The North Atlantic LCC mission stated below clearly supports the goals and actions outlined in the Strategy.

The North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative provides a partnership in which the private, state, tribal and federal conservation community works together to address increasing land use pressures and widespread resource threats and uncertainties amplified by a rapidly changing climate. The partners and partnerships in the cooperative address these regional threats and uncertainties by agreeing on common goals for land, water, fish, wildlife, plant and cultural resources and jointly developing the scientific information and tools needed to prioritize and guide more effective conservation actions by partners toward those goals.

The North Atlantic LCC would like to acknowledge its commitment to support the Strategy consistent with its mission and the strategies and actions that support its mission related to climate change adaptation. The attached crosswalk indicates Strategy goals and the corresponding LCC objectives, strategies and actions from the North Atlantic LCC Conservation Science Strategic Plan. The attached list of relevant ongoing projects provides specific

examples of LCC activities that support the strategy. As you will see in those documents, there are LCC strategies and actions that support all seven of the Strategy goals. Now that the Strategy is complete, the LCC Steering Committee and technical committees will review existing LCC projects and consider future priorities for science and science delivery needs that can address recommended actions in the Strategy that are not already being addressed.

We agree with the three thematic areas identified in the attachment to your letter that LCCs can contribute to including Regional Landscape Conservation Planning and Design, Regional Conservation Priorities, Needs, and Agendas and Decision Support Information and Tools. These are all areas that are a focus of the North Atlantic LCC. One additional area for consideration is Information Management – providing easily accessible information on climate change adaptation in the scale and formats that partners need in a central location.

We also suggest that the Strategy Management Team should consider how to best work not just with individual LCCs but across the LCC network, possibly through the LCC National Council that is now being developed.

Thank you again for the opportunity to review and express support for this important national strategy.

Sincerely,

Ken Elowe Patricia Riexinger

Chair North Atlantic LCC Steering Committee Co-Chair, LCC Steering Committee

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service New York State Dept. Environmental Conservation