

Hi Ken,

I'm writing to express WCS' interest in officially joining the North Atlantic LCC Steering Committee. As you now, I attended the April Steering Committee meeting and my colleague, Michale Glennon, is participating in the Technical Committee. I would appreciate you formally considering WCS' membership in the Steering Committee.

Attached is a letter of interest I sent to the committee in February of 2011 indicating the skills and expertise that WCS can bring to this group and stating our interest in participating.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,

Zoe Smith
Director
Adirondack Program
Wildlife Conservation Society
7 Brandy Brook Ave. #204
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ADIRONDACK COMMUNITIES & CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Andrew Milliken, USFWS
North Atlantic LCC Coordinator
Northeast Regional Office
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
300 Westgate Center Drive
Hadley, MA 01035-9589

February 28, 2011

Dear Mr. Milliken,

On behalf of the Wildlife Conservation Society, I applaud and support the creation of Landscape Conservation Cooperatives across the US, and in the North Atlantic Region specifically. Climate change is one of the most significant challenges facing the conservation of fish, wildlife and ecosystems — one that will require the application of best available science to conservation and management decision-making to ensure long-term protection of valued natural resources. The core functions and approaches of the LCCs - science-based, collaborative, and cross-cutting - are exactly the strategies that are needed to meet the most important conservation challenge of our time.

I understand that each LCC is guided by a steering committee with members from resource management and science agencies and, in some cases, nongovernmental organizations. The Wildlife Conservation Society would welcome the opportunity to share our scientific and management expertise by serving on the steering and/ or technical committees for the North Atlantic LCC and would like to discuss this possibility with you.

The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) is a large (\$205 million/year) international conservation organization with 2,000+ staff (including close to 200 Ph.D. level scientists). We are able to provide a global and national perspective on climate change science and adaptation by drawing on our experiences around the globe and at multiple landscapes in the United States and Canada, through our North America Program. Our work in North America focuses on understanding wildlife needs, providing scientific information to managers, and conserving ecosystems from threats like climate change. Currently WCS provides leadership and participation in several national and regional climate change efforts such as climate scenario development for the U.S. National Climate Assessment; assistance to the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies on incorporating climate change into state wildlife action plans; adaptation planning with the Southwest Climate Change Initiative; serving on the steering committee for the Great Northern-LCC; participating on the steering committee for the Northeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' 13-state vulnerability assessment; participation in the New York State climate vulnerability assessment; and co-chair of the New York State Climate and Wildlife Alliance.

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WCS also works on-the-ground to advance conservation across North America in four of our priority landscapes, Arctic Alaska, the Yellowstone Rockies, Ontario's Northern Boreal, and the Adirondack Park including:

- Collaborating with several state and federal agencies and other stakeholders in the Yellowstone Rockies to conduct scenario-based climate change adaptation planning and implement priority recommendations.
- Conducting long term monitoring and research on the vulnerability of species and habitats in the Adirondack Park and partnering with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and other NGOs to develop wildlife adaptation strategies for these ecosystems, specifically in lowland boreal habitats.
- Facilitating discussions among Arctic scientists and conservationists to establish new conservation priorities for wildlife given different climate change scenarios facing the region.
- Conducting community-based assessments on climate change impacts facing both wildlife and the economic, subsistence, and cultural values of importance to First Nation communities in Northern Ontario.

WCS administers the WCS Climate Adaptation Fund, a program which will make \$4 million in funding available over the next two years to nonprofit conservation organizations across the United States working to implement applied, on-the-ground actions to increase the ability of wildlife to adapt to climate change. Over the past four years, this program has invested over \$7.5 million in conservation activities around the US, including several grants for climate change adaptation in the North Atlantic region.

WCS' Adirondack Program, based in Saranac Lake, NY is actively engaged in linking climate change and other science disciplines to conservation delivery in the region covered by the North Atlantic LCC. I am interested in discussing opportunities for WCS to partner with the North Atlantic LCC to help implement the LCC's vision for creating a science-management partnership around climate change and other stressors in the region. WCS brings many skills and resources to the North Atlantic LCC partnership, including:

- Conservation science expertise and long-term scientific investigation (field research, data analysis, modeling) on the consequences of climate change and other stressors (e.g., rural sprawl, human-wildlife conflict, habitat fragmentation) for wildlife and habitats across North America and the NA-LCC region (including high elevation conifer forests, low elevation boreal habitats, and a suite of wildlife species in the Northeast).
- Knowledge and expertise on the local impacts of climate change reflected in our recent publication, *Climate Change in the Adirondacks: The Path to Sustainability* which identifies vulnerable human and ecological systems in the Adirondacks and the means by which we might meet the climate change challenge in this region.
- A long history of collaboration with multiple state agencies and other NGOs in the region, for example serving as a steering committee member and active partner with dozens of NGO's and state agencies in the Staying Connected Partnership, a group dedicated to protecting and maintaining wildlife corridors in the Northern Forest.

- Opportunities to discover new ideas and approaches for adaptation planning across North America through WCS' Adaptation for Conservation Targets (ACT) framework.
- Access to an extensive network of global WCS scientists working on a range of climate change projects including conducting vulnerability assessments in places like Africa's Albertine Rift, implementing climate adaptation strategies across numerous landscapes such as Fiji, Colombian Andes, Papua New Guinea and others, and implementing tools for adaptation for climate change, such as adaptive fisheries management and designing resilient marine protected area strongholds across the west coast of Madagascar.

Given the overlap between WCS' interests and expertise, and the goals of the North Atlantic LCC, I welcome the opportunity to discuss the opportunity for WCS to contribute to efforts to bridge science and management in the region by serving on the steering and/or technical committees of the North Atlantic LCC. Thank you for your consideration and please let us know the best way to continue this dialog. We are very supportive of your efforts.

Sincerely,



Zoe Smith
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Wildlife Conservation Society

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