



UNIVERSITY of NEW HAMPSHIRE
Cooperative Extension

Wildlife Conservation Strategy Forum

NH Fish & Game Department
Concord, NH
May 3, 2005

Wildlife Conservation Strategy Forum
Fish and Game Department Headquarters, Concord, NH
Tuesday, May 3, 2005
8:30 – 12:00 noon

Agenda

- 8:30 Coffee and Refreshments
- 9:00 Welcome, Introductions and Wildlife Strategy Update (John Kanter)
- 9:20 Small Group Discussion Overview (Charlie French)
- 9:30 Early Morning Sessions (Habitat Fragmentation, 1A; Air and Water Quality, 1B)
- 10:15 Report Back on Habitat Fragmentation and Air & Water Quality
- 10:30 BREAK
- 10:45 Later Morning Sessions (Growth and Development, 2A; Transportation, 2B)
- 11:30 Report Back on Growth and Development and Transportation
- 11:45 Wrap-up
- 12:00 Adjourn

Facilitators: Charlie French (lead), UNH Cooperative Extension; Judy Silverberg, NH Fish & Game Department

Recorders: Darrel Covell, UNH Cooperative Extension; Liza Poinier, NH Fish & Game Department

Participants (24 people): Bill Hauser, NH Dept. of Transportation; Adair Mulligan, Connecticut River Joint Commissions; Mark Kern, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Ray Whittemore, Ducks Unlimited; Steve Wright, National Wildlife Federation; Nancy Christie, NH Lakes Association; Stacy Lemieux, White Mountain National Forest; Jeffrey Hayes, North Country Council; Dave Tellman, landowner/NH Coverts Cooperator/NH Tree Farmer; Tanya Tellman, landowner/NH Coverts Cooperator/NH Tree Farmer; Marjory Swope, NH Association of Conservation Commissions; Fred Allen, Pemigewasset Valley Fish and Game Club; Wendy Ward, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Ellen Snyder, wildlife consultant; Scott Borthwick, NH Trappers Association; Bob Potter, landowner/NH Coverts Cooperator; Roberta Arbree, landowner; Fred Shepard, NH Trappers Association; Suzanne Fournier, Speaking for the Animals; Isobel Parke, Jackson, Jackson & Wagner (public relations firm); Andrew Major, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Chris Andrew, Newts (consulting herpetologist); Dea Brickner-Wood, Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership; Sheridan Brown, Office of U.S. Senator John Sununu

The people who participated in this event were from the March 2004 Wildlife Summit. This was considered a continuation of their public participation work begun at that time.

As a part of the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, we developed some broad strategies and actions (see following pages) to address threats to our wildlife species and their habitats. These were relevant to the issues we addressed at this Wildlife Conservation Strategy Forum. The issues we focused on were habitat fragmentation, air and water quality, growth and development, and transportation (described below).

We enclosed relevant results from our March 2004 Wildlife Summit and the August-October 2004 Wildlife Plan Web Survey. These were sent ahead of the forum to help

participants prepare to contribute to the discussion. Specifically, we sought input on the strategies, actions and tools that would help us address the four issues mentioned above.

Issue Descriptions

1A. Habitat Fragmentation

Habitat fragmentation is the breaking up of habitat blocks into smaller sizes, as a result of roads and development. Smaller blocks of habitat reduce the number of wildlife species that can occupy an area. Due to the high number of fragmenting features in southern New Hampshire, blocks of a few hundred acres may be significant to wildlife. In northern New Hampshire blocks of a few thousand acres would be considered important to wide-ranging animals.

1B. Air and Water Quality

Fish and wildlife populations may decline if air or water quality is degraded substantially. Acid rain, caused by pollutant emissions, travels on winds for hundreds of miles and may impair air quality, acidify lakes and streams, harm sensitive ecosystems, and degrade visibility. Aquatic organisms, especially sensitive species, have been impacted. Acid rain in some areas has directly killed fish, caused reduced growth, deformed skeletons and failed reproduction. Emissions from large power plants in the Midwest and urban areas to the south of New Hampshire provide the vast majority of the pollution that causes unhealthy air quality, impaired visibility, acidification of lakes and forests, and mercury contamination in New Hampshire. However, local hotspots also occur near major emissions sources from within our state. Run-off from developed areas, agricultural fields, high-use recreation areas and other sources (a.k.a., non-point source pollution) can also degrade water quality from pesticides, salt, sedimentation, etc.

2A. Growth and Development

Clearing for houses, roads and associated utilities eliminates and fragments habitat and increases exposure to non-native and invasive plants and animals. New Hampshire has one of the highest growth rates of all states in the eastern U.S. Development is highest in the southern parts of our state, coinciding with the areas of greatest wildlife diversity. Recent census data projections indicate that the central portion of the state will grow rapidly, as well (e.g., Lakes Region). Fish and wildlife need quality habitat, and some species are at risk of being lost due to development pressure, especially in high-growth areas of New Hampshire. The presence of people can also degrade habitat even if it is not directly altered by development.

2B. Transportation

As New Hampshire's population grows, our transportation infrastructure grows with it. New Hampshire has one of the highest growth rates of all states in the eastern U.S. Development is highest in the southern parts of our state, coinciding with the areas of greatest wildlife diversity. Recent census data projections indicate that the central portion of the state will grow rapidly, as well (e.g., Lakes Region). Roads reduce and fragment habitat, subject wildlife to potential vehicle kill, and introduce additional disturbance and road salts into the environment.

Broad Strategies and Actions

Agency Regulation and Policy

- 1 Review Development Permits
- 2 Implement Access Control Measures

Conservation Planning

- 3 Prioritize Lands for Protection
- 4 Identify Unfragmented Blocks
- 5 Identify Landscape Connections
- 6 Identify High Risk Areas
- 7 Identify Focal Populations
- 8 Identify Critical Habitat Focal Areas
- 9 Restore Connectivity

Education and Outreach

- 10 Foster Supply/Demand for Native Plant Landscaping
- 11 Advocate BMP's for Agriculture
- 12 Advocate Adoption of Sustainable Forestry
- 13 Advocate Adoption of Alternatives to Pesticides
- 14 Advise Town Conservation Commissions
- 15 Advise Commercial Horticultural Organizations

Environmental Review and Mitigation

- 16 Review Ski area Expansion
- 17 Review Pesticide Permits
- 18 Review Forest Management Plans
- 19 Review Boating Access Projects
- 20 Mitigate Wildlife Impacts in Focal Areas
- 21 Mitigate Wildlife Impacts

Habitat Management

- 22 Develop Urban Wildlife Management Plan

Inter-Agency Regulation and Policy

- 23 Establish IRAT (Transportation)
- 24 Establish IRAT (Pollutants)
- 25 Establish IRAT (Development)
- 26 Develop BMP's For Agriculture

IRAT = Interagency Risk Assessment Team

Land Protection

- 27 Protect Unfragmented Blocks
- 28 Develop Land Protection Program
- 29 Advise Town Conservation Commissions

Landowner Incentive Program

- 30 Implement Backyard Habitat Program

Research

- 31 Test Experimental Road Crossing Structures
- 32 Research Terrestrial Pathways for Bio-accumulation
- 33 Restore Connectivity

Wildlife Summit Summary and Priorities **(from March 2004)**

The following section is a summary of the major themes and issues that came up for each topic across all of the breakout groups – the issues recorded below were amalgamated/combined for all of the groups in order to eliminate duplicate data (i.e. if two groups said that education is a top issue for a given topic, it is only listed once below). Once the issues/themes were amalgamated for each topic area, each participant of the summit was allowed to vote on the top issue/theme for each topic area. They placed a vote on the issue/theme that they felt was most important and merits the most immediate attention.

Topic 1: Habitat Loss

- Lack of planning (**34 votes**)
identification of critical habitats
regulatory controls
population growth
lack of wildlife as a value in planning
- Dedicated funding (**24 votes**)
- Fragmentation (**8 votes**)
- Economic pressures (**6 votes**)
- Awareness/education (**5 votes**)
- Air and water quality (**2 votes**)

Topic 2: Human Wildlife Interactions

- Development/land conservation (**31 votes**)
- Communication and education (**19 votes**)
- Management and managing people (**4 votes**)
- Transportation/recreation (**3 votes**)

Topic 3: Private Lands Stewardship

- Education (**25 votes**)
- Economics (**18 votes**)
- Landowner rights and responsibilities (**14 votes**)
- Public use of private lands (**6 votes**)
- Government role (**2 votes**)

Topic 4: Successful Fish and Wildlife Conservation

- Maintain viable populations and habitats (**37 votes**)
- funding for protection monitoring and education (**15 votes**)
- Balancing conflicting desires (**5 votes**)
- Number and diversity of habitats (**3 votes**)
- People can see wildlife – residents & tourists (**1 vote**)

Topic 1: Habitat Loss (from Wildlife Summit)**Actions Needed (1st group):**

- Habitat
- Think beyond political boundaries
- Identify specific habitat activities; work with delegation
- Partnering with transportation agencies to minimize fragmentation and incorporate wildlife crossings
- Incorporate habitat protection into land use planning
- Education of options
- Identifying/mapping critical habitats
- Map dispersal corridors
 - o education of that
- Promote roadless areas
- Provide build-out analyses
- Replicate NEMO
- Focus on localized outreach
- Basic education/outreach

Actions Needed (2nd group):

- Using current use model, created added (financial) incentive to encourage long-term ownership (20 years) higher penalty for leaving current use
- Priority system considering all values of land – set it forth and educate people why it needs to be preserved – involve more people/organization in mapping
- Provide state information to towns to make it usable (use interns) get it to Planning Boards and Conservation Commission
- Regulations federal, updated regularly to protect. Air/water quality and keep pace with science (if feds won't state must)
- Encourage conversation/understanding of tax for school and linked to rest of towns issues
- Value of open space and low cost but generates revenue tourism, license sales
- LCHIP, tap federal money to buy land

Actions Needed (3rd group):

- Identify and protect most important habitats with viable populations
- Education

Topic 2: Human-Wildlife Interactions**Actions Needed (1st group):**

- Establishing buffers and greenways
- Motorized recreation restrictions
- More land conservation funding

Actions Needed (2nd group):

- disseminate wildlife habitat maps
- improve education
- funding by all user groups
- establish a dialogue to improve opportunities to work together

Topic 3: Private Lands Stewardship**Actions Needed (1st group):**

1. Education

- Statewide land conservation conference (landowners/land activist workshops)
- Audit of what's out there – help someone decide
- Get beyond clutter – organize information and educational resources
- Speaker's Bureau (address conservation commission, etc)
- To interrupt regular course of action peer-to-peer, build trust
- Find out what landowners want (Conservation Commission)
- Attractive publications on unfamiliar wildlife (turtles, snakes, salamanders, etc) popular for general public
- Backyards/small lots-schoolyard/backyard habitat – tell public what they can do
- Find Americorps – get young people working
- Develop action committee – see what's already out there, develop marketing strategy, partners, etc
- “Develop constraints” map – does not include wildlife corridors (should...)
- Get a feel for where elderly landowners are – hold workshops specific to them
- Identify everyone who deals with landowner and give information
- PLT – wild – web etc.

2. Economics

- Better LCHIP funding
- Conservation license plates, expand regular to off road vehicles
- Value of wildlife recreation – what it means to economy – add to messaging
- Working with developers on “smart” development at planning level
- Change state tax structure
- Pay developers not to build (see ag. Example)
- Stricter zoning
- Taller buildings
- Incentives for rehabbing – Brownfields funding
- Build wall around state
- Provide better/clearer incentive for “smart” development
- Wetlands regulations – change to promote more infill development
- Change federal highway policy to reduce sprawl
- Look creatively at other costs of low-income housing/inappropriate regulations in regions
- Tax write off...duplicates no tax
- Current use look at backyard incentives/tax structure

Topic 4: Successful Fish and Wildlife Conservation

Actions Needed (1st group):

- Surveys – public opinion.
 - o what would someone pay
 - o attitudes toward wildlife
- County foresters – need WILDLIFE bios in every county to serve same role
- Hit hard in schools – count number that are doing things
- Return on investment – measure it
- State support – money leveraging
- Partnerships
- Increase citizen science opportunities/involvement
- Publications
- Monitor number of people involved
- T&T/F&G work more closely to promote opportunities

Actions Needed (2nd group):

- Use local component of “cornerstone project” to identify what habitats and measures
- Identify coordinating person/agency to get overall picture
- Quantitative measures A & W quality
- Develop a true measure of ecotourism numbers
- Feedback from human users (consumption and non consumption) on wildlife
- Ask non-consumption and consumption about their experience and how well we are doing
- Be careful where put our resources to save species common nearby
- Success = coordination of data among diverse organizations to really understand situation
- Use indicator species as a measure of success (ie. Atlantic Salmon)

Actions Needed (3rd group):

- Get designated funding for protection, monitoring and education

Wildlife Plan Web Survey Results (from August-October 2004)

Question 15. What actions do you think we should take to conserve wildlife? (950 respondents. Multiple responses possible.)

- #1 Protect or provide habitat (22%)
- #2 Educate about wildlife conservation (21%)
- #3 Hunting or fishing related action (21%)
- #4 Improve or manage habitat (9%)
- #5 Smart growth – better planning for development (7%)

Question 16. Of the following actions, which ones should be the top three priorities for wildlife conservation in New Hampshire? (1256 respondents. Multiple responses possible.)

- #1 Prevent loss of habitat (86%)
- #2 Educate citizens about wildlife management (52%)
- #3 Improve land use planning (40%)
- #4 Encourage stewardship (36%)
- #5 Manage recreational impacts (25%)

Wildlife Conservation Strategy Forum Results Summary

The following is a summary of those strategies and actions receiving 2 or more votes. Please see additional detail on these and other strategies, actions and tools in the pages that follow.

1A. Habitat Fragmentation

9 votes: Develop land protection program (includes the following)

- identifying funding mechanisms and political strategies
- enable communities to dedicate timber taxes to conservation

8 votes: Education strategies (includes the following)

- education packets with resources and funding sources
- education for agencies/regulators
- education strategy that targets schools/young people
- communicate with landowners
- more information sharing with general public

7 votes: Identify and prioritize lands for protection

6 votes: Protect unfragmented blocks

3 votes: Mitigate wildlife impacts (includes better mitigation/enforcement)

3 votes: Develop incentives for developers (includes the following)

- incentives to promote conservation of green corridors
- tax rules/laws to encourage these protections (closer look at current use)
- promote smart growth by encouraging “infill” developers in exchange for green corridors or other long term value parcels

2 votes: Advise town conservation commissions

1B. Air and Water Quality

12 votes: Land, water and wetland protection

6 votes: Identify high risk areas

4 votes: Education and outreach

3 votes: Environmental review and mitigation

2 votes: Inter-agency regulation and policy

2A. Growth and Development

9 votes: Land protection (includes the following)

- protect unfragmented blocks
- develop land protection program

8 votes: Advise town conservation commissions (and planning boards)

7 votes: Education and outreach (includes education through the Tree Farm Program)

5 votes: Agency regulation and policy (includes the following)

- encourage cluster zoning/tax incentives
- develop model ordinances/regulations to be used by towns/cities

4 votes: Conservation planning

3 votes: Prioritize lands for protection

3 votes: Research (includes test experimental road crossing structures)

2 votes: Identify critical habitat focal areas

2 votes: Environmental review and mitigation (includes mitigate wildlife impacts)

2B. Transportation

8 votes: Conservation planning – collaborate with Dept. of Transportation from beginning

4 votes: In-lieu fee proposal under consideration (pay mitigation fee to be used in conservation projects elsewhere)

4 votes: Education: advise town planning boards about best management practices for wildlife

Overview of Results: Specific actions, tools and comments suggested by participants on yellow sticky notes appear as “sub-bullets,” indented, and in red. Priorities were done by sticky dots and are represented by numbers in front of the bullets.

1A. Habitat Fragmentation

Facilitator: Judy Silverberg; Recorder: Liza Poinier

Participants (15 people): Bill Hauser, NH Dept. of Transportation; Mark Kern, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Ray Whittemore, Ducks Unlimited; Steve Wright, National Wildlife Federation; Stacy Lemieux, White Mountain National Forest; Jeffrey Hayes, North Country Council; Fred Allen, Pemigewasset Valley Fish and Game Club; Scott Borthwick, NH Trappers Association; Bob Potter, landowner/NH Coverts Cooperator; Roberta Arbree, landowner; Fred Shepard, NH Trappers Association; Isobel Parke, Jackson, Jackson & Wagner (public relations firm); Chris Andrew, Newts (consulting herpetologist); Dea Brickner-Wood, Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership; Sheridan Brown, Office of U.S. Senator John Sununu

Agency Regulation and Policy

1 - Review Development Permits

- state permit review should be meaningful and thorough. Add staff especially for wetland review. Regulations should be tightened toward additional environmental protection. State should develop wetland mitigation bank to which regional/state entities have access to funds for conservation projects.

- Help prevent developmental loopholes and slow process down so organizations and agencies involved can make better informed decisions, especially wetlands!

Conservation Planning

2 - Prioritize Lands for Protection

- send letter to communicate with town governing bodies.

- Identify Unfragmented Blocks

- Identify Landscape Connections

- Identify High Risk Areas

- Identify Focal Populations

1 - Identify Critical Habitat Focal Areas

- State should participate/fund project area specific habitat inventory studies to further refine critical habitat areas.

- Restore Connectivity

Education and Outreach

- Advocate Adoption of Sustainable Forestry

2- Advise Town Conservation Commissions

- Some towns still do not have conservation commissions and/or planning boards. New State Law: mandate conservation commissions and planning boards.

- Help conservation commissions prioritize their activities. Provide funding to Cooperative Extension to do this.

Environmental Review and Mitigation

- Review Ski area Expansion

- Review Forest Management Plans

- Mitigate Wildlife Impacts in Focal Areas

2 - Mitigate Wildlife Impacts

- Charge developers with a fee when their project impacts wildlife resources in a significant way.

- Off-site mitigation on larger – connected areas.

- New protection of significant vernal pools; protect 3 acres for every acre of upland lost.

Inter-Agency Regulation and Policy

- Establish IRAT (Transportation)
- Establish IRAT (Development)

IRAT = Interagency Risk Assessment Team

Land Protection**6 - Protect Unfragmented Blocks**

- Form groups around the state like the Great Bay Partnership and fund them well.
- Form/create statewide "conservation council" of groups, individuals to support appropriate political action.
- Develop regional plans for land protection.
- Provide more incentive for donation of land or conservation easements.
- Develop long-term funding source for land protection. Make available a portion of property – transfer tax for land protection (for example).
- Create additional tax or other incentives for landowners to protect critical habitats that they own.
- Upgrade timber harvesting regs. in view of current logging practices.
- Money for LCHIP (Land & Community Heritage Investment Program).

2 - Develop Land Protection Program

- Organize/coordinate all available state programs (include technical assistance and funding opportunities). Effectively communicate (clearinghouse through web site/state agency awareness and regional/single phone number contact). Clarify state land protection priorities and communicate.
- Develop a consistent and well endowed funding source for state land protection (LCHIP)
- Easier access to current use laws.
- Advise Town Conservation Commissions

Research

- Restore Connectivity

Additions to strategy/action list

- 1 • support wildlife issues in local master plans
- 5 • identifying/prioritizing lands for protection
- organized method of informing Conservation Commission
 - come up with formal education process for Conservation Commission across counties so all communities have the ability to be on same "page" and function efficiently and effectively
 - staff from Fish & Game to advise, educate and work with Conservation Commission
 - Conservation Commission should know Fish & Game laws before making decisions
 - Newsletter to conservation commission and planning boards
 - Utilize/fund regional planning commissions to provide outreach and education to Conservation Commission
 - Email listserv to share information throughout the conservation community
 - Conservation Commission and Planning Board receive copies of final report of forum/wildlife plan
- provide a review or overlay of regional/locally identified growth areas
- town Conservation Commission need a lot more help – get up to speed on "what's really happening"
 - a forum/meeting with town planners and Conservation Commission and Planning Board on this wildlife forum

- person at Fish & Game or a partner organization whose job is to interact with commissions and planning boards and give them information; same person could develop education packets, etc.
- more input/education – less politics at Conservation Commission level...”can’t develop everything”
- 1 • better mitigation/enforcement
 - * pass and enforce laws that actually deter offenders and repeat violators other than small, insignificant fines
- 1 • coordination in planning efforts among agencies
 - * institute state agency planning clearinghouse to coordinate statewide planning and development initiatives
- 4 • Identifying funding mechanisms and political strategies for making it happen. Bringing in hunting and fishing communities
 - form task group to identify funding sources and leverage funding. Form political action group to secure funding, promote conservation strategies thru rules and regulations.
 - Fund conservation initiatives through broad-based tax system
 - Identify potential partners/stakeholders
- 1 • contact and communicate with landowners
- figure out funding
- Conservation Commission need lots of education (e.g. sustainable forestry)
 - they are working on inconsequential things
- 1 • logging regulations need improvement
- 1 • even if Conservation Commissions knew more regarding wildlife...”we (Conservation Commission) have no teeth”...but one thing we can control is water
 - * give conservation commission the authority to ask developers for a wildlife impact plan on cluster developments
- possible for Conservation Commission to be given option to ask developers to consider needs of wildlife in planning (important study)
- small parcels becoming surrounded
 - need some money to buy development rights
 - could be some regional/planning for greenways in between small parcels?
 - new strategies for smaller parcels
- 1 • promote smart growth by encouraging “infill” developers in exchange for green corridors or other long term value parcels
 - * transferable development rights
- sometimes wetlands law promotes sprawl instead of reverse...
- move “restore connectivity”
- 1 • education – look at more information sharing with general public – choices they’re making on their own land
 - * educate landowners of value and importance of critical habitat or resources on their property and importance of maintaining them
- developers to help them do this
- 1 • look at tax rules/laws to encourage these protections (closer look at current use)
- 1 • develop incentives for developers to promote conservation of green corridors

- discourage sprawl by giving financial incentives to developers to use cluster planning by installing sewer systems so that one acre was not necessary for individual septic systems
 - highlight or celebrate towns and developments that take wildlife needs into their planning as a quality of life issue for residents on tourism
 - develop committee of state and conservation organizations to work with commissions, legislators, developers, etc to search out funding and help agencies, town and individuals to get that funding
- 2 • develop education “packets” to discuss options...list resources and funding sources, etc.
- regional information meeting with state, federal and local officials to discuss wildlife issues and funding sources. Distribute funding information packets. Many conservation commission members may be unable to attend a day time meeting so a night time might be better.
 - lack of planning – opportunity with federal grants for greater collaboration
 - way to improve communications so Conservation Commission can collaborate with other conservation commissions...list servers?
 - threats to tax benefits associated with giving conservation easements
- 2 • education for agencies/regulators to “know what they’re talking about”
- state laws should be easy to read and understand
 - cost-sharing programs (like Fish & Game’s mowing program)
 - most conservation organization have eyes on “big beautiful lands”...but help must be given to smaller parcels in south or they’ll be gone
- 1 • add planning boards
- 3 • enable communities to dedicate timber taxes to conservation
- develop model legislation and solicit legislative sponsor
 - educate/work with NH legislators for legislation enabling timber tax – conservation use
- 2 • education strategy that targets schools/young people – start early
- * land stewardship should be required education
 - enforce existing regulations like shoreline protection act

1B. Air & Water Quality

Facilitator: Charlie French; Recorder: Darrel Covell

Participants (8 people): Adair Mulligan, Connecticut River Joint Commissions; Nancy Christie, NH Lakes Association; Dave Tellman, landowner/NH Coverts Cooperator/NH Tree Farmer; Tanya Tellman, landowner/NH Coverts Cooperator/NH Tree Farmer; Wendy Ward, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Ellen Snyder, wildlife consultant; Suzanne Fournier, Speaking for the Animals; Andrew Major, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Conservation Planning

6 - Identify High Risk Areas

4 - Education and Outreach

- **Model ordinance for towns.**
- Advocate Adoption of Sustainable Forestry
- Partnerships

- Advocate Adoption of Alternatives to Pesticides
- Advise Town Conservation Commissions
- Advise Commercial Horticultural Organizations

3 - Environmental Review and Mitigation

- **State technical committee request federal money (farm bill \$) to go toward funding forest management plans and have money for review of plans (Cooperative Extension, Fish & Game, Fish & Wildlife) to promote sustainable forestry.**

- Review Pesticide Permits
- Review Forest Management Plans
- Review Boating Access Projects

2 - Inter-Agency Regulation and Policy

- Establish IRAT (Pollutants)
- Develop BMP's For Agriculture

IRAT = Interagency Risk Assessment Team

12 - Land Protection (and water & wetland protection)

- Protect Unfragmented Blocks
- Develop Land Protection Program
- Advise Town Conservation Commissions

Research

- Research Terrestrial (and aquatic) Pathways for Bio-accumulation

- add soil to “Air & Water Quality”

Missing

- state
 - shoreland protection act
 - overlay district for buffers (e.g. for lower stream orders)
- local regulation
 - flood plain protection ordinances

Education

- boating as relates to invasive species
- separate strategy on “Water Protection”
 - identify pristine waters - difficult management
 - invasive keeping out, monitoring where

Conservation Planning

- identify pristine waters (e.g. like designated rivers)
- Land and Water Protection – riparian corridors connecting
- vernal pool protection especially not under wetlands protection
 - add strategy that NH Fish & Game is to actively support pro-environment bills (e.g. reduce mercury, reduce auto emissions)

“Land & Water Wetlands Protection”

- e.g. protect beavers creating habitat
- BMP's for agriculture > clarify “add to existing”

- voluntary currently
- are they following?
- consequence for not
- regulating forestry/liquidation issue (e.g. Vermont & Maine laws)
- environmental review
 - evaluate T.M.D.L.'s in highest risk areas "total maximum daily load"
- enforce existing regulations (few staff)
- advise Conservation Commission
 - updating them on regulations/fact sheets
- Conservation Commission powers – authorize/not just advisory
- research – especially mercury issues > fish bioaccum
 - disagree that conservation commissions should be regulatory

Conservation Planning

- green infrastructure planning

Inter-agency regulations/policies

- army corp policy – cutting down buffers
- review old management plans/need new direction
- nitrogen in Great Bay (actions at that)
- targeted action items – geographically

Land Protection

- lobby 100% land use tax to conservation
- soil carrying materials > water
- how to deal with air quality?
 - lobbying Congress/agency > air quality standards
- state move on auto emissions
- key strategy – land and water protection
 - high risk areas/critical habitat
 - riparian connections
- model ordinances (especially for towns)
 - problem loss of O.S.P.
 - e.g. OSP > cell tower ordinance model
- water quality unifying concept (the issue)
 - broader, more inclusive justification in model ordinance (e.g. drinking H₂O, habitat, etc.)
- advocate – lawmakers at all levels (include state)

Tools

- web-based, update frequent, not just state maintained
- model ordinance
- empower/fund R.P.C's
- LCHIP, forest legislation, drink H₂O, etc = money
- raise RPC level of expertise
- ensure partnership use as a "tool"

- Dept. of Env'tl Services has a water quality standards advisory committee, wildlife interests should be better represented on issues such as TMDL's and nitrogen in Great Bay (Vern Lang is on this for USFWS, is Fish & Game well represented)

2A. Growth and Development

Facilitator: Charlie French; Recorder: Darrel Covell

Participants (15 people): Ray Whittemore, Ducks Unlimited; Steve Wright, National Wildlife Federation; Nancy Christie, NH Lakes Association; Stacy Lemieux, White Mountain National Forest; Jeffrey Hayes, North Country Council; Dave Tellman, landowner/NH Coverts Cooperator/NH Tree Farmer; Fred Allen, Pemigewasset Valley Fish and Game Club; Wendy Ward, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Scott Borthwick, NH Trappers Association; Bob Potter, landowner/NH Coverts Cooperator; Roberta Arbree, landowner; Fred Shepard, NH Trappers Association; Chris Andrew, Newts (consulting herpetologist); Dea Brickner-Wood, Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership; Sheridan Brown, Office of U.S. Senator John Sununu

3 - Agency Regulation and Policy

Review Development Permits

- 2 State agency review of existing rules and regulations and evaluation of effectiveness in terms of the protection of the intended environmental outcomes (i.e., wetland regulations, etc.)

Implement Access Control Measures

- Expand Shoreland Protection Act to 3rd order streams.

4 - Conservation Planning

3 - Prioritize Lands for Protection

- 3 Make a portion of property transfer tax available for habitat protection/management
- 4 Build statewide coalition of individuals/groups regarding wildlife conservation. Form statewide conservation council with representatives of all NH conservation groups. Convene annually for policy/strategy discussion/debate.

Identify Unfragmented Blocks

Identify Landscape Connections

Identify High Risk Areas

Identify Focal Populations

2 - Identify Critical Habitat Focal Areas

Restore Connectivity

6 - Education and Outreach

Foster Supply/Demand for Native Plant Landscaping

- Stronger legislation on woolly adelgid and sudden oak death. Do not allow importation of plants or logs from infected areas.

1 - Advocate Adoption of Sustainable Forestry

5 - Advise Town Conservation Commissions

- Implement education programs for participants of conservation commissions who are not involved in conservation field and don't have critical skills needed for sound planning.
- Add staff at Fish & Game to advise, educate and work with conservation commissions when it comes to wildlife habitat.

Advise Commercial Horticultural Organizations

- Develop handout for new home owners relative to preferred species of plants to use for landscaping and what should be avoided. Distribute to real estate agents as well.

1 - Environmental Review and Mitigation

Review Ski Area Expansion

Mitigate Wildlife Impacts in Focal Areas

- DES wetlands rules allow an excellent, undisturbed forested wetland, for example, to be dredged and converted to an open pond, obliterating complex, natural habitat and substituting man-made habitat that is considerably less valuable. Revise wetlands rules?

1 - Mitigate Wildlife Impacts

- Develop broad-based funding mechanism for wildlife conservation. Develop political strategy for supporting wildlife conservation initiatives. Form political action groups regarding this element.

Habitat Management

Develop Urban Wildlife Management Plan

Inter-Agency Regulation and Policy (IRAT = *Inter-agency Risk Assessment Team*)

Establish IRAT (Transportation)

Establish IRAT (Development)

4 - Land Protection

1 - Protect Unfragmented Blocks

4 - Develop Land Protection Program

2 - Advise Town Conservation Commissions

- Develop models of planning board and conservation commission Best Management Practices – they don't like to have to think and may lean "our way".
- Add staff at Fish & Game to advise, educate and work with conservation commissions on wetlands and other wildlife habitat.
- Report of this wildlife planning project to conservation commissions and planning boards. Website for their use for information /suggestions.

Landowner Incentive Program

Implement Backyard Habitat Program

1 - Research

2 - Test Experimental Road Crossing Structures

Restore Connectivity

- 5 communicate more (newsletter?) to town governing bodies, conservation commissions, planning boards. (Applies to all above).
- 6 Develop state-level conservation committee of state agency and conservation groups to compile and disseminate information, advise town commissions/boards & push strategies (Applies to multiple strategies above).

Missing

- local regulations under "regulations and policy"
- include regional regulations under "regulations and policy"
- include federal regulations under "regulations and policy"
- state regulations no logging >2500' elevation
- 1 • encourage cluster zoning/tax incentives
- 1 - * develop model ordinances/regulations that can be used by towns/cities

Conservation Planning

- think big –landscape features – let wildlife determine actions regardless of political boundaries
- prioritize water bodies (aquifers, lakes, rivers, wetland)
 - concern regarding private property in priority zone
- develop strategy for funding conservation projects (priorities)
- identify who is responsible for doing conservation planning
 - coordination of activities
- encourage cluster zoning/tax incentives

Education

- see habitat fragmentation education actions
- Fish & Game staff help with questions – Conservation Commission
 - website access point for that
 - training program for Conservation Commission
- Under #10 (Foster supply/demand for native plant landscaping) -_hemlock wooly adelgid, sudden oak death (enforce regulations to prevent)
- include state lawmakers on policy issues
- include select boards
- laws against unsustainable forestry
- 1 • Tree Farm Program
 - education thru that to understand management planning
 - mitigate wetland impacts
 - preserve riparian corridors
 - environmental (e.g. forest harvest>x acres) review process for forest management plans
 - no current laws have to do
 - extend shoreland protection > 3rd order streams
 - expand to add “forest” management plan
 - carrot incentive
 - roadside planting, tree types
 - discourage deliberate feeding
 - develop lake management plans (inter-agency)
- 1 • provide more state staff/money to manage/restore state-owned lands/water
 - adequately fund (and fill) state staff positions (NH Fish & Game, Div. of Forests and Lands, stewardship program) to provide regular stewardship and management of state owned properties

Inter-agency

- concern over separating development and transportation into 2, maybe combine 1 rate

Land Protection

- add water and air to Land Protection
- comes back to good planning
- define “protection” – maybe open space planning when development
- 1 • add planning board to “Conservation Commission”
- work with congress regarding conservation easement tax benefits

- strengthen shoreland protection act
- consider exotic invasive
- concern regarding management of smaller protection parcels (tax incentives for donor to make money)
- umbrella organization to manage smaller parcels (money issue)

Landowner incentives

- see above too
- let people know what wildlife will come if you encourage wildlife

Research

- * need to research the economic impact of growth and development on our public waters; recreational value/use, the fisheries, loons and other wildlife
- “changing landscape” analysis at local/regional level
- state participate in habitat inventory studies on project basis
- research best plantings in developments (compile existing information)
 - information/recommend pamphlet or booklet/website to advise nurseries/landscapers.

2B. Transportation

Facilitator: Judy Silverberg; Recorder: Liza Poinier

Participants (8 people): Adair Mulligan, Connecticut River Joint Commissions; Mark Kern, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Tanya Tellman, landowner/NH Coverts Cooperator/NH Tree Farmer; Marjory Swope, NH Association of Conservation Commissions; Ellen Snyder, wildlife consultant; Suzanne Fournier, Speaking for the Animals; Isobel Parke, Jackson, Jackson & Wagner (public relations firm); Andrew Major, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Agency Regulation and Policy

Review Development Permits

- Promote the Roads Scholar program and look at Vermont's Better Back Roads program for extra ideas. Train local road agents.

1 - Conservation Planning

- Develop GIS maps of riparian connectivity and unfragmented habitat blocks by region to guide location of roads and development away from these areas.
- **Information to local conservation commission & planning boards on which areas are most important.**

Prioritize Lands for Protection

Identify Unfragmented Blocks

Identify Landscape Connections

Identify High Risk Areas

Identify Focal Populations

Identify Critical Habitat Focal Areas

Restore Connectivity

Education and Outreach

- **Expand Fish & Game constituency: more Wildlife Journal readers; change flavor of Wildlife Journal to cover these key issues more often; reduce segregation into “nongame”, “game”, etc. – show connectedness not segregation.**
- Continue outreach/education on wildlife friendly driving - “brake for wildlife”, Eric Orff's campaign.

Foster Supply/Demand for Native Plant Landscaping

- Fish & Game, DOT and other state agencies use native plantings in their project and on their lands.

- Keep the state nursery going strong and establish satellite nurseries around the state.
- Lists to be provided to nurseries for their inventory.
- A brochure for developers to avoid invasive species and offer native species.

Advise Town Conservation Commissions

Environmental Review and Mitigation

Review Boating Access Projects

Mitigate Wildlife Impacts in Focal Areas

2 - Mitigate Wildlife Impacts

- mitigation should be near to other protected lands; not isolated.

Habitat Management

Develop Urban Wildlife Management Plan

Inter-Agency Regulation and Policy (*IRAT = Inter-agency Risk Assessment Team*)

Establish IRAT (Transportation)

- task IRAT with formulating state policy to address the issue of secondary development
- Fish & Game and DOT have a systematic approach to keeping each other informed of projects of mutual interest.

Establish IRAT (Development)

Land Protection

Protect Unfragmented Blocks

1 - Develop Land Protection Program

- support/provide fund for protection.

Advise Town Conservation Commissions

Research

1 - Test Experimental Road Crossing Structures

- have road crossing structure experiment on Route 2 in Randolph.

Restore Connectivity

- 5 • collaborate with DOT on planning from the beginning
 - educate towns on importance of early participation in DOT planning for road
 - create GIS layer (DOT) that maps out projected projects over the next 10 years. Overlay that with un-fragmented blocks, connections, critical habitat, etc. Identify where the conflicts are now to see whether rerouting project plans can be changed early
 - support regional planning – local boards, etc.
 - inter-agency includes state, federal
- 1 • DOT never includes riparian buffers...should be part of their MO
 - Dept. of Env't'l Services/Fish & Game insist that DOT back off on the riprap near streams and over plant wherever possible
 - provide list of buffer plants (native) and planting/maintenance requirements to DOT project managers (CRJC has posted at www.crjc.org/riparian_buffers.htm)
- 1 • bridge and culvert inventory for aquatic connectivity
- 1 • green infrastructure concept could be integrated into all aspects of planning
- 1 • figuring out recreation/transportation/habitat balance in planning projects
- Identify and remove invasive plant species

- expand IPANE inventory
- education – brake for wildlife/drive with wildlife in mind type of “campaign”/materials (user friendly/suggestions)
- need process to discuss and establish mitigation “banking” and large scale, DOT bank, state funded (have done for Ammonoosuc)
- 4 • in lieu fee proposal under consideration
 - provide political support for the in-lieu fee bill
 - has passed Senate, now in House
- continue to experiment with materials other than salt for snowy roads
 - establish “test” sections of roadways and conduct a scientific study looking at efficiency of different de-icing agents
- look at runoff from parking lots (snow removal)
- railroad – may be able to work with them to not mow down riparian buffers
- wildlife passages between stored train cars
- under research – establish research for moose collisions
- developers could use advise on how to plan non-straight road systems...shared driveways, widths and surfaces of roads, less hardtop, etc.
- 4 • education: advise town planning boards (they must approve these road systems) “BMPs” for wildlife – implemented suggestions
 - model ordinances for towns (Planning Boards) i.e. protect deer yards
 - train private/consulting wildlife biologists to guide development/transportation projects (town level/private developers)
- are constructed wetlands still common DOT practice? (they’ve gotten better at locating but ecology still not top concern)
 - focus on multiple small infiltration areas for stormwater rather than larger constructed wetlands that stay inundated and trap wildlife
- 1 • secondary development - to what degree does DOT or town take responsibility to protect habitat before planning? (currently, encouraged to provide for future access)
 - * DOT should provide money for likely secondary impacts to help with green infrastructure
- class V & VI roads – protection is fragile
- 1 • needs to be more private wildlife consultants who can guide planners/individuals - training programs?
 - * education & outreach tool for Fish & Game staff: NH Fish & Game to take an active role in advising about wildlife protection in regards to existing and planned roads.
- “Wildlife management” with transportation in mind
 - * Encourage population levels of species that would minimize potential for human-animal collisions