

SOUTHEASTERN ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES

Committee Report – Forestland Resources Committee

Chair – Duck Locascio

Meeting of 21 October 2018

Mobile, AL

Meeting convened: 8:00am

Chaired by: Duck Locascio

Committee Members Attending: Andrew Nix, Alabama
Mark Hutchings, Arkansas
Duck Locascio (Chair), Louisiana
Chris Jordan, North Carolina
Brian Chandler, Tennessee
Rusty Wood, Texas

Committee Cooperators Attending: Jen Schaeffer, AFWA
Mike Harris, USFWS
Dennis Krusac, USFS

Others: Kenny Ribbeck, LDWF
Todd Ferrand, USFWS

Scheduled Discussion Items:

Farm Bill updates

Jennifer Schaeffer updated the FRC on the Farm Bill status. Congress has allowed the Farm Bill to expire with no extension. Conservation programs funding is available but problems are on the way. There are some CRP signup and funding issues as well as potential merging of CSP/EQUIP. Rental rates have been cut 5-65% in some counties causing signing up to decrease. CSP never went before house in 2002, but became law. For some producers CSP has been good for rotational grazing. A proposal to move toward 10-year contracts on CSP is probable.

AFWA update

Jennifer Schaeffer presented the FRC with an AFWA update. There is potential that Section 4 of Pittman-Robertson Act could be modified to allow funding to be allocated to US territories. Washington DC doesn't receive wildlife restoration dollars or have hunting licenses. There is potential for dollars going to territories that don't buy licenses, furthermore, the entire match is waived for territories. Funds would then go to migratory bird conservation act. The PR modernization bill, utilize up to 25% R3 dollars. Outreach and communication level the playing field. PR funds are actively prohibited from pushing public relations due to 1937 law.

US Forest Service Update

Dennis Krusac provide the FRC a USFS update. The USFS is doing regional consultation for longleaf and shortleaf pine restoration and management.

Longleaf - There is approximately 4 million acres of longleaf dominant forests. There is a need to collect baseline data on landscape, dominant stands, and biological components in longleaf stands. There is a goal to reach of eight million acres by 2025. The eight million-acre challenge encompasses longleaf pine restoration plans for every forest. Range wide formal consultation with USFS are underway with potential for a 4d exemption for RCW in the future. The longleaf stewardship fund has been developing metrics associated with open pines. Most longleaf stands are in poor condition that needs to be thinned and burned. Question posed to the states: Are they interested in this effort? Louisiana is restoring all of their historic longleaf forests, by removing loblolly and replanting longleaf. North Carolina has been actively trying to restore longleaf since 2010 and is working on developing a formal plan. Alabama has been restoring longleaf on state lands since 2000. On behalf of Southeast Longleaf Ecosystem Occurrences geodatabase, polygons of known longleaf forest are needed.

Shortleaf - In 2000 southern pine beetle killed off a substantial amount of

shortleaf pine. Development of a regional shortleaf pine strategy is underway which is molded after longleaf pine initiative in order to advance shortleaf restoration. There has been work in North Carolina and Kentucky concerning shortleaf pine restoration projects on USFS lands. There is some concern over the USFS meeting targets and not objectives with prescribed fire. Burning during the nesting season in South Carolina is an issue with hunters. Concerns consist of large burning units versus small burn units in regards to wild turkey utilization.

SECAS Update

Todd Farrand presented the SEACAS update to the FRC. SECAS Blueprint was started in 2011, which stitches together the work of multiple Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs) into a map of shared conservation and restoration priorities across the Southeast and Caribbean. Mallory Martin is now over SECAS and the directors are moving them forward. SECAS has been working with each state's point of contact for regional assessment of functional ecosystems. There has been an effort to define long term versus near term goals. There is new interest in studying forest BMP's and their impact on at risk species. There is also a focus on the high compliance rates on private lands, looking at the effect of BMP's on at risk species.

WRC Update

Kenny Ribbeck briefed the FRC on the Wildlife Resources Committee's agenda items and noted that the WRC will be receiving FRC updates in the afternoon session.

Wetland Forest Initiative update

Duck Locascio updated the FRC on this initiative and reported on the most recent steering committee meeting. The group has begun inserting themselves into the conservation delivery world. They are still a nebulous group with divergent interests. A draft of strategic plan has been drafted and will be released in 2019. The Committee agreed that continued involvement with this group was beneficial for the SEAFWA States and wildlife/forest resources.

NAWCA, Farm Bill, RAWA Support letters

The Wetlands Wildlife Committee drafted three letters of support concerning the 2018 Farm Bill, the Recovering America's Wildlife Act, and NAWCA Reauthorization. The FRC was asked to review these letters and possibly support the Wetland Wildlife Committee when presented to the directors. Motion passed to support letters, with appropriate changes proposed by Chandler, seconded by Nix.

Timber Markets and Conservation Delivery discussion

Markets are fair to good in the Southeast. Saw timber has been low, chip and saw higher, moving timber is working well in Louisiana. Hardwood pulp is harder to

move in North Carolina. On all state agency lands lump sum sales are most common, however some states practice pay-as-cut especially on pine sales. Membership in this committee is important. Wildlife management through commercial forest management remains difficult in some areas of the Southeast, however the timber market has improved in the last 18 months and expectations are positive.

Other Discussion Items: No additional items discussed.

Action Items and Recommendations: No action items requested of the Directors. The committee will continue monitoring relevant issues and remain involved in existing forest/wildlife related regional efforts while keeping the Directors informed.

Committee Recommendation for Chair: None, current Chair

Meeting adjourned: 12:00 pm

List of Current committee members and contact information: (attached)

List of Interested participants and contact information: (attached)

List and description of active committee members: (attached)

Submitted by: Duck Locascio, FRC Chairman

Attachment 1: List of Current committee members and contact information:

Alabama

Andrew Nix

Alabama Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries

(334) 242-3865

HYPERLINK "mailto:andrew.nix@dcnr.alabama.gov" andrew.nix@dcnr.alabama.gov

Arkansas

Mark Hutchings

AR Game and Fish Commission

1266 Lock & Dam Road

Russellville, AR 72802

(877) 967-7577

HYPERLINK "mailto:mark.hutchings@agfc.ar.gov" mark.hutchings@agfc.ar.gov

Florida

Morgan Richardson

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

(850) 800-7360

HYPERLINK "mailto:morgan.richardson@MyFWC.com" morgan.richardson@MyFWC.com

Georgia

Jessica McGuire PhD.

Georgia Wildlife Resources Division

116 Rum Creek Drive

Forsyth, GA 31029

(478) 994-7583

HYPERLINK "mailto:Jessica.McGuire@dnr.ga.gov" Jessica.McGuire@dnr.ga.gov

Kentucky

Zak Danks

Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources

(800) 858-1549 ext. 4544

HYPERLINK "mailto:zak.danks@ky.gov" zak.danks@ky.gov

Louisiana

Duck Locascio

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

P.O. Box 98000

Baton Rouge, LA 70898

(225) 765-2349

HYPERLINK "mailto:dlocascio@wlf.la.gov" dlocascio@wlf.la.gov

Mississippi

Adam Butler

Mississippi Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks

(601) 695-6795

HYPERLINK "mailto:Adamb@mdwfp.state.ms.us" Adamb@mdwfp.state.ms.us

Missouri

John Tuttle

Missouri Department of Conservation

(573)522-4115 x3304

HYPERLINK "mailto:John.Tuttle@mdc.mo.gov" John.Tuttle@mdc.mo.gov

North Carolina

Chris Jordan

North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission

(919) 707-0053

HYPERLINK "mailto:chris.jordan@newwildlife.org" chris.jordan@newwildlife.org

Oklahoma

Joe Hemphill

Oklahoma Department of Wildlife

(405) 521-3856

South Carolina

Gary Burger

SC Department of Natural Resources

P.O. Box 167

Columbia, SC 29202

(803) 734-3969

HYPERLINK "mailto:burgerg@dnr.sc.gov" burgerg@dnr.sc.gov

Tennessee

Brian Chandler

Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency

P.O. Box 40747

Nashville, TN 37204

(615) 781-6548

HYPERLINK "mailto:brian.chandler@tn.gov" brian.chandler@tn.gov

Texas

Rusty Wood

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

(409) 383-8065

HYPERLINK "mailto:rusty.wood@tpwd.texas.gov" rusty.wood@tpwd.texas.gov

Virginia

Rick Busch

Virginia Game and Inland Fisheries

4010 W. Broad St.

Richmond, VA 23230

(804) 640-2380

HYPERLINK "mailto:Rick.Busch@dgif.virginia.gov" Rick.Busch@dgif.virginia.gov

West Virginia

Keith Krantz

West Virginia Division of Natural Resources

(304) 637-0245

HYPERLINK "mailto:Keith.d.krantz@wv.gov" Keith.d.krantz@wv.gov

Attachment 2: List of Interested participants and contact information:

Bill Bartush

Gulf Coast Prairie Landscape Conservation Cooperative

Wetlands & Aquatic Research Center

700 Cajundome Blvd

Lafayette, LA 70506

(337) 266-8816

HYPERLINK "mailto:bill_bartush@fws.gov" \t "_blank" bill_bartush@fws.gov

Jennifer Goff

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

(850) 617-9548

HYPERLINK "mailto:Jennifer.goff@myFWC.com" Jennifer.goff@myFWC.com

Mike Harris

US Fish and Wildlife Service

1875 Century BLVD

Atlanta, GA 30345

(404) 679-7066

HYPERLINK "mailto:michael_harris@fws.gov" michael_harris@fws.gov

Kenny Ribbeck

Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries

PO Box 98000

Baton Rouge, LA 70898-9000

(225) 765-2942

HYPERLINK "mailto:kribbeck@wlf.la.gov" kribbeck@wlf.la.gov

Jen Mock Schaeffer

Government Affairs Director, AFWA

1100 First Street, NE Suite 825

Washington, DC 20002

(202) 838-3468

HYPERLINK "mailto:jenmock@fishwildlife.org" jenmock@fishwildlife.org

Attachment 3: **List and description of active committee members:**

Alabama: Andrew Nix - participates in email requests for information and attends annual fall FRC meetings.

Arkansas: Mark Hutchings – participates in email requests for information and attends annual fall FRC meetings.

Florida: Morgan Richardson –attended 2017 committee meeting, travel restrictions in 2018.

Georgia: Dr. Jessica McGuire – participates in email requests for information and attends annual fall FRC meetings.

Kentucky: Zak Danks – participates in email requests for information and attends annual fall FRC meetings.

Louisiana: Duck Locascio – participates in email requests for information and attends annual fall FRC meeting. Current Chair of the FRC

Mississippi: Adam Butler - second year on the committee, attended 2017 committee meeting, absent in 2018.

North Carolina: Chris Jordan – first year on FRC, attended 2018 fall FRC meeting.

South Carolina: Gary Burger – participates in email requests for information and attends annual fall FRC meetings.

Tennessee: Brian Chandler – participates in email requests for information and attends annual fall FRT Committee meetings.

Texas: Rusty Wood – participates in email requests for information and attends annual fall FRC meetings.

Other State Members have not communicated with the Chair or been present at the fall FRT Committee Meetings.

PAGE

PAGE 2