



**27th Annual**

**NBTC**

**Meeting**



**Bentonville, AR | August 2-5 2021**

*Hosted by*







## CIP Workshop Notes

August 4, 2021 – August 5, 2021

### Round Robin

Three questions were asked of each state:

1. What are your habitat goals and have you met them?
2. When is your next habitat assessment?
3. Are NGOs investing in your management activities (financially and otherwise)?

Most states have reported that they have been unable to meet their habitat goals due to multiple factors including staff turnover, lack of manpower, burn blocks that are too large, loss of CRP contracts, and administrative difficulties with federal partners. USFS was identified as challenging to work with on reducing burn block size due to burn quotas, where they must burn a certain amount every year or they get dinged by supervisors. District rangers do not speak among each other so a key question was asked how we may increase their communication on this issue. South Carolina has experienced some success in reducing burn blocks of USFS on Indian Creek and it may be worth having other rangers visit their focal area to see the results. It may also be beneficial to take a subset of the CIP Workshop group to have a meeting with rangers to discuss this problem.

The next phase of habitat assessments for nearly all states will occur in the next three years. Quail Forever, Pheasants Forever, National Wild Turkey Federation, Habitat Forever, and The Nature Conservancy have all been active partners in for the majority of states, often donating equipment hours, planting, assisting in surveys, connecting with private landowners, assisting in prescribed burns, funding positions, and providing match.

### Grant Opportunities

In the past year, an attempt to pull together a 1 million Cooperative State Wildlife Action Plan grant proposal together was made. 7 states, University of Georgia, and Monarch Joint Venture were all participants in this grant, however it was never submitted as we were unprepared for the financial breadth of information the proposal had to contain. Next year NBCI and participants will start the grant process at least three months prior to the submission deadline.

State coordinators are asked to create "wishlists" so you have them at the ready when there's a grant opportunity. With your wishlist you can instantly say which equipment, activities, or other items you could put money towards which will allow NBCI et al. to respond faster to grants. Grant writing will not fall on coordinators, coordinators just need to know what they want to use the money for. It is important to note that wishlists also give a specific ask to QF/PF chapters too and gives them something to get excited about.

It was identified that a strengthening of the relationships between the Diversity coordinator, PR coordinator, and state quail coordinator is needed as this will help us to respond to grants more quickly.

### Targeting Private Lands

Private lands have always been challenging to target as landowners are difficult to incentivize. Some states reflect that landowners seeing success on public lands has encouraged more habitat management activity on their property that benefit quail. States need to be sure to advertise successes, especially via social media, all throughout the year; not just in fall. Hold short workshops or landowner meetings on public lands to speak about the habitat management activities of your state that benefit quail. While display of success may be enough to encourage some landowners, it was recognized that many landowners are only incentivized by money. Tennessee is entering discussions with the TN Wildlife Federation about trying to raise funds to have additional incentives for private landowners.

### Building Federal Partnerships

There is a lot of difficulty surrounding federal partnerships because they often have different objectives or administrative proceedings that make it hard to engage meaningfully. Kurtis Cecil of Arkansas played an interview he had with Nolan Moore of NPS. It was said that the National Park



Service has different rules, regulations, and policies that often hamper progress, thus all projects move very slowly. Their projects must go through environmental compliance procedures and, if the nature of the park dictates it, extra surveys such as archaeological surveys on battlefield parks need to be performed if any ground disturbance is to occur. The NPS is also underfunded and has few resources to carry out management. It was discussed amongst the group how to start projects on federal lands; the general consensus is that it was best to talk to the ecologist or main point person for the federal service you are interested in and get a feel for which park/forest/refuge may be open to such projects. This person may be able to relay to you who to get in touch with at these federal lands. Approach that person and attempt to make local relationships, then possibly bring in the main point person whom you previously spoke to. Make local relationships first, do not ask the main point person to try and make that relationship for you (it may make your local partner think you're going over their head).

## **DoD Partnership**

There is great potential in creating partnerships with multiple military installations. They have plentiful resources, natural resource staff, and their training missions seem greatly compatible with the type of disturbance bobwhite need. Additionally, bobwhite are one of the 16 mission sensitive species defined by the military. Greater bobwhite populations may also add recreational opportunities for the post. Multiple posts were identified as possible candidates for a partnership: Fort Gordon (GA), Fort Chaffee (AR), Shaw Air Force Base (SC), Poinsett Air Force Base (SC), and Fort Pickett (VA). Ideally, you'd work from the top level down to make these partnerships, although colonels/generals (aka commanders) turn over quite often which may make it more challenging to make solid relationships with the posts. One idea was to use youth hunts as a way to anchor the CIP areas at these posts, that way even if there is turnover, there is an established recreational benefit that will likely be continued by the commander. It was largely agreed upon that commanders only care about the mission, but if you stay out of their way they will be okay with you.

## **Monarch Joint Venture**

Collaborating with monarch joint venture produces a positive story to tell about your focal area. Arkansas shared their experience with MJV running surveys on their focal area; it is largely hands off, the quail coordinator showed the volunteers where the plots were and they carry out their monitoring, already having known the appropriate protocol. The volunteers fill out the datasheets and, in the case of Arkansas, Nolan (NPS staffer) entered the data in the online portal for MJV. This type of collaboration is great outreach to the public as it shows what the state agency (and federal service if applicable) are doing for grassland birds that people otherwise would not have learned about. Ideally, state agencies should give their MJV chapters the location of the quail survey points where monarchs might be and the chapters do the rest of the work. Take advantage of the compare and contrast you could do if you have them place plots in both the focal and reference areas.

## **Continuing the Development of the CIP**

The time has come to scale CIP up from focal areas to focal landscapes and focal regions. It was concluded that a new ad hoc committee to begin this process needed to be formed, this ad hoc committee will be the Strategic Habitat Conservation Committee. To start, they will address some questions:

1. What is the definition of a biologically relevant landscape? What about a region?
2. How does the monitoring need to change as we scale up? Should we look at colonization and extinction rates, gene flow, core and satellite populations?
3. What will be the framework for a landscape level initiative that states can use as a rough implementation plan?
4. How can we better define density goals on a landscape and regional scale?
5. How can we allow this process to make prioritization changes due to economic changes?
6. How might we incorporate ecosystem services in this plan?

The committee will consist of 9 to 12 people and will be structured with 3 to 4 people in each these categories: research, planning, and implementation. The leader will be the NBCI Science Coordinator if agreed upon by the partnership; it will be vetted with the Steering Committee.

## **Delivering Ecosystem Services Through CIP**

We want to attract new research to our focal areas and this is a way we can work collaboratively with outside groups; this is not about doing more monitoring. The highest priority may be in human health studies. Human responses to green space can be quantified and measured. Targeting youth human health studies may be especially effective now. Additional considerations include targeting producers and, for example, studying how prescribed fire affects row-crop or no-till land and insect communities adjacent to it. It may also be a good time to approach soybean and corn associations at local and national levels to measure runoff. There are multiple ways to incorporate research outside of wildlife to elevate our CIP areas.



## **Quail Density App**

You can now measure spring and fall densities with an online app developed by University of Georgia: [https://quaildoc.shinyapps.io/DS\\_App\\_Beta/](https://quaildoc.shinyapps.io/DS_App_Beta/). The Data Simulator will help you determine how many points, replicates, and the length of the study period are appropriate to capture the true population density based upon the model fit. You can also use the data you have already collected on the Density Estimate page (it must be formatted correctly!). You must have at least two or more visits per point for at least two years of data, not all points have to be visited twice. Aim for at least 30-50 detections over the course of all years. This model only considers your own CIP area, it does not estimate density by incorporating densities from across the bobwhite range.

## **New Science Coordinator Expectations**

The general consensus is that the new Science Coordinator's number one priority should be completing the development of the initial CIP plan. The Science Coordinator first and foremost should have leadership qualities and should be capable of collaborating in a group. We need a Science Coordinator who can be creative and think about future growth. Having existing relationships with other agencies is a major plus. They should have a scientific understanding of quail conservation and be passionate about it. Lastly, a basic understanding of data analysis, GIS, and/or model fitting, is highly preferred. Ideally this would be a PhD with some post-doc experience, but a candidate with a Masters degree and experience will also be welcome to apply.

## **QuailCount Website Revamp**

While a lot of great things are coming out of our new relationship with Clemson, there's also some downsides. One is that they do not use the same framework or code language we were using at UTK. We need to switch to what Clemson is using because it allows us to receive IT support from Clemson if necessary. Due to this issue, I (NBCI Data Analyst) will be essentially rewriting all our web applications from scratch, in a language I do not know how to write. As you can imagine, this is going to take a while. However, now we have a moment to consider how we want to functionally change the website and see if there is anything I can do to make it more efficient. When I say functionally, I mean how the pages look, how many button clicks it takes to get something done, how I can make something less tedious, etc. We discussed the login system at the workshop and potentially working around university-based logins, but we determined that is not a good idea as federal agencies especially need certainty that our data portal is secure in case we start to harbor sensitive data (CRP contract data or data from DoD installations, for example). If anyone has a change to the website that they would like to suggest, email me.



## NBTC Steering Committee Meeting

Bentonville, Arkansas

August 2, 2021

### 8:00 – Welcome and Introductions

Lisa Potter

Began meeting at 8:08. Lisa welcomed group to AR. Introductions around the room. There were lots of new faces.

### Approve Steering Committee Minutes from Winter Meeting

Lisa Potter

Approved steering committee meeting minutes – did not send out to group so Lisa will need to send them out. Please review them and get any changes to Michael or Lisa by Wednesday.

### Treasurer's Report

Michael Hook

Treasurers report discussed account changes, balances and new QF cash management system.

In the old NBTC Account 4709 several items were paid from March to June. Items included Monthly fee for business fundamentals each month, reimbursement to Steve Chapman for tip to Bankhead National Forest, and reimbursement to John Morgan for trip meeting with Prairie Wildlife/Jimmy Bryan. On May 25, 2021 \$2,857.00 was transferred into the account to cover business fundamentals fee. On June 21, 2021 the remaining \$4,984.4 was transferred to the new Bank of America NBTC account that is linked to the Quail Forever accounting system. The old NBTC 4709 account was closed on June 21, 2021.

The new NBTC Account 0868 was opened on August 8, 2020 with a deposit of \$26,620.00. This account was unused until May 25, 2021 when \$2,877.00 was transferred to the old NBTC account 4709 to pay for business fundamental fees. In June 2021 \$18,763.00 was transferred to Quail Forever's Wells Fargo account for use in their cash management system. On June 21, 2021 \$4,984.44 was transferred into the account from the old NBTC account 4709. On July 29, 2021 a deposit was made as a sponsorship for the State of the Bobwhite publication in the amount of \$1,500.00 from Roundstone Native Seed. This brings the account total to \$11,484.44 in the new NBTC account 0868.

### Old Business

Group

Membership fee increase. We discussed membership fee at last steering committee meeting but since Hook's computer crashed we lost the details of that conversation. Morgan stated Pat Keyser brought up that a change was in order but couldn't remember if Dr. Keyser proposed a membership fee of \$25 or \$35.

R. Perez make motion to raise to \$30, K. Brazil seconded. Motion passed with no discussion.

J. McGuire mentioned that students may appreciate a reduced rate.

R. Perez made motion to keep \$15 fee for students, K. Duren seconded. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

### 8:20 – Directors Report

John Morgan

Began with describing the RFP and the transition process from University of Tennessee to Clemson University. The Executive Management Board and the Executive Steering Committee decided a change needed to be made. Five universities were targeted: the Texas A&M University - Kingsville, Mississippi State University, Oklahoma State University, University of Georgia and Clemson University. There was good conversations with all and John expected at least four proposals. Two universities ended up submitting proposals. There were stark differences between two. Clemson's proposal was similar to the setup at the University of Tennessee. University of Georgia included structural changes to the NBCI and the group felt more comfortable with Clemson University. The spring Management Board meeting was held and then a special spring Management Board meeting virtually with 23/25 states represented. At this meeting there was an unanimous vote in favor of moving the NBCI to Clemson University and there was no discussion of staying at University of Tennessee. John Morgan had been working on new business plan for a year but



the Management Board decided to wait to vote in September 2021. This vote will be a big, historical moment for the partnership. Also tabled at this time was the discussion of the NBCI becoming its own 501.c3. As we weren't a 501.c3 John reached out to SEAFWA and AFWA for assistance. SEAFWA agreed to sign a MOU with us. NBCI captured \$127,500 through state MOAs. NBCI was able to expend \$120,000 to Clemson for startup funds. John showed slide showing discrepancies between the commitments from all the states. There is \$533,500 committed for next year. A NFWF grant will provide \$10,000 through UGA NFWF long leaf project. Park Cities Quail is looking good to get \$95,000 for policy work again. John Morgan is going to Texas to propose the details next week. Jenn Mock Shaefer has agreed to do our policy work if we get the funds from Park Cities Quail. Jenn will be presenting with John next week. Grand Total the NBCI is looking at \$686,000 operating budget for next year. Ken Duren asked what is the path forward for new agreements? Morgan said we are still working with USFWS on how we deal with PR contracts. First phase will be working with MOU's for state monies. NBCI used to have a safety net of state monies that has been expended within the last year to get us through the transition over the last year. Morgan displayed NBCI Fixed Costs. At full staff NBCI is at \$648,600. (Additionally \$80-95,000 is needed from Park Cities Quail for part time policy work). Morgan discussed FY22 budget options. He provided a conservative, moderate and aggressive approach. Current staff is costing us \$462,300. Need to hire a science coordinator at \$103,500 – will embed science coordinator at Clemson and provide a nexus for work there. Travel is critical to NBCI. Staff would require \$50,000 for travel per year. Operations is targeted at \$70,200 in conservative approach to cover printing publications, etc. If we don't use the money it can be used as safety net for the future. Under the moderate approach, the big difference is providing a ½ Communications Coordinator position for a cost of \$41,400. Clemson has a very strong communications team and it may be worth partnering with them for a part time person. This would be similar to Allyssa at University of Tennessee, who was a 1/3 time partner and that worked quite well for us. The operations budget would be cut by half. The aggressive approach funds all of the Communications Coordinator position and cuts travel and operations budget. All totals for all three approaches equals \$686,000. The policy position has always been important to the group and we will try to work through Park Cities to get funding there. Duren asked about Clemson's fiscal year and when the science coordinator would be hired. Morgan would like to see them hired by November and if that's the case there will be some cost savings there. Also, there will be some additional savings as staff wasn't hired until halfway through July. There may be potential to save additional monies if Clemson agrees to 75/25 science coordinator position. Lisa Potter noted that Science Coordinator position is important and questioned the importance of the travel and operations budgets? Morgan noted that he may have to travel to sell business plan and may go over \$50,000. Duren noted that time may be the biggest issue going forward this year. Morgan stated building the business machine is key as well and that it will probably take a full quarter to get the business process in place. Kyle Brazil mentioned that shooting for moderate makes sense especially concerning travel which he sees that is important to revive all partnerships. Cory Rhoden asked about the operations and whether we could look at the operations in the conservative approach as money in the bank. Morgan confirmed that \$70,200 in the conservative approach would be a bankrolling effort. The operations funding of \$28,800 in the moderate approach is probably more realistic.

Morgan updated the committee on Clemson. On July 15, 2021 the Clemson Board of Trustees approved the transition. Staff hirings so far – everyone but Steve and Jeff. There is a NBCI Department at Clemson. Clemson will be sending out a news release soon. Working on the MOU currently. Now working on integrating into Clemson University system.

USFWS Regulation Changes. USFWS has document under review by OMB. They are seeking exemptions in 2 CFR 200 that would establish Cooperative Conservation Initiatives (CCI's). September 30 is the goal for their solution. The regulations change after that. They are still assessing recharge centers.

NBCI has formalized a new partnership with Monarch Joint Venture. They have 100 established partners and just transitioned to stand alone 501.c3 from a university. They have 11 staff, 12 board of directors, and a 16 member advisory committee.

Grant efforts. Two multi-state PR proposals have been submitted but didn't get either as there were 120 submissions. One competitive SWG was prepared but not submitted. Will be submitting next year. Just not enough time to submit. James Martin looped us in on an opportunity on an FSA opportunity to evaluate.

Upcoming items: building the Clemson business operation, hire a Science Coordinator (who do we include on the hiring panel), respond to the business plan vote, secure NGO partners as they play major role in moving money back to states, and re-ignite policy efforts.

Morgan sought input on strategizing the road show concerning the new business model. How many states should he visit? Should he visit high, medium or low buy-in states? Capitalize on SEAFWA meeting? Other ideas? Perez stated that you probably must go to all of them simply to explain the new business model. They may be bought in but need to hear the business model again. Molly Foley and Lisa Potter agreed that it may be worth going to all so as to not alienate anyone. Maybe just cursory visit to encourage/sell the business plan to them.

Morgan discussed partner meeting. Looking to speak with NGO's to network to show the benefits of the partnerships.

Leadership guide. Morgan noted that many of us don't know what the positions are within the group. Up until now it has been word of mouth. Will try to develop a document to explain the roles of key leaders.



## **Bylaws Update and Review**

**Lisa Potter**

Lisa Potter displayed the by-law changes to be brought up to full membership at the business meeting.

1. Change name from NBTC to NBCI Technical Committee.
2. Removing University of Tennessee and adding Clemson University within the document.
3. Added two new awards: NBCI hall of fame award and the Chair Emeritus Award.

There was discuss regarding the Chair Emeritus Award.

Robert Perez made a motion to accept the second name, Distinguished Service Award, instead of Chair Emeritus Award. K. Duren seconded the change. No discussion and the motion passed unanimously. To be voted on by full membership later this week.

## **Awards and Elections Update**

**Robert Perez**

Perez noted there are two elections this year. One for NEAFWA and one for SEAFWA representatives. Will put out a box and will collect votes throughout the meeting. Morgan suggested two people counting votes. Perez noted that we will be giving several awards at the meeting. Perez submitted receipts for \$87.44 for awards and shipping.

## **NBCI Staff Updates**

**NBCI Staff**

J. Hodges handed out the Beef, Grass, and Bobwhites brochures. Will have a pre-order process set up. Go to website and put in how many you'd like. There is a small opportunity to make small changes if you see something. Looks like we will be able to distribute these free or charge. The front and back covers are blank providing space for advertising and possible advertising money. [bringbackbobwhites.org/BGB](http://bringbackbobwhites.org/BGB). Potter asked if it will be available online. Hodges noted that it is available now. Brazil stated that there are plans to move to other regions as well.

S. Chapman worked with Duane Elmore, Pat and Alyssa to create and distribute hardwood document. He has been keeping in communications with our partners. Made a trip to the Bankhead National Forest in north Alabama to look at their quail emphasis area. They were looking for assistance/advice. Not necessarily looking for Focal Area only looking at bird monitoring. Also took some leave for the transition from UT. Had virtual committee meeting due to chair and sub chair not being able to travel. Will provide notes and committee meeting will probably not meet for both sessions here. 33 people on virtual meeting. Potter noted that we should make announcement at Plenary session.

M. Foley has been filling requests as she has been able in the absence of the science coordinator. Has spoken with Dr. Belli and Nancy at Clemson. Clemson has agreed to allow Molly to work on Clemson projects similar to 90/10 agreement with UT. Clemson is very excited to integrate Molly into Clemson GIS department. Clemson has an entire department with 4 or 5 full time staff and good technology that wasn't available before. Unfortunately, all of our data entry portals is completely different at Clemson than at UT so Molly will have to rewrite code to make it work. Basically, will have to start from scratch to create a working protocol and it will probably will take a year to complete. M. Foley will be working remotely and has discussed with Nancy to be involved with the departmental meetings in order to get better integrated. Foley noted that habitat inventory data from coordinators was spotty but the acreages actually increased. The data system has been down due to the transition, and she has been collecting the data in the background.

Communications report was provided by John Morgan who noted that we are working on a digital version for the SOTB. Roundstone is still going to be a sponsor. The story board that Mclaughlin created was fantastic. Morgan noted Penny can do webpage work and has agreed to help with the storyboard and maintaining the webpage for a little bit. Looking to focus on internal communications. Penny noted the listserv is still active but noted we need to transfer that to Clemson system. Perez wanted clarification on what was expected at the onboarding system. Potter noted that a name change may be needed as "onboarding" is a little confusing.

## **Break**

## **Quail 9 Update**

**Dave Hoover**

Committee is meeting about once a month. Planning is continuing, final edits and review process for papers is in progress. Currently looking at working with budget and setting registration costs. Preparing for sponsorships as well. Right now looking at \$450 for both Quail 9 and NBTC. Roger Applegate noted that is where they were in 2017 but sponsorships continued to come in and brought the cost down. They have been conservative in their numbers and planning. Will be getting to the little things within a few months. Plenary speakers and invited speakers have been confirmed.



## **WLFW Ad Hoc Committee Update**

**Jess McGuire**

Mark Gudlin is retiring so we are looking for an additional member and leader. We have sent out a FAQ document that highlights what we have been up to. There's a meeting tonight to discuss how WLFW fits into each subcommittee meetings. 24/25 states are involved in process. PA and OK are not part of the group but MN has joined in. They are pressing folks to create quail groups within each state to get everyone on the same playing field. There is an online portal for maps, WHEGs and NRCS data but you must register. This process will take lots of teamwork and if you need anything please let the group know and they will try to provide what you need. Potter asked how the needs assessment is being used? Jess noted that it isn't a commitment. It will be used to form a baseline for approaching NRCS. NRCS has a big buy-in and are excited. Even though bobwhite wasn't designated as a 1.0 Jess believes that it is still a good thing as NRCS is likely moving away from the 1.0 designations. Morgan asked how important the BRI is in the process. Jess noted it is huge and has already been integrated into the portal. Some states have updated their areas through this process.

## **Translocation Ad Hoc Committee Update**

**Ken Duren**

Duren noted the group has met twice. No meeting here this week because it is so busy. First meeting they discussed 3 items: First item is Translocation Review Team, second item is Translocation Database and last priority is Rules of Screenings and State Laws. At the Second meeting it was discussed how review team operates. Not a yes and no but here's the benefits and here's what you need to consider. This is completely voluntary. If you are working through groups like Tall Timblers they will still operate under their conditions. Next meeting will be next month and will look at translocation BMPs. Will probably look at a winter field visit to see how folks trap and move birds. Perez noted that the independent review team will have a representative from NBCI staff – most likely science coordinator. Morgan stated that Paul Grimes has been very willing to help with field visit. Possibly a site in SC that could work well with Clemson.

## **NBTC Critical Review Questions for Subcommittees**

**Lisa Potter**

Potter noted that we have been organizationally structured the same way for 27 years and questioned if we need to make changes to meet our ultimate objective of restoring bobwhite. Potter provided 4 questions to open dialogue. Plan to submit these questions to the sub-committees and discussion during the sub-committee meetings.

1. What are the 3 major needs to change how people use and view the land?
2. We have 5 working committees now, is that too few, too many, or just about right? If you had to make a change to our committees, then identify at least one change/enhancement.
3. We cover 25 states, can our broad-based committees adequately represent unique regional needs? Identify at least 1 way to better address regional needs within our partnership.
4. Is one annual meeting adequate to complete committee tasks and maintain momentum for committee work? Should the NBTC strive to meet more times a year, in-person or virtually?

Duren stated that the number of committees is not as important as what the committees are doing. Do the committees still meet the needs of the NBCI?

Perez noted that some of the western states may still feel as though they are not as well represented as they should be. Morgan noted that question 3 is trying to get at that. May need some wordsmithing to get that across. The landscapes are so different across the nation for quail so that is important for us to figure out.

Duren suggested that changing number 3 to "Do we adequately each region's needs. If not, how can we? Eg. Western rangelands vs. Eastern pasturelands".

Gudlin suggested that we need to emphasize that bobwhites are a shrubland obligate and we need to tie in grasslands, pollinators, etc. He noted they aren't necessarily the same thing. Morgan said we need to focus on the messaging.

Chapman noted that from the forestry subcommittee that the discussions were dominated by who was at the meeting and where the meeting was held. We've even lost some of the institutional knowledge due to folks moving on. If we had consistent members maybe, we could have separate groups to discuss regional needs and then bring them to the full committee.

Potter asked do we do the sub-groups or more ad hoc committees? Casey Bergthold noted that a little clarity from the steering committee would be beneficial so they could see how they fit in better and what the needs actually are. Morgan noted that a structural change may be helpful for the ag policy committee to integrate them into the other committee since they affect all groups.

Cory Rhoden asked are we seeing a situation where the committees are seeing NBCI staff and subcommittee visions are divergent? Potter says no and Morgan noted that there could be differences and that's not a bad thing.



Perez noted that we recently updated our mission statement, and we need to be pushing that on our documents and presentations. Potter will edit these questions and send them out to subcommittee groups for discussion.

### **Management Board Preparations**

**John Morgan**

We will be voting on the business plan soon and we need to look at each state and have discussions with them prior to the vote. Currently John has met with 6 states of 25. Will be talking with coordinators to see how comfortable with the business plan they are and will vote at the coordinators meeting.

Kyle Brazil asked if Clemson is interested in the business plan. Morgan noted they were open to it. They are open to a recharge center model.

Morgan stated there is a need to make sure that coordinators understand the risk associated with the new business plan as well. If a lot of states only buy in at the bare minimum, then the NBCI will be severely underbudget. Just need some input on how to proceed going forward.

Morgan noted that the management board meeting is a virtual meeting again this year. It may be worth having the management board meeting outside of AFWA since we had such good attendance the last time. Does the steering committee agree with this discussion? Paul is ready to move forward with having the meeting virtually after AFWA. There was no opposition from any of the members in attendance.

The Steering Committee tabled the 501.c3 discussion due to all of what was going on. We may do that again with the business plan taking emphasis at this meeting. Clemson is encouraging us to be a 501.c3.

### **CIP Completion/Next Steps**

**John Morgan**

Some states are reaching their 10 year end. When originally designed this portion was only phase 1. There were two other phases. There are some western states wanting to work at the 50,000 feet level and cover large areas. We are losing their support if we go with the focused areas. Do we need to reconvene the ad hoc committee to work on phase 2 and 3 and complete the document? Perez noted that in the western states they are moving to the Joint Venture model. Duren asked do we have a leader for the ad hoc committee? Potter asked do we have a meeting with the partners who are saying they are interested in other options? Morgan stated this will be discussed at the CIP workshop as well. Morgan said he would get input from the science subcommittee meeting and the CIP meeting. Potter said the steering committee would address it after John provides the input from the committees.

### **Leadership Workshop**

**John Morgan**

This is the year that we typically try to do these meetings and it may be a good year to do it with all the changes over the year. If we are interested Morgan just needs some commitments from folks to help pull it off. Would do it during the winter. Need to get input management board as well. May can pull this off at Pheasant Fest with a half-day session.

McGuire asked if there was any way to force the directors to engage with the coordinators to facilitate some discussion between them so everyone is on the same page?

### **Other Issues/Comments**

**Lisa Potter**

Potter asked if there were any other issues or comments? Penny said she'd be happy to put the new mission statement on the webpage if we have it available.

Chris McLeland noted that last year Pheasant Fest and Quail Classic was cancelled. This year it is in Omaha, NE on March 11-13 and is considering creating a space and opportunity to have with winter steering committee meeting there if the group is interested. Potter noted that we have typically had the steering committee meetings at UT but obviously that will change this year. We don't have to make the decision today but need to figure out travel requests, etc. Jef Hodges noted that we have done it in the past. Morgan noted that it would compress the timeframe between the steering committee meeting and the management board meeting. May be irrelevant after discussions later today. McLeland asked that we let them know within the next thirty days in order plan effectively.

If nothing further meeting is adjourned.

### **Adjourned**





## **NBTC Forestry Subcommittee**

July 28, 2021 (1:30 – 4:00pm Eastern Time)

Virtual – Microsoft Teams (34 Participants) Meeting Report

Greg Hagan, Chair  
Jimmy Sloan, Vice Chair

### **Welcome and Introductions**

**Greg Hagan and Jimmy Sloan**

### **Updates**

**John Morgan**

- Virtual meeting was possible due to Chair and Vice Chair unable to attend in-person meeting.
- Explained reasoning behind not providing a non-virtual option for the entire meeting.
- Transition to Clemson is “almost” complete. Steve and Jef are not formally Clemson employees at the moment due to lagging background checks.

### **Restoring Oak Woodlands for Bobwhites- Brochure**

- Brochure is available for download on the NBCI website and ready for use.
- Big thanks to Dwayne Elmore for his assistance and expertise on brochure development.

### **Group Discussion regarding needs from NBTC members from the Forestry Subcommittee**

- Marc Puckett: Very little on talking about the process of timber sales, might be worth coming up with something to discuss. Specifically designed for landowners. “A to Z” on Timber harvesting.
- Brad Alexander: Agrees the benefit of creating this type of document and include a site preparation alluding to establishing trees and maintaining the native vegetative ground cover
- Discussion on developing a YouTube video or Brochure? Final consensus was a brochure would serve as the best format.

### **Update: NBCI Forestry Activities**

- Completed the Restoring Oak Woodlands for Bobwhites brochure. Big thanks to Alyssa Merka for layout and formatting.
- Continued participation with East Gulf Coastal Plain Joint Venture, Longleaf Partnership Council, U.S. Forest Service and states where CIPs are located.
- Looking forward to getting established with Clemson.

### **Arkansas- Louisiana RCPP Grant (Open Pine Landscape Restoration Project)**

#### **Presenter Luke Lewis, AGFC Assistant Chief of Wildlife**

RCPP Overview: Louisiana, Arkansas, Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture, NRCS

- \$5.9 million invest
- Contribution match \$9 million
- Innovative Industry Approach- IVM



- 70%- landowner financial assistance
  - o Funds stay with NRCS
  - o 413K\$/state/year for 5 years
- 30% technical assistance for delivery
- Numerous industry contributors:
  - o Entergy
  - o Potlatch Deltic
  - o Enable Midstream
  - o So. Central Electric Coop
  - o Ouachita Electric Coop
  - o Clariborne Electric Coop
- Goal to restore over 60K acres of understory pine habitat
- Conversion of Desired Forest Conditions by using practices to establish open pine conditions using herbicides and prescribed fire
- Provided with preliminary practices and prices, but they are debating on using the standard EQIP pricing (existing rates)

### **Update: Working Lands for Wildlife**

#### **Presenter: Bridgett Costanzo, NRCS East Region WLFW Coordinator**

- Currently doing ~\$171 mil a year - would like to reach ~\$600 mil a year (NRCS Staff)
- Top 5 Core Conservation Practices:
  - o Prescribed Grazing
  - o Brush Management
  - o Prescribed Burning
  - o Forage and Biomass Planting
  - o Forest Stand Improvement
- Framework document being created to establish conservation practices that benefit bobwhites, these change throughout NRCS Regions (Northeast, Central, Southeast). Instead of dwelling on individual states the document will focus on the national effort.
- Individual states will be able to amend priority areas in their state

### **FSA's RFP impacting CP36- longleaf pine practice (potential policy update/change)**

- Proposals are for evaluating wildlife and soil impacts from pine straw raking
- Dr. James Martin and Greg Hagan expressed concern
- Potentially could have a negative impact on bobwhites due to the raking practices/procedure
- Proposals didn't address any wildlife concerns, just to optimize the practice.
- This needs to be passed onto the Ag. Policy Subcommittee
- Steve will discuss this next week at the actual meeting to address the next steps

### **EQIP and Loblolly Pine**

- Loblolly pine pays for itself, and conservation dollars shouldn't be used (Marc Puckett)
- Loblolly is used in most states through EQIP, Virginia removed loblolly from their approved practices
- Discussion on whether "tree planting" should be removed from conservation funding pools or promote payment for management under those trees (i.e., ground cover restoration)
- Marc Puckett asked for individual states reach out to him and send synopsis of whether Loblolly is used/ranked



## **Continued COVID-19 Impacts**

- Timber Market: Price increase and now is becoming more stable.
- Some state timber sales have increased based off sawmill location; most coastal timber harvest is being sent overseas
- Most of the habitat management practice range-wide have picked back up to pre-COVID conditions/timeline
- Climate change and the burning window could limit our timeframe by up to 90%

## **Group Discussion**

- Burning outside of our traditional windows
- Conservation Stewardship Program E612B Planting for Carbon Sequestration
  - o Only limit is based on current site condition
  - o Paying over 1,000/acre, is this justifiable?
  - o We will have this viewed with the Ag. Policy Subcommittee next week

## **In-person Meeting Notes**

**Steve Chapman**

- 23 Participants
- Majority of the discussion was around two topics:
  - o Continuation of the EQIP Loblolly Pine discussion from the virtual meeting (see above).
  - o Working through the NBCI Subcommittee Structure Review Questions.





## Ag Policy Subcommittee Meeting Agenda

Casey Bergthold, Chair  
Mark Gudlin, Vice Chair

Meeting Resources: (Sent electronically to NBTC Ag Policy Subcommittee prior to the meeting)  
WLFW-Bobwhites 2.0 FAQs\_July2021pdf  
WLFW NOBO\_PartnerContacts\_07\_27\_21.pdf  
NBCI Ag Policy Activity by Jef Hodges, Grassland Coordinator  
Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act (RCA) interactive data viewer (RCA Data Viewer)

### Tuesday, August 3

12:45-4:45 p.m.

Ag Policy Subcommittee Meetings (Session 1)

Welcome and Housekeeping

21 Attendees. Introductions. Sign up sheet was passed to group.

### Discussion and Update from WLFW ad Hoc Subcommittee – Mark Gudlin, TWRA

Mark Gudlin gave WLFW background and Overview. This was a summary of the efforts since the NBTC meeting last year to request bobwhite become a national WLFW species and how that resulted in the current WLFW efforts for bobwhite.

### WLFW Bobwhite Overview, Needs Assessment, FAQ and Best Practices. Bridgett Costanzo – Working Lands for Wildlife Coordinator-East/Central U.S., Natural Resources Conservation Service

Recording of presentation was made and will be posted on the Landscape Partnership website. As soon as it posts I will send out directions for how to access the presentation through the portal.

Bridgett presented, WLFW Map noting that linking State Priority Areas was a smart move. In the future building more inter-state connectivity would be good way to gain more support. Conservation practices by Region were shown. Casey noted the lack of prescribed burning in the central region.

WLFW Discussions: How are we going to document that this is a success? We are currently lacking population goals. A discussion was held regarding goals. Bridgett shared that goals and priority areas can be tweaked annually, as this is a learning process for all of us. WLFW has 6 major tenets (Did not get the list recorded, but will be requested of Bridgett). Need plan for how to measure what is on the ground.

While we have habitat goals the ultimate need is to show population response and other tangible outcomes. Success in stabilizing bobs is the first goal.

Discussion – It was suggested that somehow we need to better incorporate a group from the Science subcommittee in the WLFW discussions as that component is essential to our success. While recognizing the need we discussed possibly having one or more coordinating virtual meetings with that (ad hoc) group to address the science needs.. Enhance monitoring. Population success

Dan Peebles – WHEG @ checkout would require us to do

Is an Ad hoc needed related to – how to work in monitoring

Policy side – hard to show or expect response. Landowner surveys to show success?

2:00-2:10 p.m. Break



**2:10-4:10 p.m.**

**Landscape Partnership Portal – Bridgett Costanzo, Working Lands for Wildlife Coordinator – East/Central U.S., Natural Resources Conservation Service**

Landscapepartnership.org

See PDF of presentation that is attached to the email distributed to Ag Policy Subcommittee members. Landscape sponsorship portal. Presentations on portal pdfs, shapefiles, needs assessment, all listed on the site. Casey to send out landscape partnership portal address to Ag Policy Subcommittee

Training resources on landscape training network tab.

**Feedback and Other topics: What are your concerns with WLFW NOBO? Including CRP in WLFW, Practice List review, potential phone App?, Monitoring, Outcomes, etc.**

Have a consistent way to ask for information from the states. Baseline for before and after. Ask for geographic reports

Consistent asks for data across the states. Take a research approach.

How does Science subcommittee engage with Ag Policy? WLFW monitoring - Mark McConnell (UGA) is working with James Martin How do we monitor? Mark Gudlin identified the need to find out how many states have a CRP quail SAFE project, and if they don't that they have the opportunity to submit a proposal to FSA once every year. ?

Tagging on a Conservation Desktop. It was noted that if Standard 420 is not there, and that has been elevated to NRCS. Training is critical for tagging practices implemented that are beneficial to bobwhites. Idea to require clicking no priority would help with Quality control. Bulletin came back out again related to tagging. Option for WLFW habitat evaluations.

Question: Who to petition to edit conservation practice narratives as narratives are too vague to be useful (e.g. can include scenarios both beneficial and not beneficial to bobwhites.. Can Narratives and scenarios be attached to tags?

CD & CART: You don't set component until pre-proposal to do agreement items. Issue with the funding. Can Component be chosen at the planning stage? Dan Peoples suggested writing notes in the attributes section.

**Ag Policy Chair and Vice Chair Nominations – Overview of roles and duties of position and nominations**

**Ad hoc WLFW Co-chair Nominations – Overview of roles and duties of position and nominations**

Casey and Mark discussed the opportunity and asked for nominations for Ag Policy Chair, Vice Chair, and WLFW ad hoc Co-Chair. Item is to be presented in the full meeting and voted on through email.

**Discussion: 3 Major needs** – NBTC Chair Lisa Potter in her plenary talk requested each Subcommittee find time in their agenda to address 3 questions:

Good morning Subcommittee Chairs,

As I mentioned during the Plenary session this morning, the Steering Committee would like to ask all of you to discuss the below questions during your subcommittee meetings this week. This will help kickstart our review of the NBTC structure to evaluate if or how we could improve our structure to better meet our goals for quail restoration. Thank you for taking some time to work this important discussion into your agendas! Please be sure to send your discussion notes to myself and Michael Hook. We look forward to hearing the feedback from you committees!

Subcommittee Structure Review Questions:

NBTC has been organizationally structured the same way for the last 27 years. It's time to consider if our structure is reflective of what it takes to meet our ultimate objective of restoring bobwhite populations. To be truly successful in our effort to restore bobwhite populations and create lasting habitat for bobwhite and other grassland species our goals must be centered around "changing how people use and view the land".

1. What are 3 major needs to change how people use and view the land?
  - a. How practices can help landowner
  - b. Benefits to people
    - i. Economics
    - ii. Stewardship
    - iii. Tax implications



- c. Relationship building
  - d. Landowners spreading the word
  - e. Ag markets
  - f. Connecting wildlife to sustainability
  - g. Education
  - h. Aesthetics
  - i. Small game hunting culture
2. Do our current 5 subcommittees provide us the organizational structure to best address bobwhite and grassland conservation and our goal of changing how people use the view the land? For example, are there too few subcommittees, too many, or just about right? If you had to make a change to our subcommittees, then identify at least 1 change/enhancement.
- a. Yes about right, but could use improvement to flow or direction.
    - i. Is the name "Ag Policy" correct and does it accurately capture what this group is charged with. If so should subjects flow through the committee from others in a more structured manner.
    - ii. Changes:
      - 1. Emerging issues update during plenary to inform and prime discussions/improve information flow.
      - 2. Define subcommittee roles more clearly
      - 3. Flow within the meeting could be altered to allow for more cross-talk/collaboration.
3. NBCI supports bobwhite conservation efforts across 25 states. Can our broad-based committees adequately represent unique regional needs within our partnership (e.g., western rangelands vs. eastern pastureland)? If not, how can we better address regional variation? Identify at least 1 way to better address regional needs within our partnership.
- a. Ad hoc committees within subcommittees
  - b. Ensure representation of all appropriate sub-groups as a task of the chairs/vice chairs
  - c. Getting the right people in the room as representation on the subcommittees.
4. Is 1 annual meeting adequate to complete committee tasks and maintain momentum for subcommittee work? Should the NBTC strive to meet multiple times a year, in-person or virtually?
- a. A meeting of the chairs prior to the meeting to cover agenda topics and get on same page.
  - b. Report this information back to steering committee
  - c. 4 virtual meetings each year.
  - d. 1 in person meeting per year.

**4:10-4:30 p.m.**

**America's Grasslands Act – Bethany Erb, Director of Government Affairs, Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever.**

North American Grasslands Act

- NAWCA like grassland Act
- 350 million/ yr to create
- Looking to make it a Bi-partisan effort.
- Natural Resources Committee
- Interior program
- Bruce Westermen, AR
- NAWCA is at 60 million
- Legislation is possible this fall



**4:30-4:45 p.m.**

**Wrap up Comments – Mark Gudlin, TWRA**

**Wednesday, August 4**

**8:00-10:00 a.m.**

Ag Policy Subcommittee Meetings (Session 2)  
Welcome/Housekeeping and Recap of Session 1  
NBCI Ag Policy Activity Update by Jef Hodges

**Monitoring**

- ARUs?
- Citizen Science?
- E Bird
- Florida Example

**Jef Hodges – Ag Policy Update**

- Document submitted to the group and attached.
- Climate Smart Comments
- TRCP Policy Council
- American Wildlife Conservation Partnerships member
- Hunt 30x30 Coalition member
- 1 dozen letters signed on.
- MO Prescribed Burn Act

**8:10-8:20 a.m.**

Ag Policy Chair and Vice Chair Elections and WLFW Ad hoc committee elections to be held over email after announcement to full membership.

**8:20-9:40 a.m.**

**Program Updates and Discussions**

Conservation Reserve Program – Greg Pilchack, Agriculture Policy Program Coordinator, AFWA

Environmental Quality Incentives Program – Mark Gudlin, TWRA

Conservation Stewardship Program – Derek Wiley, Conservation Delivery Specialist, TPWD (Derek Wiley was not able to attend. Mark Gudlin covered.)

Regional Conservation Partnership Program – Lisa Potter, Farm Bill Coordinator, MDC

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

Voluntary Public Access-Habitat Improvement Program

**John Morgan – Overview and background**

Proposal to Park Cities

- Jen Mach Schafer for Ag Policy Rep. is a potential.

## **CRP**

- Lowest enrollments in 3 decades
- Rental Rate Caps
- 9 mill expiring before 2023
- CRP policy Changes
- Increased in grassland rates
- SHPP
- Clear 30
- CRP – Monitoring A Evaluation
- Soil Carbon levels
- Still no final rule on CRP
- Natives First Language
- Justify pine straw raking
- Can we encourage NRCS to better monitor CRP

## **EQIP**

- Totals by practice

## **CSP**

- Recommend state tech committee engagement

## **EQIP**

- Texas example of planning 645 without practice on the ground.
- Quality of Planning
- 10-yr incentive contracts
- Pilot states steered

## **Nationwide FY22 CIC Contracts Problems**

- CSP 612B Carbon Sequestration
- Plant Trees
- Payment is 3x cost
- Encouraged high density planting
- Required FMP

## **KS EQIP – not allowing non-commodity land enrollment Steve – Prescribed Burning and Thinning incentives (2016)**

- Change to include other
- Q – Do we need to push for 10 mill in CRP incentive?
- A. General consensus is that we don't need to if we cant ensure it will go positively.

## **RCPP – Lisa - Discussion of how Classic and AF RCPPs have gone.**

- PPA Agreement



- Texas Couple funded
- NE and KS had a continuous
- AR – No way to limit contract payments
- Best practices in agreements AFWA

#### **ACEP – ALE**

- Carbon sequestration
- Wetland/forest/Working land Easement

#### **RCPP WL4W**

- Overlap with GRIP
- Will Newman – Is there a concern that WL4W fund pool will cut use of RCPP.
- Add Courtney to

#### **Ag Policy subcommittee Nominations - To be voted on electronically in the weeks following the August meeting.**

- Chair
  - o Will Newman, TPWD
  - o Brad Alexander, GA DNR
- Vice Chair
  - o Dan Peeples, SC DNR
  - o Marina Osier, KS PFQF

**9:40 am – 9:55 am      Other Topics / Open Discussion**

**9:55 am – 10:00 am      Closing Remarks – Casey Bergthold, PFQF**

#### **NOTES**

##### **Resources Conservation Act (RCA) Data Viewer Updated for FY 2020; Data Now Available in Excel Format**

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 updates to the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act (RCA) interactive data viewer (RCA Data Viewer) were released on February 26th. In addition to reports for each conservation program, there are state, regional, and national conservation profiles covering fiscal years 2009-2020. These reports include data on obligations, contracts, and easements, as well as conservation practices applied by resource concern. Program reports also include Civil Rights reports that provide contract data breakouts for race, gender, Hispanic ethnicity, socially disadvantage, limited resource, beginning farmer, and disabled producers. The RCA data viewer provides tabular reports, maps, and downloadable data files. 2017 National Resources Inventory data are also available at the state, regional, and national levels. A newly added viewer option provides conservation program and practice data in a downloadable excel file format. The new files combine data from national, state, and program reports into a handful of “flat” files that can be easily read using R, SAS, Tableau, and many other software packages. Each excel file includes multiple worksheets that offer data by program, practice, and year at the state and national level. Another new file that identifies practices by land use (in addition to state and program) is also available as an excel file in the new flat file format. The file provides information on the practices associated with cropland, pasture, range, forest, farmsteads, and other land use/land cover categories.

##### **NBCI Technical Committee Subcommittee Chair and Vice Chair Election guidance**

Each Standing Subcommittee shall be headed by a Chair and Vice Chair, to be elected by a majority vote of voting members in attendance at the Subcommittee meeting of the annual NBCI TECHNICAL COMMITTEE meeting. Each Subcommittee Chair shall solicit nominations from their Subcommittee voting members and conduct the election. Newly-elected nominee(s) must be approved by the Steering Committee before serving. The Subcommittee Chair and Vice Chair shall serve two-year terms and upon conclusion of a term the Vice Chair shall assume the Subcommittee Chair position. When a Standing Subcommittee Chair resigns, the Vice Chair shall immediately assume the Subcommittee Chair position and the Vice Chair position shall be filled by election at the next annual meeting. If both the Subcommittee Chair and Vice Chair resign, the Steering Committee Past Chair shall solicit nominations from the Standing Subcommittee voting members and conduct the election. Chair and Vice Chair positions for all Standing Subcommittees shall be reviewed annually by the Steering Committee. Each Standing Subcommittee Chair shall invite persons from the membership to form the Standing Subcommittee.



## Grasslands and Grazing Subcommittee Meeting Notes

### Day 1 – Tuesday, Aug. 3, 2021

1. Discussion and Update on GPGI – Dean Krehbiel, KS NRCS State Resource Con, gave an excellent overview of this new initiative, and highlighted some of the innovative things they are doing with this program.
    - a. Vision – Large, intact grasslands
      - i. Rancher driven
      - ii. Science informed
      - iii. Agency supported
    - b. Dirac Twidwell – A guide to reducing risk and vulnerability to woody encroachment <https://agronomy.unl.edu/faculty/Twidwell/WPE-vulnerability-guide-preprint.pdf>
      - i. Science-driven assessment of risk and vulnerability used to direct program spending
      - ii. Fire is extremely important!
      - iii. Technical assistance focused on pest management to reduce woody encroachment
        1. Conservation delivery specialists to assist implementation by landowners
      - iv. Act now funding
        1. Spent some discussion time discussing how this funding mechanism works with NRCS, and how well it worked for this initiative.
  2. Coordinator Update – Jef Hodges
    - a. Quail 9 planning is well underway in Missouri, and Jef has been active on the team there.
    - b. Jef attended several important meetings over the course of the last quarter, the CHJV Board meeting, TRCP Policy Board meeting, and the WLFW Northern Bobwhite Committee. He represented the interests of NBTC at each of those meetings.
    - c. Update on in-service training on native forage for NRCS and Partners
      - i. Sub-awardee from grant to Quail Forever (QF)
        1. May use some funds to print “Beef, Grass, and Bobwhites”
        2. Virtual video workshops to meet NRCS needs
    - d. Completed “Beef, Grass, and Bobwhites” Native Grazing Document
    - e. Multi-state conservation proposals for native grasslands are going to be sought moving forward to help deliver native grazing programming.
    - f. Dr. Keyser working on native forage for eastern US, Jef reviewed.
    - g. Working on Eastern Grazing videos, with goal of completing these this coming year.
      - i. Need more producers to interview!
- \*\*\*NAGCA – Ask Aviva Glazier about it and maybe comments
3. Bob Glennon gave a WLFW update from Ag Policy Subcommittee. Bob joined the discussion in the other subcommittee with Bridgett Costanzo, NRCS WLFW Coordinator-East/Central US. The discussion was focused around the needs assessment and goal setting that had occurred earlier in the year with the states and NRCS.



4. Beef, Grass, and Bobwhites – Quail Management in Eastern NWSG Pastures

- a. Preorders can be made on a webpage that has been set up
  - i. <https://bringbackbobwhites.org/request-bgb/>
- b. 93 copies per case; see website for details
- c. Will have a digital version later
- d. This is directed to technical advisors
- e. Short version geared toward producers will be produced through NBTC and members of this subcommittee.
  - i. 4-pager
  - ii. Links to points of contact and extra resources

5. USDA loan issues

- a. Cody Rhoden brought up the point that KY has experienced issues with producers not being able to get loans to help with conversion projects because they didn't have 17 head of cattle. Wanted to know if other states have had similar experiences with FSA loans having such a limitation. It was discussed that nobody had experience with this in the room, but it would be asked of others to see if we could get some more details on this question.

6. Discussion about getting forbs in native pastures

- a. We need more research to help us know how to make diverse native pasture seed mixtures.
- b. What % of the mix should be in forbs?
- c. Grazing management to keep them in the stand
- d. Need info on how to do this
- e. Jef will compile available info for the subcommittee

7. Tell & Tanner developed a native shrub seed packet and brochure for rangelands. This idea was well received. The brochure actually had a packet of sumac seeds attached to it with instructions for how to plant a small shrub thicket.

8. Vista Outdoors Foundation Grant opportunity

- a. This is likely not going to be possible still for this year, but we need to keep in mind this opportunity for future application times. What could we potentially apply to get funds for? (Native Grasslands Alliance, NGA Summit, Jef's Coordinator Position Salary)

**Day 2 – Wednesday, Aug. 4, 2021**

9. Update on Ohio WLFW Native Grazing from Jason Jones

- a. Successes
  - i. 24 projects in 4 years
  - ii. Some great examples of successful projects
  - iii. Including extension and Dept. of Ag agents on field visits to get buy-in
- b. Challenges
  - i. Establishment – landowner not following plan
  - ii. Assistance from technical staff
  - iii. Access to native grass drills
  - iv. Education and Outreach
  - v. Managing expectations

- c. Goals
  - i. More field days and workshops
  - ii. Explore native forbs compatible for grazing
  - iii. Explore cover crops for site prep
  - iv. Share success stories
  - v. Monitoring and surveys
- d. Ohio requires 512 Native Grass to get WLFW Funding

10. Good Discussion on WLFW Ranking Questions. Some states have seen that rankings are not coming out like they would imagine based on past experiences with programs. Some high quality projects that ranked high based off of the ranking questions alone did not rank the highest or even get funded due to background points in the CART System.

#### 11. Subcommittee Structure Review Discussion

- a. Target younger generations of farmers and ranchers, maybe even middle and high school
  - i. Educational push – Ag side
- b. Ad hocs for prescribed fire in both grasslands and forestry subcommittee may be good
  - i. Education Subcommittee?
- c. We do not need to separate regional meetings for grasslands. Perhaps an informal ad hoc for rangeland.
  - i. Virtual western rangelands focused meeting for subcommittee
- d. Yes, for quarterly meetings, virtual seems to be the best option.





## Communications Sub-Committee Meetings Notes

NBTC Annual Meeting – Bentonville, Arkansas – August 2-5, 2021

### Overview:

Had a brief discussion of history and direction of Communication Sub-Committee and activities. Of note, Robert Perez noted that it took 26 years to create a mission statement and that it should have been displayed in our marketing for this meeting but wasn't.

Cody Rhoden discussed DJ case efforts in KY. A group discussion ensued. Notable items were that the billboard campaign was as successful as the google AdWords. The group discussed the successes and failures of the campaign. Andy mentioned that QF may be able to assist in creating landing pages and webpages for states wanting to participate in this effort. A short discussion on how the Indian Creek Restoration targeted landowners within the area.

"A good program sells itself and the keystone landowner is the most important factor in spreading the word."

C. Rhoden did note that the money spent on the campaign was money well spent because it got people into EQIP that hadn't been before and some landowners within the targeted area really transformed their properties.

The conversation turned to internal communications and how to promote better internal communication. Maybe create an online repository for state, NBTC, and NBCI specific information. Internal communication is going to become more important as institutional knowledge is lost. We may find that the new biologists begin recreating the wheel without anyone to let them know that we have already done these things before.

ArcGIS StoryMap has been developed and will be reviewed and distributed in the next few months.

Bobwhite Roundtable Blog – received posts from OK, AL, KY, AR, DE, and GA have been received. During the transition blog posts have slowed but please still submit posts. The general idea is that the blog posts keep the webpage fresh and drives hits.

The committee presented two options for the past-chair award and the final option will be voted on in the business plan.

There is a communications plan but it needs to be updated ASAP. Not sure if the Sage Grouse Initiative Strategic Communications Plan is the correct way to approach our communications needs. We need to evaluate our options and try to create a game plan by the end of the year. There is a need for direction and continuity. Need to increase idea/content sharing. Initiative how-to's.

Per John Morgan Internal Communications is anyone of the logos involved with the NBCI. Need to specifically target chiefs within agencies. Chiefs do not transition as fast as executive leaders.

Communication Plan history – the original was an external plan where we would be interested on internal plan. Maybe use Sage Grouse Initiative Plan as a guide. On external communications we need to capitalize on our partner brands and push out the same information collectively.

Maybe develop a targeted message for one year for all the partners to push to see if we can move the message.

### Proposed Projects:

- Executive Leadership – Chiefs vs Executive Leaders
- Develop Member List
- Find/review current communications plan
- Update bobwhite library

### Mission statement:

A partnership to restore and maintain wild bobwhite quail, associated species, and their native habitats through science-based research and management to support healthy wildlife, soil, air and water for the benefit of society.

### **Additional Meeting Notes:**

Priority – find and review existing strategic communications plan

1. Reviewed DJ Case example in KY – not an overwhelming success
2. Focus on internal communications plan, basic info, and needs assessment with each state/stakeholder info made available to all members
3. Assess possibility of communications director with Clemson before hiring or moving forward – funding and assistance will likely determine direction.
4. Resources through Ag Extension and FF programs should be reassessed and promoted more for use and information dissemination.
5. Updated NBCI mission statement on NBCI website – committee will help on website through virtual meetings as needed.
6. NBCI StoryMap has been created and will soon be added to the website.

### **Sub-Committee Structure Review Questions:**

1. What are 3 major needs to change how people use and view the land?
  - a. Communicate our expertise as biologists and as managers in a palatable way.
  - b. Need to stress the importance of an ecosystem-based approach to advocating for quail and ESH on the land.
  - c. Focusing on the private production landowners through programs like precision agriculture, grazing specialists, and foresters.
  
2. Do our current 5 subcommittees provide us the organizational structure to best address bobwhite and grassland conservation and our goal of changing how people use the view the land? For example, are there too few subcommittees, too many, or just about right? If you had to make a change to our subcommittees, then identify at least 1 change/enhancement.
  - a. Possible consider restructuring Ag Policy since its overarching – or have committees aligned with employees at some level. Communications Sub-Committee members in all the other sub-committees, then come together and form a cohesive communications plan from info and ideas collected. Use virtual meetings to supplement idea exchange.
  
3. NBCI supports bobwhite conservation efforts across 25 states. Can our broad-based committees adequately represent unique regional needs within our partnership (e.g., western rangelands vs. eastern pastureland)? If not, how can we better address regional variation? Identify at least 1 way to better address regional needs within our partnership.
  - a. Have staff dedicated committee members to direct conversations across regions of interest or need. Location of meeting often dictates conversation. Be sure to cover “underserved” regions through virtual meetings.
  
4. Is one annual meeting adequate to complete committee tasks and maintain momentum for subcommittee work? Should the NBTC strive to meet multiple times a year, in-person or virtually?
  - a. Multiple meetings for sub-committees – 1 in person, 3 virtual, with monthly email conversations and other collaboration to come naturally to work through goals and deliverables.





## **NBTC Science Subcommittee Meeting Agenda**

3-4 August 2021

### **Ad hoc translocation committee discussion - Ken Duren**

All meetings have been virtual, #1 priority was translocation review team, #2 logistics, #3 state laws and health screening regs, #4 translocation database

2nd call was to dive into review team...review process will only start if a donating state requests it, science coordinator will be in charge of leading the review process, translocation workshop at Tall Timbers in February 2022; Jay Howell discussion about how much of a population does a donor site need to have to be considered a safe site, all of the models are based on harvest modeling, Tom Bonott's work on BHNH, simulation analyses is the approach probably most realistic, but field project not out of the question, Applegate discussed if source populations need to be spread out and not all from 1 place

### **Southern Grassland Birds Collaborative – Jane Fitzgerald**

Good presentation on this project, where it fits in, and how the monitoring will work. Where the monitoring will occur, modeling

### **Spatial prioritization and opportunities for WLFW – James Martin**

Need to better identify areas where we can truly get work done, where it is feasible. Pixels based on cost, feasibility, etc. Not just cost, what can we legitimately afford? Not going to save huge landscapes of quail, Kyle Brazil's economic model?, this is a possible enhancement for BRI...a quantifiable method instead of a subjective one, but there will be some biologists experience and intuition; costs and biology are both included in the ranking, not just cost; good approach for identifying opportunity, need to start making achievable goals; how does this apply differentially to the states?, objectives and priorities should be set by the states; would be great to have an advisory group to help inform James and Mark; Bridget would like this tool for the entire WLFW footprint, introduced pasture going to be tougher

### **Ad hoc monitoring committee to complete the CIP – John Morgan**

Need to complete the coordinated implementation project (CIP), define a vision for working through those scales, monitoring at the landscape and regional scales, the science subcommittee should serve as and anchor for the effort, Jay Howell – when do you scale up from a focus area to a landscape scale?; what is necessary to scale up? What can we afford to give up?, determine what the wider scale at which we can scale up, critical to be able to capture what all the assorted partners are getting done, what are the elements you need to achieve success at the landscape scale and what kind of monitoring is needed to track success. 1 How do you prioritize where to work, 2 goals, 3 are you meeting goals, Science coordinator was an essential component of the CIP but need to roll on before the coordinator position comes on.

Going to move forward with a Science Coordinator, faculty member at Clemson is the vision. Good discussion relative to the intricacies of hiring a new Science Coordinator. Need to identify some people from the science subcommittee to serve on the search committee

### **Frank Loncarich, James Martin, Roger Applegate**

#### **Discussion of need for online quail journal to publish as necessary**

Needed several years to build up enough papers to have a symposium but the internet has allowed us to have the opportunity to publish papers as needed, conversations relative to this topic has happened with Tennessee TRACE with the Science Coordinator as the primary editor, does the group see any issue with the papers being published continuously, quail symposium is officially housed by NBTC sop steering committee will have to vote on it, recommendation is to present this to the SC, need to give some thought how the editorial board will be set up, etc. Note to reach out to the western quail folks (western quail working group); Frank and James will work on a recommendation to the steering committee to consider this.

#### **Discussion of a better way to get scientific literature in the hands of managers and biologists**

Online doesn't help unless managers know that the papers are known about, Listserv as a way for members to get the latest research, need for a separate listserv, charge NBCI to develop a listserv separate for getting managers the information they need, this is a critical need for our discipline...encourage more active use of the listerv, encourage NBCI top put together a periodic document with policy, research, activities, updates from committees etc.

### **A potential white paper discussing the issue of scale and landscapes in bobwhite conservation**

How do we communicate landscape complex? What is a quail landscape and how do we define landscape context? How do we communicate it with respect to NBCI? Landscape is a heterogeneous area regardless of size. Landscape context is important. What do we mean by managing at a landscape scale? Regional scale? Planner is at the practice level (small scale) which is important. What is our planning unit? How do we inject biologically meaningful scales into the organizational scales? James - Scale and biologically relevant management strategies for bobwhite. An outline of how to manage at spatial scales but including numbers for bobwhite. A standardized process or standardized language (terminology) quail specific (biologically based, not geographically), this could all be a part of the CIP update.

### **Relatedly to above...are we trying to solve the right problems in bobwhite conservation?**

Who are our stakeholders? Have we left the quail hunters behind? Access? Relevancy? Have we forgotten our roots? Must incorporate wild bird hunting back into the discussion. We need to be more aware of connecting people to wild bobwhite. We must be held accountable to hunters, investors, etc., what has been the return on investment? We need to be honest with what the response. NBCI needs to be held accountable for the money invested in it. We must measure some kind of response. Whatever the response we choose besides acres managed. We must make better connections with the quail hunting community. Need to do a better job of including human dimensions.





## **NBTC Business Meeting**

Bentonville, AR

August 4, 2021

### **Sub Committee Reports**

Ag Policy – Casey Bergtold

Communications – Andy Edwards

Forestry – Steve Chapman

Grasslands – Ryan Diener

Science – Frank Loncarich

**Lisa Potter** – Sounds like we had good discussions, did we have enough time in committee meetings? Too much time? No comments, Timing was good this year.

### **Business Meeting – Call to order/welcome**

Lisa Potter: Chairs Please have your committee notes to Michael Hook for compilation by August 20. The exec. Steering committee will compile and review at the winter steering committee. Will provide a proposal or more feedback after discussions.

### **Approval of 2020 Business Meeting Minutes**

Michael Hook provided minutes via email to group.

Mike Ikels made motion to accept 2020 Business meeting minutes. James Martin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Michael Hook: Treasurers report discussed account changes, balances and new QF cash management system.

In the old NBTC Account 4709 several items were paid from March to June. Items included Monthly fee for business fundamentals each month, reimbursement to Steve Chapman for tip to Bankhead National Forest, and reimbursement to John Morgan for trip meeting with Prairie Wildlife/ Jimmy Bryan. On May 25, 2021 \$2,857.00 was transferred into the account to cover business fundamentals fee. On June 21, 2021 the remaining \$4,984.4 was transferred to the new Bank of America NBTC account that is linked to the Quail Forever accounting system. The old NBTC 4709 account was closed on June 21, 2021.

The new NBTC Account 0868 was opened on August 8, 2020 with a deposit of \$26,620.00. This account was unused until May 25, 2021 when \$2,877.00 was transferred to the old NBTC account 4709 to pay for business fundamental fees. In June 2021 \$18,763.00 was transferred to Quail Forever's Wells Fargo account for use in their cash management system. On June 21, 2021 \$4,984.44 was transferred into the account from the old NBTC account 4709. On July 29, 2021 a deposit was made as a sponsorship for the State of the Bobwhite publication in the amount of \$1,500.00 from Roundstone Native Seed. This brings the account total to \$11,484.44 in the new NBTC account 0868.

### **Next year's meeting/Quail 9 updates**

Dave Hoover: August 1-5, 2022, Joint meeting of Quail 9/NBTC at University Plaza Hotel in Springfield MO. Have been planning for a year. They are using a conference planner, hotel contracts have been signed, agenda is completed. Currently working on budget and fees. Call for posters, papers and abstracts several months ago. They are going through review now. Should be done by December. Proceeding will be completely shortly after and distributed electronically only. The Plenary speakers have been set. Save the dates will be sent out soon. Starting to work on sponsorships, donations and local logistics.



## **State Coordinator's Report**

Cody Cedotal: Thanked everyone for coming this year. Thanked all the state coordinators for coming as well. 16 of 25 states were present with many other guests. Directors Update from Morgan detailing transition from UT to Clemson. Briefed us on business plan model and vote by management board. Discussion ensued concerning BRI. Wanted to determine if we wanted to update BRI since it was being utilized by so many and because it was so old. Nathan Stricker gave us a history of BRI. Consensus was that BRI needed to be updated due to current uses, technology gains in past 10 years and age/original intent of updating. This is especially true seeing that there may be funding available. Item was passed to science committee. Ken Duren gave update on Translocation Ad Hoc committee. Possibly have a translocation workshop hopefully sometime this winter. Discussion on bobwhite relevancy. State coordinators brought forward ideas from successful states. Relevancy from admins and staff and hunters and general public. One item – need to push relevancy from top down (Governors and directors). Need to market successes no matter how big or small. Let folks know you are doing something and show wins. Need to tailor messages to who you are talking with. Traditionally have been hunters but may be replaced by other users. Sell whole system restoration to administrators. Keep discussion going with partners within states.

## **Partners Meeting Report**

Ryan Diener: Partners meeting was held on Monday afternoon. Simply wanted to gather and share thoughts. Had three agenda items and got through two. Lots of good discussions. Discussed successful quail initiatives and even near misses. Some states were having some issues spending cost share dollars within their focal areas. Discussion ensued how to remedy these issues. Spent time discussing prescribed fire burn teams. Great deal for burn crews in many states. Discussed success of Arkansas fire team. Discussed precision agricultural successes in some states and that lead to carbon sequestration talk and sustainability talks. Need to grow communications between everyone working in the states. Opportunities for collaborative communications –as biologists we do a poor job of sharing our successes. Conversation turned to outreach and how we approach difference audiences. Looking to younger, more energetic partners for demographic concerns. Discussed ideas about connecting with audiences we haven't reached out to before.

Lisa Potter noted that the onboarding meeting was held again this year. Perez and Potter participated. Perez gave a history and how to get involved with the group. Going forward will continue meeting but will likely change name of meeting.

**Action Item: in the future all agendas will go out to all participants of the meeting prior to meeting.**

## **Ad Hoc Committee Reports**

### **Translocation Ad Hoc**

Ken Duren: At the winter steering committee last winter the ad hoc committee was created. There have been two meetings prior to meeting here. Two topics have been explored. Translocation review team. What are the different regs and disease requirements are required for each state? What resources are available from other prior states efforts. Translocation review team will be available for states who don't have protocols in place they can utilize review team to facilitate translocations. Completely voluntary. Simply request assistance from review team through the science coordinator or John Morgan right now in absence of science coordinator. After review, a report will be provided. No yes or no just details of positives and negatives of process. Information will be distributed as they are established.

### **Working Lands for Wildlife**

Jess McGuire: The ad hoc committee met Monday night to make sure we had our messaging ready for the different subcommittees. We are engaged with 24 states currently. In the ag policy group Bridget Costanzo presented an overview, the needs assessment, and best practices within WLFW. She then spoke on the landscape partnership portal. If you need help with portal let Jess know. It's a place to curate meetings, documents and share information. You will be able to access the presentations in the portal next week. Risk management and carbon sequestration was discussed. Monitoring is going to be an integral part of the farm bill going forward so you will be seeing more. Please stay engage going forward, get involved, and there is a space on the ad hoc committee with Mark Gudlin's retirement.

Breck Carmichael asked if there was additional funding for positions within the state? Jess responded that yes, they were currently working on that now nationally.

Lisa Potter has never seen participation from NRCS at the national level before. It is a huge opportunity and to see the interaction between this group and the national office is unbelievable and very exciting.

## **Election Reports**

Robert Perez: This year is a light year with only two nominations NEAWA and SEAFWA representatives. Ken Duren has been filling in for Tom Keller after his move and ran unopposed. Duren was elected representative. As for the SEAFWA representative position, Perez thanked Cody Cedotal for his service over the last year and then noted that Dallas Ingram was elected to seat.

## **New Business**

### **Bylaw Changes**



Lisa Potter: We have three items to discuss. We will discuss in room and then vote to accept if warranted.

Item 1. Proposed change is to change name from National Bobwhite Technical Committee to National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative Technical Committee. Background was provided on confusion on differences between NBCI and NBTC. The steering committee discussed this issue wanted to maintain the NBCI identity but remain a technical committee.

Discussion: Roger Applegate – Will change be addressed throughout the document. Yes. Robert Perez said he supported the idea. Question from the floor – what are the downsides? If the NBCI was a product of the NBTC is there concern that something may come from the technical committee that doesn't tie with the conservation initiative? Is there a danger in tying ourselves to the conservation initiative? Is there value to function separately. Andy Edwards echoed that concerned especially seeing that QF is housing the checking account and it would be tougher for them to help out in the same manner if there was no separation between the NBCI and NBTC especially if the NBCI becomes a 501.c3. John Morgan noted that Clemson is strongly encouraging and expected that we become a 501.c3 in order to mitigate risk to themselves. They'd like to us have an organizational backbone for support. Morgan noted that even as an unintended consequence we may have to move the money from QF. The confusion causes lost support with our executive directors because of churn. The 501.c3 would create a management board and would likely include the exec steering committee. Morgan noted that we may already have 501.c3 status through QF and this is something we need to discuss in depth. Edwards suggested that we discuss further. Comment from the floor seconded that idea and don't want to rush. Applegate stated that we should document the genesis and history because people need to know the evolution. Jay Howell stated the business model may have an effect as well especially if the state doesn't pay in can the state pay in? Morgan said that under the current proposal that yes currently but that needs to be discussed further. Cody Cedotal asked if 501.c3 is obtained are there rules that keep state partners and employees from voting and participating in policy making groups that they are providing guidance to? Morgan noted AFWA SEAFWA was 501.c3 and operated similarly.

Tal Hedrich made the motion to table the proposed item of changing the name of the Technical Committee. Bubba Groves seconded the motion to table the issue of changing the name. Motion passed unanimously.

Andy Edwards volunteered to help explore options and answers to questions.

Item 2. Proposed change: Changed UT representative to Clemson representative on the Management Board.

Jay Howell suggested that instead of Clemson we make it say the representative university. Potter asked if it was worth having Clemson in there for visual purposes.

Jay Howell made a motion to change language to "By an appointed representative from where NBCI is housed".

Roger Applegate seconded the motion.

Breck asked if the science coordinator could be the representative. Morgan said he'd like to keep it independent and likely have dean or department head as the science coordinator may be a conflict of interest on the steering committee.

Motion passes unanimously.

Item 3. Proposed change: The addition of two new awards – The NBCI Hall of Fame Award and the Distinguished Service Award.

No discussion.

Tal Hedrich made the motion to adopt the two new awards as proposed.

Mark Gudlin seconded the motion.

Motion passes unanimously.

### **Other New Business**

Lisa Potter noted that in the steering committee meeting and the winter steering committee meeting we discussed the annual dues. For the entire history of this group our annual dues have been \$15. We felt it was time to increase the fee to \$30 for members and \$15 for students. Jay Howell asked what the fees goes to. Potter stated simply that it went into the NBTC account and covers incidental travel for members, incidental expenditures etc. Morgan noted that we have used the funds to cover socials at AFWA etc. In the past and it may be useful going forward. Tal Hedrich asked Marcus Asher if an additional \$15 would help with the meeting? Marcus said that no but generally those funds didn't go to current meeting.

Andy Edwards made motion to accept motion as proposed.

Jay Howell seconded the motion

Motion passed unanimously.

**No additional items were discussed, and the meeting adjourned at 1:20 PM.**





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