

## **SWAP Planning Meeting - Notes**

**28 May 2013**

Efroymsen Conservation Center (The Nature Conservancy Indianapolis office)

11 am to 2:30 pm

### **Attendees:**

Joe Robb – US Fish and Wildlife Service, Big Oaks

Jeff Kiefer – US Fish and Wildlife Service

Cliff Chapman – Indiana Land Protection Alliance

John Bacone – IDNR, Nature Preserves

Gary Dinkel – US Forest Service

Chris Gonso – IDNR, Forestry

Raoul Moore – Sycamore Trails RC&D/Indiana Forest and Woodlands Owners Association

Mike Mycroft – IDNR, State Parks

Kevin Crane – IDEM

Daniel Arndt – Duke Energy

Kent Yeager – Indiana Farm Bureau

Greg Beilfuss – IDNR, Outdoor Recreation

Mike Sertle – Ducks Unlimited

Laura Hilden – INDOT

Caty Wilson – IDNR, State Parks (intern)

### **Core Team from IDNR, Fish and Wildlife:**

Amanda Wuestefeld

Julie Kempf

Sandy Clark-Kolaks

Adam Phelps

Nate Levitte

Sam Whiteleather

Shannon Winks

Kent Hanauer

Brant Fisher

**Observers: Jack McGriffin, Scott Munoz, Scott Davis, Kevin Hoffman**

### **Agenda**

**11:00 a.m.** –

Introductions

Recap process and where we are

What questions do you still have?

Round-table discussion

How does your organization define success?

What are the measureable outputs and the outcomes?

Outputs are products like acres protected, landowners contacted, projects funded, etc

Outcomes consist of the differences made like increasing biodiversity, decreasing species listed as rare status, etc.

How do you measure these things?  
Relevance – why do you measure these things?

**12:30 p.m.** -- Lunch – pizza will be delivered on-site.

**1:15 p.m.** -- Continue round-table discussions.

Identify connections: Given the information shared in the morning:

How does the data apply to others?

How can we use this collective information going forward?

Gap identification - what information is missing to measure success?

**2:30 p.m.** – Wrap-up discussions. End.

## **Intro & Background**

Indiana's State Wildlife Action Plan is more than a plan or a document. It is collaborate effort among the conservation community to create a shared vision and goals, to maximize partnerships so that random acts of conservation can be avoided. This is everyone's plan.

### Federal Support for State Wildlife Action Plan

- "Conserve wildlife and vital areas before they become more rare and costly to restore."
- SWAPs support and required for Federal State Wildlife Grants funding
- "3<sup>rd</sup> leg" of conservation to support species not support through game and sport fish funds

### 8 Required Elements

1. ID species distribution, abundance, and species of greatest conservation need (SGCN)
2. ID habitats – locations and conditions essential for SGCN
3. Threats to species and habitats
4. Actions to address threats
5. Monitoring needed, including effectiveness of actions
6. Review plan every 10 years minimum
7. Coordination with partners
8. Public participation

### Indiana's Vision:

Indiana's State Wildlife Action Plan will be a national leader in guiding a diverse conservation community towards the shared goal of enhancing and conserving fish and wildlife resources.

### Indiana's Mission:

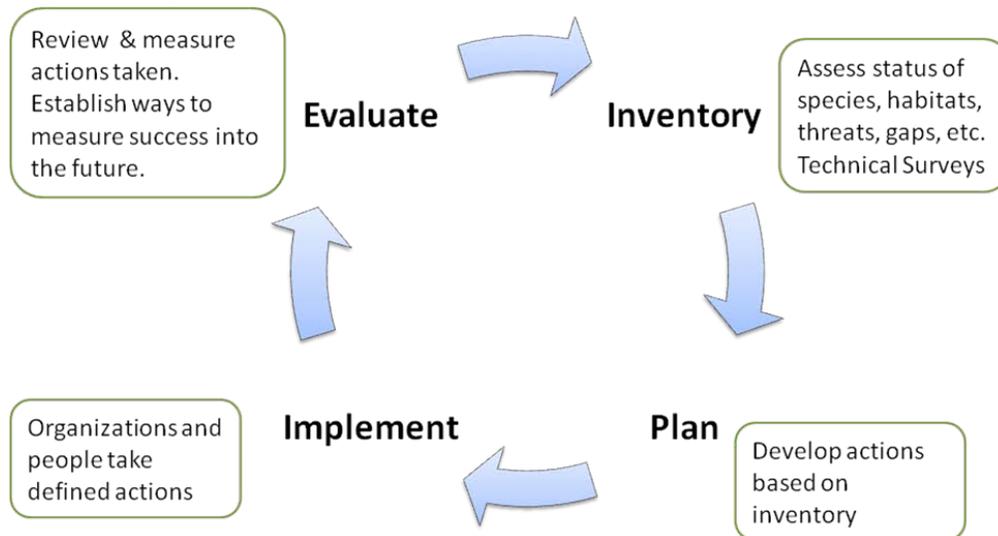
The purpose of Indiana's State Wildlife Action Plan is to manage, conserve, and enhance habitat and population stability for diverse fish and wildlife resources. By 2025, the SWAP will be fully integrated throughout Indiana's conservation community. The SWAP will serve to bridge the efforts of dedicated natural resource professionals and stewards, which will ultimately enrich the quality of life for all Hoosiers.

### Timeline:

- Mid-2013: Formal kick off with early opportunities for input from partners.
- 2014: Technical survey to partners about species, habitats, threats. Actions to be developed and prioritized.
- 2015: Finalize SWAP. Begin implementation. Submit for federal approval.

### Stages of SWAP Planning:

We are in the Evaluation phase. We are reviewing our success since the 2005 plan, in addition to determining how we will measure actions and success in the 2015 plan. This begins with developing goals and objectives.



#### Four Themes:

In early conversations with Fish and Wildlife staff, along with partners, four big themes emerged when presented with the question “We know Indiana has been successful at conserving & managing natural resources when...” Those themes are:

- Ecosystem – habitats, species, water quality, etc
- Conservation Community – partnerships
- Funding – support
- Citizens – public opinion & interest

### **Round Table Discussion**

Each organization talked about how they defined success, what is measured (outputs and/or outcomes), how they were measured, and the relevance of the measurement.

Farm Bureau—is this a wildlife plan? Yes, through habitat.

**Indiana DFW Core Team** Presented a concise version of values and targets from most recent DFW strategic plan

### **Cliff Chapman, IN Land Protection Alliance (ILPA):**

Old paradigm of reporting acres and bucks

New paradigm away from \$\$ and acres, focus on goal of stability of wildlife and delisting of listed spp

### **Kiefer, Partners For Wildlife Program:**

Broad trust Target mig birds and listed spp, a little different between program areas

Partners focuses on private lands conservation of TE/mig birds; target impact geographically

“Strategic Habitat Conservation”—does \$\$/actually translate to a benefit to F&W spp? Trying to answer these more difficult questions. Have to start from a population level—assessment and goal-setting.

### **Michael Sertle, DU:**

Different divisions, conservation—acres, leveraged funds, fed \$\$ brought in

Set priority areas in the state, spend \$\$ there

Other wetland spp come along with ducks

Monitoring and Research needed to follow-up post project completion to see if it actually works

No time or \$\$ for monitoring—would like to see monitoring a priority in the SWAP

Kiefer—use HAPET models to evaluate habitat components and predict response

Gonso— isn’t the SWAP supposed to set these priorities?

Kiefer: Copper Belly watersnake is a good example of partnering with universities to further conservation, populate models, etc. USGS/research arm could provide habitat spp modeling (they are doing this in the Prairie Pothole region)

ILPA: min standard for Eastern Box turtle conservation is 750 ac, as an indicator for forest interior spp.

We know about habitat, but not spp requirements for a lot of wildlife

### **John Bacone, Indiana Division of Nature Preserves:**

Partners to protect various habitats (rare communities like Bogs/Fens/Prairies) -- track acres and sites protected

Manage Habitat via succession control

Maintain Natural Heritage Database –Info is available to share and use

### **Chris Gonso, Indiana Division of Forestry—private and managed lands**

Metrics on 700k private acres—stewardship plans, different mgmt regimes

Managed lands—multiple benefit areas—timber inventory, harvest, recreation, trails managed/maintained

Sustainable certification

Private and public lands rolled into timber inventory program

HEE 100yr experiment

Nursery—tracks seedlings sold

**Dan Arndt, Duke:**

1<sup>st</sup> measurable is profit

Env. Dept—goal is to provide customer service to plants—help meet permitting reqs and minimize env impacts.

Mission is to provide clean, reliable, affordable energy

Community outreach—wetlands days, Eagle days

**Raoul Moore, IFWOA:**

Get citizens/volunteers to help with monitoring work. Citizen involvement should be #1 priority

**Joe Robb, Big Oaks NWR:**

Are our measures correct? Look at moist soil seed production instead of duck use days

Is it worth treating invasives?

Can we use BMPs instead of Adaptive mgmt in some cases?

Surrogate spp—which spp we monitor to best indicate habitat quality

**Mike Mycroft, Indiana State Parks and Reservoirs:**

Similar to other divisions—qualitative issues in data/work

Ecological rankings developed to prioritize where funding goes

Uses Heritage DB and preferred habitats of those spp

**After Lunch!**

How do measures of success apply to others, and where are the gaps

Ecosystems/Funding/Citizens are the three pieces of the SWAP that we measure

**Sertle**—Joint Venture/ Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCC) plans are a good place to start for strategic prioritization

Overlay priorities and data for a starting point

**Kent Yeager, Indiana Farm Bureau:**

Need targeting/priorities for communication and to reduce pushback

**Sandy Kolaks-Clark, DFW Core Team,** Online tool – x acres of wetland = x and # spp enhanced – similar to water quality tools (environmental calculator tool)

DU has a tool that will tell you # of mallards...

**Gonso**—parcel-level forestry data available

**Mycroft** –some spp may be listed because we are on the edge of their ranges, not necessarily a habitat problem in the state

\*Need to compile lists of priorities and plans that in any way occur in the state so we can begin to overlay these priorities

How can we share info better? What process is missing?

Identify a clearinghouse for data/models

**Scott Munoz, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, MIS:** Can set up a web portal that pulls from other servers rather than dump all the data in one place. Each org. stores data in a compatible form. Data is always as up to date as possible in this way.

Collaborative Management Platform—great, but we need people to actually use it.

LCCs, JVs, PIF, Shorebirds, Waterbirds, NAWMP, herps, grouse, ng mammals, AMWO, fed t/e, AFS, TWS

**Ideas/needs to consider:**

-cross training with partners

-collaboration

-participants have to participate for any of this to work

Economics – How does this play into account? (how do we or will we take this into account when setting priorities). Example: Acres cost varies depending on location – certain areas may be easier to take action. One response was that the action may change based on these factors. For instance, instead of acquiring land, the action may be putting a conservation easement on it.

- We will try to account for this when we conduct the survey

\*Thought: No one is mentioning climate change and potential range changes for some spp?

**Assignment due to Amanda or Julie by June 21**

The group decided one way to get begin identifying the connections and gaps in the conservation community is to share geographical priority areas, interest areas, or schedule of work as it relates to locations within the state. Overlaying this information will begin to show areas in the state of high interest and where there is less interest (and thus potential gaps).

The Action item:

By Friday, June 21, send Amanda and/or Julie either a map (or maps) or a list of geographical locations of interest to your organization. The interested areas may range from priority areas to a schedule of work areas in the upcoming years. Maps are preferred, and GIS shapefiles are even better.

DFW's Core Team will synthesize this information and share it back with the group (maybe as soon as the next meeting).