



A Fish Habitat Partnership

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 26th, 2012

Call-in Conference Call

1:00-2:00 PM

Stated purpose of this meeting: Review of MGLP scoring committee results for project proposal evaluation, other business

Action items in red

Meeting convened at 1:00 pm. Steering Committee (SC) Members Present: Gary Whelan (MIDNR), Bill James (Indiana DNR) Katie Haws (Coordinator), John Lott (SDGF&P), Maureen Gallagher (for Todd Turner USFWS), Todd Tisler (USFS), Mike Duval (for Dirk Peterson MN DNR), Kate Zurlo-Kuva (Gatering Waters Conservancy),

New Vice-chair John Lott convened the meeting.

Katie Haws briefly updated the SC on items of interest such as Outreach Products, and the science/data team meeting of 9/19 held to develop the Assessment Project Proposal. In addition she announced the results of the SC voting; Dirk Peterson (MN) is the new Chair of the SC, and John Lott is the Vice-chair.

The main topic of conversation was the five submitted habitat project proposals, and the one assessment proposal being prepared by Katie. Following are the titles of the proposals/applicant being considered for 2013 funding, as well as the ranking assigned by the SC after discussion.

Proposals in order of priority of the steering committee as decided at this meeting	
1. MGLP Healthy Shorelines Initiative in the Upper Tippecanoe River Watershed, IN	Tippecanoe Watershed Foundation/Lyn Crighton
2. Protecting the Unique Sinkhole Lakes in the Pigeon River	Huron Pines/Sam

Country State Forest, MI through the Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership	Prentice
3. A Phase II Assessment for MGLP; Using Science to Evaluate Lake Health and Fish Potential in a Subset of Lakes in Eight Midwest States.	MN DNR
Not recommended for funding / Insufficient funding	
MGLP Re-establishment of Littoral Zone Woody Habitat for Fish and Wildlife on White Lake, MI	Muskegon Conservation District/Jeff Auch
MGLP Scientific and Educational Invasive Species Control Assessment on Paradise Lake, Emmet County, MI	Paradise Lake Improvement Bo./Catherine Freebairn
MGLP GIS Delineations of Fish Habitats Near Boating Access Sites: Crystal Lake, Benzie Co., MI	Crystal Lake and Watershed Association/Joel Buzzell

The Steering Committee members who participated in this conference call discussed the merits of all the proposals at length, including some background information more readily known by people within the respective agencies of the applicant's projects. It was pointed out that having the working relationship and support from local FWS or state Fisheries office is essential to a successful project. In addition, participants agreed that having some sense of the overall project proposal quality would be important in deciding on whether to fund a project (i.e. does a project score an A, B, C). After this discussion, the SC agreed to accept the recommendations of the Project Proposal Scoring Committee, which consisted this year of Katie Haws, Jo Latimore (Michigan State Extension), John Haack (Univ. WI Extension) and Molly Zins (Univ. MN Extension).

M. Gallagher explained that the MGLP FHP would be slated for \$63,000 in federal funds this year. However a Continuance Resolution has been passed, and federal agencies may be asked for an 8% sequestration; which could possibly result in our amount available being reduced to \$57,000.

M. Duval gave a thumbnail sketch of the Assessment Proposal (this proposal was not ranked by the Project Proposal Scoring Committee since it was created at the behest of the SC). The top two priorities/questions were identified as: 1) Can we improve the model outputs? and 2) we have a lot of data but don't have the same data across all of the states? Can modeling compensate for that? The main focus of the Assessment Proposal is to provide travel expenses for a group of fisheries scientists from five states to travel to Ann Arbor, Michigan for two meetings, two days in length in order to conduct an improved model run. Included in the proposal is also salary support for some GIS time for personnel to join additional new data to the existing database for the revised model run.

There was discussion of the five models produced by Downstream Strategies for this FHP, and the relative usefulness of each. Of the five models, the Coldwater and nutrients models were the most useful; for the species specific models, the CPUE is not a good modeling endpoint, and translating into a binary variable would be better for northern pike, sunfish and walleye models.

Whelan moved to fund both the Tippecanoe and Huron Pines projects as well as fund the Assessment P-2 proposal.* There was discussion of this suggestion, with the SC agreeing to prioritize the projects as Tippecanoe #1 Huron Pines #2 and Assessment P-2 #3.

Katie to work with the applicants to scale down project proposals to fit with our \$63,000 in available project funds. Project Proposals due to Maureen G. on Tuesday 10/2.

Participants suggested a possible next meeting time at the "Midwest" upcoming meeting in Kansas in December.

Meeting Adjourned at 2:00 pm.

*Although not discussed at the meeting, SC member Mike Staggs had previously submitted his input via email which was in general agreement with the priority ranking of the habitat proposals decided on in today's meeting.