

FWS/R3/MBSP

November 27, 2006

Memorandum

To: FW3 RO RDT– Actings  
FW3 ALL FO Project Leaders  
FW3 ALL RO Office Heads  
FW3 RO FS ALL

From: Regional Director /s/Robyn Thorson

Subject: Working with States on their Wildlife Action Plans

On May 16, 2006, we sent a memorandum asking you to look for opportunities to partner with States on mutual priorities in State Wildlife Action Plans and to report accomplishments relating to the plans through the Accomplishment Reporting System (ARS). We expect that by now you have had the opportunity to review your State's plan and to begin developing and working on ideas for collaborative projects.

The completion of these plans gives us a tremendous opportunity to increase our collaboration with State partners and to leverage additional funding and efforts toward common objectives. The States in our Region currently have funding to address plan priorities on an annual basis, and there is continued efforts by the States and the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies to increase these appropriations.

We see numerous benefits to increased participation with the States on their wildlife action plans. We can work together with States to identify mutual priorities and take coordinated action to restore and protect priority habitats, keep common species common, recover imperiled species, and to avoid the need for future species listing actions. And as a result of our mutual efforts, we will distribute limited resources more effectively across the landscape to conserve a greater amount of high priority fish and wildlife resources of mutual concern.

Here are the Regional Directorate Team's (RDT) expectations for the field:

1. Become very familiar with the State wildlife action plans.
2. Work together as a Service team within a State to coordinate your efforts.

3. Look for new opportunities to coordinate our Service priorities with State priorities and increase collaboration with the States to leverage additional resources towards common goals.
4. Participate at a level consistent with the benefits to be gained.
5. Report your progress and accomplishments through the ARS.

How you address these expectations is up to you as a team. Each State is different and so are their plans and resource issues, and this will affect what approach will be most effective. To avoid duplication and increase efficiency, we recommend that all project leaders within a State discuss the best approach to increase collaboration.

The following project leaders are assigned the lead to initiate these discussions. These project leaders should hold initial discussions with the primary State contacts responsible for the State Wildlife Action Plan to see what approach the States would prefer in terms of increased Service participation. In some cases, States will be delegating implementation to their field offices. In other cases, States may be developing implementation strategies out of their central office and may prefer coordinated Service involvement.

The lead project leader assignment is ad hoc and for the short-term. Once the initial contacts and discussions have been made, the project leaders in a State will decide how to proceed. Options may range from a more formal cross-program team of all project leaders meeting with State counterparts to identify mutual priorities and projects to a more decentralized approach, with individual project leaders working with their local State counterparts to implement plan strategies of mutual benefit.

One immediate requirement is for the project leaders within a State to develop a description of how they will work with their State and to submit this in the form of an ARS report on the implementation of the State Wildlife Action Plan. This will be due by January 18, 2006.

Initial Project Leader coordination assignments are:

Wisconsin – Louise Clemency (ES)  
Michigan – Jerry McClain (Fisheries)  
Missouri – Kelly Srigley Werner (PFW)  
Ohio – Kurt Waterstradt (PFW)  
Minnesota – Scott Glup/Jim Leach (RF)  
Indiana – Bill McCoy (RF)  
Iowa – Jim Munson (PFW)  
Illinois – John Rogner (ES)

We have also developed a Regional Office Wildlife Action Plan Support Team that will recommend guidance to the RDT and provide support and assistance to program field

stations. Project leaders should feel free to contact any of the team members for assistance or advice. The team members include:

John Christian and Teresa Woods - Co-Chairs

Louise Clemency – ES

Mark Holey – Fisheries

Kelly Hogan – Refuges

Tom Larson – Refuge Planning

Mike Sweet – Federal Assistance

Tom Will – Migratory Birds

The team is developing a website that will contain a number of “tools” for your use. The website will include: a list of key State contacts, full versions and summaries of State plans, Regional priorities such as the Regional Conservation Priority List and program priorities, the NEAT report on strategic habitat conservation, a link to a site that contains information about State Wildlife Grants, and other policies and directives regarding this important Service priority.

In closing, we want to remind you to report your progress using the ARS. By entering your reports in ARS, the information can be used by offices Regionwide and Nationwide to help track progress, report successes, and share information and approaches across all Service programs. The attached guide provides step-by-step directions on how to enter these reports using an easy and standard protocol. If you have additional questions or need further assistance using the ARS, please contact Chuck Traxler in the Region 3 External Affairs Office at 612-713-5313.

This effort is one of our Director’s 6 priorities for the Service in FY 2007. The RDT shares his enthusiasm for this effort, and we ask all of you to continue to coordinate with our State partners to achieve our common goals. We do recognize and are proud of the strong tradition in Region 3 of working in partnership with our States, and we appreciate your continuing efforts in taking this relationship to even greater levels to benefit our trust resource responsibilities.

Thank you for all your efforts to build bridges to a conservation future we can all be proud of.

Attachment

cc: Louise Clemency (ES)  
Jerry McClain (Fisheries)  
Kelly Srigley Werner (PFW)  
Kurt Waterstradt (PFW)  
Scott Glup/Jim Leach (RF)  
Bill McCoy (RF)  
Jim Munson (PFW)  
John Rogner (ES)  
John Christian (MBSP)  
Teresa Woods (RD Sp Ass't)  
Mark Holey (Fisheries)  
Kelly Hogan (Refuges)  
Tom Larson (Refuge Planning)  
Mike Sweet (Federal Assistance)  
Tom Will (Migratory Birds)