

## **North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative Science Needs Priorities, Criteria and Process**

### **Process and Timeline for Decisions on FY 2011 LCC Science Funds**

#### ***March 21***

Technical Committee Criteria Group agrees on and provides guidance to full committee and systems groups on priorities, criteria and process

#### ***March 21-March 31***

Systems groups (coastal, terrestrial, aquatic, information management) review submitted science needs (in tables) for their system and

- 1) identify common needs among the needs and projects submitted
- 2) identify missing critical needs for that system
- 3) review the LCC priorities and criteria (see below) and develop additional criteria specific to that system if needed
- 4) review and group needs based on the LCC and additional systems criteria into high, medium and low groups and forward the high ranking needs to the full technical committee and coordinator
  - the forwarded needs could be individual needs submitted, common needs based on multiple submitted needs or missing needs identified by the group
  - high ranking needs should not exceed 10 needs or 10% of the total submitted needs, whichever is smaller

#### ***April 1 - April 11***

Members of Technical Committee individually review and rank the full set of forwarded needs from all systems groups and submit ranks to coordinator (additional guidance on ranking process being developed)

#### ***April 11 or 12***

Technical Committee call to review results of ranking and reach consensus on ranked list to present to Steering Committee

#### ***April 13***

Ranked list and justification sent to Steering Committee

#### ***April 20***

Technical Committee presents initial recommendations to Steering Committee. Steering Committee approves recommendations or decides on alternatives

Handout 10a

***April 21 - May 13***

Based on Steering Committee decision, Technical Committee and staff identify partnerships and/or organizations that could best address these needs and requests full proposals (proposal format to be developed)

***May 16 - May 27***

Technical Committee and staff review proposals to make sure they meet criteria for sound projects

***May 30 - June 17***

Staff works with FWS Budget and Contracting to develop agreements for approved projects

## **LCC Priorities/Criteria**

### **Justification**

*Criteria Group developed these criteria based on the mission and components of the North Atlantic LCC (see next page). They recognized that the LCC community will need to develop more specific priorities in the future but that for this year focusing on foundational needs that have been recognized by partners and partnerships made the most sense. They also recognized that Systems Groups may need to identify additional criteria that are specific to that system.*

### **Criteria**

- 1) Foundational needs for organizing landscape conservation:
  - building blocks for future science and tools (e.g., consistent classification, mapping)
  - organizational frameworks for science and tools to guide conservation decision making based on current and future conditions (e.g., modeling frameworks that link predictions of future conditions to conservation decisions)
  - information management tools to ensure that information is organized in a way that it is available in scales and formats needed to guide conservation decisions
- 2) Needs that address major threats and uncertainties to sustaining natural or cultural resources in the North Atlantic LCC:
  - human impacts include land use change (e.g. urban growth, roads, sprawl, transmission corridors), changes in hydrology, invasive species, contaminants
  - climate impacts include sea level rise, impacts from changing temperature and precipitation including changing hydrology (floods, droughts, change in timing or duration), shifts/changes/loss of natural communities, changing phenology
  - energy impacts including hydropower and wind development, biomass, transmission corridors
  - co-occurrence of these impacts
- 3) Needs that are landscape or regional in scale or pilot/demonstration projects of approaches that can be applied at landscape and regional scales
- 4) Needs that address threats and uncertainties to multiple species or can be applied to multiple species
- 5) Needs that will inform conservation decisions and actions by agencies, organizations and partnerships working in the North Atlantic LCC
- 6) Needs that are priorities for existing partnerships in the North Atlantic LCC
- 7) Needs that leverage and integrate existing efforts including ongoing LCC and RCN projects

## **Mission and Components of North Atlantic LCC**

**Mission Statement (with emphasis added):** The North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative provides a partnership in which the private, state, tribal and federal conservation community works together to **address increasing land use pressures and widespread resource threats and uncertainties amplified by a rapidly changing climate**. The partners and partnerships in the cooperative address these regional threats and uncertainties by **agreeing on common goals** for land, water, fish, wildlife, plant and cultural resources and jointly **developing the science and tools needed to prioritize and guide more effective conservation actions** by partners toward those goals.

### **Specific LCC science components include the following:**

Ecological Planning: Compile, organize and provide information from existing partners and partnerships on status, trends, threats and limiting factors for priority fish, wildlife and plant species and cultural resources; agree on objectives for these species and resources; and assess their relationship to limiting factors, habitats and landscapes to provide a scientific basis for conservation actions.

Conservation Design: Provide tools and information to guide decision makers and inform conservation actions to more effectively address threats, limiting factors and uncertainties and efficiently achieve objectives under current and predicted future conditions and link site-scale actions to landscape and regional scale goals.

Demonstration Projects : Support implementation actions designed to test, validate and improve information, science, and tools developed by the LCC to enhance the ability of our lands and waters to sustain fish, wildlife, plant and cultural resources.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Facilitate monitoring of populations, resources, habitats and landscapes designed to assess the effectiveness of conservation, assess progress towards common goals and guide future planning and actions based on the results.

Research: Facilitate and support priority research activities based on needs identified by partners that test key assumptions in planning and design and inform future planning; provide guidance to Climate Science Centers; and work with partners to coordinate ongoing research initiatives on priority conservation issues.

Information Management: Compile, organize and make available existing information, data, science and tools developed by LCC partners in scales and formats identified by partners.

**From Request for Science Needs:** Needs and projects that are landscape or regional in scope, are focused on informing management decisions and actions (including habitat protection, restoration and management, policies and regulations, and targeted outreach) and address major threats and uncertainties to sustaining natural or cultural resources.