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To: [FWS Directorate & Deputies](#)
Subject: Directorate Meeting Notes
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Hello!

Attached are the Directorate Meeting Notes. Please let me know if you have any comments or questions. I am working with Steve and Rowan to firm up the dates of the spring Directorate meeting and hope to get this information out by the end of the week.

Thanks,
Anna

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November 2014 Directorate Meeting Notes

Future Directorate Meetings

- August 2015 Directorate Meeting will be in Alaska at the Alyeska Hotel in Girdwood on August 3-5, 2015.
 - Directorate members will need to arrive in Anchorage by Sunday August 2, 2015 and plan on departing via vans to Girdwood on the morning of Monday August 3, 2015, and returning to Anchorage on Thursday, August 6, 2015.
- Spring 2015 Meeting Schedule
 - Proposed AD Retreat in late January/early February in Philadelphia.
 - Proposal to schedule the Spring Directorate Meeting in Arlington for the week of March 23, 2015 **[UPDATE: a number of Directorate members have identified this week as being problematic. Alternate date forthcoming]**
 - Proposal to schedule an RD retreat in CO or WY during the week of April 20, 2015 **[UPDATE: This week will not work for 2 RDs, proposal to move this to the week of April 27, 2015. More information forthcoming.]**

Sandy Restoration - <http://www.fws.gov/hurricane/sandy/storymap/>

- The storymap can talk to all of our databases and pull data from them. There are also national databases we can pull from and we can also incorporate other DOI bureaus and their portals.
- It has the ability to tell our story internally and externally. Both of the internal and external mappers could sit on our home website.
- Now looking at broader use; it's not that expensive to expand. Working on a January timeframe for briefing the Programs to see if this is something they would want to support/fund for broader use throughout the Service.

SHC and Surrogate Species

- We will be recasting the surrogate species technical guidance as a technical reference document.
- Core Team has revised and simplified an approach to ROI
 - ROI proposal isn't ready to bring this back to the Directorate
 - Draft ROI tool is being shared with Version 1.0 teams for piloting and feedback
- There are certain species that we're required by law to address but may not be good surrogate species. We have legal responsibilities related to some individual species. But we will still be using and SHC approach for those species.
- Each Region described their progress in implementing the surrogate species concept.

FWS Strategic Budget Planning

- This framework is meant to help us determine/frame our priorities and then we can figure out how to best package for our Congressional budget submission.
- This framework can also help us to better communicate priorities to our people.

- **FIRST ASK:** Input on the framework as presented. Are these the right goals and strategies?
 - There was agreement that these were the right goals and strategies, however there was discussion regarding whether “environmental review” sufficiently covers our statutory responsibilities in the strategies for priority landscapes and species.
- **SECOND ASK:** Allow the Deputies to move forward with the development of this framework with RD input and then put together a business strategy based on this framework that will include a budget prioritization tool to be used for the 2017 budget.

ACTION ITEMS:

- **There was agreement to allow the Deputies group to move forward and further develop this framework and budget prioritization tool.**
- **The Deputies will work with Directorate Members to ensure that our regulatory/statutory responsibilities are adequately covered under the strategies for priority landscapes and species.**
- **Updates will be provided during the Jan and Feb VTC.**
- **Deb Rocque will get the information in the prezi out for comments. Comments should be submitted to Deb Rocque and Chris Nolin by Dec. 12, 2014.**

SAGE GROUSE CONSERVATION

- The Directorate discussed how to continue funding this effort now and into the future if Congressional budget requests are not fully met.
- Last year we used one-time money but recognized that this was a long-term commitment.
- If we don't get a budget or we don't get the money we asked for, we'll have to figure this out. Do we use one-year money again or do we do something more long-term?
- We already agreed to support this into perpetuity. So it's not whether we are going to do this, it's how we're going to it.
- Due to a lost a month due to the shutdown, a request was made to let the Regions use their carryover as opposed to automatically redirecting to this effort.

Proposal for Funding NCTC Deferred Maintenance

- **Modified Decision Statement:** Provide \$3 million funding for the NCTC maintenance funding shortfall, spreading costs equitably by Enterprise Cost share charges using available funds. Meanwhile, the FWS will request +\$3 million in the FY17 budget that is currently under development.

DECISION: Approved

Proposal to Create the Elizabeth Harper Stevens Congressional Fellows Program

- External Affairs has offered to cover the costs for the first year.
- Suggest editing bullet 4 under “Program Details” to include the Deputy Director for Operations in the quarterly meetings with the CLA chief.

- Do not need to edit the narrative, but we should think a little bit about what happens to these employees when they rotate off this Congressional fellowship

DECISION: Approved.

Workplace Greatness 2.0

- One of the biggest deltas from previous years was focused on senior leadership. Clearly there are issues related to sequester and other factors out of our control, but it's more than that.
- The senior leader question is a continued issue. Others have noted that this needs to be better defined because people define senior leadership different ways. For our purposes we should all assume that we are part of this group
- As we make decisions, we need to express our intentions and then make sure that the folks in the field hear our intentions and not rely on translation of our communications.
- Using Project Leaders and next level supervisors to lead and communicate regional priorities can increase buy-in at the field level.
- There are a lot of metrics in here, what would need to happen to crack the top 10?
 - Top 10 agencies have a general overall satisfaction in the mid 70s. We're in the mid-60s so we would need to improve by about 10%. Note that some of the top agencies are those agencies that are very insular (labs or don't have to deal with the public a lot).
- We need to consider what we can do to improve communication. Staff might not agree with decisions but how we communicate them can influence how they view us as leaders.
- At the recent HQ mentoring workshop, a number of folks couldn't name 5 members of the Directorate. Maybe we need to put ourselves out there to share who we are and where we come from.
- A pulse check has been used by a number of regions and has been beneficial in further understanding staff concerns. NCTC can provide assistance and info on conducting a pulse check.
- First challenge: We should set an aspiration that we will be a top 10 agency.
- Second challenge: Determine how can we communicate better with our employees and let them know that we heard what they said in the FEVS and that we're committed to take action.

ESA Regs

- Final Incidental Take Statement regulation is about to be sent to OMB. Anticipate publication in January 2015.
- Changes to Critical Habitat Regulations, the Definition of Destruction or Adverse Modification of Critical Habitat and the Policy for Critical Habitat Exclusions under section 4b2 are scheduled to go final in Spring 2015
- The Draft Policy on Voluntary Pre-listing Conservation Actions published in FR on July 22, 2014. Comments are being reviewed and considered.

Fleet Management

- Each DRD should meet with their fleet management person to get the best data we can into the system. We need more/better information regarding utilization.
- Although we're meeting our overall targets, there is varied progress at the Regional level.
- If we don't make meet our targets, the Director will move forward with talking to GSA about options for leasing vehicles and increasing the number of energy efficient vehicles.
- Will also be looking at efficiency of our heavy equipment fleet
- One of the biggest challenges is that we haven't operated our fleet as a Service-wide fleet. We have been operating as 400 some fleets. Regions should be looking at their "regional fleet" and not a Fisheries fleet, an ES fleet, a Refuges fleet etc.

Permanent Change of Station (PCS) Lump Sum Payment Option

- Request for feedback from the Directorate on whether HQ-BMO should move forward with an application for inclusion in GSA's Relocation Test Program.
- Lump sum payments are based on averages. There's no way to make it unique to individual needs under a lump sum approach. It will be up to people to decide what option works best for them.
- It's a 4-6 month application process; if approved, we would start the pilot program in FY16.
- We need to promote flexibility and should discuss keeping both options (traditional and lump sum) at the end of the pilot.

DECISION: Approved moving forward with this process and submit an application for a 2-year pilot period.

Making the USFWS Fit for the Future

- We need to think big and talking about efficiencies beyond GOAC and fleet moves.
- Do we have too many regions? Is our program structure and impediment to how we function? What should our Regions and Programs look like in 10 -15 years?
- Think about consolidating functions, like the HR function, for example.
 - R2 and R4 have consolidated their HR functions to serve both Regions.
 - There has been a consolidation of engineering functions between Regions 1, 7, 8.
- How do we use technology and do we need all of the bricks and mortar?
- Think it's important to have a review. It's not whether we should do this, but rather how do we do it. Do we try to manage a review internally or do we seek out external assistance?
- We may need unbiased assistance in answering this question regarding our functions and our form. If a review tells us that are organized the best way, then at least we know the answer to the question.
- We should discern the business side from the resource management side.

- We need to describe what the real problems are and what we are trying to solve. Before we talk about form, we need to discern function.
- We will have further discussion about this and Directorate members need to come back with concrete thoughts on how we could/should move forward.

Safety Report

Paul Rausch provided the Annual Safety Briefing for the Directorate. The powerpoint presentation can be found on the November Directorate Meeting Google Drive.

Island Conservation

- At the last Trilateral, the U.S. signed a letter of intent with Canada and Mexico regarding the conservation and restoration of insular ecosystems.
- The MOU with Island Conservation is an effort to implement this letter of intent and to create more structure around how we partner with Island Conservation.

ACTION ITEM: An MOU with Island Conservation will be uploaded to DTS for Directorate review. Regions and Programs will have 30 days to review and comment.

Foreign Travel Approval

- We are revising our Foreign Travel process to require staff to get first and second-line supervisor approval before applying for an ITAP project.
- If selected, travelers need to submit their travel docs in within a reasonable timeframe. We have been asking that requests be submitted 45 days in advance.
- Once these procedural requirements are update, International Affairs will work with the Department to have them posted on their ITAP website.

ACTION ITEM: International Affairs will be sending this revised process out via DTS for Directorate review and comment.

Wrap-up

- Rowan is retiring on January 3, 2015.
- David Cottingham is retiring on December 31, 2014.
- Wendi, Geoff, Jay, Jerome will work with Anna to begin immediate development of the agenda for the next Directorate Meeting
- Anna will work with the Directorate to finalize the dates for the Spring meetings.
- Rowan and Steve will be contacting the Directorate and Deputies to discuss:
 - Do we need two Deputy Directors?
 - If so, are you interested? If you aren't interested, do you have thoughts regarding other potential candidates?