

Strategic Habitat Conservation Workshop Appalachian Landscape Conservation Geography

Doubletree
211 Mockingbird Lane
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Implementing SHC in Appalachian Geographic Area – Breakout Session # 1

Breakout Session: Biological Planning (Chuck Hunter)

Biological Planning –What is its core purpose, what activities comprise it, and what does it result in?

1. Develop information on species that is already available and compile.
2. Team building.
3. Identify explicit objectives for population and habitat.
4. Population objectives before habitat objectives.
5. Inventory and present information in easy to interpret way.
6. Continuity.
7. Identify what's important that we don't know but need to know.
8. Identify management actions – core purpose for biological planning.
9. Activities of biological planning:
 - Collecting available knowledge base.
 - Identify populations.
 - Identify priority species.
 - Determine if you have information to develop.
 - Bring partners on board.
 - Models – information needed.
 - Define desired conditions.
 - Define limiting factors and threats.

What is/are the appropriate scale(s) from which to address Biological Planning?

1. Determined by objectives, particularly the overall objective.
2. Test different scales.
3. Start large and scale down.
4. Determine planning unit.
5. Based on species – current range, historical range.
6. Scales may vary – data, species, partners, etc.
7. Consistent definition scale for seamless LCC/SHC efforts.

What people, organizations or partnerships are best positioned to address Biological Planning activities?

1. States, including non-resource agencies – DOT, mining, etc.
2. Species experts.
3. Academia.
4. NGOs.
5. Federal agencies.
6. Land owners.
7. Local governments.
8. FWS programs – especially MB, Fisheries, ES

9. Joint Ventures, FHPs
10. Energy groups, and industry
11. Tribes
12. Various capacities – geneticists, contaminants, modelers, ecologist, hydrologist, GIS, statistics, species experts, communication experts, climate change expert, writers.

What information or resources are necessary for effective Biological Planning?

1. Forecasting models
2. BMPs
3. Current status
4. Life history information.
5. Existing plans
6. Genetics
7. Treatment or limiting factors
8. Water quality, air quality
9. GIS information
10. Funding
11. Time
12. Land ownership
13. Capabilities and capacities of partners.

Is there a particular aspect of Biological Planning that seems most important? Why?

1. Defining overall objectives
2. Getting partners involved.
3. Getting it right.
4. Be flexible.
5. Results from biological planning:
 - Actions that benefit species and habitats.
 - Measureable objectives.
 - Developing a common language for partners to operate with.
 - Improved relationship with partners.
 - Obtainable objectives.
 - Next level of strategic conservation design.

In terms of the Appalachian landscape, what are some ways to ensure that all of the functional elements of SHC are systematically addressed and progressively refined?

1. Common understanding.
2. Organization
3. Who leads SHC? Coordinators, Board, Steering Committee
4. Communication.

Lessons Learned:

1. Confusion on definition of scale.
2. Confusion about what SHC means to various individuals.
3. Expectation SHC as explained today will be the same tomorrow.
4. Can't do this alone.
5. Temper expectation.
6. Complexity of SHC.

Breakout Session: Conservation Design (Cindy Williams)

Conservation Design – What is its core purpose, what activities comprise it, and what does it result in?

1. Identification of habitats necessary to address problem.
2. Identification of partners necessary to address problem.
3. Modeling expertise to generate estimates on carrying capacity or limiting factors of target species population.
4. Development of a model that provides an estimation of a proposed action that moves towards a desired population/habitat level effect. Feedback creates improved estimations of the effects.
5. Information gathering:
 - Needs are generally identified.
 - Groups already working on the problem.
 - How does APP. LCC pull together existing information and work on the ground to answer and address landscape scale issues?
6. SHC is understood and being accepted and applied locally, but how to link to LCC area?
7. Landscape scale conservation is lacking – Doing the right actions in the right locations to maximize landscape effects.
8. Importance is pooling resources not necessarily changing day to day actions.
9. Communication between partners to effect changes within watershed/landscape opportunistically and strategically through planning.
10. Roles and responsibilities of agency and partners within the landscape:
 - How do NWRs, National Parks, State lands fit into the conservation design?
11. Conservation design's strength will come from partners support. Everyone must have buy-in.

What is/are the appropriate scale(s) from which to address Conservation Design?

1. Multiple scales with any conservation design.
2. Biologically relevant scale to address within and across LCC's to meet species habitat objectives.

What people, organizations or partnerships are best positioned to address Conservation Design activities?

1. People/stakeholders – more the better.
2. All need buy-in to problem and design early on.
3. Correct expertise brought in early and often.
4. Ensure roles and responsibilities are identified and agreed upon.

What information or resources are necessary for effective Conservation Design?

1. Funding
2. Time
3. Staff and expertise

Is there a particular aspect of Conservation Design that seems most important? Why?

1. Clear outputs from biological planning process to direct conservation design.

In terms of the Appalachian landscape, what are some ways to ensure that all of the functional elements of SHC are systematically addressed and progressively refined?

1. Taking information from biological planning to develop a strategic action plan to begin answering questions and problems as proposed in step 1. What do we do and where do we do it?

Breakout Session: Conservation Delivery (Maureen Gallagher)

Conservation Delivery –What is its core purpose, what activities comprise it, and what does it result in?

1. On the ground implementation.
2. Done following a strategic comprehensive overview of types of actions that occur.
3. Is it broader? – establishing legal authorities.
4. Where it all comes together for action.
5. Working with partners working for a shared vision of using various programs to deliver conservation.
6. Appropriations – getting the funds.
7. Must ultimately lead to conservation of species.
8. Fulfilling the mission of the refuge system (the Service) – day to day management, permitting, etc.
9. Implementation until the end product is achieved.

What is/are the appropriate scale(s) from which to address Conservation Delivery?

1. The level at which you are making decisions, examining, operating,
2. Interactive – the power of your focus and at which you interact with others.
3. Geographic scope and range.
4. Temporal component of scale.
5. Could be multiple scales and we may examine on one scale and operate on another.
6. There must be flexibility in scale.
7. Have to be willing to listen to partners.
8. Scale may differ depending on which element of SHC you are operating in.
9. Scale is a measuring device.
10. Appropriate scale:
 - Geographic boundaries for the Service to set population objectives.
 - Field offices will work on targets for LCC within its area of responsibility.
 - All scales are appropriate and necessary.
 - Focus is as important as flexibility.

What people, organizations or partnerships are best positioned to address Conservation Delivery activities?

1. Everybody – dependent on conservation need.
2. Those who have the resources available and access to resources.
3. JVs and FHPs do delivery as an organized entity as well as their individual partners.

What information or resources are necessary for effective Conservation Delivery?

1. First two steps in the SHC wheel.
2. Technically sound scientifically driven delivery.
3. Well written objectives.
4. Adaptive management.
5. Good performance measures
6. Good communication.
7. Long term funding.
8. Meeting objectives on appropriate time scale.
9. Meet objectives with efficient use of resources.

Is there a particular aspect of Conservation Delivery that seems most important? Why?

1. Partnerships – given effective delivery is dependent on biological planning and conservation design.

2. Making delivery responsive monitoring.

In terms of the Appalachian landscape, what are some ways to ensure that all of the functional elements of SHC are systematically addressed and progressively refined?

1. Communication and coordination
2. Has to move beyond providing science to include other functional elements.
3. May need to resemble a JV or FHP.
4. LCC could integrate across taxa.
5. Some sort of coordination structure across partnerships operating in the same geography as well as with partnerships in other boundaries – seamless operation.
6. Buy-in
7. Good information tools to keep people informed – web, webinars, video conferencing.

Lessons Learned:

1. Collectively we are a lot smarter.
2. In our agency we define elements differently – a lot of uncertainty – challenge in communication.
3. The word is out to enough partners on SHC that we need to get them at the table.
4. May not be time to bring Service employees up to speed before partners.
5. Don't fear uncertainty.
6. Get all invested now.
7. Articulate the benefits.
8. What are the possible benefits to partners? Make life better for all. More conservation of fish and wildlife resources.
9. Shared resources.
10. Getting folks involved in landscape conservation.
11. TNC – a new partner.
12. Filling information gaps.
13. Reducing redundancy.
14. Networking.
15. Being part of a conservation movement.
16. Improved science, techniques, PR, policy, and understanding of partner objectives and mission.
17. Synergy will increase momentum and drive improvements in technology.

Breakout Session: Assumption Driven Research (This session was not conducted)

Assumption Driven Research – What is its core purpose, what activities comprise it, and what does it result in?

What is/are the appropriate scale(s) from which to address Research?

What people, organizations or partnerships are best positioned to address Research activities?

What information or resources are necessary for effective Research?

Is there a particular aspect of Research that seems most important? Why?

Breakout Session: Outcome-based Monitoring and Evaluation (Cindy Bohn)

Outcome-based Monitoring/Evaluation –What is its core purpose, what activities comprise it, and what does it result in?

1. Core function of LCC – tracking, coordinate, integrate.
2. Monitoring and research efforts and data
3. State of the conservation estate.

What is/are the appropriate scale(s) from which to address M/E?

1. Driven by funding source.
2. Driven by indicator species.
3. Driven by partnership and Regional Office.
4. Driven by conservation goals.
5. Driven type of project.
6. Driven by uses of data.
7. Clearly identify goals and objectives.
8. Ecosystem functions and models
9. Population and monitoring of trust species – genetic stock, life histories, and high priority species.
10. Site specific monitoring – specific mussels, refuges, watersheds, habitats,

What people, organizations or partnerships are best positioned to address M/E activities?

1. Who is going to do it?
2. Organize and communicate.
3. Articulate what those modeling and research needs are.
4. Bring spatial information
5. What are our overlaps in information?
6. What are our own collective questions?
7. Who are the partners?
 - States
 - FWS: within boundaries
 - NPS
 - TVA
 - TNC
 - COE
 - USGS
 - NRCS
 - NGOs
 - Universities
 - Private landowners/companies, etc.

What information or resources are necessary for effective M/E?

1. Coming up with clear monitoring objectives and questions.
2. Sustainable population ecosystem functions.
3. Identify species and objectives.
4. Summarize and synthesize existing data.
5. Develop protocols.
6. Manage data well.

Is there a particular aspect of M/E that seems most important? Why?

In terms of the Appalachian landscape, what are some ways to ensure that all of the functional elements of SHC are systematically addressed and progressively refined?

1. What is the role of research?
2. Who decides scale at which to monitor?
3. Metrics – counting good or bad/