

MEETING NOTES

Water Resources HCP Steering Committee
Morgan County School Administration Building
Flat Fork Rd., Wartburg, TN
June 30, 2010

ATTENDEES

Name		Affiliation
Erik	Andelman	Morgan County
Steve	Bakaletz	NPS – Big South Fork
Robert	Baker	TN Department of Environment and Conservation
Tim	Begley	Crossville
Everett	Bolin	Crab Orchard Utility District
Joy	Broach	USACE – Nashville District
Geoff	Call	USFWS
Joe	Dario	Tennessee Tech Univ.
Malissa	Davis	Tennessee Tech Univ.
Kevin	Dean	City of Crossville
Jennifer	Gihring	UT
Dennis	Gregg	Obed Watershed Community Association
Jerry	Hardin	Emory River Watershed Association
Hon. Rick	Keeton	Scott County
Teresa	Payne	ECE, Inc.
Gay	Reeves-Stewart	Home Builders Association of Cumberland County
Rebecca	Shapansky	NPS – Obed W&S River
Alex	Wyss	The Nature Conservancy

MEETING GOALS

- Begin to discuss key concepts pertinent to the take model: land use change and its effects on hydrology.
- Consensus on revised covered species decision tree.
- Consensus on covered activities decision tree.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Handouts: Agenda packet

- Jennifer Gihring (HCP Team) welcomed all attendees and reviewed the meeting goals.
- Attendees introduced themselves to the group.

HYDROLOGY AND LAND USE CHANGE

Handouts: Powerpoint

Dr. Joe Daraio (HCP Team) reviewed the basics of the water cycle, hydrology, and impacts of land use change on instream hydrology. Highlights:

- The purpose of the HCP take model is to quantify the narrative definition of “take.” Quantified estimates of take allow us to forecast how much take will occur and assess the effectiveness of conservation measures.
- The model is primarily concerned with estimating take that occurs from habitat loss and degradation, although it will estimate direct take as well. Habitat loss and degradation includes hydrologic changes (water quantity and quality).
- Watershed response to land use change: as impervious surface increases, water infiltration decreases and runoff increases. The lag time between a rain event and a rise in the level of a stream is shortened and peak flows are increased (i.e. larger, more intense flows). This can negatively impact aquatic habitat in several ways, such as excessive sedimentation from eroding streambanks.
- Future work on the take model includes analyzing take associated with the most intensive to least intensive changes in the watershed. This includes analyzing different growth scenarios.
- In the next meeting, we will discuss smaller scale instream processes that shape aquatic habitat.

Attendee Comments

- Instream erosion, a consequence of urbanization, affects both aquatic habitat and landowners that have streams on their property.
- Sediment islands are also a possible source of habitat impairment.
- The model will help us determine what percentage of land use change will impact channel morphology and hydrology – 10%? 30%? 40%? We can then use this as a goal to determine how much impervious cover the system can tolerate.

COVERED SPECIES DECISION TREE

Handouts: Revised covered species decision tree

Malissa Davis (HCP Team) reviewed the revised covered species decision tree. Highlights:

- Revision of the covered species decision tree include: 1) removal of the historic species filter (revised Box #1); 2) addition of wildlife “in need of management” (revised Box #3); and addition of the Steering Committee as the last stage in the review process.

Attendee Comments

- The decision tree is clear and uncomplicated.
- Quantifying take will be a difficult task. If we have a difficult time quantifying take, then the species may not be appropriate to include in the HCP.

Q&A

If a species is designated as a “poor candidate,” do we lose the ability to consider it for coverage?	Jennifer: During their review, the species experts will be asked to answer two questions: 1) do they concur with the list of good candidates; and 2) do they concur with the list of poor candidates. Both of the candidate lists will be shared with the Steering Committee. These steps provide review of all species determinations.
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Consensus Item

- The Steering Committee approved the 6/30/10 Covered Species Decision Tree.

COVERED ACTIVITIES DECISION TREE

Handouts: Draft covered activities decision tree

Jennifer Gihring reviewed the draft covered activities decision tree. Highlights:

- The covered activities decision tree is a selection process, very similar to the covered species.
- An “activity” is any action that could cause take of a covered species.
- One of the key questions is whether or not an activity causes take and if we can quantify the link between the activity and take of a covered species.
- Another key consideration is whether or not the applicant has, or could have, legal control over an activity.
- Expert review is a key part of the covered activity selection process. These experts include academic and government scientists as well as local experts like road superintendents, developers, etc. who are familiar with the way in which the activities are conducted.

Q&A

Theoretically, ATVs could be regulated by an applicant. Will we consider ATVs as a covered activity?	Jennifer: The take model will help determine the extent to which ATVs are actually causing take. If the model shows take, then the applicants will need to consider whether or not they would like to pursue coverage for ATV impacts. As with all activities, it is ultimately up to the applicant to decide which activities to include. Mayor Keeton: Scott County is interested in promoting outdoor recreation and may look at ATV use during HCP development. Education of ATV riders is critical.
Why is the permit term 30 years?	Alex Wyss: This was the longest permit duration that USFWS would consider.
When will the covered activities	Jennifer: We will meet independently with applicants to

be presented to the Steering Committee?	develop the covered activities lists. The next meeting will focus on covered species, so we will likely revisit the activities in October.
What about mining in the City of Crossville? Would this activity be covered by their MS4* permit and included in the HCP?	Jennifer: The City can regulate discharge of sediment into their MS4 system, regardless of the origin of the sediment (mining, construction, etc.). Tim Begley: If they disturb more than the maximum amount of land allowed by the City, then they would have to get a City permit.

* MS4 = Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System

Attendee Comments

- The decision trees look good. We are ready to see the lists.

Consensus Item

- The Steering Committee approved the 6/30/10 Covered Activities Decision Tree.

UPCOMING CORE TEAM ACTIVITIES

- Complete the species database and threats associated with activities.
- Review the draft list of covered activities with applicants.
- Present the draft covered species lists at the August meeting.
- Begin looking at conservation measures in the fall.

APPLICANT LIAISONS

- The HCP project has provided funding for each applicant to identify an HCP liaison. The liaison will facilitate internal discussions of HCP topics pertinent to their jurisdiction.
- The contracts will be signed within a few weeks.
- Kevin Dean and Erik Andelman will be the liaisons for Crossville and Morgan County, respectively. Liaisons for Scott and Cumberland Counties remain to be designated.

NEXT MEETING TOPICS

- Speaker: Aquatic critters and instream habitat needs.
- Continuation of take model discussion.
- Draft list of covered species.

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ACTION ITEMS

Responsible Party	Item	Deadline
HCP Team	Develop draft lists of covered species.	For next S.C. meeting

		(8/25)
HCP Team & Applicants	Meet individually to begin working on covered activities.	Ongoing

The next SC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday August 25th from 1-4PM Eastern at the same facility (Morgan County School Administration building on Flat Fork Rd., Wartburg).