

**Desert Landscape Conservation Cooperative (DLCC)  
Steering Committee Conference Call  
January 12, 2012  
12 p.m. to 2 p.m. Mountain Standard Time**

**Meeting Summary**

**Participants**

Please see Appendix A for a list of participants.

**Meeting Objectives**

- Determine action on new DLCC Steering Committee membership request(s)
- Discuss 2012 science project proposals and agree to next steps
- Agree to criteria for comprehensive needs assessment process
- Approve process for communications plan development
- Updates on additional activities of Science Working Group, Administrative Working Group, GIS/Spatial Data Working Group, and Tribal Working Group

**Outcomes and Consensus Agreements**

- The Steering Committee did not have consensus to proceed with the addition of new members; the Committee determined there is first a need to hone the criteria for addition of new members.
- Louise Misztal will act as a liaison for the DLCC Steering Committee during the America's Great Outdoors regional conference calls.
- The Steering Committee agreed via consensus to the comprehensive science needs assessment criteria with the adjustments discussed and the agreement that information on how the criteria will be applied will be shared with Steering Committee for its review.
- The Steering Committee agreed to the proposal for the development of a DLCC Communication Plan.

**Action Items and Next Steps**

- The Administrative Working Group will recommend options for Steering Committee size and structure including recommendations for considering new memberships.
- The options will be added as an agenda item to be presented at the next meeting. Scott Boruff agreed to be involved in the process.
- Julie Shapiro will circulate Tom Frye's information to the DLCC Steering Committee so any individuals interested can join on the America's Great Outdoors conference calls.
- Christina Vojta requested emails from anyone who has further suggestions about the science projects database.
- The Science Working Group will report back on its composition in April.
- A small group, including Christina Vojta and Mark Sogge, will look at the priority science needs projects and how they align. Leslie Meyers and Christina Vojta may follow up with the group to engage further participation.
- Christina Vojta will update the science needs criteria based on today's discussion.
- The Science Working Group will circulate the process on the application of the criteria in mid-February.
- Christina Vojta will engage US Fish and Wildlife (Rick Reester) to include them in the GIS/Spatial Data Working Group. She will also circulate the contact information for the current set of GIS from the USGS.

- The Admin Working Group will develop a Scope of Work and Reclamation will move forward with hiring a consultant to develop a communications plan. An update of the progress will be on the April Steering Committee meeting agenda.
- The GIS group will consider the larger LCC network's activities and look for opportunities for consistency across LCCs.

### Next Meeting

- Steering Committee –April 10 and 11, 2012
  - Agenda: To be determined; include partner presentations.
  - Location: Las Vegas, Nevada (exact location to be determined).

### Detailed Meeting Overview

#### **Member Request for DLCC Steering Committee**

- QuadState Local Governments Authority
  - Gerry Hillier provided a quick overview of the QuadState Local Governments Authority (QuadState).
  - Questions:
    - *Does QuadState have a direct role for providing conservation services on the ground?* No. QuadState would carry messages to individual counties that would then implement land use or resource management on the ground and has the ability to provide technical advice to the individual counties. While QuadState has no exercise of authority in the counties, its board is made up of the elected officials of the counties. QuadState is organized as a joint powers authority (JPA) under the laws of the four states involved, and as such is a public agency.
    - *Does QuadState have a scientific staff?* No, the staff is Bill Lamb, Gerry Hillier and a bookkeeper. However, both Bill and Gerry are resource management professionals (and former BLM employees) and maintain professional associations with science-delivery establishments and through professional societies They seek out information from the universities, both research and extension arms, to access appropriate information required to carry out their functions and provide advice and input to our member counties.
    - *Can the following portion of the mission statement be clarified: “It seeks to protect economic uses of public lands, provide appropriate conservation to landscapes, and assure land and wildlife management agencies apply sound and appropriate resource management to the land of the region”?* The board is knowledgeable of multiple use principles of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the National Forest as well as being interested in maintaining the legacy uses to the extent that it is practical. Additionally, the board has flexibility to allow for not maintaining uses or businesses without the appropriate infrastructure and/or viability.
    - *Does QuadState operate with the best available science?* Yes, it operates with the best available science and assumes that the best science would be applied to all operations.
  - The chair of the DLCC Steering Committee asked the group if it was able to reach consensus to allow QuadState entry to the Steering Committee.
    - The group was not able to reach consensus and addressed the following concerns:
      - Allowing entry of QuadState could open the door for many other similar organizations to apply for admission; there is concern around the Steering

- Committee role of groups that are not land managers and a concern for the proliferation of members and the size of the Steering Committee.
- There is a need for well-defined criteria for organizations seeking admission to the Steering Committee; and

Action Items/Next Steps: The group acknowledged the need to hone criteria specifically removing gray areas in the Steering Committee Composition Criteria and to add this as an agenda item to be presented at the next meeting. Scott Boruff agreed to be involved in the honing of the criteria. The Steering Committee will actively stay engaged with QuadState until the criteria is better crafted and will then revisit their request for admission.

### **Collaboration opportunity with America's Great Outdoors**

- Tom Frye offered a brief high-level overview of America's Great Outdoors (AGO) activities.
- Questions:
  - *When will the five regional portfolios be completed and will this group be able to review them?* In early February more definitive information will be available. However, this will be a document that will evolve over time. AGO would be happy to share the documents with this group and hopes it will offer a worthwhile intersection for the two groups.
  - *Can the DLCC Steering Committee have a liaison to participate in the AGO regional conference calls?* AGO would welcome any members of the DLCC Steering Committee to be on the regional conference calls.

Agreement: Louise Mistal will act as a liaison for the DLCC Steering Committee during the AGO regional conference calls.

Action Items/Next Steps: Julie Shapiro will circulate Tom Frye's information to the DLCC Steering Committee so any individuals interested can join on the conference calls.

### **Science Working Group Composition**

- Leslie Meyers and Christina Vojta provided an update about the addition of expertise to the Science Working Group (SWG). At the last meeting, the group felt the SWG needed more water resource expertise (supply and demand, water rights, etc.). The SWG was charged to engage more water expertise for the Science Working Group; BOR has taken a lead on this and its efforts are outlined below:
  - Attended the CO River Basin Study meeting, gave the LCC presentation and sent out proposed science recommendation, asking for feedback. The Colorado River Basin Study group was very interested;
  - Engaged in ongoing discussion with New Mexico and Colorado on how to do broader outreach to water entities; and
  - Added Teresa Lewis, FWS, an expert in aquatics, to the SWG.

Action Items/Next Steps: The SWG will report back further on composition in April.

### **FY 2012 Priority Science Needs and Recommended Projects**

- Christina Vojta gave a summary of the priority science needs and recommended projects. For further detail, please see the presentation.
- The group had the following feedback:
  - Asked for clarification on the near-term prioritization of the projects:

- There is no further prioritization, however a working group will evaluate where project ideas align and where funding might be available, and will provide ideas back to the Steering Committee and
- The Steering Committee will ultimately prioritize the projects.
- Suggested there be categories in the “status” area of the data base such as: completed, in process, conceptual, planning, ongoing etc. If status is “ongoing,” it means things are being done on the ground and funded.

Action Items/Next Steps: Christina Vojta requested emails from anyone who has further suggestions about the database. The SWG will also look to identify any funding and collaboration opportunities. A small group, including Christina Vojta and Mark Sogge, will look at the projects and how they align. Leslie Meyers and Christina Vojta may follow up with the group to engage further participation.

### **Comprehensive Science Needs Assessment: Needs and Criteria**

- Christina Vojta gave a presentation, reviewed the science needs collated by the SWG, and asked if the Steering Committee would consider agreeing to the criteria for the prioritization of the science needs. Please see the presentation for further information.
- After reviewing the proposed criteria for ranking, the group had the following feedback:
  - Incorporate themes of adaptation and management integration vs. application into the criteria in some area;
  - Specify the inclusion of other local and historical uses, not just tribal/indigenous;
  - Pursue feedback from Mexico; and
  - Commit to a thoughtful process for the application of the criteria.

Agreement: The Steering Committee agreed via consensus to the criteria with the adjustments discussed.

Action Item/Next Step: SWG will circulate the process on the application of the criteria in mid-February.

### **DLCC Communications Plan**

- Leslie Meyers gave a brief presentation on the Administrative Working Group’s proposal for the Communications Plan.
- The proposal is to hire a contractor to move the process forward. The Administrative Working Group came up with a draft outline of a communications plan and will expand that effort to create a scope of work.

Agreement: The Admin Working Group will develop a Scope of Work and Reclamation will move forward with hiring a consultant to develop a communications plan. An update of the progress will be on the April Steering Committee meeting agenda.

### **Additional Working Group Updates**

- GIS/Spatial Data Working Group
  - The group had a call in December, discussed selection of a data portal for the DLCC, and created criteria to assist in the selection process. The GIS/Spatial Data working group requested submissions from four entities meeting the criteria regarding data portal capabilities.
  - The Steering Committee would like the working group to consider the relationship of all the LCCs and the GIS/Spatial data and wants to make sure the group is looking at the bigger picture and will work toward consistency with standards and models.

Action Items/Next Steps: Christina Vojta will engage Fish and Wildlife to include them in this working group (Rick Reester). She will also circulate the contact information for the current set of GIS from the USGS.

- Tribal Working Group
  - The group has been working on outreach and coordination and has contacted the tribes regarding the DLCC.
  - A letter has been crafted to the tribes requesting input on the science needs and includes a yearend review of the DLCC.
- Administrative Working
  - The final Governance Document and Operations Plan have been adopted by the Steering Committee. These documents may be revised as needed through consensus of the Steering Committee.
  - The discussion of the future structure and size of the Steering Committee continues and will be revisited at the April Steering Committee meeting; this will include discussion of new membership criteria.
  - The summary outlining what has been completed by the DLCC in 2011 has been completed and a yearend letter will be sent to all partners.
  - The following is an update in regards to the coordinator search:
    - The interview panel has selected a pool of candidates;
    - The references are being checked; and
    - A final decision will be made with an offer to the candidate.
  - Leslie Meyers announced that she has taken a new position within Reclamation and will be phasing out of work with the Desert LCC once the new coordinator is selected.

## **Appendix A: Desert LCC Steering Committee Conference Call Attendance, January 12, 2012**

### **Steering Committee Members and Alternates**

Whitney Albright, California Department of Fish and Game  
Carole Beardmore, US Fish and Wildlife Service/Sonoran Joint Venture  
Scott Boruff, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department  
Art Coykendall, Bureau of Reclamation-Denver  
Julie Decker, Bureau of Land Management-Arizona State Office  
Peter Dederich, National Park Service  
Fon Duke, U.S. Department of Defense  
Mary Gustafson, Rio Grande Joint Venture  
Amy Heuslein, Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Mike Johnson, New Mexico Office of State Engineer  
Martha Lee, National Park Service  
Paul Miller, Bureau of Reclamation  
Louise Misztal, Sky Island Alliance  
Tom Owens, U.S. Geological Survey  
Duane Pool, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory (Vice Chair)  
Laura Richards, Nevada Department of Wildlife  
Dana Roth, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Russell Scofield, Desert Managers Group  
Mark Sogge, US Geological Survey  
Dave Stewart, U.S. Forest Service  
Benjamin Tuggle, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Larry Voyles, Arizona Game and Fish (Chair)

### **Coordinators**

Leslie Meyers, Bureau of Reclamation  
Jeremey Mikrut, Bureau of Reclamation  
Christina Vojta, US Fish and Wildlife Service

### **Facilitators:**

Julie Shapiro, The Keystone Center  
Niki Koszalka, The Keystone Center

### **Presenters**

Tom Frye, America's Great Outdoors  
Bill Lamb, Quadstate Local Government Authority  
Gerry Hillier, Quadstate Local Government Authority