



Cape Fear Arch Conservation Collaborative
Minutes from the July 17, 2007 Meeting
Lake Waccamaw State Park, Lake Waccamaw, NC

Attending: Andy Wood Audubon North Carolina, Janice Allen NC Coastal Land Trust, Dan Bell, TNC-NC Green Swamp Project, John Bell Conservation Trust for North Carolina, Mamie Caison Brunswick SWCD, Kim Douglass NC Natural Heritage Program, Steve Everhart NC Wildlife Resources Commission, David Farren Southern Environmental Law Center, Laurie Fenwood USFWS, Vic French NC Wildlife Resources Commission, Laura Gadd NCDA Plant Conservation Program, Mike Giles NC Coastal Federation, Walker Golder Audubon North Carolina, Chris Helms NC State Parks- Lake Waccamaw, Camilla Herlevich NC Coastal Land Trust, Sarah King Clean Water Management Trust Fund, Hervey McIver TNC-NC, Marilyn Meares Cape Fear RC&D, Shelly Miller New Hanover SWCD, Scott Pohlman, NC Natural Heritage Program, Nancy Preston NC Coastal Land Trust, Phil Prete City of Wilmington, Shawn Ralston New Hanover Planning Dept., Michael Scisco NC Coastal Land Trust, David Scott Waccamaw Riverkeeper, Anthony Snider NC Division of Coastal Management, Hope Sutton TNC-NC Green Swamp Project, Kelli Westervelt Wildlands Project

Guests: Laurie Fernwood, US Fish and Wildlife Services, Kim Douglass, North Carolina Heritage Program.

I. Ivory-Billed Woodpecker: Background, NC/SC Search Efforts, Funding Opportunities

Ms. Laurie Fernwood of the US Fish and Wildlife Services gave a presentation on the Ivory Billed Woodpecker and the search efforts being conducted. What prompted these search efforts was a sighting on the Cache River National Wildlife Refuge in February 2004 in Arkansas. The current search team (or IBW Recovery Team) consists of 70 people. There is money pledged for habitat restoration, mapping, analysis tools, and outreach (in Arkansas).

Current Status:

Evidence exists that a small presence of birds lives in Arkansas. In 2006-2007 searches were conducted in Tennessee, South Carolina, Florida (two), and Texas. Additional evidence was found (vocal recording, etc.) but confirmation of other populations in the

southeast is lacking. There is potential for additional searches in Illinois, Mississippi, Louisiana, and North Carolina.

Collecting Evidence:

Many state, federal, and private partners are coordinating searches for species presence. None of these sightings have been confirmed, however. Unfortunately, the only sound identification recordings were taken in the 1930's by Cornell. All possible current recordings are compared with this Cornell recording. In Congaree National Park in South Carolina a search conducted recorded calls and a few brief sightings, but no photo documentation to use as evidence.

Types of Searches:

Ground

Canoe, kayak, boats

Helicopters

Intensive versus limited effort

Automatic recording units, Reconyx cameras, Aggie Cams.

The organization of searches is supported by USFWS through grant, but consists of multiple partners. Some groups are led by non government organizations while others are led by the state.

This is an incredible opportunity to conserve a species and habitat that is of concern to the Cape Fear Arch region. It is important to consider that the search is sometimes difficult and can be controversial; however, the USFWS objective can only be accomplished with help from partners.

The USFWS is in need of a partner organization or organizations that can be flexible. They are also looking for a lead agency or grant recipient organization that is able to maintain coordination with state agencies. The USFWS can assist with any grant proposals and will provide training for state groups or participants, as well as mapping or analysis tools as needed. Current funding for this effort is 1.1 million per year, with half that amount focused on searches.

The proposed new approaches include small, expert state teams, Cornell mobile team, helicopter searches, a citizen-scientist effort, and outreach to hunters and other wildlife observers.

Why focus on the Lumber and Waccamaw river areas? These areas contain remnants of older forest and pockets of large trees, both of which are believed to be suitable habitat for IBW. However, the best habitat for these birds is not known, so the plan is to look at a broader area.

II. North Carolina's Strategic Conservation Plan- Scott Pohlman

- What needs to be conserved in North Carolina?
- Why the need for the plan? Rapidly losing open spaces

- For each new person to North Carolina, we lose two acres of land
- What is green infrastructure? Approach must be strategic and science based. Must be developed as system.

Project Mission-

1. Planning process-
Coordinate conservation efforts
Inform funding decisions
Guide conservation efforts in NC for next 100 years
2. Focusing and Refining Relationships-
Ecological- biodiversity and wildlife
Existing open space and conservation lands- parks, greenways, trails, nature preserves.
Working lands and CHPP- farms, working forests, working waterfronts
3. Landscape/Habitat Indicator Guilds-
Focuses on animals
Goal is to identify blocks of habitat that are significant on scale-
Indicator species approach
Habitat by habitat approach
Common animals as well as rare
Identify a highly associated group of indicator species
4. Core Areas-
Map blocks of habitat for specific LHI guilds (>25% species present)
Treat as NHP element occurrences
Represent residential or breeding habitats
Support internal movement
5. Connectors-
Provide links between nearby core areas
Serve as dispersal routes
Dimension determined by species

Timeline-

June- draft GIS layer and first map
Focus on biodiversity and wildlife

December- update current map
Expand data sets

III. **Cape Fear Arch Budget, Tasks, Responsibilities-** Camilla Herlevich

Revenues received to date- Z. Smith Reynolds- \$60,000

Doris Duke Foundation/The Conservation Fund/CTNC/NCCLT- \$10,000 for a site conservation plan

Expenses (anticipated and occurred)- meals, meetings, travel

Public relations- Web and printing

Site conservation plan- DDR/CTNC

GIS

Program Coordinator

Economic Analysis

Admin.

Grants Pending-

Mott and NC Attorney General

Proposed-

Site Conservation Plan (Janice)

GIS Work (Michael)

The next meeting for the Cape Fear Arch will be held on Tuesday, October 9th at Lake Waccamaw State park.