

HO-02_No Regrets Working Group Guidance draft 19 June

TO: Appalachian LCC Steering Committee

FROM: "No Regrets" Working Group (list...)

DATE: 19 June 2013

Guidance Framework for Identifying "No Regrets"¹ High Value Conservation Areas in the Appalachian LCC Region

At the April meeting of the Appalachian Landscape Conservation Cooperative, the Steering Committee tasked a work group to advance the identification of previously assessed high value conservation areas (HVCA) for which there may be a general consensus about their significance and relevance inside the LCC geography. This contributes to the effort of the LCC by identifying areas that can be promoted as needing special attention and consideration by managers (and others) in advance of more systematic modeling or LCC-sponsored analyses or structured decision-making and prioritization in the future.

The Working Group is proposing this framework for the identification of those "No Regrets" opportunities.

This stocktaking effort will cover the full geographic scope covered by the Appalachian LCC and focus on:

- identifying both Thematic (terrestrial, aquatic, connectivity, etc...) and Spatially Explicit (landscape polygons, corridors, etc...) conservation units that are thought to be important for the sustainability of valued resources, ecosystem health, and biodiversity conservation;
- defining the biological and ecological resources of concern (while recreational, cultural, and other social values are beyond the scope of this Working Group, it will provide a platform upon which additional values can be later added if desired);
- utilizing previously completed regionally or nationally recognized approaches for identifying and/or prioritizing HVCAs within the Appalachian LCC geography;
- developing selection criteria upon reviewing and considering the content of the previously completed approaches; and
- comparing selection criteria and HVCAs with those identified in State Wildlife Action Plans and other state and locally based approaches.

This effort will not:

- address Threats and Stressors;
- be a compilation of all data sets and analysis, but will build upon the information the LCC obtained in its "103 assessment" of existing products; and

¹ "No Regrets" in means no regret in an organizational investment (i.e., no regret in the allocation of time, money, or effort) to devote toward that area as it is believed to hold great conservation "pay-off" for that investment.

- assess of the information and data gaps, but will rely upon existing information and informed by the LCC-funded Clemson study currently underway.

Coordination with Steering Committee - The Working Group will ask Steering Committee members to suggest staff from within their organizations that may be available to help the Working Group, especially in the following steps:

- assist in its identification of appropriate sources (the Working Group will provide members of the Steering Committee an opportunity to suggest potential sources and review the list of potential sources);
- review draft Selection Criteria submitted to the Steering Committee members by the Working Group; and
- respond to the opportunity to review draft Thematic and Spatially Explicit HCVAs to assure consistency with the Selection Criteria.

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