

CRW Terrestrial & Wetlands SubTeam meeting – May 13, 2014

Participants: Rachel Cliche, Bill Jenkins, Scott Schwenk, Lori Pelech, Marvin Moriarty, Jeff Horan, Nancy McGarigal, Bill Labich, Andrew Milliken, Randy Dettmers, Bob Houston, Eric Sorensen, Emily Preston, Patrick Commins, Mitch Hartley

- 1) Review and discuss criteria for ranking ecosystems
 - a. Review of Scott's preliminary criteria for weighting ecological systems (see his handout)
 - i. Do we want to take into account existing levels of protection? General sense from Core Team meeting was that we didn't want to take this into account at this stage of the process.
 - ii. Bob H. – in GOM process, they added scores from all species together as measure of "importance", but could pull out top% of major habitat types – this kind of approach could be useful for this pilot as well
 - b. Review of preliminary weights for macrosystems
 - i. How do we approach weighting in terms of relative importance within CRW vs importance within Northeast region?
 1. Suggestion is to think about focusing on watershed scale with perspective of how it fits within the region
 2. Suggestion that we do not just focus on importance being based mostly on areal coverage within the CRW and within Region
 3. How will smaller patch systems that get prioritized actually be incorporated into landscape design? – issue for more discussion with Kevin, but could include buffering around these patches
- 2) Under represented species and ecosystems
 - a. Bat hibernacula
 - i. Missing data – there are more hibernacula data available
 - ii. What additional data would be good to include? E.g., hibernacula & *myotis* locations
 - iii. Jeff will work with States to collect available data and revise map representing key bat habitat
 - b. We need to be conscientious about not using rare/unique species as both species and ecological systems – decide on one way or another for each case
 - c. Mapping existing locations for rare species doesn't account for possible range expansion in terms of landscape design – could we identify macrogroups or systems to rank higher? Maybe for some species, but probably not for all (e.g., bats)
 - d. Others – endangered plants might need special consideration also, especially ones that might be regionally important? Rachel tried to address these in the analysis she did of SCGN.

- e. Suggestion is to increase weight of macrogroups/ecological systems where possible to cover these rare species, but when that approach doesn't cover the species' needs, how will we incorporate them?
 - f. Argument for NOT using these species to weight ecological systems so that partners with interest in these species can more easily see where the priority areas are for species and can more easily be pulled out from the overall landscape design
- 3) Approach to species conservation design
- a. Linkage between population objective and habitat objective is important to consider, and for a species like WOTH, it is problematic in CRW, and points out need to understand limiting factors
 - b. Realistic approach for forest birds might be to maintain or set a floor below which we don't want to go
 - c. Also need to factor into climate suitability and edge of range issues
 - d. Add a column related to conservation strategies for each species