

Chair Chatter

Most of you are wondering: What's going on with the Council? My answer to that query is this metaphor; the Council is a newborn and is being nurtured along so it can mature into a productive and high functioning existence. However, that does not translate into inactivity. There has been a tremendous amount of effort establishing and strengthening communication networks between and among partners. Also, there has been significant activity by some of the Technical Teams that were formed at the October meeting that will be incorporated in this *Chatter*.

Next Meeting

Our next Council meeting will be April 19-20, 2012 in Columbus, GA. The meeting will begin at 8:00am on Thursday, April 19th. We appreciate the NFWF and the Southern Company for working with us on our meeting space and hotel accommodations needs. Vernon, Glen, and I have begun work on the upcoming agenda. We welcome any suggestions and ideas from Council members on topics.

Longleaf Stewardship Fund

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation announced the Longleaf Stewardship Fund call for proposals on Wednesday, December 14th, 2011 at a press event in Columbus, Georgia near Fort Benning. Information is available at www.nfwf.org/longleaf. A total of \$2.9 million is available for 2012 grants. A special acknowledgement, considering state budgets, is made to State Forestry Agencies that contributed a portion of their Forest Service State & Private Grant funds to assist with establishing this opportunity. The Council has been asked through Vernon and myself to participate in the technical review of proposals. Important dates related to the grants:

Wednesday, February 15th: Pre-proposals due

Monday, April 23rd: Full proposals due

Week of July 2nd: Award announcements

North American Wildlife Conference

In conjunction with the North American Wildlife Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, the Partnership Council is planning to host a reception highlighting the 3rd anniversary of the release of the Range-Wide Conservation Plan and highlighting the broad partnership/accomplishments. This event is scheduled for Tuesday, March 13th at 5:00pm EST. Vernon has been asked to coordinate sponsorship and logistics of the reception. Council members should receive an invitation to attend sometime in February.

State and Local Implementation Teams

The state and local implementation teams held a conference call on Thursday, December 15. I have attached notes from their meeting. The teams discussed:

- Formation of the Longleaf Partnership Council.
- A process for adding two local team members. The teams agreed to have at least one of the positions be represented by either, North Carolina, Virginia, Texas, or Louisiana. The other position would rotate between the remainder of the range on a two year basis. Vernon will distribute a nominating form to the local teams to submit nominations in January.
- Technical Assistance.
- Tracking Longleaf Restoration Success/Accomplishments.
- Improving State and Local Team Communication. The group discussed the value of periodically getting together face-to-face to meet. Future opportunities include the North American Wildlife Conference in conjunction with the ALRI event in Atlanta, the Longleaf Partnership Council meeting in April, and in October in conjunction with the Longleaf Alliance Biennial Conference.
- Individual Team Highlights.

America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative (ALRI) Website

The communications team has updated and launched the ALRI website (www.americaslongleaf.org). The site includes a variety of features, including the potential for sharing files and email functions for the Longleaf Partnership Council. It should develop into the central hub for information and communication exchange.

Tracking Longleaf Restoration Success/Accomplishments

The Longleaf Partnership Council adopted **Assessment and Reporting** as a key regional function it will help facilitate. A regional workgroup is working on various actions to provide a common set of restoration outcome and accomplishment measures for reporting. The work group is encouraging the NatureServe rapid assessment metrics (in draft) be adapted range-wide to define longleaf condition classes. The work group will also:

- Work with State Technical Committee members or an appropriate state-level longleaf coordination team to - (a) verify the current conditions and locations of longleaf ecosystems, (b) develop longleaf restoration goals (the potential state contribution to range-wide conservation goals), and (c) restoration program levels/needs (across all agencies)
- Agree to process and determine responsibilities for developing a periodic partner restoration outcome progress report (every 3-5 years)
- Agree to process and determine responsibilities for developing partner reports on longleaf restoration work performance/accomplishments (annually).

Strategies and Tactics: Implementing the Range-wide Conservation Plan (RWCP) 3 year horizon

A small group met January 11-13, 2012 to begin discussions for a product currently titled *Strategies and Tactics: Implementing the Range-wide Conservation Plan 3 year horizon*. The group was comprised of Longleaf Partnership Council members and Federal Coordinating Team staff. A small drafting team has been formed to develop initial working drafts for the Council to develop and finalize a product in the summer of 2012. The objective is for the Longleaf Partnership Council to develop and own this effort. I want to **emphasize that this is not a "top-down" effort** aimed at providing directives. The purpose of the document is to:

- Recommend strategic and tactical approaches to reach the restoration goals in the RWCP
- Provide a communication/marketing tool for all levels (national to field) to describe the partnership
- Demonstrate progress and accomplishments
- Affirm the current roles and contributions of the various partners

Members of the drafting team are Glen Gaines (lead), Kevin McIntyre, Tom Darden, Vernon Compton, Roel Lopez, and Aaron Valenta. This team is scheduled to provide a 1st Draft to the Council in early March. I plan to schedule a Longleaf Partnership Council conference call in mid-February to discuss. To aid development of the Strategies and Tactics document for the April LPC meeting, your assistance with responses to information requests from the drafting team will be most appreciated.

Common Vocabulary

As with any newborn learning a language is challenging especially if the nomenclature is not consistent. You may have noticed that I have referred to the Longleaf Partnership Council (LPC) throughout this *Chatter* and that is to start down the path of solidifying the lexicon. Aaron Valenta has agreed to start a glossary of terminology so we can keep our acronyms straight.

LPC Technical Teams and Efforts

Education and Training

Contact - Roel Lopez, Texas A&M The Longleaf Alliance (LLA)

Communication

Contact - Lark Hayes, NC & Roel Lopez

Longleaf Seedling Supply

Contact - Mark Hains (LLA)

Native Understory Plant Supply

Contact - Vic Vankus, USFS & Carol Denhof, LLA

Prescribed Fire/Smoke Management

Contact - Tom Darden SERPPAS Work Group

Research and Development

Contact - Rhett Johnson, LLA & USFS - Southern Research Station

Economics

Contact - Rhett Johnson, LLA

Assessment and Reporting

Contact - Glen Gaines, USFS

(Mapping/Inventory)

Longleaf Partnership Council

January 2012

Glen Gaines, Past Chair

Patrick Glass, Chair

Vernon Compton, Vice Chair

State Coordination Teams

North Carolina Longleaf Coalition

Texas-Louisiana Longleaf Taskforce

Mississippi Longleaf Coordination Team

Alabama State Technical Committee

Local Implementation Teams

Gulf Coastal Plain Ecosystem Partnership (GCPEP)

Sandhills Longleaf Pine Conservation Partnership (SC)

Low Country of South Carolina

Chattahoochee Fall Line Conservation Partnership (Ft Benning)

Apalachicola Regional Stewardship Alliance

Georgia Red Hills Region

South Central Louisiana Ecosystem Conservation Project

Onslow Bight Conservation Forum (NC)

North Carolina Sandhills Conservation Partnership

Osceola NF Cooperative Forest Landscape Restoration Project