



Notes

Peninsular Florida Landscape Conservation Cooperative
Steering Committee Meeting

November 20, 2014

Gainesville, Florida

Updates:

SW Florida CCB Update – Developing a Conservation Delivery Network – presentation by Julie Morris

- Identification of priority private lands and engaging land owners is complex. Difficult to determine which aspect should come first - the prioritization or the development of the incentive.
 - Landowners may be cautious of their land being identified without knowing what incentives that designation may bring
 - Development of incentives first could lead to challenges in defending selection of prioritized lands
- Would be good to identify which incentives have been used, which are most successful (and why), what might be missing
 - Conservation easements are well supported by private landowners

Implementation of Amendment 1 – presentation by Ernie Cox

- Questions to consider:
 - How do we reach out to the legislature – identify what is important to them and their districts?
 - How do we deliver conservation on the ground?
- Water will be an important issue/resource
- Identifying multiple uses will be important
- Need to be creative
- Suggested that PFLCC provides support to identify project areas/projects
 - Many large landscapes/projects have already been identified through various efforts and prioritized, accounting for multi-use values – make sure not to re-invent the good work we already have. These processes are adaptable and can continue to adapt as needs arise.
 - May need an ad hoc group for quick planning/action for 2015 legislative session
- Need to identify key players – not just the conservation community and politicians, but also the NGOs and business groups.
- Many legislators feel there is already too much land in public ownership – don't want more land removed from the tax roll. Could be a challenge to overcome.
- State agencies already coordinate well on land acquisition, may need to improve coordination between state and federal agencies.

Update on Private landowner Committee – Dave Hankla

- Evaluating possibility of statewide safe harbor agreement for agricultural lands
- For the private landowner – If management actions on private property (ag) have increased listed species presence/habitat the landowner would not be prevented from returning their property to baseline conditions, even if doing so would negatively impact the species.
- Looking to PFLCC for interest – in being the permit holder, carrying out the permit requirement, monitoring
 - Permit “tasks” could be shared across several individuals
 - A menu of possible permit options for individuals could be developed
 - Dave is willing to be the permit holder if necessary.
- The idea has received positive feedback from the USFWS
- There may be concerns with non-federal/non government entities holding the permit
 - Has been done – Arkansas (document will be shared with SC)
- Baseline assessments may not have to always be done by the USFWS – they could identify appropriate entity to conduct it. USFWS does have to sign all baseline surveys/assessments.
- Dave will move forward, working with the Private Landowner team.

TNC Updates – presentation by Richard Hilsenbeck

- Getting the right areas purchased can take a long time, but can still be successful
 - Some areas do get “lost” due to length of time or being ranked too low
 - Need to find a way to place higher value on key corridors – other higher ranked areas may only be of higher value if they remain connected. Without the corridors, other areas will lose value.

Update on Conservation Targets – by Stephanie Romanach

- This will be an adaptive process. The process to develop conservation targets will be well documented so it is transferable and decision points can be tracked
- It is not a USFWS effort. It is an LCC issue – each LCC is tasked with identifying “targets” – some are using Natural Resource Indicators (species, habitats, ecosystems), some are focusing on just species, some on other aspects such as threats
- Proposed geographical delineations using modified Ecoregions
 - Ecoregions may not resonate with some audiences
 - The number of proposed ecoregions (10) may be too many
 - Potential alternate is Water Management District boundaries
 - May need to divide state using something other than geographic boundaries – by resource type – water, land resources, corridors...?

- We need to organize the state in a way that maintains biological relevance and have metrics and actions that can relate back.
- A SE region-wide effort to delineate landscapes used ecoregions – Scott will share the document
- There are several ongoing SE region wide efforts – Southeast Conservation Adaptation Strategy, Gulf Coast Vulnerability Assessment, SE connectivity
- The targets should be identified for a wide-range of options, not just focusing on acquisition and easements
- We need to find a way to engage the PFLCC SC in this process as a collective and not as individual responses
 - Need conversations and discussions – a facilitated workshop/meeting – early in 2015
 - May need to develop a technical team
- Agreed that CLIP is a good starting point
 - Need to review that using CLIP priority areas will get at what we want
 - Need to determine what it will take over time to achieve the “picture” of Florida that we want
 - Need to provide explicit measures of how much, how much more, where, ...
- Need to keep Amendment 1 in mind during this process
 - A possible metric is no change in the level of support (by county/district) of Amendment 1. Map of percent voting “yes” by county will be shared.
 - The PFLCC needs to stay informed as to progress/process
- Need to clearly define metrics and how we will track them

Science Updates – presentation by Steve Traxler

- The Science Coordinators are currently working on the PFLCC Science Plan
 - This will be an over-arching plan that provides science direction to the PFLCC to achieve its' mission and meet LCC Science metrics.
 - A draft version will be sent to the Steering Committee for review/comment
- The Science Coordinators will begin work on a Science Strategic Plan after approval of the Science Plan by the Steering Committee.
 - The strategic plan will identify science tasks and actions for the next 3-5 years
 - The Science coordinators will work with the Steering Committee to provide potential direction that tasks and actions may need to take to meet objectives of the Science Plan
 - The Science Strategic Plan will be developed in a way that it is flexible enough to address and accommodate uncertainties
- The PFLCC needs to find ways to track conservation delivery/actions
 - This is in the Science Investment and Accountability Schedule that measure the success of the LCCs. The PFLCC staff are working on ways to track how/when LCC partners/stakeholders are including LCC identified priority resources in planning and implementation and ways to track progress towards conservation targets

- Monitoring will be a huge issue. Will work on this more once conservation targets are identified.
- Need to make sure to assess existing monitoring efforts

Wrap-Up Discussion:

- Kudos to Lisa on the Web page and Newsletter – all agree it is looking great.
 - Everyone is encouraged to submit articles/information to Lisa for the web page and newsletter
- To become a more effective collective we need to become better enablers.
 - Need to identify current challenges and then ways to get past them – what does work and is there a way to leverage successful tactics to the challenging issues
 - Need to find a way to increase process compatibility across jurisdictions/agencies – to increase efficiency
 - Need ideas on how to do this
 - Topic for upcoming monthly Steering Committee call

Steering Committee Members Attending

1. Bill Uihlein - USFWS
2. Doria Gordon – TNC
3. Scott Sanders - FWC
4. Leonard Pearlstine – National Park Service
5. Charles Shinn - Florida Farm Bureau
6. Ernie Cox - Family Lands Remembered
7. Julie Morris - Wildlands Conservation

8. Greg Galpin - Plum Creek
9. Barry Rosen – USGS
10. Todd Davison – NOAA
11. Nina Bhattacharya – NRCS (for Michael Bush)
12. Jon Oetting – FNAI (for Gary Knight)
13. Phil Gornicki – Florida Forestry Association

PFLCC Staff Attending

- 1) Tim Breault – Coordinator
- 2) Steve Traxler co-Science Coordinator
- 3) Beth Stys – co-Science Coordinator
- 4) Dave Hankla – Private Lands Incentive Coordinator
- 5) Andrew Townsend – GIS support

Other Attendees:

Brian Branciforte (FWC), Laura Brandt (USFWS), Stephanie Romanach (USGS), James Beerens (USGS), Allison Bencoter (USGS), Andy Dodd, Dennis David (USFWS), Bill Miller (USFWS), Laurie McDonald (Defenders of Wildlife), Tom Hactor (UF), Richard Hilsenbeck (TNC)

Submitted by Tim Breault

November 28, 2014