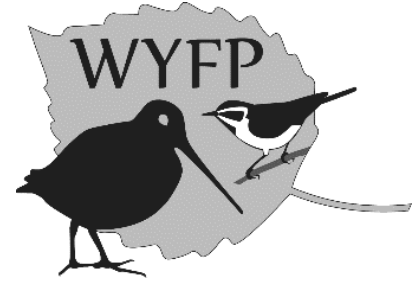


Wisconsin Young Forest Partnership Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

October 19th, 2016

9:00am-3:00pm CDT



Rhineland WDNR Conference Room 1/ Conference call

Attendees: Jeremy Holtz (WDNR- wildlife), Brian Spencer (WDNR- forestry), Ryan Willaert (WDNR- wildlife), Randee Wlodek (WYFP coordinator), Kristin Lambert (WDNR- forestry), Chris Borden (USDA- NRCS), Eric Holm (WCFA), Gary VanVreede (USFWS), Callie Bertsch (ABC), Jim Hamill (UP habitat work group), Nora Kennedy (ABC), Shawn Graff (ABC), Bob Ellingson (WWF), Scott Walter (RGS), Matthew St. Pierre (USFS), Mark Witecha (WDNR), Dan Eklund (USFS-CNNF), Janet Brehm (WDNR- wildlife), Michael John Jaeger (WBCI- call in), Yoyi Steele (WBCI-call in), Anna Buckardt (U of Maine- call in)

9:00 am Introductions

9:05 am Additions to Agenda

- No additions

9:15 am Anna Buckardt's research update

- She is working with private landowners to evaluate BMPs for woodcock and working towards citizen science (bird point counts and vegetation measurements done as well)
- Funded through USFWS webless grant, WI SFI, U of Maine, WYFP
- 2 field seasons for woodcock surveys and the hope is that the landowners will continue the research on their own. Not all landowners were participants with WYFP.
- Refer to page 7 and 8 for handout

Jeremy mentions research is important because grants won't pay for habitat implementation but will pay for research, partners involved can demonstrate that habitat work does make a difference, it'll contribute to landscape scale data. Scott mentions that this research has huge outreach potential. Shawn agrees and mentions NRCS wants results. Scott says SEAP proposal might make sense though NRCS.

9:30 am

---Steering Committee changes since last meeting (if any)

- WBCI and SAF were added on last time, no changes

---MOU

- Jeremy asked Michael if he remembers WBCI getting theirs signed and sent back. Michael will follow up on it.
- Scott is supposed to follow through with WWOA.

---Subcommittee Overview (personnel, outreach, fundraising; add monitoring?)

- Personnel- was formed and dissolved- focused on what ways there are to fund and service people
 - Ryan working with DNR, Randee contractor through WMI, Callie Bertsch coordinator for ABC/NRCS, Nora Kennedy forester for ABC/NRCS
- Outreach- focused on how do we tell our story outwards and gather information to bring inwards. Next big task is to tell what we have accomplished.
- Fundraising- focused on finding new grants and funding sources
- Monitoring- never had a committee, but everyone agrees there should be one

Points mentioned: it will provide someone to synthesize data; there is more data out there to use as well as to combine; it would be a good to have a connection to a university; there should be someone in the local area; will Amber continue to work with us in Maine or maybe someone new from Stevens Pointe or Madison should be added too; Shawn says Amber is pushing forward with GWWA work and Jeff is half paid by ABC, so he should keep going with it; Michael says FWS in Marquette are trying to coordinate all sort of research; Dan says Anna's data is going to Katy at the Lambert network; Shawn says Katy or Bill might be good, he can look into that.

- Everyone should figure out where they want to be in subcommittees
- WYFP needs participation from the partners, from subcommittees and steering committee
- **Scott says maybe if the subcommittees can meet an hour or 2 before the partnership or steering committee meetings then they can get their business done.** Maybe meet before steering committee meeting and give update at partnership meeting?

---WYFP updates – Jeremy

- Jeremy was requested to give a presentation at the National SAF in Madison to talk about private landowner engagement
- Gary Zimmer had Jeremy give an article in the timber producer's magazine
- TWS professional magazine article to talk about bringing the partnership together

---Partner updates – each rep fills us in

- **ABC-** Callie Bertsch- 2 grants to get habitat on the ground, RCPP and NFWF (refer to page 9 for handout)

RCPP- They are using the money delegated for WI whereas MN and MI are having a harder time with their money. They're working with landowners from Jeremy's list and landowners that have come straight to NRCS. Landowners don't need a plan if they're alder shearing or planting shrubs and trees in a previous agricultural land. Landowners get paid \$413/acre for early successional habitat (mainly alder shearing) and it usually costs \$150/hour from contractors where 1-2 acres/hour. \$46-48 to set up timber harvest. RCPP has been funding people as they come. NRCS might have to modify contracts or work with landowners if the winter is bad for shearing. Chris says this grant allows people to get plans and work

with people who have equipment. Jeremy says the benefit has been to get CPW, contractors, and other people to get business.

NFWF- \$25k available for public land with around \$23k spent. There is money for forest management plans as well.

- Andrew Rothman has been working landscape scale still. Jeff Larkin's crew should have reports out to landowners soon. Callie has been updating contractor list and people mentioned it would be nice to get everyone the new list of contractors sent to them.
- Shawn asks partners to get ideas of how the program can be tweaked so they can pass that along to their policy people. The presidents/founders of ABC will be retiring, but involvement will still be strong.
- Nora mentioned that it would be good to have a field day with contractors where they can try out their machines. Pensee (builds logging equipment) might want to be involved.
- **NRCS**- Chris Borden- New opportunities such as understory plantings of conifers, demo on deer exclusion on small areas to get better/more regeneration on forest floors, oak wilt single stem treatment, patch clear cuts, thinning for wildlife and forest health, EQIP, conservation stewardship program (needs to attract applicants, so payment rate has increased). Chris will give opportunities to Scott so he can distribute through the Outreach subcommittee.
- **USFS**- Dan Eklund- \$30k in agreement with DNR for Ryan and other work. They need to get final numbers, but 3,000 of aspen cut and 310 acres of alder. 5-6k acres all in Taylor county. All demo areas have gone through first entry harvest, where some have 5th and others have 10th coming up. Chris says thank you to forest service for work with Lake Superior Landscape Restoration Project, which is no longer, but EQIP is still there.
- **USFWS**- Gary VanVreede- providing funding through RGS. Doing about 10 acres a year, but not as much wetland work going on, so they can fund more projects.
- **WBCI**- Yoyi Steele and Michael John Jaeger- reach out to people about bird conservation. Not as much on the ground. They have a conference going on in Rothschild. Jeremy says there probably is a connection between breeding bird atlas and WYFP work.
- **WCFA**- Eric Holms- 1,300 acres of aspen clear cuts, sometimes have loggers run over alder as well. Price county had best year yet with \$2.23 million when usually get \$1.2 million due to markets, many loggers, and nicer jobs. Jeremy says that WCFA doesn't give themselves enough credit, they provide match, but they allow communication between the counties.
- **DNR**- Kristin Lambert- She has worked with MFL program for the last 5 years and can bring that to the table. Jeremy said Kristin and them can call and get her caught up on what the previous position has done.
- **DFN**- The big obstacle to cutting trees is public resistance. The group is pursuing landowner outreach about timber harvesting in an economical aspect and wildlife aspect. Darcy, with Driftless Forest Network, has sent out their first mailing in Langlade county using targeting outreach to landowners with 10 acres or more.
- **DMAP**- Bob Nack has been making sure DMAP is going hand in hand with young forest.

- **DNR-** Janet Brehm- Several of members went to Ackley for a field visit to get the on the ground feel for alder shearing. The biggest take home was trying to determine the biggest bang for the buck, such as prioritizing which sites are better than others, which is mainly upland alder that's not very wet.
- **RGS-** Scott Walter- Have the drummer grant that has been funding for on the ground work. There should be an economic assessment on grouse and woodcock hunting in order to increase the value of our work.

---forest wildlife specialist update – Scott W

- In addition to the farm bill biologists, there will be a forest wildlife specialist for the northern counties. This summer's work was to figure out this position. Nov. 11th deadline for applications.
- Spooner or Medford would be possible location. Jeremy says Medford might be a good location due to limited staff. There will hopefully be the need to add more positions that can be spread out more, but for now the position is only for 2 years.
- Feel free to distribute or redistribute Scott's emails to advertise for the position. The position will be funded through EQIP/RGS/DNR. They will work to get projects for NRCS, Partners, etc.

---Griffin Groups: past meeting documents available; functional, or do we need another option?

- Some people may not be able to access it. It's currently where we have our meeting minutes and basic partnership foundation documents.
- We need to figure out a new system to use that works for everyone.
 - Possibly put documents on the website

---WYFP Website: www.youngforest.org/wi

- Remember that it is there and use it for reference.

---Proposal submission updates not covered by partner updates: NFWF, RCPP, WI SFI IC, USFWS Webless, others?

12:00 am Lunch at DNR office while wrapping up agenda

12:15 pm Partnership needs, partner needs & opportunities for involvement – Scott W

- Now that we have the staff and a larger foundation, how do we continue to grow? We need to find a way to make sure everyone is providing for the partnership and getting benefits to your organization as well.

---Annual accomplishment reports – annual tabulation of dollars, acres, etc.

- For the annual report, what do we report? Only what the immediate partnership has done on the ground or what all partners have done.

Points mentioned: these numbers set the stage for funding in the future; numbers can be blurred so showing work on graphs and maps can also be useful; it's not just acres that should be in the progress report, but the contractors, foresters, etc. that we have helped provide business; the qualitative and

quantitative should both be involved; maybe do both ways- have match/leverage and another of just from the partnership; public acres are meaningless without the gaps that private lands provide; there should be a group focused on just this.

Verdict: We could report total acres of young forest work done by partners. WYFP can say that they provided the outreach with contacts through mailings, workshops and trainings, etc. that has helped partners obtain work.

- Next step: how fine scale of acres do we report? Acres of actual habitat sheared/cut, acres of the alder stand or aspen stand impacted by treatment, landowner's total property acres, or multiple?
- Should split up public acres and private acres.

---How does/can the WYFP serve you?

---What can you provide as part of the partnership (time, talents, treasure)

---White paper on our young forest objectives and implementation plan

- Bump to next meeting

12:50 pm How frequently should we meet – quarterly? More or less? Set next meeting

- Quarterly meetings, alternate with conference call/ in person.

Afternoon Field Tour

1:00 pm Field Tour – we will be visiting one property; it has a little bit of everything, from alder mowing on an upland site to aspen cuts.

2:00 pm Adjourn

Wisconsin Young Forest Partnership Leadership

Executive Committee Members:

Jeremy Holtz, Facilitator

Dan Eklund

Scott Walter

Steering Committee Members: new members always welcome

USFS: Dan Eklund and Matthew St. Pierre

NRCS: Chris Borden and Tom Krapf

USFWS: Kurt Waterstradt and Gary VanVreede

WDNR: Jeremy Holtz, Brian Spencer, Kristin Lambert, Janet Brehm, Mark Witecha and Ryan Willaert

WCFA: Gary Zimmer and Eric Holm

ABC: Callie Bertsch, Shawn Graff, and Nora Kennedy

RGS: Scott Walter

WMI: Pat Ruble, Amber Roth

Forestland Group: Shawn Hagan

WBCI: Michael John Jaeger, Yoyi Steele, Ryan Brady

WWF: Bob Ellingson

SAF: Tom Hittle

WWOA: Dale Zaug

Subcommittee Members:

Personnel: disbanded by steering committee

Outreach:

Scott Walter, Chair

Jamie Nack

Chuck Fergus (website)

Callie Bertsch

Gary Zimmer

Fundraising:

Dan Eklund, Chair

Jeremy Holtz

Monitoring:

Amber Roth?

Jeff Larkin?

WYFP Research Update October 2016

REMINDER OF STUDY OBJECTIVES

This study addresses two important needs for American Woodcock conservation. First, we will improve our understanding of breeding habitat quality for American Woodcock by evaluating best management practices (BMPs) that are being broadly applied across the eastern United States and Canada. Second, we will address the need to develop a communication strategy to increase support for policies and practices that benefit American Woodcock and other wildlife of young forests.

To address these needs, we have identified the following four objectives for this study:

- Research Objective 1 (Years 1-2): Evaluate young forest best management practices as indicated by woodcock usage and displaying male density during the spring breeding season.
- Research Objective 2 (Year 2): Identify an American Woodcock monitoring protocol that is easily conducted by private landowners based on counting displaying males in spring.

2016 PRELIMINARY RESULTS

American Woodcock Singing Ground Surveys:

American Woodcock (AMWO) singing ground surveys were conducted to understand habitat use by AMWO on private non-industrial forest lands with and without young forest management. Woodcock singing ground surveys will serve as a proxy for the success of the Golden-winged Warbler habitat management for American Woodcock, both early successional obligate species.

Below are summary data from the 2016 American Woodcock singing ground surveys. Pre-harvest and Pre-study harvest sites were on private non-industrial forest lands and control sites were on public lands and paired with pre-harvest sites.

Table 1: A description of the sites and points where American Woodcock singing ground surveys were conducted. Each point was surveyed twice between April 25 and May 15 2016, for a total of 98 Singing ground surveys conducted.

Treatment Type	Number of Survey Sites	Number of Survey Points
Control (mature aspen or alder)	12	17
Pre-harvest (scheduled harvest winter 2016)	12	18
Pre-study Harvest (0-5 years post-harvest)	12	14
Total	32	49

Table 2: Site level findings from 2016 American Woodcock (AMWO) singing ground surveys.

Treatment Type	% of sites occupied by AMWO	Average number AMWO detected per site	Greatest number of AMWO per site
Control	29.4	0.32	2
Pre-harvest	5.6	0.08	1
Pre-study Harvest	71.4	0.98	3

Table 3: 2016 American Woodcock (AMWO) singing ground survey summary statistics when data from 98 surveys (49 unique survey points each surveyed twice) are pooled.

Treatment Type	% of surveys with AMWO detected	Average number of AMWO detected per survey
Control	20.6	0.24
Pre-harvest	23.5	0.06
Pre-study Harvest	67.9	1.00

Table 4: A Comparison of American Woodcock (AMWO) detections between the first and second round of singing ground surveys in 2016.

Treatment Type	Number of sites with AMWO detected during survey 1	Number of sites with AMWO detected during survey 2	Number of AMWO detected during survey round 1	Number of AMWO detected during survey round 2
Control	3	3	4	4
Pre-harvest	1	1	1	1
Pre-study Harvest	11	8	17	11

Landowner Interviews:

The goal of these landowner interviews is to better understand landowner interest in citizen science based activities in which landowners can become more active on their property. These interviews try to understand what landowners know about citizen science, their prior experiences with citizen science projects, and their willingness to collect data on their own property. 18 interviews were completed with landowners whose properties were being surveyed for American Woodcock. Interviews are being transcribed for further analysis of themes in participant responses.

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

This USFWS webless grant has allowed us to expand the project using other grants and collaborative funding. This grant gave us a framework, upon which, we were able to expand the information we gather about young forest management and the bird species that rely on it.

With funding from the Wisconsin Sustainable Forestry Initiative (WI SFI) we were able to add breeding bird point counts and Golden-winged Warbler playback surveys at each of the AMWO survey points. This additional data included 98 point-count and Golden-winged Warbler surveys. These resulted in the detection of 82 species, 11 of which are species of greatest conservation need according to the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan.

Additional funding from a collaboration of sources allowed for investigation of Golden-winged Warbler broad scale habitat use by using light-level geolocators. These geolocators will allow us to determine migratory paths and broad scale habitat use during stop-over and wintering. During 2016 we deployed 28 geo-locators and will recover them in the spring of 2017.

American Bird Conservancy
Forest Habitat Coordinator Update

Current as of 10/19/2016

Callie Bertsch

RCPP

NRCS- Young Forest				
Year	Contracts	Dollar Amount	Contracted Acres	Acres Certified Complete*
2014	20	\$36,193.58	258.4	184.6
2015	9	\$26,916.77	119.4	104.4
Total	29	\$63,110.35	377.8	289

NRCS/ABC-RCPP						
Year	Contracts	Dollar Amount	Contracted Acres	Acres Certified Complete*	Applications Pre-Approved	Applications Pending^
2015	19	\$89,565.18	288	132	N/A	N/A
2016	63	\$285,749.34	949.8	29.5	N/A	N/A
2017	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	37
Total	82	\$375314.52	1237.8	161.5	N/A	37

*Acres may not have been completed due to weather constraints or were just recently contracted and will be completed winter of 2016/2017.

^Next NRCS deadline is December 2nd. This is for current eligible applications to have priority screening. The next possible batching deadline is **March 3rd, 2017**.

NFWF

- **Public Lands:** Eagle Ridge (MN) – Completed (\$10,575)
 Flambeau School District (Rusk County, WI) – To be implemented Winter 2016/2017 (\$4,700)
 WI DNR (Ackley) – Pending Signature of Agreement (\$9,725)
- **Forest Management Plans:** 16 FMP's written for private forest landowners for a total of 2,225 acres. 7 CPW foresters were utilized. \$23,346 spent to date.