

Proceedings of the 21st Annual Meeting of the National Bobwhite Technical Committee



August 4 – 7, 2015
Stockton Seaview Hotel
Galloway NJ



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Conference Agenda

Tuesday, August 3

- 7:00 – 6:00 Registration
- 8:00 – Noon Steering Committee Meeting
- 1:00 – 6:00 State Quail Coordinators Meeting
- 3:00 – 3:15 Break
- 6:30 – 8:30 Welcome Reception & Auction
- 8:30 – 11:30 Hospitality

Wednesday, August 4

- 7:00 – 8:00 Breakfast Buffet
- 7:30 – 6:00 Registration
- 8:00 – 10:00 General Plenary Session – 2015 Meeting Chair *Andrew Burnett, NJDFW*
 - Welcome and Opening Remarks – *Dave Chanda, Director, NJ Division Fish & Wildlife*
 - The Bobwhite in New Jersey – *Andrew Burnett, NJDFW Upland Game Biologist*
 - Restoring Bobwhite along its Northern Fringe – *John Parke, NJ Audubon Society and Dr. Theron Terhune, Tall Timbers Research Station*
- 10:00 – 10:15 Break & Auction
- 10:15 – 12:00 General Plenary Session
 - NBCI Update – *Don McKenzie, NBCI Director*
 - Shortleaf Pine Initiative Update – *Mike Black, SPI Director*
 - Strategic Monitoring & Applications in Ag Landscapes – *John M. Yeiser, UGA*
- 12:00 – 1:00 Lunch Buffet
- 1:00 – 3:00 Subcommittee Meetings (*Ag Policy, Forestry, Grasslands/Grazing Lands, Outreach, Research*) *Note: Mined Lands committee did not meet.*
- 3:00 – 3:15 Break & Silent Auction
- 3:15 – 5:15 Subcommittee Meetings (*Continued*)
- 6:30 – 8:30 Dinner and Awards Presentation
- 8:30 – 11:30 Hospitality

Thursday, August 6

- 7:00 – 8:00 Breakfast Buffet
- 7:30 – 12:30 Registration & Silent Auction
- 8:00 – 11:30 Subcommittee Meetings (*Continued*)
- 10:15 – 10:30 Break
- 12:00 – 1:00 Lunch
- 2:00 – 5:00 NBTC Business Meeting (Finance, Subcommittee Reports, Election Results, Adjourn)
- 6:30 – 8:30 Dinner

Friday, August 7

- 7:00 – 8:00 Breakfast Buffet
- 11:30 Assemble for Field Trip
- 6:00 – 8:30 Field Trip Dinner
- 9:30 Return to Hotel

Steering Committee Meeting Agenda

Tuesday – August 4, 2015

- 8:00 – 8:20 Welcome and introduction of participants (All)
- 8:20 – 8:30 Approval of Des Moines minutes (Kowaleski)
- 8:30 – 8:40 Treasurer’s report (Morgan) (*Note – need to select audit committee and conduct audit before Business meeting)
- 8:40 – 9:00 Update on NBCI progress over the last year – hiring, accomplishments, works in progress, short term and long term goals (Dailey and McKenzie) – *Note, full new staff introductions and updates will occur later during state coordinators meeting this afternoon.
- 9:00 – 9:30 Quail VIII update – dates/hotel contract/review of proposed agenda (Dailey)
- 9:30 – 10:00 Latest on NBCI funding status, PR, State, Foundation, possible National Upland Game Bird Stamp and briefing on Texas trip (McKenzie)
- 10:00 – 10:15 Break
- 11:10 – 11:40 NBCI Habitat Guide progress and other projects and products (Doty, Kowaleski)
- 11:40 – 12:00 State Coordinator’s meeting prep – how do we maximize meeting productivity by maintaining focus on subcommittee needs and barriers to CIP implementation (Morgan)

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday – 4 August 2015

Attendees: Don McKenzie, John Doty, Jay Howell, John Morgan, Jim Wooley, Todd Bogenschutz, Tom Dailey, Chuck Kowaleski, Jef Hodges, James Martin, Marc Puckett, Steve Chapman, Ben Robinson, Kyle Johnson, Jay Stine, Andrew Burnett, Reggie Thackston, Chris Kreh, Tom Franklin, Elsa Gallagher

8:20 – 8:30 – Approval of Des Moines minutes (Kowaleski).

The first order of business was the approval of the Iowa meeting minutes. Wooley made a motion to accept with a second from Bogenschutz. The motion unanimously passed.

8:30 – 8:40 – Treasurer’s Report (Morgan)

John Morgan presented the treasurers report as follows. The NBTC account balance reported at the last Treasurers report at the July-August meeting in Des Moines Iowa was \$30,183.53. Since that time we’ve taken in \$215 in dues and \$5,101.44 from the meeting and paid out \$2,451.96 to cover the cost of the 2015 award plaques and gift certificates, \$1,774.29 in travel reimbursements for folks to attend various meetings and functions, and \$515.44 in miscellaneous expenses. Our current balance is \$30,758.28.

Puckett, Thackston, and Kowaleski agreed to review the financial records for accuracy. Morgan reported that confusion regarding the \$5,000 deposit from the Iowa meeting was indeed in the account the whole time. Awards and travel made up the majority of expenditures and travel was under the 10% approved allocation.

8:40 – 9:00 – NBCI Update (Dailey, McKenzie)

McKenzie noted the greatest hurdle of the first year was getting the contracts in place with the states. The first PR report was completed and circulated. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. However, the report is not the full picture as some NBCI activities ineligible for PR. The NBCI will use 2 or 3 reporting mechanisms over the course of a year: PR report, SOTB, and PR plus report that include ineligible activities. Kowaleski noted that the report was a great job and it has been accepted all the USFWS Regions. A point of discussion centered on how to get the report to all partners. Ideas included AFWA, state meetings, list-server, website, and defined list of state contacts (especially PR and quail coordinators). Thackston recommended that report have an executive summary limited to a single page.

McKenzie reported some of the PR highlights. All PR contracts are completed except FL and AR due to contracting issues. The NBCI hired 4 staff this year including Tom Franklin, Jef Hodges, Derek Evans, and Steve Chapman. The expectation is for year 2 to be much more productive as a full complement of staff is assembled. UT continues to be an excellent partner. Increased demand for administrative services resulting from the PR funding mechanism. In February, the SC approved (also approved by the Mgmt. Board) the investment of administrative help at UT for NBCI. UT is hiring 2 full time admin staff, but part-time support on both positions for the NBCI. Martin inquired how that time would be tracked at UT. McKenzie noted that UT has a time accounting system designed to follow time investments. McKenzie reported that Evans has migrated the CPT to the UT server, Black has become the Director of the blossoming Shortleaf Pine Initiative, and ultimately, the Shortleaf Plan is essentially an NBCI product. Puckett inquired if the CPT was available. McKenzie confirmed it would be soon. Dailey added that the research subcommittee is looking at edits to the CPT in relation to bobwhite densities for focal areas. McKenzie noted the FSA has approved the center pivot corners practice as eligible for CP-33. That request was first submitted in 1996 with the field borders request. After 19 years, it was

approved. Roughly 3,000 acres enrolled since was approved and work is underway to separate borders from corners with respect to tracking. Martin is applying for a research dollars to support the new opportunity.

McKenzie continued his report by highlighting his year by meeting with 4 state boards (VA, SC, AR, TX). All were successful visits and AR requested recommendations on how the agency should move forward towards bobwhite restoration. Franklin met with the Hunting and Wildlife Heritage Council. He generated a letter of support for agency heads. The Natives First Initiative continues forward under the guidance of Jef Hodges. He is working new opportunities with the seed trade industry and developing an MOU with them moving forward. The Pea Ridge National Military Park in AR is quickly becoming the next CIP focal area. The concept is expanding to military parks in TN, PA, and VA. The NBCI, in partnership with KDFWR, held the habitat assessment training at Shaker Village. It was well done and well received by 25 attendees from more than a dozen states. Doty had a film crew on-site that has some information viewable on the web. Drone footage was also captured. PA has requested an NBCI habitat assessment for one of their potential restoration sites. Dailey, Hodges, and Chapman will be looking at that site in the coming days.

Non PR accomplishments included the Park Cities Quail partnership. The group was generous enough to extend their grant upon Kyle Brazil exiting of the Ag policy position. They extended it through the current year and have granted additional funding to carry the position through June of 2016. A Congressional Staff Field Tour is slated for 2 September in Maryland which is an outstanding opportunity for the group. It is valuable for building relations with members of Congress. Bob Long is involved and it is hosted by Chito Farms. They have 20 years of NWSG restoration with a good population of bobwhite. It includes buffers and blocks of habitat. Franklin encouraged states to use in-state resources to foster attendees to this trip. He would share list of target attendees. Puckett inquired if Tall Timbers was involved, but they were not. Gallagher will be talking about 30 year anniversary of CRP. Keyser will not be in attendance but Hodges will represent the grassland committee. Bogenschutz inquired if USDA staffers would be invited. Franklin would like to stick with congressional folks. Bogenschutz noted it could put a lot of pressure on USDA staffers though. Franklin will look into upper level USDA staff participation. McKenzie would like to see 2 to 3 of these a year and invite other states to attend.

Martin inquired about the situation on the Cades Cove Focal Area Project. Doty reported that TWRA staff had been on-site and heard some bobwhite. It does represent the #1 visited location in the National Park system. They are working to restore to original condition which included bobwhite habitat. The NBCI would be interested in working collaboratively on outreach with the park. It may just end up being a demo site, but the discussions have been on-going for a couple of years. It is a high value outreach opportunity.

9:00 – 9:30 – Quail VIII Update (Dailey)

Dailey discussed progress on the Quail VIII meeting. It will be a joint meeting with NBTC in 2017. There will not be a field trip. TWRA and UT are key partners and they decided to stick with the UT contract with the Holiday Inn World's Fair in Knoxville. The dates are slated for July 24-29th.

9:30 – 10:00 – Latest on NBCI funding (PR, State, Foundation) and possible new initiative (McKenzie).

Fourteen states have pledged PR funding. LA used state funds. TN has verbally stepped up with an additional \$20,000. Morgan asked what about asking other states to step up. McKenzie felt the best time for that would be as we approach the 3 year mark when some states may drop out. Bogenschutz inquired about concern about future funding by states, but the hope is the proving power of partnerships will keep dollars coming. Thackston asked if we had a list of expectations from Directors. McKenzie noted he's been working on that for a couple of years, but he feels like the NBCI is pretty good place on where the deliverables are heading. Kowaleski noted that would be a good ask of the Management Board to help ID targets. Martin noted what will happen when the PR bubble goes down and considered NBCI funding and easy target.

McKenzie transitioned to the discussions focused on the Bobwhite Foundation. He noted that there are lots of targets out there, but no one has stepped up beyond the initial investment from Joe Crafton. Recently, the PR effort has demanded the majority of time and attention. Lenny Brennan created a huge opportunity in S. Texas by inviting the NBCI to one of their donor luncheons. It resulted in a few small level donations, but the follow-up not there to secure big donors. SC had a similar opportunity, but it requires intense, long-term follow-up. Kowaleski inquired if Keith Barber could be of help. McKenzie noted that he has helped some, but he cannot be the point person. Kowaleski noted that we lack the expertise to raise funds like this and we need Barber to attend trips like those. McKenzie discussed that with Barber, but considered it a “first-date” and the second visit is more important. Kowaleski noted that a thank you is in order for Brennan and Ceasar Kleberg for the opportunity to meet their donors, and recommended that we get with Barber to get a “second date.” As PR settles, this is next logical investment of McKenzie’s time. A board must be set up as soon as possible. At the moment, the Foundation has \$100,000. Thackston inquired if we can shift to the Foundation in 3 years as some Directors are expecting. McKenzie stated that is not likely the Foundation could carry the costs of the NBCI by that time and need to stay focused on keeping the states invested. Hodges asked if a Director had been discussed for the Foundation, and McKenzie noted it had but not been able to act on it. Ultimately, the Foundation needs to endow \$30-40 million.

The next topic of discussion was the AFWA Blue Ribbon Panel for the sustainable funding for wildlife resources beyond the typical payers. The Ultimate Upland group started a blog conversation on the internet regarding a national upland gamebird hunting stamp. McKenzie reached out to Brian Cook (the author). Cook attended the North American Conference to see the leaders of conservation and pitched the idea to the Resident Gamebird Working Group. The pitch didn’t generate much discussion, but it did stimulate a chance to group’s charter to look at long-term funding for upland gamebirds. Ultimately, McKenzie had 4 days to draft a letter to the Blue Ribbon panel, so he worked with executive management board to get approval to pitch the stamp idea. McKenzie also got a call from the dove and woodcock interests 2 days after submitting the concept. McKenzie presented a case that NBTC should be the group that leads the resident gamebird working group towards having this conversation. Discussion followed including Puckett highlighting states spending limits that often make “new” money not spendable. Thackston questioned how to regulate the allocation of funds, can it be used for management, research, and outreach? Kowaleski questioned if the feds could be kept out of the loop. The group agreed that the feds would be a critical to maintain and protect the dollars for their intended purpose. Franklin pitched the thought of expanding upland habitat to attract a broader base, but Thackston/Kowaleski cautioned the risk that steer dollars to deer and turkey interests not gamebirds. Kowaleski thought removing hunting from the name may help broaden interest. Robinson offered that access should be tied to the stamp. The group landed on the following motion by Thackston seconded by Martin: *The NBTC Steering Committee recommends that the AFWA Resident Game Bird Working Group consider an upland game bird stamp or other suitable options for creating sustainable and dedicated new national funding for upland game bird conservation as a needed and viable concept that deserves to be pursued.*

NBTC Steering Committee voted unanimously (9-0, no abstentions) in support of the above motion at 11:20 am.

11:20 – 11:50 – NBCI Habitat Guide progress and other projects/products (Doty, Kowalski)

Doty noted he is working with Kowaleski to finalize the habitat guide initiated by Aaron Jeffries. Kowaleski farmed out the draft to the subcommittees to polish and update and gathered images. The document contained a lot of repetition. Doty recommended making it an appendix for the NBCI 2.0. The group discussed if the audience was managers or landowners? The document may need chopped up to smaller more commercial pieces. Robinson noted the outreach subcommittee will look into it from the perspective of an audience to include foresters, USDA staff, landowners, and typical WMA managers.

Outreach had generated products over the last year including an electronic newsletter and bobwhite brief for outdoor media folks. The UT NBCI brochure was completed, and the NBCI is now a member of the Outdoor Writers Association of America and Professional Outdoor Media Association. The web-site is going to be revamped in conjunction with upcoming NBCI data services. The TRCP documentary "This America Land" is progressing well. A 4 segment episodes (for a total of 30 minutes) will tell the bobwhite story. It will include an overview, forest, grassland, and Ag segment. The forest segment has been filmed in SC.

Wooley invited the group to consider having the winter meeting in conjunction with Quail Fest on the 19-21st of February. It includes a trade show, hunting dogs, and habitat segments. There is a USDA Secretary reception on the 18th. He asked the group to respond by September.

Kowaleski adjourned the meeting at 11:54 AM.

State Quail Coordinators Meeting Agenda

Tuesday – 4 August 2015

- 1:00 – 1:30 Welcome – Don McKenzie & Chuck Kowalski
Brief round robin introduction for all in attendance
- 1:30 – 2:00 Introductions and updates by NBCI staff members
- 2:00 – 3:30 CIP: Status, Opportunities and Barriers – John Morgan, facilitator
1. What is the status of the CIP in your state?
 - a. Describe active or proposed focus and reference area project sites including if it is tiered (single slides of a map welcome)
 - b. Describe monitoring program plan
 - c. Describe habitat implementation plan
 - d. If no activity on these fronts, present future vision from your perspective to get a CIP project going or why it won't work in your state
 2. What are the top 3 opportunities for the CIP to be successful in your state?
 3. What are the top 3 barriers for the CIP in your state?
- 3:30 – 3:45 Break
- 3:45 – 4:45 Open discussion NBCI/NBTC funding – Don McKenzie
Sources – including the possibility of a new national game bird stamp
Insuring longevity, what do we want/need to accomplish?
What are States expecting in return for their P-R dollars?
Can coordinators play a role in finding donors for the NBCI Foundation?
- 4:45 – 5:45 How can subcommittees with staff and funding maximize their effectiveness?
Increasing/improving communications within NBTC/NBCI/Subcommittees between meetings
Maybe have subcommittees come up with a list of suggestions before the meeting?
Subcommittee charges – Chuck Kowalski
- 5:45 – 6:00 Wrap up discussion

State Quail Coordinators Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Tom Dailey, NBCI Assistant Director/Science Coordinator

John Morgan (KY) led a facilitated discussion of implementation of the NBCI Coordinated Implementation Program (CIP), primarily on Focal Area implementation and Tom Dailey (NBCI) kept meeting notes. The focus was on circumstances that make the CIP doable in each state, and barriers to implementation. Each state was given 5 minutes to discuss a set of questions provided before the meeting, and coordinators' had the opportunity to provide their state's CIP information for a PowerPoint displayed as background. Quail coordinators from 21 of 25 NBCI states participated in the facilitated discussion (IL, IN, MS and WV absent).

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the status of the CIP in your state?
 - a. Describe active or proposed focus and reference area project sites including if it is tiered.
 - b. Describe monitoring program plan.
 - c. Describe habitat implementation plan.
 - d. If no activity on these fronts, present future vision from your perspective to get a CIP project going or why it won't work in your state.
2. What are top 3 opportunities for the CIP to be successful in your state?
3. What are top 3 barriers for the CIP in your state?

This is the first Annual NBTC meeting to provide live interactive remote meeting access via Zoom video conferencing. This was made possible by NBCI's new Data Analyst, Derek Evans, the University of Tennessee, and by host Andrew Burnett. Derek participated throughout the week in Research Subcommittee meetings, and the NBTC business meeting, with remote access to these meetings available. High-speed internet is necessary.

Content of the facilitated discussion was captured by Tom Dailey, Derek Evans and Don McKenzie. Answers shared by coordinators were categorized and summarized in Figures 1-3 below. Because a standardized question/fixed response format was not used, responses below provide only a partial description of the nuances of positive and negative factors affecting implementation of the CIP.

Positive factors contributing to CIP success (Figure 1) include following coordinator responses: (1) The majority of the 25 NBCI state agencies have, or are planning, CIP Focal Areas; (2) Strategic Habitat Conservation--NBCI-led effort to measure quail population response, provide proof of concept, etc., is desirable and motivational for agency, partners, landowners &/or hunters); (3) Funding and/or Personnel has increased substantially in some states to meet needs of a comprehensive CIP Focal Area; (4) Partner Cooperation, with federal, state and NGO partners, is increasing; (5) Agency Leadership--agency supportive is increasing; (6) Private Landowner Cooperation--both short- and long-term interest in carrying out habitat-based bobwhite conservation is increasing; and (7) NBCI CIP Focal Tiers--agency and/or partners are increasingly using Focal Tiers conservation planning.

Barriers to CIP success (Figure 2) include following coordinator responses: (1) Funding and/or Personnel staffing levels are inadequate, particularly for monitoring, but also for CIP prescribed management; (2) Private Landownership--landowner willingness to implement programs is lacking, because of cost, history of ineffective agency efforts, quail not a priority, quail numbers very low, etc., and ownership changes often; (3) Agency Commitment Uncertain--commitment to quail management is lacking, now, or perceive it could weaken in future; (4) Quail Hunters Unsupportive--hunters are not contributing to implementation of CIP because of small numbers and/or lack of faith in agency habitat-based solution; (5) Quail Abundance Low--eastern states, DE, NJ and PA, believe quail abundance might be inadequate for restoration, however, Maryland believes their populations are sufficient; (6) Partner Support Deficient--some uncertainty about short-term value of farm bill

programs and long-term commitment to CIP (10 years); and (7) Harvest Monitoring/Management aspect of CIP—very difficult to implement.

Figure 1. Positive Factors Contributing to CIP Success

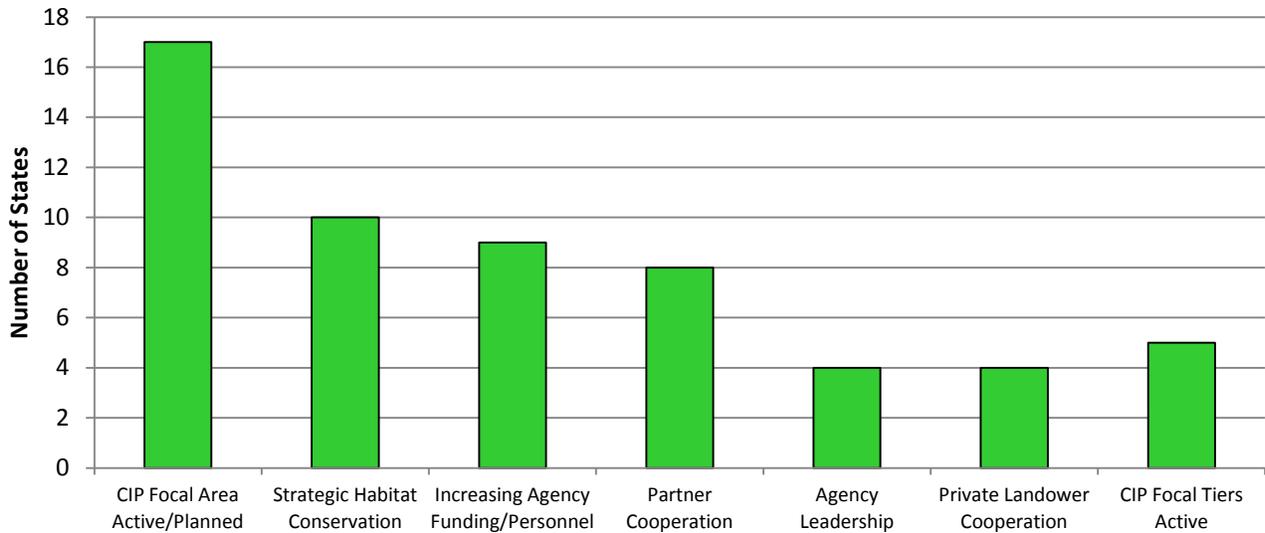
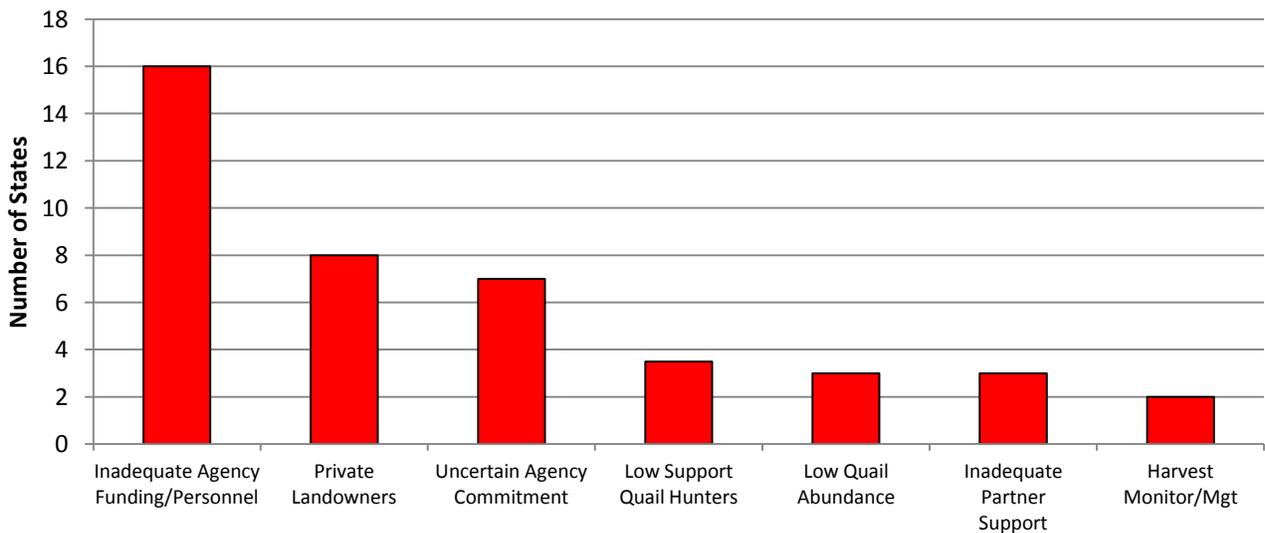


Figure 2. Barriers to CIP Success



Notes and the background PowerPoint used by John Morgan are available upon request.

In addition to the CIP discussion, NBCI & NBTC recognize NBCI coordinators who had met annual deadlines for the NBCI Inventory (GA, KS, MO, NJ, NC, OK and VA) and NBCI State Conservation Reports (FL, GA, IN, IA, KS, LA, MD, MS, MO, NC, NE, OK, TN and WV). A random drawing from each pool resulted in two coordinators being further rewarded for their efforts by the NBTC Steering Committee (Oklahoma—Scott Cox & Kyle Johnson; Georgia—Reggie Thackston).

Committee Awards

Individual Achievement



John Morgan, KYDFWR

John J. Morgan, small game program manager for the Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources, took home the National Bobwhite Technical Committee's (NBTC) Award for Individual Achievement at ceremonies of the 21st NBTC annual meeting.

Described in the nomination as “a true leader in this field of quail conservation,” Morgan has not only led efforts to restore wild quail on Kentucky’s landscape but also has been instrumental in national bobwhite recovery efforts as well.

Morgan has served for years on the group’s research subcommittee, is current secretary/treasurer and incoming chair (2016) of the NBTC, has played a pivotal role in the development of the Coordinated Implementation Program (CIP) for the National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative (NBCI), and recently led his state in hosting a CIP habitat assessment training program for biologists from 14 other states.

Group Achievement

The Center for Native Grasslands Management (CNGM) at the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture took home one of two Awards for Group Achievement presented by the National Bobwhite Technical Committee (NBTC) during the group’s annual meeting. The Center, established in 2006 in Knoxville, Tennessee, provides technical and economic information to producers and land managers for establishing and managing native grasses on “working lands.” Replacement of a portion of exotic, cool season pasture grasses with native warm season grasses is a key objective of both the NBTC and the 25-state National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative (NBCI) in their efforts to restore wild bobwhites to the landscape while providing producers an economic buffer in times of drought.



(l-r) Dr. Chris Lituma (CNGM) and NBTC Past Chair Marc Puckett (VDGIF)



(l-r) Dr. Theron M. Terhune (TTRS) and Reggie Thackston (GADNR)

The development of an innovative transplantation or relocation policy for wild bobwhites by Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy (TTRS) and the Wildlife Resources Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources garnered an Award for Group Achievement from the National Bobwhite Technical Committee (NBTC) at its annual meeting here recently.

The entities were cited for “exemplifying collaborative efforts and thinking outside the box” in developing the ability – and process – for relocating wild bobwhites. This process is being viewed as a viable method in assisting areas or even states where wild birds have

disappeared to jumpstart population recovery if there is sufficient quantity and quality of habitat.

NBCI Fire Bird Conservation Awards

The contributions to wild bobwhite restoration by entities and/or individuals in six National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative (NBCI) member-states claimed NBCI National Fire Bird Conservation Awards following ceremonies at the annual meeting of the nation’s bobwhite experts here recently. Award recipients are nominated by the respective NBCI-member state’s quail coordinator for their contributions to that state’s efforts toward habitat-based restoration of wild bobwhite populations on a landscape scale.

The award’s name symbolizes the historic reliance of bobwhites on fire in much of its range to maintain the landscape in an “early successional” stage, that is, in the native grasses, wildflowers and “beneficial weeds” providing bobwhites with suitable habitat. Both wildfires and fires intentionally set by landowners to clear farm fields and woodlots historically resulted in abundant habitat for bobwhites, as well as other wildlife. The term “fire bird” in relation to bobwhites was first coined by naturalist Herbert Stoddard, who researched bobwhites and worked to restore bobwhite habitat in the early 20th Century.

“NBCI provides this avenue for states to recognize and thank those making meaningful contributions to the science-based restoration agenda, and perhaps help encourage others to join their efforts,” said NBCI Director Don McKenzie. “We need as many individuals, agencies and organizations as possible actively contributing to this unified 25-state strategy.”

Today, “prescribed” fire under controlled conditions by trained professionals has become an increasingly important tool for helping create and manage habitat for bobwhites, as well as a suite of songbirds, pollinators and other wildlife that require early successional habitats to survive.

2015 award recipients were:

FLORIDA – UERP Steering Committee



*(l-r) Greg Hagan (FFWCC) and NBTC
Past Chair Puckett (VDGIF)*

Florida’s Upland Ecosystem Restoration Project (UERP) Steering Committee has provided the leadership in increasing the use of prescribed fire on the landscape and having over 110,000 acres of public lands managed for bobwhites.

UERP is a cooperative partnership between the Florida Forest Service, Florida Park Service, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, U.S. Forest Service and Tall Timbers Research Station to improve populations of bobwhites and other declining species on public lands throughout Florida. Florida leads the nation in the

application of prescribed fire, issuing over 100,000 burn authorizations allowing landowners and state and federal agencies to conduct prescribed burning on an average of 2 million acres each year. Most importantly, a large percentage of these acres are burned on a 1 – 3 year frequency in an effort to maximize the early successional habitat these species require, a primary objective of the UERP Steering Committee.

UERP Steering Committee members include: Jim Karels, director, Florida Forest Service; Parks Small, chief, Florida Park Service; Eric Sutton, assistant executive director, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission; Marianne Gengenbach, program administrator, Florida Division of State Lands; Dr. Bill Palmer, president/CEO, Tall Timbers Research Station; and Lane Green, North Florida Prescribed Fire Council Steering Committee.

KENTUCKY – Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill

Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill (SVPH) is one of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources’ (KDFWR) strongest allies in bobwhite restoration. Beginning in 2009, SVPH began the transition from the cattle business into a wildlife habitat management role, specifically focusing on bobwhite. Fast-forward six years and with more than 1,000 acres of high quality bobwhite habitat on the ground, SVPH is now known locally, regionally and nationally as one of the largest quail restoration success stories in the country.



KDFWR has used SVPH as a springboard to validate its 10-year quail restoration plan, “Road to Recovery.” The property has been a proving ground to demonstrate that habitat restoration truly is the answer to restoring wild bobwhite. Kentucky was one of a few states to pilot test the NBCI’s Coordinated Implementation Program (CIP) protocol. Prior to pilot testing, Shaker Village was the site for the first meetings to create the national CIP and was recently home to the first ever CIP training attracting representatives for 14 states to learn about the new protocol.

In past years, hunting was not allowed on SVPH property. Today, quail, deer, and other small game hunters are regularly seen on the property, with all proceeds from the hunts going directly to manage and maintain the SVPH habitats.



Cody Cedotal, LDWF, on behalf of Sandy Hollow Burn Team

LOUISIANA – Christian Winslow & Sandy Hollow WMA Burn Team

Sandy Hollow Wildlife Management Area is the state’s only WMA dedicated to bobwhites. Winslow and his colleagues with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries’ burn team assess habitat response and burn needs annually, then conduct prescribed burns using small patch burning at a rate of 2,000 acres annually -- with plans to increase burn acres in future years.

Bobwhite numbers observed in annual summer whistle counts have trended upward since the early 2000’s in response to these efforts, and under Christian’s leadership other quail friendly practices are also increasing, including fallow disking, wildlife plantings, and timber harvests. The Sandy Hollow team created and maintains some of the highest quality bobwhite habitat in the state. Sandy Hollow burn team staff includes Tommy Bruhl, Jill Day, Calvin Waskom, Wade Fitzsimmons, Jake Tate, and Jason Childress.

MISSOURI – Kyle Hedges and Frank Loncarich

As Missouri Department of Conservation public land managers with responsibility for a combined 26,000 acres in southwest Missouri, Hedges and Loncarich have demonstrated convincingly that bobwhites can be a part of a native grassland management program built upon grazing and prescribed fire. While these tools are commonly applied for bobwhite management in range country, they have often been approached with hesitation and skepticism in the Midwest, where public – and often agency – perception is that grazing is inherently bad for natural resources. Their work has clearly shown that these powerful management tools can be applied in Midwestern landscapes with positive results for grassland flora and fauna. The pair also recently proposed and earned approval for a long-term study of the effects of different native-forages grazing management styles on bobwhite breeding ecology. Now midway through the study, this project shows promise to fundamentally change MDC’s approach to quail management on many public lands.



(l-r) Frank Loncarich and State Quail Coordinator Scott Sudkamp, MODOC

TENNESSEE – Clint Borum



As a biologist for Tennessee’s Landowner Incentive Program (LIP), Borum has integrated bobwhite quail habitat into most of the private lands contracts that he has managed, and he has emerged as one of best “bobwhite arsonists” in the state. Borum averages 12 prescribed burns per year to improve bobwhite habitats, and handles many technical assistance calls from landowners annually. He also has identified how to successfully integrate quail habitat into management plans for landowners whose primary interests are often deer and turkey.

Left - TN Quail Coordinator Roger Applegate (l) and Clint Borum (r)

VIRGINIA – Robert “Bob” Glennon

Retired from the US Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) after years as a plant materials specialist, ecologist, natural resource planner and manager of the National Farm and Ranchland Protection Program, Robert “Bob” Glennon has contributed his expertise to the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries’ Quail Team for more than four years. His emphasis is on outreach and he routinely attends and displays posters oriented toward quail recovery at multiple conservation events annually. He is a routine contributor to the state’s Virginia Bobwhite Bulletin page on Facebook and has spent innumerable hours mentoring the team’s young biologists, helping them develop a superior knowledge of plants and herbicides, and the role they each play in quail management.



(l-r) Bob Glennon (NRCS) and NBTC Past Chair Marc Puckett (VDGIF)

NBCI Legacy Landscape for Bobwhite Conservation

Decades, and in one case a century, of good land stewardship and aggressive bobwhite management and research across millions of acres on opposite ends of the bobwhite range were recognized as the 34-million-acre Rolling Plains of northwest Texas and western Oklahoma and the 700,000-acre Red Hills/Albany region of north Florida and southwest Georgia were each declared a Legacy Landscape for Bobwhite Conservation.

Primary criteria for the Legacy Landscape designation includes an extensive area of ecologically “contiguous” habitat that has for decades or longer supported high densities of wild northern bobwhites, a long-term tradition of purposefully implementing or maintaining land use practices that support bobwhite habitat conservation, and landowners, hunters and other stakeholders who have demonstrated strong support for quail hunting, management and/or quail research over multiple decades.

“While most of the nation’s bobwhite managers are focused on restoring diminished bobwhite habitats and populations, it’s important to remember that some regions of the country have remained bobwhite bastions, said NBCI Director Don McKenzie. “The national bobwhite community wants to recognize and encourage long-standing efforts to conserve and maintain the remaining vast areas of existing bobwhite habitat, whether through management practices or other decisions, that provide long-term viability of not only wild bobwhite populations but also many other associated species McKenzie said. “Both the Rolling Plains and the Albany/Red Hills regions are longstanding national models for such efforts and tradition, and we commend these regions, their landowners and others for this enviable status.”

Rolling Plains Region (Oklahoma / Texas)



(l-r) Robert Perez (TWPD), Kyle Johnson (ODWC) and NBCI Director Don McKenzie

The Rolling Plains region is generally described as the area about 100 miles either side of a line from Sweetwater, TX to Sweetwater, OK. This ecoregion’s landscape holds large sections of contiguous habitat that have long supported significant bobwhite populations, and landowners have implemented purposeful bobwhite habitat management for decades. About 60% of the Rolling Plains is rangeland and 30% is cropland. The major land uses are ranching (beef cattle) and farming (mostly dryland wheat and cotton). A strong and growing research network involving several institutions has also been established within the last decade.

Red Hills Region (Florida / Georgia)

The Red Hills portion of the Albany/Red Hills region lies between the Aucilla and Ochlocknee rivers from Thomasville to the Cody Escarpment in Florida, while the Albany portion is located on the Dougherty Plain in southwest Georgia. This region is a unique, diverse landscape of expansive pine savanna harboring the largest bobwhite population in the southeastern U.S., with populations sustained at high densities across a contiguous managed landscape. More than 700,000 acres are managed across more than 200 properties (ranging from 300-20,000 acres) using frequent prescribed fire to mimic and restore the natural fire history. This is the only region in the Southeast that has consistently applied prescribed fire to the land in natural frequency for over 100 years and it is home to the best quality remnants of old-growth longleaf pine forests. Additionally, the region has nearly a century of bobwhite research which continues today.



(l-r) G. Hagan (FFWCC), Dr. T. Terhune (TTRS) and R. Thackston (GADNR)

Subcommittee Reports

Ag Policy Subcommittee

Chair: Lisa Potter (MO), **Vice Chair:** Cody Cedotal (LA)

NBCI Ag Liaison: Tom Franklin

Attendees: Levi Horrell (AR), Pat Riese (KS), Michael Hook (SC), Jim Wooley (QF/PF), Paul Grimes (GA), George Garbaravage (NJ), Chris Kreh (NC)

Wednesday, 5 August 2015

Election of new Vice Chair

Cody Cedotal has accepted another position with his agency which will prevent him from serving as the Vice Chair for the Ag Policy Subcommittee.

Action Item: Call for nominations of a new Vice Chair

- Will send out an email announcement to entire subcommittee mailing list

Welcome and Introductions - Tom Franklin, NBTC Ag Policy Liaison

Tom provided his background information including his extensive history working with conservation partners and federal agencies in Washington DC and how these relationships can help advance the NBTC objectives. He also explained his role as the new Ag Policy Liaison for NBTC but also his simultaneous role continuing to work closely with the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP).

Tom has already been very active during the first 6 months of his new role with NBTC. Tom's NBTC position is funded primarily through funding provided by the Texas Park Cities Quail (funding through 1.5 yrs). NBCI has applied to be member with the American Wildlife Conservation Partners (a coalition of sportsmen/conservation organizations) and Tom serves of the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council that advises the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior on wildlife conservation issues.

Tom has met with NRCS and FSA leadership, including NRCS Chief Jason Weller. Tom held discussions on NBTC's request for NRCS to provide data on acres of native grass and introduced grass planted under NRCS conservation programs, discussed CP33 pivot corner acreage tracking requirements, the new CRP grassland program, and several other topics.

- FSA is able to provide the acreage of CP33 pivot corners enrolled following the recent change in policy

For the first time ever, Tom has organized a NBTC led Congressional Tour scheduled for September 2nd in Maryland to tour grassland and quail restoration completed on a nearby local farm. Congressional Ag Committee members as well as state-level FSA and NRCS leadership are scheduled to attend the tour.

- Tom requested states, if possible, encourage their state delegates to attend the tour.

At the next North American Fish and Wildlife Conference, Tom will be leading a special session Forest Policy: "20/20 vision – federal forest management in next decade." The session will address how improvements on forest land will benefit quail.

An upcoming initiative may be to look at launching a National Upland Game Bird stamp to help raise funds for conservation.

There is a current national-led Pollinator Coalition – NBTC needs to strategize on how we can build bobwhites into this national effort. Pollinator habitat is quail habitat.

Review of Subcommittee Charges

- 1) How do you recommend we maximize your subcommittee effectiveness through the use of NBCI staff?
 - Would like periodic updates from Tom on activities in DC, especially regarding USDA programs and policy and any other issues that may be useful information to the state. – periodic updates to committee members
 - Tom will send any relevant info to the entire Ag Policy Subcommittee, rather than funnel the info through the chairs. This will streamline information delivery.
 - Tom requests the states send information on emerging issues to him as well so he can be sure to accurately relate state information/needs in DC.
 - Tom will look to Ag Policy members to provide technical information on bobwhite biology and restoration.
 - Ag Policy will rely on Tom to let us know if there are co-issues that would be best addressed when collaborating with other subcommittees
- 2) What are the current barriers to CIP Implementation and how do we resolve them?
 - a. All conservation programs would help implement with CIP
 - b. Money is one of top barriers therefore funding through farm bill programs and other potential funding opportunities (upland game stamp etc.) is a way Ag policy can assist with CIP implementation
 - i. Make sure there are clear wildlife designated funds in programs
 - ii. Ability to hire positions to help deliver programs
 - c. Ag policy is a tool in the toolbox, but won't solve the issues

Joint meeting with the Grassland Subcommittee

- Grassland Committee is developing BMPs for expiring CRP - example are publications that provide guidance on program and land management options for landowners with expiring CRP (In 2017, there are 1.2 million acres of CRP scheduled to expire)
 - Programmatic
 - Technical
 - What if scenarios
 - Policy – non-regulatory changes – comments by September (draft in Aug)

Action Item: Coordinate with Grassland Committee to provide USDA Program recommendations that will help address expiring CRP

- Recommendations Finalized by next year's meeting in Nebraska

Action Item: Working Group Members to develop BMPs

- Jef Hodges has created a Dropbox of grassland related materials. Contact Jef if interested in materials.

Policy Recommendations

Tom has opportunity to meet with and provide comments to FSA and NRCS leadership: The following are items of interest that may be beneficial to discuss if/when appropriate with FSA leadership:

CRP Grasslands

- EBI recommendations– See AFWA recommendations as these will also address NBTC concerns.
- For re-enrollments, require management within the first 2 years
- Higher (EBI) ranking if they have a wildlife management plan AND a grazing plan
- National random contract check to ensure MCM/maintenance check; spot checks from national office to county offices to ensure following requirements

EQIP Ranking

To encourage NRCS to fund conservation practices that use native species, request that a ranking question to include in the National EQIP ranking questions that provides significant ranking points if the practice uses Native vegetation, including a multi-species, site appropriate mix where possible.

Natives First Policy

Jef Hodges and NBTC staff are developing a 'Campaign Plan Development' document

- Coalition development
 - Working group out of this coalition
 - Policy Working Group members
 - National Park Service, US Forest Service, and BLM already have good natives only policy
- Natives First name needs to be re-branded

Action Item: Provide names of Ag Policy members to Jef Hodges if interested in helping with Native First Coalition.

Bobwhite Quail Initiative

If given the opportunity to create a USDA Bobwhite Quail Initiative, what would that look like? Ideas from the group:

Would need to be multi-faceted including multiple programs and potentially the combination of NRCS and FSA programs
SAFE like – tailored to specific range-wide needs
Need on the ground technical assistance – to help promote existing practices
Maintenance/MCM at least twice in the contract
Prescribed grazing
AGI waivers
National/regional Rx fire initiative
Working lands for wildlife
Pollinators

Action Item: By end of September 2015: Continue to develop ideas/strategy for a Bobwhite Initiative and send to Tom

- Cody Cedotal will gather ideas for SE
- Lisa Potter will gather ideas for Midwest

- Need representative from the NE

Thursday, 6 August 2015:

CRP Grassland Program - Recommendations

- Include how to incorporate maintenance of practice (tree encroachment, MCM, etc.) spot checks/monitoring: What can be accomplished/ what will it take to get done/ enforcement)
- Grazing practices: (coordinate with AFWA CRP Working group)
- Specify what a common grazing practices is:
 - Need to specify quality grazing practices, grazing heights, require Prescribed Grazing plan, and require a Wildlife Management Plan
- Status-quo grazing practices (i.e. Over grazing fescue) is not acceptable
- Provide specific guidance for nesting season - allow grazing (no haying) but require lower stocking rates to avoid trampling nests

Ranking:

- Must prioritize native Species (should be no scenario where introduced species outrank native mixes)
- Prioritize management (Prescribed burning, patch burn grazing)
- Prioritize wildlife management plan in addition to Prescribed Grazing plan
- Location relative to other quality grassland habitat (quail focus areas)

Last year of the contract (allowing resource conserving use)

Don't destroy/diminish wildlife value and purpose of the contract – consultation of F&W agency if destroying cover – avoid nesting season

Fencing:

- Avoid wood fencing (Rx burning limitation) and woven wire

Tree encroachment issue – annual maintenance / spot checks should be required/completed by FSA and/or partners

- Random checks to see if practice is meeting wildlife/quail objectives

Action Item: Draft comments to the CRP rule due Sept 14th.

- Include Forestry Subcommittee to incorporate comments on \$10 M tree thinning provision

Action Item: Send CP33 pivot corner information out to Policy Members again

Action Item: Coordinate with Outreach Committee on promoting 30th CRP anniversary and CP33 enrollment

- Expand on pivot corner promotion.
- Create promotional material for the states.
- Possible April event on CRP 30th anniversary in DC (promotional opportunity)
- Possible event at QF/PF classic in KC (promotional opportunity)

CRP non-regulatory policy changes

Action Item: Send any comments on non-regulatory changes to CRP to Tom by August 31, 2015

Group ideas:

CCRP

- Consistency on paying for wildlife practices (Ex. Edge feathering is paid for in some practices and not in others)
- Consistency among practices of when SIP/PIP apply
- Combine practices when possible (Ex. combine CP23/CP23A)
- Setting rental rates (accepting justification for changing of rates. Although this is allowed per policy, justification for change is often not considered)
 - Need more competitive rental rates

Next Farm Bill

Action Item: Begin considering/developing NBCI's top priorities for the next Farm Bill?

Group ideas:

- Short-term/rotational CRP
- Management (ex. expand tree thinning)
- Conservation program reauthorization - funding

Action item: Coordinate with States and Outreach committee for success stories to provide CRP anniversary and also to begin collecting successful program examples for next Farm Bill (SAFE, CP33 – quail populations – NBCI taglines)

Pollinators

- NRCS – looking for practices that work for pollinators that they haven't been doing previously
- Meld Natives First concept with pollinator program/initiative
- Pollinator Coalition
- Information need: How does Prescribed burning impact pollinator habitat
- Cover crops and Food plots can be pollinator habitat

Action Item: Provide Tom a bulleted list of how pollinator habitat also benefits quail habitat and vice versa

- Collect regional pollinator mix recommendations and provide to Tom

Forestry Subcommittee

Chair: Willie Simmons (SC), **Vice Chair:** Larry Heggemann (CHJV)

NBCI Forestry Coordinator: Steve Chapman

Attendees: Mike Black (SPI), Billy Dukes (SC), Greg Hagan (FL), Jason Honey (AR), Lorien Huemoeller (VA), John Parke (NJAS), Marc Puckett (VA), Andy Rosenberger (VA), Mark Sasser (AL), Jimmy Sloan (NJ), Reggie Thackston (GA), Brittney Viers (QF)

Wednesday, 5 August 2015

Action Items

- Update the “Managing Pine Plantations for Timber and Wildlife” pamphlet. This item was assigned to Steve Chapman.
- We need to put together a group or find a person that monitors policy for all Prescribed Fire Groups. This Ad-hoc group should not have any federal connections so they can lobby for Prescribed Fire Group concerns.
- Write a letter of support for the Wildlife Disaster Funding Act and include the benefit of bobwhites and pollinators. Billy Dukes, Reggie Thackston and Willie Simmons are assigned to this task and will submit the letter to the Steering Committee for approval.
- Collaborate with Ag Policy and Grassland/Grazing Lands Committee to draft a letter to provide input on the CRP Interim Grassland Rule.

Minutes from last year

- NBCI Habitat Management Chapters submitted.
- Check to see if the chapters are on the NBCI Website.

Update from Forestry Coordinator - Steve Chapman

- Informed the committee about his position and his involvement in CIP training. He also attended the Prescribe Fire Communication Summit at Tall Timbers.
- Steve will fill the permanent seat on the Longleaf Partnership Council (LPC).
- Steve presented an update on Land between the Lakes savanna restoration controversy.
- Look at the possibility of a grass roots group that could weigh in on the LBL discussion.
- Federal Policy for managing declining species (USFS, USFWS)
- USFS is required to manage for early successional forest.

Reggie Thackston

- Barriers with USDA. Policy limitations, lack of job approval authority, not enough training and workshops available, and there is not a willingness to send people to be trained.
- Formal policy needs to be addressed and internal attitudes of NRCS need to be addressed also.
 - What are the Federal Agencies definition of viability, hunt-ability, and sustainability?

Mike Black

- Update on the Shortleaf Pine Initiative. He noted that fire culture does not exist within parts of the range of Shortleaf Pine.
- Range-wide Plan will be coming out soon for Shortleaf Pine.
- There are 13 stakeholders but he would like to have one more.
- Working on organizing workshops and fact sheets on Shortleaf to train biologist and foresters.
- Willing to provide Shortleaf Workshops to the states.
- How will the Shortleaf Alliance be developed? Mike answered by saying he will include as much science in the plan as possible. He plans to build up slowly, he is seeking additional support and he is working on a 5 year plan.

Election of Vice-Chairman

- Mr. Larry Heggemann was nominated and accepted the position as Vice-Chairman of the Forestry Subcommittee.

Prioritization process for NBCI Forestry Coordinator duties

1. Influence the State Forest Agencies to embrace the Focal Area concept.
2. Represent NBCI objectives in the Prescribed Fire Community Meetings.
3. Address the policy barriers with USDA and other agencies both written and internal barriers to carrying out Prescribed Fire on the ground.
4. Develop a fact sheet with methods and guidelines for new techniques to inform the public of the economic benefits for forest management on private lands.
5. Work in coordination with the Ag Policy Coordinator to provide input into the Farm Bill Forestry Practices.

Northern Long-Eared Bat Ruling

- Heavily affected by White-nose Syndrome.
- The Interim 4 (d) rule provides exemptions for forest management practices and the ruling took effect on May 4, 2015

Thursday, 6 August 2015

Reggie Thackston/Steve Chapman

- Reggie Thackston, Steve Chapman, and Dan Forster are scheduled to meet with USFWS Regional Director for Region 4 and USFWS Regional Supervisor for Region 8 on Federal Agency acceptance of NBCI Focal Area Concept.

Tom Franklin - Wildfire Disaster Funding Act

- The act is just sitting there right now because of lack of support.
- Diversion of USFS budget for firefighting has crippled USFS from being able to carry out Prescribed Fire
- We need to add our support from the NBCI and support the Act.

Resilient Federal Forest Act

- Facilitate more active wildlife management
- Free up the process of doing projects

- Cut the red-tape and lead to more management on the ground.
- Limit litigation (it would restrict and reduce the legal suits on USFS)
- Steve Chapman is currently reviewing the bill for the Forestry Subcommittee to make it more beneficial for bobwhites, grassland bird species and pollinators.
- Categorical exclusions of up to 5,000 acres
- The concern from the public is they will not have any involvement in the process and this could lead to abuse on the public lands.
- Look at the current document on the net to see how it can be improved for quail.
- AFWA and NBCI should produce separate support letters. It is important to answer the following question. Is there a clear understanding between early successional habitat and early successional forest?

CRP Interim Grassland Rules

- Includes provisions for pine thinning and burning
- Possibility of Bobwhite Initiative being added to the rule
- Reggie...Native grassland habitat restoration. Stress the importance of thinning, burning- benefits to bobwhites, pollinators, and all species.
- Woodland Savanna restoration (Focus on the burning)

Mike Black

- Provided update on the proposed MOU with the Southern Group State Foresters Meeting. (13 States represented at this meeting)
- Work on a way to communicate information between committees.
- Must work with their need for money to be utilized on state forest lands.
- MOU should explicitly promote the focal area concept for quail

Grazing Lands & Grasslands Subcommittee

Chair: Nick Prough (QUWF), **Vice Chair:** Robert Perez (TX)

NBCI Grasslands Coordinator: Jef Hodges

Attendees: No list provided, but had 14 representatives at our Subcommittee meeting representing 10 different states over the 2 days of subcommittee meetings.

1. Went over ongoing list of deliverables developed in Iowa last year for the Grassland Coordinator and did a status update of each of them now that staff has been on 5 months into filling the position. More details regarding each to be further shared in later status documents during the year.
2. Going to be sharing more success stories in coming months related to quail and grassland/grazing lands, this is important for all of NBTC/NBCI not just to grasslands and was discussed as a major need by many.
3. Developing a Grasslands page/section of the NBCI www.BringBackBobwhites website with many useful documents, various links and multiple resources for both wildlife professionals and the landowner/public alike.
4. Quarterly update to all grassland subcommittee members from Jef H. on updates, new topics and hot issues upcoming, conservation alerts regarding grasslands, etc. A Quarterly schedule for this is being finalized now for this with first update to be out in coming months.

5. Continue to engage more outside partners and groups in grazing and grassland issues in coming year. NBCI staff will be attending many of their meetings and participating in them around the country this fall and in the coming year.
6. Plans to continue to grow the relationship with Extension nationally and further this to a step down model directly to the states to help on this front locally. Making some good headway there is going to be a continued effort and goal in coming year.
7. Subcommittee met with Ag Policy subcommittee as we have every few years in a packed room of about 30+ people combined.
 - A. Held long discussion on the expiring CRP issue in coming several years and going to be developing BMPs for landowners on what to do with the grass they have as it expires. Working Group on this task being formed now developing those over the next 6 months in preparation for the large flux of expiring CRP in 2016/17. Still need working group members to assist on this task. If interested contact NBCI staff or subcommittee chairs to get added to working group.
 - B. EQIP Ranking Criteria-Reviewed and discussed at length and after discussions definitely encourage all folks to work directly with their STC on this issue locally to make some gains there for wildlife
 - C. Natives First Updates-Status of Natives First discussed at length and continues to be worked on over the past year. Next logical step for the progression of the concept was discussed by group. Further development of a "Campaign Strategy" and possibly "Renaming It" upcoming during the next year will be a possible next step when working with a broader coalition of groups including range groups, industry, seed producers, etc. Both committees and broader coalition will be continuing to work on this in remainder of 2015 and 2016.
8. CRP Grassland Rule Change Discussion was held by the Grasslands/Grazing Lands Subcommittee on the 2nd day of meetings.
 - A. Support Highest ranking possible for natives like 100 points minimum and much lower or almost 0 points for non-native "improved pastures". What can't be allowed is for there to be just 10 to 20 points difference between those 2 types of offerings in the rankings to be successful for quail and all wildlife.
9. Native Vegetation Advantages Sheets- Currently being developed and going to be going thru a technical review soon by grassland/grazing lands committee members.
 - A. Then those advantages sheets will be forwarded to Outreach committee for final design phase or subcontracting out that designing to true design teams for consistency and professional look in all the sheets being developed.
 - B. These sheets will then be posted on Grasslands page of the website for use by visitors.
 - C. Each state or NGO will be able to add each states/NGO logo on the sheets so they are customizable message from that specific state/NGO.
10. Ecotype versus Cultivar issue- Discussion on the topic and group came up with consensus for subcommittee to "Base its suggestions on this topic to strongly include the landowner needs/goals and objectives" for the specific habitat project. The position statement is now being finalized in the coming weeks for a full statement to be posted on the grassland section of the website and to be utilized by NBCI staff and subcommittees in discussions and meetings.
11. Discussion of Energy issues and if energy/mining subcommittee was again going to be reinstated or formed in the future to address these issues or what subcommittee was going to take them up in future as it continues to be an issue in many states and a growing concern for resources.

12. Discussion of what to do with the 100+ Million acres of fescue and Bermuda grass out on the landscape if the landowner doesn't want to convert it to anything else? What BMPs can be done to improve those existing pastures/grasslands. These BMP's are going to be developed regarding those options in early 2016 and hopefully before NE 2016 meeting.
13. Looking into developing a cultivar phone app this year for landowners, biologist, seed industry folks that is GPS based. This will be a very useful tool for many in the field and will be worked on coming year.
14. Discussed the Chairs charges to the subcommittees. Some topics or solutions to the questions charged with included.
 - A. Quarterly e-mail update and status update that the Grassland/Grazing Lands Subcommittee will be getting from NBCI Staff person to help with the efficiency topic question posed by chair is one solution. Additionally as well as a possible select individuals working group meeting on a major topic such as "Natives First" in mid-year like spring of 2016 prior to the Aug 2016 annual meeting in NE.
 - B. Grassland page being developed on website as mentioned earlier for more efficiency in information sharing between meetings.
 - C. Subcommittee will continue to work off the deliverable document for the grasslands/grazing lands position that was developed in 2014 for further guidance of continued efforts.
 - D. CIP recommendations were deferred to state coordinators meeting discussions and their state coordinators reporting on that to the chair as no members had anything further for input on the CIP topic and felt that the other meeting covered the topic well.
 - E. Currently subcommittee members will be polling their administrative leaderships on PR funding usage and if those administrations have further needs they are expecting from NBCI and NBCI staff. Those members will be sending in any comments they receive directly to the NBTC chair.
15. Both Nick Prough of QUWF and Robert Perez of TXDWP agreed to stay on as our Grassland and Grazing Lands Subcommittee chair and co-chair positions for this coming year.
16. Further information will be coming out in e-mails, status updates and in the Dropbox link site that was setup for grassland/grazing land members in the coming weeks and months.

Mined Lands Subcommittee – Did not meet

Outreach Subcommittee

Chair: Ben Robinson (KY), **Vice Chair:** Tim Kavan (MO)

NBCI Communications Director: Joh Doty

Attendees: No list provided, but had 10 individuals on Day 1; 6 individuals on Day 2

Wednesday, 5 August 2015

Day 1 was spent addressing committee charges presented by NBTC Chairman Chuck Kowaleski:

How do we maximize our subcommittee's effectiveness through the use of NBCI staff?

Part 1:

- Agreed that our current structure is not the most effective way to operate.
- Discussions centered around committee's lack of knowledge on outreach/communications.
- We are a support arm for other NBTC subcommittees, yet we don't receive tasks from them until after the meeting, making us less effective.

- **Solution:** Restructure our annual meeting strategy.
 - Prior to 2016 meeting in Nebraska, Outreach Subcommittee will request meeting agendas from all other subcommittees.
 - Outreach Subcommittee members will be assigned a subcommittee to sit in on during day 1 of the annual meeting, taking notes and requesting specific Outreach needs.
 - On Day 2 Outreach Sub-Committee will reconvene to discuss needs of other committees and begin prioritizing projects for the coming year.
- Outreach Sub-Committee will host a mid-year meeting to advance/complete tasks generated at annual meeting in addition to other projects as needed.

Part 2:

- In addition to assisting other sub-committees, we will prioritize (with assistance from SC as needed) one major project to focus on.
- We will utilize current budgeted funds to consult with a private sector marketing firm to develop and promote that initiative.
- “Native’s First” Campaign will be our first attempt at this strategy.
 - Note: Native’s First is an internal name. Marketing experts will assist in development of name, logo, materials, etc.

What are the current barriers to CIP implementation and how do we resolve them?

- We discussed barriers shared during state coordinators meeting.
- Decided that our committee can address these barriers by continuing to provide support with future CIP trainings, creating tools such as training videos and manuals.
- There may be value in reviewing the complete list of barriers recorded during the state coordinators meeting to determine if we can be of assistance addressing them.
- Pea Ridge example: editorials, publicity etc. has led to additional opportunities for AR.

State administrations views of P-R and state funding to support NBCI. How can our committee address perceived wants or needs?

- Our committee is unsure of actual wants of needs.
- Suggested a survey to answer this but ultimately decided this was not the best solution at this time.

Thursday, 6 August 2015

- State Coordinator Survey
 - January 2015
- Website revisions: complete overhaul of website.
 - Create new state map listing CIP focal areas.
 - **ATTENTION:** we have to deliver Success Stories if we want to make progress.

- According to State Coordinators Survey, 18/20 state coordinators are willing to share success.
- What is success? Need help defining this? Perhaps we use the word “progress” instead?
- PBS This American Land Documentary: filming has started. Should air in 2016.
 - Filming in 4 states: Pine Forest, Rangelands (western), Row crop, Cattle (eastern)
- NBCI Habitat Guide
 - Use as addendum to NBCI 2.0
 - Provide templates to states for their own use.
 - Investigate smart phone app.
- Vice-Chair Election: David Bryan (VA) Tim Kavan (MO) new chair

Research Subcommittee

Chair: Jay Howell, **Vice Chair:**

NBCI Science Coordinator: Tom Dailey, **Spatial Data Analyst:** Derek Evans

Attendees: no list provided.

Item: NBCI Staff updates and introductions

Included in the discussion were results of the Habitat Assessment training in Kentucky, plans for interim data collection and storage for the CIP, ArcGIS server development, and a preview of the NBCI technical website. Per the charge from the steering committee, the subcommittee also discussed the best uses for NBCI staff moving forward including making the subcommittee more year round effective.

Outcomes:

1. The subcommittee voted that quailcount.com should be the name for the website domain.
2. Data from the NBCI will exist separate from AKN, however data will be shared between the two systems
3. Potential for a mid-year video conference update on ad-hoc and subcommittee activities

Item: CIP and Focal Area Issues

CIP issues and results were discussed. James Martin gave an overview of the results of his analysis of the first two years from the CIP pilot states. There was discussion of the habitat assessment and insuring consistency between participating states. Per the steering committee charge, the subcommittee discussed the current barriers to CIP implementation. Finally, there was discussion of population goals and potential revision of the BRI.

Outcomes:

1. Data for the CIP should be submitted by December 31.
2. Photo depictions of various habitats and their interpretation relative to the Habitat Assessment should be developed.
3. States should not be excluded from CIP for failing to meet all of the requirements.
4. Population goal issues may be resolved as more data becomes available

Item: Subcommittee Member Research

Frank Loncarich presented “Breeding season survival, nest success, and space use of Northern Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*) under differing management approaches in grassland landscapes of Missouri: Which habitat management efforts are producing more bobwhite?” Nathan Stricker presented “Incorporating Time of Detection into Spring Roadside Quail Surveys”. Will Macaluso presented “Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Parent-reared vs Non-Parent Reared Semi-Wild Northern Bobwhites for Reintroduction on Long Island, New York”. Scott Klinger provided an overview of the situation for quail in Pennsylvania and the potential for recovery efforts there.

Item: Quail 8

The subcommittee discussed the upcoming joint meeting for NBTC and Quail 8. Included in the discussion were timelines for paper submissions, plenary sessions and invited speakers, and proceedings editing.

Outcomes:

1. NBCT 2017 Annual Meeting will be July 24-26 followed by the Quail 8 symposium July 26-29.
2. Proceedings will be available as a bound volume at the meeting.
3. Meeting announcement will be in September 2015.
4. Call for papers will be in October 2015.
5. Abstract submission deadline will be December 2015.
6. Notification of abstract acceptance will be by February 2016.
7. Manuscript deadline will be July 2016.
8. Quail 8 Program Committee: Tom Dailey, Jay Howell, Beth Emmerich, Roger Applegate, Theron Terhune, James Martin, Lenny Brennan

Item: Quail Translocation

The subcommittee discussed the potential for an NBCT Quail translocation white paper. Included in the discussion was an update from Tom Dailey on the history of the effort and what may be needed moving forward.

Outcome:

1. An ad hoc committee chaired by James Martin and Theron Terhune was formed including Beth Emmerich, Bud Veverka, Nathan Stricker, Scott Klinger, and Jay Howell as members.
2. The resulting paper could be presented at Quail 8.

Item: Measuring Hunter Harvest/pressure on Focal Areas

The subcommittee discussed the need for development of a standard protocol for measuring hunter harvest and effort on focal areas enrolled in the CIP. Included in the discussion was the need to address pen-raised bird releases on and adjacent to the focal area.

Outcomes: An ad-hoc committee chaired by James Martin was formed to address these issues with Todd Bogenschutz, Nathan Stricker, Roger Applegate, Jeff Lusk, John Yeiser, Beth Emmerich and Jay Howell as members.

Business Meeting Minutes

Thursday, 6 August

Chair Chuck Kowaleski called the meeting to order at 2:05 PM

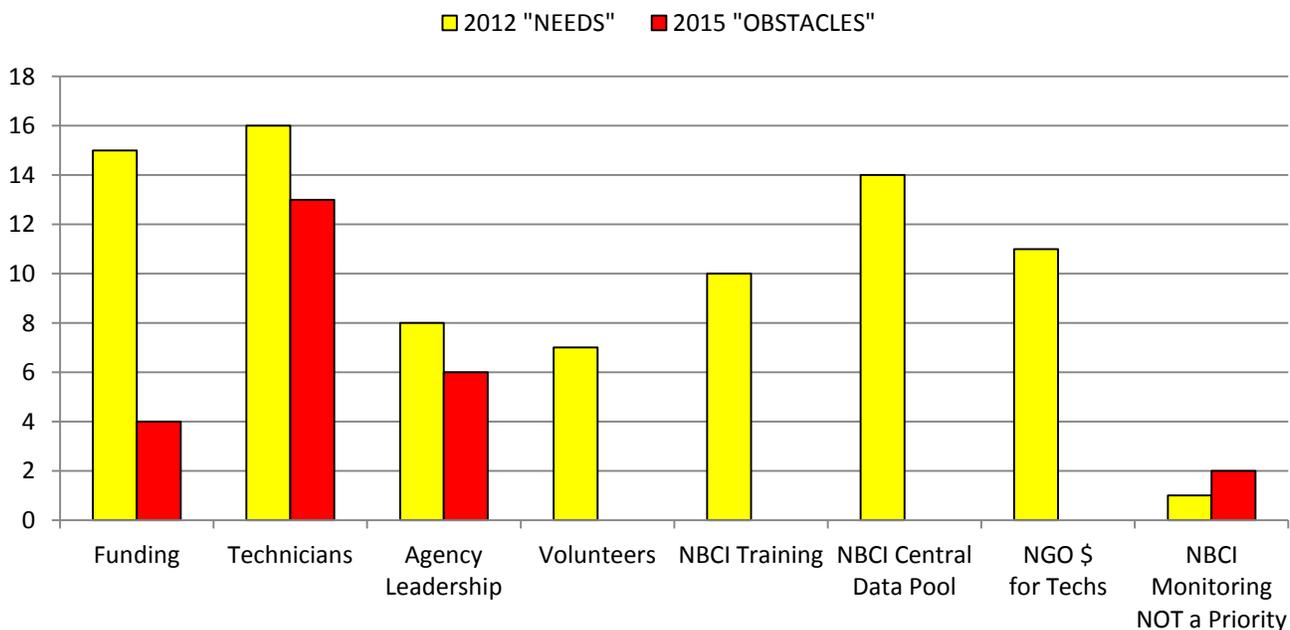
NBCI Assistant Director, Tom Dailey, presented awards for early data submission to Oklahoma and Georgia.

Secretary/Treasurer Report by John Morgan (*See Steering Committee Minutes*)

Sub Committee Reports (*See attached reports*)

Discussion of feedback from State Coordinators meeting on ways to maximize subcommittee effectiveness and eliminate barriers facing CIP implementation (Morgan) - In addition to discussion of perceptions in 2015 of state implementation of the CIP, John Morgan compared these responses to results of a similar online opinion survey conducted by NBCI in January 2012 (National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative. 2012. D.F. McKenzie, T.V. Dailey, K.M. Puckett and J. G. Doty. NBCI's Bobwhite Almanac, State of the Bobwhite 2012. National Bobwhite Technical Committee Technical Publication, Knoxville, TN. 48 pages; pages 42-44). This comparison is depicted in Figure 3 (below).

Figure 3. State Quail Coordinator Assessment of Agency Capacity to Implement Focal Area Monitoring



Primary conclusions from this comparison are that key needs from 2012, *Funding, Volunteers, NBCI Training & Data Management, and NGO collaboration*, are being met; whereas, persistent obstacles to CIP implementation include lack of appropriate technical staff, labor ceilings, funding, etc. Also, some quail coordinators interested in implementing CIP believe they need more administrative support. In summary, tremendous progress has been made in implementing NBCI's version of strategic habitat conservation (CIP) over the last three years, but important obstacles remain. Because of the significance of these limitations, Figure 3 will be shared with the NBCI Management Board at Tucson AZ in September.

Election results (Puckett) - Marc Puckett announced the election results for the Member-at-large position and the Northeast Representative Position. Ben Robinson edged Greg Hagan for Member-at-large, whereas Andrew Burnett accepted another term as the Northeast Representative.

Next meeting - Jeff Lusk announced the 2016 NBTC Annual Meeting will be held in Lincoln, NE during the 1st week of August. More information will be released in the months ahead.

No new business was discussed. Chair Kowaleski noted that the Steering Committee will need to charge subcommittees for what outreach needs they have for the first day of the NE meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 3:35 PM.

Meeting Attendee List

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Past Meeting Locations and Dates

Organization	Venue	Location	Dates	Award Recipient
SEQSG (1 st)	Webb Wildlife Center	Garnett SC	15-18 Aug 1995	None
SEQSG (2 nd)	Ramada Inn	Tallahassee FL	3-6 Sept 1996	Breck Carmichael
SEQSG (3 rd)	Sheldon's Motel	Keysville VA	15-18 Sept 1997	Don McKenzie
SEQSG (4 th)	Ames Plantation	Grand Junction TN	14-17 Sept 1998	Dr. Ralph Dimmick
SEQSG (5 th)	Mississippi State University	Starkville MS	27-30 Sept 1999	Reggie Thackston
SEQSG (6 th)	Camp Kanuga	Hendersonville NC	2-5 Oct 2000	Rocky Evans
SEQSG (7 th) with Quail V	Omni Bayfront Hotel	Corpus Christi TX	23 Jan 2002	Stephen Capel
SEQSG (8 th)	Augusta Technical College	Waynesboro GA	26-29 Aug 2002	Mark Gudlin
SEQSG (9 th)	YMCA of the Ozarks	Potosi MO	25-28 Aug 2003	Terry Sharpe
SEQSG (10 th)	Winrock International	Morrilton AR	2-5 Aug 2004	Dr. Pete Bromley
SEQSG (11 th)	Dam Village State Resort	Gilbertsville KY	14-17 Aug 2005	Dr. Wes Burger
SEQSG (12 th)	Auburn University Hotel	Auburn AL	6-8 Aug 2006	Stephen Demaso
SEQSG (13 th)	Quartz Mountain Resort	Lone Wolf OK	6-9 Aug 2007	Clay Sisson
SEQSG (14 th)	Hilton Lafayette	Lafayette LA	15-18 Jul 2008	Dave Howell
SEQSG (15 th)	Columbia Marriot	Columbia SC	24-26 Mar 2009	Stan Stewart
NBTC (16 th)	Hyatt Regency	Wichita KS	3-6 Aug 2010	Dr. Bill Palmer
NBTC (17 th)	Doubletree Hotel	Tallahassee FL	9-12 Aug 2011	Dave Godwin
NBTC (18 th)	MCM Elegante	Abilene TX	7-10 Aug 2012	Dr. Theron Terhune
NBTC (19 th)	Hotel Roanoke	Roanoke VA	23-26 Jul 2013	Dr. Tom Dailey
NBTC (20 th)	Sheraton Hotel	Des Moines IA	29 Jul-1 Aug 2014	Billy Dukes
NBTC (21 st)	Stockton Seaview Hotel	Galloway NJ	4-7 Aug 2015	John Morgan

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