

NCPARC RIMM Meeting: Wednesday, December 6, 2006

Chair

Mike Dorcas- Davidson College

Participants

Kendrick Weeks- North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC)

Steve Price- Davidson College

Grover Barfield- Independent Herp Educator

Kim Coffey- Mecklenburg Parks and Recreation

Alvin Braswell- North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences

David Cooper- North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences

Zach Orr- Randolph Rattlesnake Refuge & Research

Jacqueline Presley- NCWRC

Ed Corey- North Carolina State Parks

Jeff Beane- North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences

Jeff Hall- Weyerhaeuser's Cool Springs Environmental Center

Jeff Marcus- NCWRC

John Groves- North Carolina Zoological Park

Adrienne Pauletta- NCWRC

Lori Williams- NCWRC

Bob Cherry- National Park Service

Veronica Barnes- North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)

Ann Somers- University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Call to order: 1:25 pm

Introductions

Mike: I sent out an agenda by email. If you did not get it, please make sure you give Kendrick your email address. I listed some things that we just want to get an update on, but others we need to discuss in some detail. I also want to discuss the direction of future meetings of this working group. Let's start off in order. The North Carolina Herpetologist Registry is up and running and I think everyone is able to access it except for John who thinks the problem is on his end. And, there is a problem with Grover's password. We are working on this. If you have not registered, please do so at the NCPARC website. It is pretty self explanatory. One thing I wanted to let you know is that I am going to post this to the PARC list-serve because there may be researchers outside of the state doing work inside North Carolina. Does anyone see any reason not to do this?

Group: No.

Mike: OK then. Alvin or Lori, do you want to talk about the bibliography stuff?

Alvin: We are developing a repository of North Carolina herpetological literature citations that can be accessed by anyone doing research in the state. We have settled on using EndNote software to achieve this. We are ready to proceed with accepting citations. This database allows for sophisticated grouping of citations.

Lori: I have almost finished with all of the green salamander literature. I don't yet know how we are going to deal with confidentiality.

Alvin: Well, if we are going to put it on the web that will be an issue.

Mike: Well, keep in mind that this will only be a listing of published reports but not the actual reports. Anyone could find out those reports exist.

Lori: Did we decide on going species by species or just whatever you have?

Mike: I think starting with whatever you have and then going from there.

Alvin: I think our criteria are that the literature has to deal with some North Carolina herpetology. For example, you could have an article dealing with the natural history of spotted turtle.

Lori: What about a Masters thesis that looks at green salamanders outside of North Carolina? It may have important information.

Mike: My personal feeling is that if you think it would be useful to someone in NC doing research on green salamanders, then include it. No one, we hope, doing research on green salamanders would only go to this bibliography to get information. If so, they shouldn't be in that position. So, I wouldn't worry too much about those things. Of course, you wouldn't want to include California king snake literature even though it is the same species we have.

Lori: So if anyone has any literature citations, please send them to Alvin or myself.

Jeff H: Are you all going to include the bibliography from Breck Bartholomew's website?

Alvin: I think that would be wise.

Mike: Well, why don't I do this. Or, do you have the latest one?

Jeff H: I think I last downloaded it in March.

Mike: You are more up-to-date than I am. The easiest thing for me to do is search for literature in North Carolina and then export those.

Jeff H: I will be willing to do that with what I have.

Alvin: What about duplicate records?

Jeff H: Well, it should prevent that but if there are small differences in formatting, there will be duplicates. But, it isn't too hard to go through and delete those duplicates.

Mike: I think this will be helpful to a lot of people and it should be easy to put on the website. We can just put a link to the EndNote file.

Alvin: If it is appropriately proofed, it will be very useful.

Mike: Yes, the Breck stuff has mistakes in it, but I think we can put it up and put a disclaimer. If y'all write a little paragraph about it being dynamic and then when I update it I will label it with the date.

Alvin: We can ask for people to report errors.

Mike: Yeah, so I will put an email for people to report errors to Alvin.

Jeff H: Also we want to give Breck Bartholomew credit for the ones that came from his database.

Mike: I can even put a link to his website. So, Lori and Alvin write that paragraph and give me your current draft EndNote file, I will put a link to Breck...

Bob: Do you want only peer reviewed article citations or do you want newspaper articles too?

Lori: I have been putting grey literature in...

Alvin: A newspaper article is not grey literature...

Mike: Right, but grey literature in terms of reports or maybe magazine articles in reptile magazines, I don't see anything wrong with that. But, I think newspaper articles would be less desirable.

Alvin: We find those useful for work at the museum for mapping distributions if we are able to do the appropriate follow-up.

Mike: If anyone has any citations send them to Alvin or Lori. As soon as you get it like you want it, send it to me and I'll put it on the web. Anything else with this? OK, Kendrick...CASP.

Kendrick: 2006 was our first year in North Carolina. Twenty-three routes were run but because of a late start only 13 were run at least once in each sampling window. The first window for 2007 will start January 15. Twenty-five species out of 30 were detected in

2006 and noticeably absent were ornate chorus frog, gopher frog, river frog, mountain chorus frog, and Pine Barrens tree frog. There were 19 species detected in the Coastal Plain, 19 in the Piedmont, and 8 in the Mountains. And, I made some handouts with general numbers from last year that I will pass around. Of course, the trend data is meaningless because this was the first year.

Mike: Now is this the stuff you're handing out the same that you gave me to post on the website?

Kendrick: Not exactly. The numbers posted on the NCPARC website are numbers I worked up before I found the automated feature of the online database. They are a little different because one non-random route was not reviewed and therefore not analyzed by the database.

Mike: So if any of you are interested in doing a route, you should talk with Kendrick, before Friday, right?

Kendrick: Right, I will be coming back on January 10, and I am not sure how responsibility will be divided up amongst the new herp biologists. That leads me to 2007. Anyone signed up can go ahead take the quiz as of November 1. But if you took it last year you don't have to take it again until 2008 because the frog call quiz is only required to be taken every two years.

Jeff H: How many total routes are there? 61?

Kendrick: 64. 61 routes are random routes created by national and three routes are non-random. We can add non-random routes in places where people are interested in doing them or we have holes that the random methodology left. You can look at a map of all the routes in the state on the CASP website. If you happen to be in an area where there happens to be a hole, we can add non-random routes. Of course, national has to add these to the database and prefer that more random routes be filled before setting up non-random routes. Are there any questions about that?

Mike: I assume the abundance codes run from 0 to 3?

Kendrick: That is the calling index.

Short discussion about the lack of information in the NAAMP maximum abundance code column and the meaning of N for each column of the automated analysis.

Kendrick: There are 32 routes left to be filled in 2007.

Mike: Are those evenly distributed around the state or are there more that need to be run in certain areas.

Kendrick: Our biggest holes are in the southeast and northeast part of the state.

Jeff H: Did you get any new volunteers from the workshop that we did?

Kendrick: We sure did.

Jeff H: I already talked to Mike Campbell about doing another one at Lake Waccamaw State Park. And, I was wondering if they are valuable?

Kendrick: I think

Alvin: There is a satellite museum in Whiteville and I think this is something they might be interested in.

Kendrick: OK. Grover did a snake program down there and handed out some brochures, but I have not had any contacts from it yet. Hopefully we will.

Jeff H: I am hoping that if we did a workshop down there we could get some more people.

Kendrick: Definitely. That leads me to the workshop that Jeff Hall and Mike Campbell organized down at Goose Creek State Park that had 16 participants. Is that right?

Jeff H: 17.

Kendrick: Yeah, so the Lake Waccamaw one that we were talking about setting up should probably be held in January or early February.

Jeff H. Mike and I have already been talking about that and there are a lot of issues that need to be resolved.

Alvin: Some people down that way that would be a good contact is Andy Wood and Gilbert Grant.

Jeff H: I have talked to Andy about running a route and I don't know Gilbert Grant.

Alvin: He does county inventory for Natural Heritage.

Kendrick: And, we will have a press release in January so it would be nice to have workshop dates by the time that goes out. There is a glitch in the database that is not a huge deal but none of the new volunteers can access their stop descriptions until the New Year. I have decided to send out a small Excel file with that information to the new volunteers.

Mike: All the data goes into the online database, but do you have a database for the North Carolina stuff?

Kendrick: I set up an Access database that you can download text files directly from the national database into.

Mike: Can they be accessed by different researchers or agencies?

Kendrick: Yes, they just need to contact a state coordinator.

Mike: And will you be that coordinator?

Kendrick: I am not sure how that will hash out with the new herp positions, but I will be initially involved at least.

Lori: And what about the frog call booklet?

Kendrick: Oh yeah, the new Frogs and Toads of North Carolina written by Mike Dorcas, Steve Price, Jeff Beane, and Sarah Cross Owen is being published by the NCWRC and will be given to each volunteer that completes a route. Otherwise, you can purchase these through the NCWRC Wild Store online. It has not been published yet but will be sometime in the future.

Lori: Do the proceeds go to the nongame and endangered fund?

Kendrick: I am not sure...

Mike: I think so...the Snakes of North Carolina book proceeds did. We were told that the booklet is somewhere in the bidding process and should be finalized by January 1. Anything else Kendrick?

Kendrick: That is all I had and if anyone has any questions, I will try to answer them.

Steve: Have you decided anything about the workshops?

Jeff H: We did talk about doing workshops in several regions of the state at the last Education & Outreach working group meeting; one at Davidson, one at Falls Lake, and the one at Lake Waccamaw. Whenever you want to set a date.

Steve: So how do we get the word out?

Jeff H: Kendrick did a lot of the press for the Goose Creek workshop. We did some local advertising at that facility, but I think most of the response came from email.

Kendrick: Yes, definitely.

Jeff H: We had great response even though only 17 out of 42 showed up. Lori, I told you about folks at Haywood Community College wanting to come down to Goose Creek

so if you wanted to do one up there, I am sure you would get some interest. I think it is good if you can have a couple of people who can do the workshop together.

Lori: I think that we should have workshops where we need routes filled as opposed to in the mountains where we have more routes filled.

Jeff H: The key is to locate the thing where you have more holes.

Mike: Can there be more? I would hate for someone to be interested but can only do one in an area where the routes are already taken. Can there be more routes generated?

Kendrick: Those would be non-random routes and I or the coordinator would have to coordinate with national to add those to the national database. For example, Ed Corey has two random routes and created a non-random route.

Mike: So people won't be turned away?

Kendrick: No. And another possibility is to double people up.

Mike: So, you mean to sample the route more than once per window rather than sampling together.

Kendrick: Well, we could have some of that too but something I want to stress when that occurs is that there should not be any collaboration; if people go together they need to survey independently of one another. No one should say, "Did you hear that bullfrog?" And it affects the other observer's data. That observer's quiz score is directly linked to that observer's data.

Jeff H: We had talked about mentoring where some folks could go along with someone who has a route already.

Mike: That is a really good idea.

Jeff H: I think we need to fill the routes will have before we start generating non-random routes.

Ed: How did you set up me and Janet sharing routes?

Kendrick: Basically I assigned each of you as primary observer to one of the routes. The primary observer is responsible for sampling that route at least once in each window and then the secondary observer would sample whenever it is convenient or sampling them together. The last thing we talked about was habitat measurements since there is no specific habitat data collection in the protocol. Steve sent me some datasheets from his work and I am not sure what should be collected by volunteers that might not necessarily be used to taking habitat data. How involved should we make that?

Jeff H: You were saying that that would be something collected just one time.

Mike: Once a year. That would increase the utility of the data substantially. Even if they could just record whether there is a farm pond or stream...

Ed: Isn't that already in the stop description?

Kendrick: Yeah and with all the GIS data available, I don't know if collecting habitat data in such a general way would be an effective use of a volunteer's time. There are also issues with hearing choruses far away and not being sure what kind of habitat it is coming from. But if you could indicate that you're hearing it in a direction and distance, maybe you could link it with something. Those are the most glaring limitations of this protocol.

Alvin: Weather conditions can allow you to hear a frog chorus a couple of miles away.

Mike: Especially before the leaves come out.

Kendrick: Well the stops are at wetlands and we can hope that those choruses are drowning out anything far away. But, if there is nothing there then we get into issues of detectability. I am not sure how to handle this. Is it worth adding another requirement?

Steve: We would have to distribute the datasheets with the packets.

Mike: It might be something to just email out the forms to volunteers.

Kendrick: Yes. Then they could take the data when they scout the route in the daytime.

Mike: Lets talk about diamondback rattlesnakes and then we will take a short break.

Zach: Surveys have been slow and inconsistent. After dove season I did get some reports. One was from near Morehead City and we will be able to get in there to look in the spring. And another guy found a diamondback in Columbus County. Another one was in western Pender County. That is about all the information I have. We did go on a trip to the Croatan in October but it was cool and we only found a few other snakes.

Mike: When does dove season start?

Zach: Labor day weekend.

Mike: This is three data points but getting info to dove hunters might be a good thing.

Ann: How do we do that?

Mike: Education and Outreach coordinator?

Jeff H: That is a good topic. We should interact with hunters more in the future.

Ann: How about a piece in the Wildlife magazine on interest in getting information about diamondback rattlesnakes.

Jeff H: Well I would like to avoid people bringing a bunch of dead rattlesnakes in.

Ann: Well, yeah. You would have to be careful about it. We have access in the NCWRC so I think that whether it is to license holders through mailings or the magazine, we should get the word out.

Alvin: It was suggested once and met resistance. But since then, it seems that things might be changing when top brass actually suggested it.

Jeff H: I had an idea of a 3X5 note card that you could cut out of there and send in with a picture. There are cell phone cameras all over the place and reports without a picture should be mandatory before taking reports seriously.

Ann: That is a good idea.

Lori: We have also been thinking of the same thing with hellbenders in the mountains and have tried for years. A separate mailing might be the way to go.

Ann: Couldn't the nongame committee entertain that especially for listed species. I think that is a good route to go.

Alvin: Another thing is to get law enforcement involved because they are supposed to be enforcing the state endangered species act.

Ann: I would like to bring it up to the nongame committee.

Mike: So this is something that you would encourage hunters to report sightings and take photographs. I think that would be great. I have done research on lands in SC where there are hunt clubs. I think it would be great if someone like Grover could go and talk about snakes and specifically focus on diamondbacks. My experience with them is that they are good naturalists but still kill snakes and if they knew a little bit more about them you can really change their attitudes.

Zach: That is what I have been trying to do but it is hard. A lot of them don't want you on their property because they are afraid you are going to affect their deer and turkey. And, when you start talking to them they always put you off by saying they need to talk to the others and then never get back.

Jeff H: On the way up here Adrienne and I were talking about this and to me the way to get an in is to do it in conjunction with like me saying to Mike Jones, "when are you

going to give a talk about black bears and we go and do those things together in tandem. That way you get a lot of folks who might not come otherwise.

Mike: If you tell them you're bringing live animals, you will get a lot to come that way.

Jeff H: I think you will get a separate audience.

Ann: Is there a list of hunt clubs?

Adrienne: There may be.

Jeff M: Most of the district biologists know the hunt clubs.

Jeff H: Also, large landowners like Weyerhaeuser can put you in contact with hunt clubs on their land.

Alvin: Whether they would share that is a matter of confidentiality.

Jeff H: Another thing we talked about with the Education & Outreach Committee is having a booth at the Dixie Deer Classic and Peyton Hale is looking into that.

Mike: OK. So that is more in your domain so we will leave it at that. We skipped over the Carolina Herp Atlas but let's take a break and meet back at 2:35.

BREAK

Steve: The Carolina Herp Atlas is an online system that allows anyone to document their herp observations in North and South Carolina. We have a geocoder that allows accurate coordinate data to be recorded. It is launched and we currently have 4000 records. Most are from Davidson but Kendrick has submitted about 50 records. Last time we were almost ready, but now we have instructions for all sections and we have a mileage reporting system that allows users to submit their volunteer hours. We have been getting feedback to fine tune it, but I really wanted to talk about promoting today. It is launched now, but we have been talking about publicizing a grand opening in the near future. In late February, when people start encountering herps is probably going to be the most effective. The whole purpose is to get the everyday person to document the snakes they see in their backyard.

Mike: Before you go on, I just wanted to make sure that everyone understands that if they were registered when we were doing testing, their log in will no longer work. Everything has been purged from the database and you will need to start again. I just wanted everyone to know that only REAL observations should be recorded now; No Tyrannosaurus Rexes.

Steve: We have thought about sending out a notice to the PARC list-serve, having a brief article in Wildlife in North Carolina in the Back Porch section, having brochures made, and some other handouts that extension folks could use.

Lori: How about the NC Herp Society newsletter, has the February one gone out Jeff?

Jeff B: Yeah.

Lori: So it would be the following one.

Mike: That would still be a really good time to get it in.

Alvin: Question. What about sensitive species and their locations being made public and credibility?

Steve: If they have a photo of it and they submit good locality data, then the best we can do is say yes or no.

Alvin: Some records will need someone to follow up on rare sightings.

Steve: We have the ability to download information for those who request it but it is not something any visitor to the website can do.

Alvin: Whoever is monitoring it, will they contact Natural Heritage whenever something comes in that is of interest?

Steve: Yes, I can do that. I have to verify every record that comes in. I code each record based on its reliability.

Bob: Yeah, we are concerned about giving out bog turtle sites.

Steve: Yes, it will only display as a county record for other users and general visitors.

Mike: It is the same way as if someone asked Alvin at the museum.

Alvin: That is the issue.

Bob: Where is the data held?

Mike: Right now it is held at Davidson College.

Steve: What do y'all think is the best way to publicize it and who needs to be involved?

John: I think we should get it out to state agency publications first.

Mike: What does it take to get something published in Wildlife in North Carolina by March?

Kendrick: It would have to be Back Porch section.

Lori: All the major articles are planned almost a year in advance. Write it up and send it to Greg Jenkins.

Jeff Beane: Or Jim Wilson and get it to him three months ahead of time.

Mike: We need to decide on a date.

Lori: This is actually good timing. In 2007, six issues will deal with the nongame program.

Mike: Is this something that we can request to run in multiple issues?

Kendrick: I am not sure about that. I forgot to mention that there will be a Back Porch blurb about CASP in the February issue.

Mike: So we will make sure to write a paragraph, submit a picture and a web link. We can do that. If we make up a trifold brochure, can the NCWRC print it for us?

Kendrick: I think it would be considered research oriented which is a requirement for publishing educational materials. At least that is the way I understood it from Sarah.

Jeff M: That would be something we definitely want to discuss with Sarah since she handles the budget.

Mike: Does anyone know when Sarah will be back?

Lori: January is when I think she is planning on returning.

Alvin: We should make sure that links on websites are up-to-date so there is plenty of cross reference.

Jeff H: And it may be worth putting something in the major newspapers.

Mike: I can definitely talk to our college communications department about it. Does the NCWRC have other avenues such as a press release. I assume they would want to get the word out since they funded it.

John: We can put something in the zoo newsletter.

Lori: In answer to your question, yes and Sarah would probably know the avenues.

Kendrick: And if it doesn't require funds we can jump on it.

Mike: A press release doesn't require funds. Someone probably does that exclusively.

Lori: Someone is doing that. I'll find out who that is. The Herp Society and Wildlife Society newsletters.

Mike: Those would be good.

Ed: Jeff and I think that regional Audubon Society chapters would be good. Sandhills Natural History Society would be good.

Mike: I find that a lot of birders are also interested and encounter herps.

Veronica: Also where I work might be a good place to advertise because the Office of Natural Environment at NCDOT is out in the field a lot all over the state.

Mike: So if we sent you a little blurb...

Veronica: I could email it to the whole office.

Mike: Maybe we should get the blurb made and send it to everybody and then they could forward it on to those that they know.

Ed: We could also put it in the Steward newsletter for NC State Parks.

Mike: We could even share data with the Parks.

David: Another avenue that is the Reptile and Amphibian Day at the museum.

Mike: We are planning on being there and if the brochures are printed, we can have them there.

Jeff H: The E&O working group was talking about having an NCPARC booth with all of the working groups represented.

Mike: Anything else? OK, you guys can start submitting data.

Kendrick: I have a quick question. Is the database behind it Access or what?

Steve: It is SQL. We can import data from Access or Excel databases so if you have those send them to us.

Mike: We also have the ability to submit multiple records with the same locality data without retyping everything. In the interest of time, we would like to get an overview of the work the NCWRC is doing with herps. I have asked Kendrick and Lori to update us

on all of the work being done by NCWRC on herps. I want this group to have a better understanding of the direction the NCWRC is going for herp conservation in the state.

Lori: I made a handout that I will pass around. The most significant work is the Wildlife Action Plan that will direct research and work that the NCWRC does on nongame and endangered wildlife. The three new hires are Gabriel Grader in the mountains, Jeff Humphries in the Piedmont, and Jeff Hall in the Coastal Plain. The Wildlife Action Plan allows the NCWRC to receive federal funding for the nongame program which does not receive funds like the rest of the NCWRC. Statewide we are doing the frog call surveys that Kendrick talked about, box turtle distributions which we need folks to turn in their forms.

Ann: Can't that just be put into the Herp Atlas.

Lori: Yes, now that the Atlas is up and running we can put a blurb on the website about submitting observations to the Herp Atlas. The goal is to identify areas of high road mortality so that we can work with NCDOT to locate good candidates for critter crossings.

Kendrick: Yeah, we really need to encourage NCDOT to span entire floodplains during bridge replacements so that there are good wildlife crossings and flooding and everything for that matter.

Lori: With box turtles we really don't know what is going on with those guys.

John: The box turtle surveys are being done in many states in the region and there is a single database.

Lori: That is right. There was a second annual box turtle workshop held at the NC Zoo last spring and all the states are trying to do these surveys. Other projects are game lands herp surveys that are, I believe, only currently being done in the piedmont and sandhills, is that right?

Kendrick: Actually, the Sandhills stuff was mostly what Ron is doing and the Piedmont is what I have been doing.

Mike: What is the Piedmont stuff?

Kendrick: Caswell Gamelands

Lori: Other work in the coastal region is the sea turtle research. I don't think there are currently any projects in the Piedmont, right Jeff?

Jeff: Besides the inventory work and research project in the Sandhills.

Lori: I expect the new herp positions will go a long ways towards focusing on priority species in each region starting next year. In the mountains, there are 15 species of salamanders that we are surveying for. Project bog turtle relies heavily on partnerships with volunteers, other agencies, land trusts and others. We are trying to start a captive breeding program for bog turtles and the protocol is being run up the chain of command at NCWRC. So we hope to have that up and running next year. We are also doing telemetry work with bog turtles to generate information about sites. We are starting some work with mountain chorus frogs, timber rattlesnake, pine snake, and soft shelled turtle work. The program overall is growing by leaps and bounds and we are excited about the new emphasis on herps. Volunteer opportunities abound and we hope people will get involved to help provide more effective work and more in-kind funding.

Mike: How do those volunteer hours count towards funding. Are your salaries dependent upon that funding?

Lori: Our salaries do come out of those grants.

Mike: So if we did not fill those out, you would not get paid?

Lori: No, we would get paid but we would be restricted in what we can accomplish. Other funds from vanity license plates, contributions from tax refunds, and the in-kind federal funding.

Ann: And coming up is the Wild Stuff program that a certain portion of the proceeds from those products will go towards the nongame program. I think it will be launched at the beginning of the year.

Lori: The goal is to get a consistent amount of funding.

Mike: That is great. I really appreciate you putting this together. I think the next topic should be the NCPARC annual meeting. My big question is since Sarah is out of the picture who is in charge.

Jeff H: I had talked with Sarah in July and she wanted the E&O Working Group to tackle the planning of the annual meeting. And as of today Ed Corey is considering Chairing that committee. We were talking the other day and want to set up a meeting sometime soon to hash out the details. Ed had the idea of a workshop as a sampling / inventory theme with sessions on techniques. We thought maybe they could be technique based, region based, species based but the details have not been worked out yet. We could have them geared more towards educators or parks inventory biologists or there might be discussions about how species are affected by the pet trade. The idea was to have something for everyone. One of the things we need help with is presenters. There could be a marking techniques workshop that Steve Price would be good at conducting. Or visual encounter surveys like Lori Williams might be good at. We would be happy to get more ideas but we really need to have a meeting, sit down, and figure out what we are going to do.

Mike: Steve and I were talking about making the workshops more workshops as opposed to lectures. Hands on activities.

Jeff H: That is a great idea and a good thing now that the area is a State Park, Ed can go ahead and set up these things that he would like to set up anyway.

Ed: There are some cover boards and PVC pipes already that Kendrick set up last year, but we would like to add more.

Jeff H: Another potential valuable educational side may be to explain why you might want to do these surveys. Also, how to do them correctly.

Mike: I think it would be easy to get people excited by showing them how to do it, but what happens to the data once it is collected.

Lori: Could we do a mini session on the atlas and how to take the data?

Mike: Yeah, maybe not a whole workshop but a little session.

Alvin: And we could do a little thing on the legal aspects of sampling.

Jeff H: We definitely need folks to volunteer to hold these workshops. Alvin, did you know you were doing aquatic trapping?

Alvin: That would be great.

Jeff H: Does this all make sense to everyone? We also talked about having something oriented to all the working groups but I think that if it all flows together, it would be more interesting.

Mike: I agree. A lot of us do all of these things in some capacity.

Jeff H: Is everyone interested in being on the committee?

Mike: I would like to be involved.

Jeff H: We have about ten people including Mike.

Ed: We should have a good idea of what we are doing by December 31st.

Mike: Does anyone know if Sarah sent out a general announcement last year?

Kendrick: It was soon after I started that she sent it out.

Discussion about getting moving on annual meeting specifics...

Mike: I think we really need to get information to planners and developers that will help conservation and I am glad that Jacquelyn is here. I am up for other things that we should discuss at future meetings.

Ed: I think we need to talk about how to encourage information gathering in areas of the state that are under sampled.

Lori: I also think we should discuss an idea Ron had about investigating diversity hot spots and areas that need more protection. But, I don't think anything came from that.

Alvin: I talked with him a little bit but he needed to talk with Natural Heritage because they have already done a lot of that. I think that birders have done the same thing with Important Bird Areas. I think that we should find out where other work has been done before we start another initiative.

Mike: I think we need to become more familiar with the Wildlife Action Plan and how best to get that accomplished.

Lori: One practical application for the Herp Atlas is that our permit guys that get 401/404 permits in for review, it allows us to have some input on planning conservation. The recommendations might not be followed but at least we have input and those data will be really important for that.

Mike: Maybe I can send out an email with these specific ideas. And if you have ideas then we may want to discuss one for the whole meeting. The past couple of meetings have just been updates and they are important but we need to make some more progress. I also wanted to see if anyone had any objections to not being blind copied in the group emails I send out. (No one objects) Ok, I will continue. So, the next thing is the next meeting. Are Wednesdays good for everyone in general? I was thinking maybe not until after the annual meeting.

Jeff H: I would like to let everyone know about the Education and Outreach working group meeting January 31, 2007 at San Lee Park from 11am-3pm.

Mike: Is that it? Thanks for coming!

Meeting Adjourned