



CHAPTER 7

Partner Coordination

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SNAPSHOT

Engaging and Coordinating with Partners in the Revision Process and Implementation

- ✓ The Wildlife Diversity Forum of 2012 represents a State Wildlife Action Plan “Best Practice” by engaging partners early in the revision process.
- ✓ Pennsylvania’s diverse, knowledgeable and motivated natural resource community provided crucial support to the revision process.
- ✓ PGC and PFBC will work with current partners and, where opportunities are available, develop new partnerships to implement the 2015 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan.

Getting Started-Engaging Partners

Wildlife Diversity Forum

Partnerships are crucial to the success of major endeavors such as revising the 2005 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan. The importance of partnerships was recognized early in the revision process and, in June 2012 the Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC), in cooperation with the *Wildlife For Everyone Endowment Foundation*, hosted a one-and-a-half day, invitation-only Wildlife Diversity Forum. Attendees included 91 conservation leaders from more than 50 organizations, with an emphasis to bolster effectiveness of the Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan. The workshop initiated a dialogue with established and potential partners to identify areas of common concern. The Pennsylvania Teaming With Wildlife (TWW) Coalition member list served as a starting point for invitations. Workshop objectives were to:

- Raise awareness within the conservation community about the full breadth of the PGC’s mission – conserving all birds and all mammals for all people, for all time.
- Inform participants about Pennsylvania's Wildlife Action Plan and its upcoming revision.
- Exchange information on accomplishments and progress made over the last decade.
- Provide updates on the state of Pennsylvania's birds, mammals, and their habitats.
- Motivate multiple stakeholders to better understand and advance wildlife conservation programs and projects at the local, state, and national level.

The forum began with a brief plenary session followed by facilitated breakout discussions to identify critical conservation issues, highlight priorities, and specify actions that the conservation community could take to address priority issues. At the plenary session, concise presentations on conservation strategies, the Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan, and status of birds, mammals, and their habitats provided the foundation for the subsequent breakout discussions. Breakout groups of 10-12



conservation professionals identified and categorized critical conservation issues using a nominal group process to ensure that all ideas were recorded. Fostering additional ideas and discussions, prior to a banquet presentation, an early evening poster session/social allowed partners to share projects and discuss possible conservation actions. State & Tribal Wildlife Grants-funded projects were highlighted during this session.

By the second day, organizers had compiled 340 conservation issues from the first-day breakout groups ([Day 1 Results](#)). On this day, participants were asked to prioritize the issues and suggest conservation actions for each priority. These pre-assigned groups, based generally according to Wildlife TRACS Level 1 Categories, included leaders in:

- Conservation Planning & Design
- Education, Outreach, Human Dimensions & Communications
- Habitat Management
- Land Protection
- Policy, Regulation, Administration & Funding
- Population Monitoring & Assessment
- Scientific Research

Again, the forum employed a “round robin” process to prioritize issues and identify conservation actions ([Day 2 Results](#)). This was the start of a long conversation with partners in the coming months and years as Pennsylvania updated its Plan.

The Wildlife Diversity Forum was well-received by participants and, as the PGC Executive Director commented, was the most important event of the year.

Partners in the Revision Process

As Pennsylvania’s agencies directly responsible for securing the well-being of fish and wildlife populations, the PGC and PFBC led the comprehensive revision of the 2005 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan that resulted in this 2015 Plan. This process was supported by a broad coalition of conservation partners across the Commonwealth (Introduction, Acknowledgments), working on special committees within the

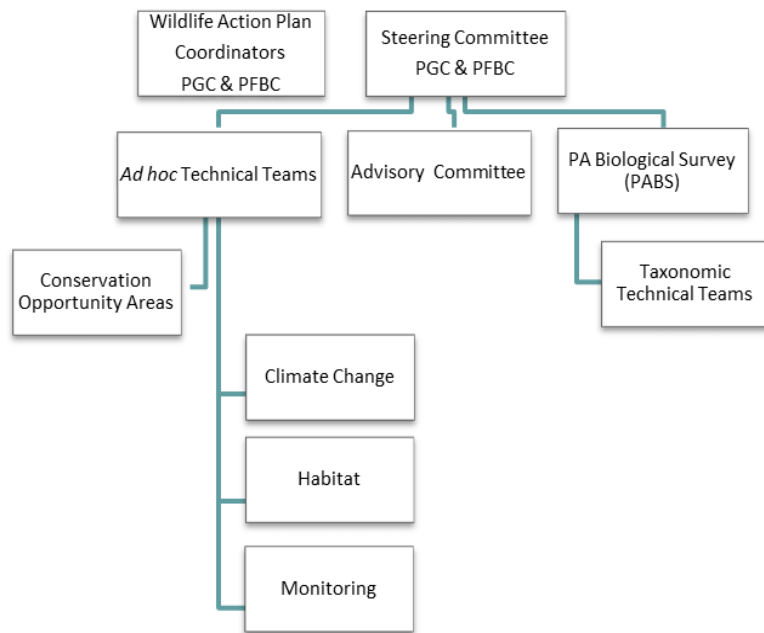


Fig. 7.1. Administrative structure for revising the 2005 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan.



established administrative structure (Fig. 7.1). In this section we describe their roles and how we coordinated with these partners during the revision process (Table 7.1, [Appendix 7.1, Exhibit 1](#)).

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Comprehensive revision of the 2005 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan was initiated by the PGC and PFBC via a conference call with Dr. John Organ and Ms. Dee Blanton of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) (Region V) (09.07.12). During this meeting we provided an overview of Pennsylvania's revision process, including an early form of Fig. 7.1 and a Gantt chart of tasks and proposed timelines. Subsequently, the USFWS was formally notified of the comprehensive revision process through correspondence co-signed by each Commission's Executive Director ([Appendix 7.1; Exhibit 2](#)). Throughout the revision process, the USFWS remained an active partner with the PGC and PFBC. An important organizational event for regional State Wildlife Action Plan Coordinators was convened by Region V staff in Hadley, Massachusetts (February 2014). Providing crucial guidance for the revision process, this meeting also highlighted the significant conservation opportunity presented by these Wildlife Action Plans. Subsequently, regional conference calls (typically monthly) provided ongoing guidance and an opportunity to share information with Wildlife Action Plan coordinators throughout the region. Other direct coordination and communication with the USFWS was conducted as needed. Additional USFWS support was provided through a local (within state) liaison, Dr. Mike Millard, Director,

Table 7.1. Administrative unit and general responsibilities for revising the 2005 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan.

Administrative Unit/Capacity	Responsibilities
Steering Committee	Guidance, assurances, review and approval of interim and final products.
PGC and PFBC Wildlife Action Plan Coordinators	Daily oversight of revision process, review materials and coordinate with partners.
Advisory Committee	Counsel Steering Committee and State Wildlife Action Plan Coordinators on scientific merits of the revision process and materials, and provide recommendations for achievable implementation.
Technical Committees (PABS Committees and <i>ad hoc</i> Technical Committees)	Review and assessment of species, habitats, threats and conservation actions for technical support revision of the 2005 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan.

Northeast Fishery Center, Lamar, Pennsylvania. In this capacity, Dr. Millard provided information to the PGC and PFBC Wildlife Action Plan Coordinators relevant to federal topics such as federally listed species, and corresponded with USFWS offices in Pennsylvania on behalf of the Wildlife Action Plan Coordinators. Dr. Millard also served on the Advisory Committee.



Steering Committee and Wildlife Action Plan Coordinators

Revising the 2005 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan involved administrative units within each Commission (Table 7.2) and accordingly, participation of several administrative and program leaders who comprised the Steering Committee (Acknowledgments). This committee provided overarching guidance for key components of the plan (e.g., Goals, Objectives and Strategies, Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) flowchart criteria, Conservation Opportunity Areas) and reviewed draft materials prior to public review. As a formal unit administering this revision, operational guidance, including quorum and voting requirements, were provided through the Steering Committee Charter (Chapter 6, Revision). In addition to electronic correspondences, in-person meetings (typically quarterly) provided members the opportunity to receive status reports and review key materials.

The Wildlife Action Plan Coordinators (Coordinators) from each Commission were responsible for direct oversight of the revision process. Reporting directly to the Steering Committee, the Coordinators worked with technical committees, organized and facilitated meetings and webinars, communicated with partners, authored grant proposals, edited submitted materials, drafted original materials and assimilated comments into the revised plan. The Coordinators worked with established committees, key partners in the Commonwealth and across the Northeast Region. Beyond in-person meetings, additional communications with Commission staff, partners, and contractors were often required in support of the process.

Table 7.2. Administrative staff offices from the PGC and PFBC serving on the Steering Committee.

Game Commission	Fish and Boat Commission
Executive Director	Executive Director
Director, Wildlife Management Bureau	Director, Fisheries Bureau
Information and Education Specialist	Chief, Division of Environmental Services
Chief, Wildlife Diversity Division	Chief, Natural Diversity Section
Chief, Habitat Planning and Development Division	Chief, Division of Fish Management
Wildlife Action Plan Coordinator	Conservation Coordinator

Advisory Committee

Pennsylvania hosts a diverse and knowledgeable assembly of natural resource professionals among federal, state and local agencies, research institutions, non-governmental organizations and private foundations. Working with both the PGC and PFBC, these partners have historically contributed to the scientific foundation that has guided crucial management decisions, or have been direct partners in implementing conservation actions. Similar to the Steering Committee, Advisory Committee functions were guided by a formal Advisory Committee Charter (Chapter 6, Appendix 6.2-Exhibit 2) and Operational Guidance (Chapter 6, Appendix 6.2-Exhibit 3). As the committee name implies, this deliberative body recommended scientific and technical materials to the Steering Committee and Wildlife Action Plan Coordinators. Participating agencies, organizations and institutions were invited based on one or more of general criterion that included responsibilities or coverage at the national or



state scale, or with broad missions encompassing factors such as multiple species and habitats (Table 7.3). Advisory Committee meetings focused on the *Eight Required Elements* and the revision process.

Table 7.3. Agencies and organizations comprising the Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan Advisory Committee.

Federal Agencies	Non-Governmental Organizations
USFWS-State College Office & Northeast Fishery Center USFWS-Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (North Atlantic, Appalachian, Upper Midwest Great Lakes) USDA-APHIS, U.S. Department of Agriculture-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service USDA-NRCS, U.S. Department of Agriculture-Natural Resource Conservation Service USDA-FS Allegheny National Forest (U.S. Department of Agriculture-Forest Service) USGS-PA CFWRU (U.S. Geological Survey-PA Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit) USGS-PA WSC (U.S. Geological Survey-PA Water Science Center)	American Fisheries Society-PA Chapter (AFS) American Rivers Audubon Pennsylvania Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) PA Biological Survey (PABS) Pennsylvania Land Trust Association (PALTA) The Nature Conservancy (TNC) The Wildlife Society – PA Chapter (TWS) Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC)
State Agencies Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PADCNR) Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD) The Pennsylvania State University (PSU)	Organizations with multi-state authorities Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC)

Additionally, throughout the revision process, members of this committee provided technical and programmatic support and were further recognized as assisting with *Required Element 7*.

Technical Committees and Related Support

Instrumental to the revision process were technical contributions, including extensive support from taxonomic committees of the Pennsylvania Biological Survey (PABS). The purpose of PABS is "to increase the knowledge of and foster the perpetuation of the natural biological diversity of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania." Members of this organization include scientists throughout the state, representatives of state and federal agencies, Pennsylvania's major natural history museums and scientific institutions, and interested individuals. A list of Technical Committee members and affiliations is available at [PABS](#) (PABS 2015b); Table 7.4; Acknowledgments). Taxonomic experts reviewed species data and provided recommendations for Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) designation, threats and conservation actions.



PABS Climate Change Committee expertise supported the Wildlife Action Plan Climate Change Committee with technical information, conducting surveys, drafting text, and reviewing materials. In addition to the Climate Change Committee, other special committees supporting the revision process focused on Conservation Opportunity Areas, Habitat, and Monitoring and included researchers, technical experts and administrative professionals from across Pennsylvania (Table 7.5). By attending meetings and workshops, providing scientific literature, drafting new materials, and critically reviewing draft materials, these

Table 7.4. Technical Committees of the PA Biological Survey (PABS) contributing to the Wildlife Action Plan revision process.

PA Biological Survey (PABS) Technical Committees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amphibian & Reptiles • Fishes • Invertebrates • Mammals • Mollusks • Ornithology • Climate Change • Community Classification

Table 7.5. Agencies and Organizations participating in the *ad hoc* Technical Committees during the Wildlife Action Plan revision process. PGC and PFBC were members of all committees.

<p>Climate Change Audubon Pennsylvania FPCCT^a Moravian College PADCNR^b PAPUC^c PNHP^d TNC^e WPC^f</p> <p>Monitoring USGS-PA CFWRU^g WPC^f</p> <p>Species Modeling PSU^h WPC^f</p>	<p>Conservation Opportunity Areas NPS (National Park Service) PADCNR^b USDA-NRCSⁱ USGS-Patuxent Research Center (Facilitation) University of Tennessee (Facilitation) WPC^f</p> <p>Habitat EPCAMR (Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation) FPCCT^a PADCNR^b PSU^h TNC^d USDA-FS (USDA-Forest Service) USDA-NRCSⁱ USFWS-(U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-Partners Program) WPC^f</p>
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^aFrench and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, ^bPennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, ^cPennsylvania Public Utility Commission, ^dThe Nature Conservancy, ^eWestern Pennsylvania Conservancy, ^fPennsylvania Natural Heritage Program, ^gU.S. Geological Survey Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, ^hThe Pennsylvania State University, ⁱU.S. Department of Agriculture-Natural Resource Conservation Service.



committees supported the scientific basis on which this Plan is developed. Committee members often worked well beyond their daily responsibilities and, in some cases, retired technical experts provided their knowledge from years of experience to advance the process (Acknowledgments).

Other support for the plan included programming, administrative, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) support provided by Information Technology (IT) staff from the PGC and PFBC. Legal counsels from both Commissions reviewed the status of threatened, endangered and candidate species (only PFBC has candidate species designations). Outreach and communication assistance from media staff and web administrators were instrumental with promoting the Plan and providing materials for public review.

Native American Tribes

Pennsylvania was historically inhabited by several Native American tribes, but currently no tribes in Pennsylvania are federally recognized, manage or administer programs that significantly affect the conservation of Pennsylvania's SGCN or habitats.

Implementing the 2015 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan

Partnerships were important to implementing the 2005 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan and will be crucial for success of the 2015 Plan. Exemplifying this collaboration is a stream habitat restoration project which included 48 participants identified as providing services and materials to advance on-the-ground habitat enhancements ([Case Study](#)-Partnerships for Stream Habitat Improvement, 2008-2013). Projects were coordinated and implemented by the Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy (grant recipient), with administrative support from the PFBC (State & Tribal Wildlife Grant, T-50-HM-1).

Regional Partners

With jurisdictional responsibilities for Pennsylvania's federally listed species, regional coordination initiatives and significant financial resources, the USFWS will be crucial to eventual success of the 2015 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan. Support from the Region V Office and Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (i.e., North Atlantic, Appalachian, Upper Midwest Great Lakes), has greatly contributed to the scientific base for this Plan. To further support implementation, we fully expect to be engaged in these cooperatives and to provide input on projects that will continue to fill knowledge gaps.

In support of State Wildlife Action Plans in the northeast region, the USGS Northeast Climate Science Center (NECSC) provided timely and well-developed summaries of complex climate science research which greatly benefitted this Plan. Climate science is rapidly changing and resource managers will benefit from the NECSC synthesis of complex datasets. We anticipate that the NECSC will be a partner at the regional scale during implementation of the 2015 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan.

As members of Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (NEAFWA), the PGC and PFBC will remain active participants in this collaborative body and committees. The Northeast Fish and Wildlife Diversity Technical Committee (NEFWDC) has guided numerous initiatives that support regional data collection and analyses. For example, the NEFWDC provided technical input for Regional Conservation Needs Program projects, with products from many studies used in this Plan.



Steering Committee and Wildlife Action Plan Coordinators

As the agencies leading Plan implementation, the Steering Committee will continue to oversee implementation of the 2015 Plan, with each agency's Wildlife Action Plan Coordinator guiding and tracking progress. We anticipate the operational guidance during the implementation phase to follow the procedures used in the revision process, with frequency of committee meetings to-be-determined.

Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee served an integral role in the revision process, and similarly would be expected to function as an important source of information and guidance during the implementation phase of this Plan. Beyond providing supportive scientific information, members will be able to assist with tracking implementation activities. When implementing the 2005 Plan, we were challenged to consistently track activities that were not funded by State & Tribal Wildlife Grants. The Advisory Committee will be able to assist with documenting activities that address objectives and strategies in this Plan, especially if the activities are not funded by State & Tribal Wildlife Grants.

During the revision process, Advisory Committee meetings were typically held quarterly. The frequency of meetings during the implementation phase will be determined early after Plan approval, but we anticipate convening this Committee no less than annually and more often as needed or requested. The role of the committee is expected to remain in an advisory capacity.

Technical Committees

Building on the approaches employed during the revision process (e.g., SGCN flowchart), we envision ongoing participation of Technical Committees, especially those associated with PABS. The revision process identified numerous conservation actions and resource concerns which are expressed in the Species Accounts and throughout the Plan. Implementing and resolving many of these needs is expected to require input from these technical or *ad hoc* committees.

Discussed throughout this Plan, especially in Chapter 3, Threats, climate change continues as a major threat to Pennsylvania's natural resources. Substantial advances in data compilation, modeling and analysis (Staudinger et al. 2015a) have been made in recent years, but many questions remain unanswered. The 2015 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan-Climate Change Committee and PABS-Climate Change Committee will continue to serve important technical roles in Plan implementation. It is anticipated these committees will work with the NECSC (noted above) to support mutual data and analytical needs.

Summary

As discussed in this Chapter (also noted in Acknowledgments), we received technical support from PGC and PFBC staff, and conservation partners encompassing a broad range of ecological interests and expertise. The knowledge, administrative support and enthusiasm of these participants immeasurably enhanced the revision process. We will continue to work with these partners and foster new relationships, to implement the 2015 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan.



Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan

CASE STUDY: Partnerships for Stream Habitat Improvement (2008-2013)

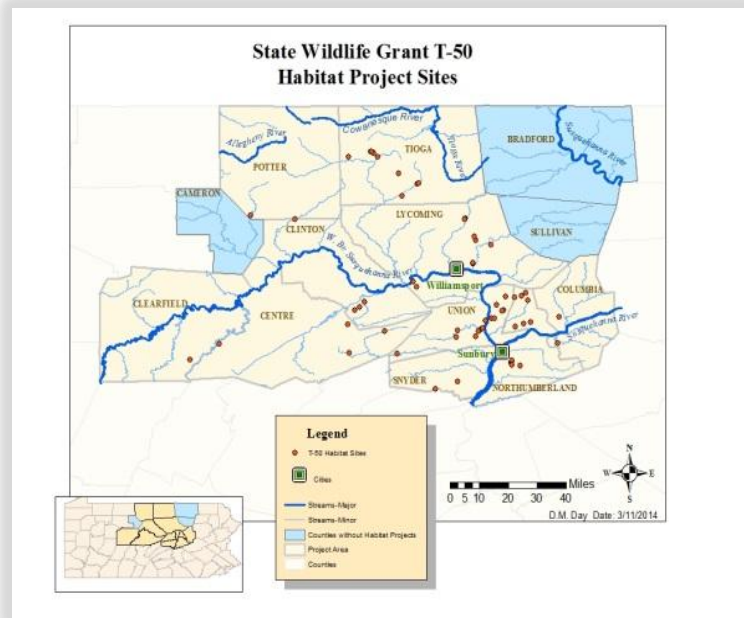
Reneé Carey, Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy

Note

Partners in this project received a 2014 Governor’s Award for Environmental Excellence.

Project Location

North-Central Pennsylvania Counties (Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Potter, Snyder, Tioga, Union)



Project Purpose

Plan, develop, and implement a comprehensive technical assistance program to protect and enhance river and stream habitats for a wide array of fish, amphibians, reptiles, and other wildlife.

Project Description

Stream Habitat restoration practices (e.g., stone deflectors, stream bank fencing, multi-log vane deflector) were installed as part of 69 projects in 39 streams. The streams included a broad range of habitats and fisheries including: cold-water; exceptional-value cold-water; high-quality cold-water; trout stocked; warm-water; and migratory fishes. SGCN potentially benefitting included; yellow lampmussel, wood turtle, and eastern hellbender.

Project Statistics	
Number of Projects	69
Number of Streams	39
Number of Partners	48

Project Partners

Projects were coordinated and implemented by the Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy with PFBC staff providing technical assistance and grant administration (Project: T-50-HM-1). Forty-eight conservation partners including: federal, state, county conservation districts, non-governmental organizations, and private landowners and companies were involved with coordination, communication, permitting and implementing practices. Fifty-three vendors were paid for work under this grant; many local to the project areas.



Reference:

PFBC 2014. A Collaborative, Low-Cost Approach to Stream Habitat Improvement and Watershed Stabilization. Final report to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Project T-50-HM-1). Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, Bellefonte, Pennsylvania.





Appendix 7.1

Exhibit 1.

Meetings and committees convened during revision of the 2005 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan.

Committee	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	Steering	Advisory	Habitat	Monitoring	Climate Change	Conservation Opportunity Areas	Communication Committee	Species Account Webinars
2012									
05/24/12 ^b				●					
09/07/12	●								
10/11/12		●							
2013									
01/10/13		●							
04/02/13			●						
05/13/13 ^d		●							
06/20/13		●							
07/31/13			●						
09/06/13						●			
10/16/13		●							
10/31/13			●						
2014									
01/16/14		●							
02/04/14 ^c	●								
02/11/14			●						
04/21/14		●							
04/28/14						●			
05/08/14			●						
05/14/14								●	
05/19/14 ^e							●		
06/02-06/14 ^f							●		
06/23/14					●				
07/01/14				●					
07/21/14		●							



Committee	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	Steering	Advisory	Habitat	Monitoring	Climate Change	Conservation Opportunity Areas	Communication Committee	Species Account Webinars
08/18/14						●			
09/11/14			●						
09/12/14				●					
11/10/14 ^a				●					
11/14/14 ^h									●
11/19/14 ^h									●
12/01/14 ^h									●
2015									
01/08/15		●							
02/20/15 ^g							●		
03/19/15 ⁱ	●								
04/30/15		●							

^aHabitat Condition Team (Penn State University), ^bHabitat Classification Workshop by TNC, ^cRegional State Wildlife Action Plan Coordinators Meeting, Hadley, MA, ^dPGC Wildlife Diversity Forum, ^epre-workshop conference call, ^fStructured Decision Making workshop for Conservation Opportunity Areas, ^gPGC and PFBC leadership review of proposed actions, ^hSpecies Accounts instructional, ⁱConference call with USFWS-Pennsylvania liaison Mike Millard and PGC & PFBC Wildlife Action Plan Coordinators.



Exhibit 2.

Official notification to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announcing Pennsylvania's intention to comprehensively revise the 2005 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan.



OFFICE OF
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
717-787-3633

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

Pennsylvania Game Commission
2001 Elmerton Avenue

Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission
1601 Elmerton Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 17110

September 27, 2012



OFFICE OF
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
717-705-7801

Dr. John Organ, Chief
Division of Wildlife & Sport Fish Restoration
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Region 5
300 Westgate Center Drive,
Hadley, MA 01035

cc: D. Blanton, USFWS
C. Riley, USFWS
A. Shields, PFBC
C. Hoffner, PGIC
L. Young, PFBC
D. Brantingham, PGIC
D. Spitzer, PFBC
C. Hoffner, PGIC
E. Day, PFBC

RE: 2015 Comprehensive review and revision of the 2005 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan

Dear Dr. Organ:

As Executive Directors of our respective Commissions, we are responsible for management and protection of all trust species and habitats for this and future generations. Since 2005, paramount to addressing this charge has been the Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan (hereafter Plan), the state blueprint for conservation action. This document, supported by State Wildlife Grants Program funding for implementation, has been the foundation for proactively addressing research and management needs of Pennsylvania's Species of Greatest Conservation Need before they require costly federal protection.

In 2005, Pennsylvania agreed to completely review and revise its State Wildlife Action Plan every 10-years. Although October 2015 currently seems quite distant, **we are writing to notify you officially that Pennsylvania is initiating the process of comprehensively reviewing and revising our State Wildlife Action Plan, in its entirety.** Your office will receive the final revised Plan no later than September 30, 2015. Our Wildlife Action Plan Coordinators recently spoke with you and Dee Blanton (9/7/12) to receive additional guidance regarding the revision process. As requested during that conversation, we have attached the project timeline for your reference.

The Commissions, along with our many conservation partners and support from the public, have made notable strides in the implementation of our Plan. We look forward to working with you and your staff throughout the revision process to continue the initiatives begun in 2005 for the protection, conservation and enhancement of Pennsylvania's natural heritage for future generations.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our Wildlife Action Plan Coordinators, Cathy Haffner (chaffner@pa.gov) or Dave Day (davday@pa.gov), or us. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Carl G. Roe, Executive Director
Pennsylvania Game Commission

John A. Arway, Executive Director
Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission

Enclosures