

**Western Bat Working Group
White Nose Subcommittee Conference Call
Wednesday, December 23, 2009**

On call: Dave Waldien, Ella Rowan, Toni Piaggio, Scott Osborn, Elaine Rybak, Pat Ormsbee, Diane Probasco, Katie Miller

Action Plan

- Pat and Toni gave the Action Plan to Heather for edits
- Heather received comments from the WNS subcommittee and incorporated them into the document
- Pat and Toni took the draft to the Board of Directors for comments, but only received comments from Martin
- Martin's comments focused primarily on the inconsistencies in formats and the troubles with the Research section
- Everyone acknowledged that the document still needs work before giving it back to the BoD
- Katie volunteered to take a stab at improvements and edits and will focus on formatting, consistencies, and improving the Research section to reflect work that the WBWG can actually conduct (as it does not actually conduct research).
- Toni will forward the current draft to Katie.
- A discussion on how to improve the Research section ensued. The group wants this section to focus on actions that WBWG can take on, such as 1) creating a questionnaire to identify research items for the west (as opposed to identifying 12 research projects that WBWG won't accomplish), 2) asking the Scientific Advisory Committee to identify the top three research priorities for the west, or 3) asking the WBWG membership to identify who has skills that they can contribute to learning about WNS.
- This subcommittee will send the entire draft document to the Scientific Advisory Committee for review, but ask them to focus on the Research section.

Signs

- Pat conceded that she had promised to review the latest draft of WNS signs, but has not been able to do that. She can have edits to Diane by the end of the first week of January. Toni also volunteered her help.
- Diane and Pat stated that they are trying to draft a template for a "why care about bats and WNS" sign more geared towards educating the general public.

National Plan

- Pat stated that there is a Writing Team and a Steering Committee for the National Plan and that she is a member of the Steering Committee.
- The Writing Team is gearing up and some assignments of parts and chapters for the document has been made. It was a rough start because initially, there were far too many people (20+ on the first conference call), but that has scaled back now. In all likelihood, there will probably be a core few individuals who end up doing the majority of the work.

- The Steering Committee has not yet developed clear goals or identified how it will operate.
- The National Plan is in the works and will likely be done before WNS actually hits western states.
- A discussion followed on how we in our individual roles can raise the WNS profile to urge action on this National Plan. The best everyone can do is to lobby the lead federal agencies (USFS, BLM, USFWS) and emphasize the need for funding and leadership on this issue.

State Wildlife Grant

- Pat had sent out a request for each state to become involved in the SWG for WNS, but received very little response from any of the state reps.
- On the last round of funding, PA took the lead for the request and AR is the lead this time. Those that are primarily involved are the Midwestern states and BCI.
- From the West, only CO and UT (?) have actually responded with interest.
- This is a going to be a missed opportunity for western states, as the SWG is due on January 8th.
- This is another arduous grant process that requires match.
- Pat will send out the most recent email request to the group. Each state should try to identify a contact for this process.

Decontamination Protocol

- The USFWS wants feedback on the protocol from those that have actually implemented the protocol by January 15th.
- There was some confusion as to whether or not this request for feedback has made it to the greater WBWG membership or not.
- Katie can accumulate NV comments and get them to Pat and Toni by January 8th.

This completed the conference call. A future conference call date has not yet be set, but will be established via email after the holidays.