

Federal Aid Coordinators Working Group Report
To
Fish and Wildlife Trust Funds Committee
87th North American Wildlife and Natural Resource Conference

Federal Aid Coordinators Working Group (FACWG) Charge:

1. Provide recommendations for and complete assignments made by the Fish and Wildlife Trust Funds Committee (FWTFC) Chair
2. Provide U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program (WSFR) a means for early review and recommendations for new actions or revisions to WSFR program, procedures, policies and/or legislation
3. Solicit input from State federal aid coordinators on topics applicable to FWTFC meeting agenda topics and WSFR program management and provide that input to FWTFC Chair and WSFR regional chiefs during regularly scheduled meetings
4. To ensure consistent WSFR program administration and new program implementation; provide technical guidance and assistance to WSFR on matters such as updates to the WSFR Toolkit and FA wiki website, implementation of Director's Orders, identification of State training needs, "trouble-shooting" existing practices and recommending solutions.
5. Identify emerging issues that may result from audits or new funding.
6. Inform other State FA Coordinators in respective region of all FAC Working Group activities.

FACWG Membership:

Brenda Bowers (AK) began her position as chair in May 2021 but has recently stepped down to attend to personal matters. Brenda will remain an active participant on the working group. The vice-chair position was filled by Matthew Warriner. Efforts will be underway to find a replacement for Chair.

The current FACWG members are:

Legacy Regions 1, 7, 8: Brenda Bowers (AK)
Legacy Region 2: Marianne Cox (AZ)
Legacy Region 3: Heather Kieweg (MN)
Legacy Region 4: Matthew Warriner; Vice-chair (AR)
Legacy Region 5: Veronica Masson (MA)
Legacy Region 6: Adam Brooks (MT)

- The FACWG has representation on the following working groups: TRACS Working Group: Adam Brooks (MN)
- CAHSS Technical Advisory Committee: Vacant
- 50 CFR 80 Pre-regulatory Team Matthew Warriner (AR)
- 5-year Report: Vacant until further notice

Grant Solutions/TRACS Efficiencies

The duplication of effort and inefficiencies within Grant Solutions and TRACS is still a significant concern for the FACWG. The FACs report an increased burden, a burden also impacting Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program (WSFR) staff as well. It is paramount that actions be taken to improve the operational effectiveness of these two systems. We understand that the TRACS WG and WSFR are actively working to improve the effectiveness of these systems. The FACWG appreciate the diligence and commitment of the TRACS WG and WSFR and encourages the prioritization of improvements to these systems.

TRACS

The FACWG continues to actively monitor the implementation of the TRACS enhancement. Some of our members also hold positions on the TRACS Working Group and are regularly engaged with identification and resolution of issues and challenges. As TRACS issues and challenges are identified, the FACWG disseminates information to the federal aid coordinators (FAC) as needed. Some of our members actively participate on the TRACS WG addressing specific issues like equipment needs, amendments, financial requirements in TRACS vs. Grants Solutions, etc. The FACWG remains committed to addressing concerns and issues with TRACS and will work collaboratively with the TRACS WG and the WSFR to develop solutions.

NBCI Corrective Actions and CCI Update

The FACWG would like to acknowledge the National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative's (NBCI) effort to implement measures addressing the Department of Interior, Office of Inspector General's compliance concerns. NBCI was able to design a cost allocation methodology that WSFR found adequate. NBCI has made changes to their cost model to better conform to the "relative benefit" requirement, by establishing a direct connection to specific state services.

The FACWG is appreciative of WSFR in considering the conservation benefits and program efficiencies that can be achieved when multiple States' resources and partnership efforts are centrally coordinated and leveraged to address shared species' management challenges spanning multiple geopolitical boundaries and requesting approval to establish a class of awards known as Collaborative Conservation Initiatives (CCIs).

FACWG/WSFR Meetings and Invitational Travel

The FACWG appreciates the invitational travel offered by WSFR to help facilitate attendance of the chair and vice-chair at the spring and fall JTF meetings and the FACWG members at the WSFR Chiefs/FACWG meetings. In-person meetings are vitally important to conveying the perspective of FACs directly to the JTF and WSFR attendance at face-to-face meets are particularly important after the disconnect we have all felt as a result of the inability to meet during the Covid-19 pandemic

CAHSS Technical Advisory Committee

Vacant and still no direct involvement w/CAHSS. We request input from the TFC and CAHSS to determine if there is still a need to have a representative from the FACWG on the Technical Advisory Committee to the Council to Advance Hunting and Shooting Sports. We are unaware of

any committee activity since fall of 2018.

Communication Protocol

The Communication Protocol for relaying high-level information from WSFR to the States continues to facilitate communication and increase transparency. The FACWG strongly supports the continued use of this communication strategy for all WSFR-related policy level communications.

The FACWG has continued to facilitate the flow of information between various federal and state groups by:

- Holding monthly or bi-monthly FACWG TEAMS meetings to discuss matters of importance to Federal Aid Coordinators (FACs).
- Corresponding via email amongst the FACWG regarding current topics of interest to FACs.

Revisions to the FACWG bylaws regarding membership

The FACWG is in the process of revising the bylaws to clarify membership and the level of involvement of alternate members, to encourage alternates to actively participate in the FACWG at least one year prior to their membership, and minor revisions to modernize and improve consistency. We are advising the Trust Funds Committee of our intent to seek approval at the AFWA meeting.

Federal Aid Coordinator's Working Group Membership Roster (March 2022)

Legacy Region 1, 7, and 8 – (AK, WA, ID, CA, OR, HI, NV, American Samoa, Guam, & Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands)

Currently serving:

Brenda Bowers

Federal Aid Coordinator
Alaska Fish and Game Wildlife Conservation
1255 W 8th St
Juneau, AK 99802
Phone: (907)465-6198
Email: Brenda.bowers@alaska.gov

Legacy Region 2 – (AZ, NM, OK, TX)

Currently serving:

Marianne Cox

Compliance & Strategies Chief / Federal Aid Coordinator
Arizona Game and Fish Department
5000 W. Carefree Highway

Phoenix, AZ 85086
Phone: (623) 236-7672
Email: mcox@azgfd.gov

Legacy Region 3 – (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Wisconsin)

Currently serving:

Heather Kieweg
Federal Assistance Coordinator
Fish and Wildlife Division
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
DNR Building – 500 Lafayette Road
Saint Paul, MN, 55155-4020
Phone: (651) 259-5214
Email: heather.kieweg@state.mn.us

Shadow – Stacy Xenakis
Federal Aid Coordinator
DNR, Division of Wildlife
2045 Morse Road, Building G
Columbus, Ohio 43229
Phone: 614-265-6321
Email: stacy.xenakis@dnr.state.oh.us

Legacy Region 4 – (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, PR and USVI)

Currently serving:

Matthew Warriner, Vice-chair
Assistant Chief, Wildlife Management Division
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
2 Natural Resources Drive
Little Rock, AR 72205
Phone: (501) 352-0925
Email: matthew.warriner@agfc.ar.gov

Legacy Region 5 – NY, VT, NH, ME, MA, CT, RI, PA, NJ, DE, MD, WV, VA, DC

Currently serving:

Veronica Masson
Federal Aid Coordinator
Rhode Island Divisions of Fish & Wildlife, and Marine Fisheries
3 Ft. Wetherill Road
Jamestown, RI 02835
Phone: (401) 423-1938
Email: veronica.masson@dem.ri.gov

Shadow 1
Stephanie Cunningham

Federal Assistance and Grants Coordinator
Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
30 Emmerson Avenue
Gloucester, MA 01930
Phone: (978) 282-0308 x133
Email: stephanie.cunningham@state.ma.us

Shadow 2

Karen Bennett

Administrator Outreach, Licensing and Grants Management Section
Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife, DNREC
89 Kings Highway
Dover, DE 19901
Phone: (302) 739-9124
Email: Karen.Bennett@delaware.gov

Legacy Region 6 – (CO, KS, MT, ND, NE, SD, UT, WY)

Currently serving:

Adam Brooks

Federal Assistance & Compliance Bureau Chief
Administration Division
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
P.O. Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701
Office: (406) 444-3032
abrooks@mt.gov