

**Wisconsin Young Forest Partnership
Partnership Meeting Minutes
9:30am - 2:30pm CDT
Dec. 8th, 2022**



Participants

Tracy Beckman- Lumberjack, Diane Gunderson – Trees for Tomorrow, Randee Smith – WYFP Coordinator, Chrissy Shaw – AFF, Liam Stevens – WDNR, Michele Woodford – WDNR, Curt Rollman – WDNR, Alaina Gerrits – WDNR, Stefan Nelson – RGS, Mark Heyde – WCFA, Eric Borchert – WDNR, Lara Fondow – USFWS, Chris Weber – LP, Marc Kenyon – WDNR, Pat Weber – ABC, Allan Braun – NRCS, Joel Flory – USFS Chaq Nicolet

Zoom

Emily Filiberti – Unv of Maine, Catie Geib – MWW/ALF, Aaron McCullough – WDNR, Eddie Shea – WDNR, Heather Doherty – PF Farm Bill Biologist, Jon Steigerwaldt – RGS, Josh Rasmussen – RGS, Linnea Rowse – ABC, Zack Zuleger – WDNR, Zak Knab – WDNR, DJ McNeil – Indiana Unv of Pennsylvania, Tom Carlson – WDNR

Not represented:

Forestland group, WBCP, PF, WWF, SAF

Meeting Details

Introductions

Introduction to new staff

- Joel Flory – USFS CNNF Forest Wildlife Biologist – from this area, used to be at the northern research station and was a fisheries and wildlife program manager
- Mark Heyde – WCFA – retired DNR forester and former county forest administrator, currently the WCFA Certification and Issues Coordinator

Research update – AMWO response to GWWA habitat in the Great Lakes and Apps – DJ McNeil

Since research results are in review and pending publication, they cannot be fully shared

- 2 common conservation practices implemented through NRCS EQIP and RCPP were evaluated – timber harvests (in the Appalachians and Great Lakes) and shrub shearing (in Great Lakes, the Apps have very few wetlands to work with)
- Golden-winged warblers (GWWA) respond to this management (higher in GL vs Apps)
 - Occupancy higher with increased growing seasons after harvest (to a certain point)
- Research wanted to look at how American woodcock (AMWO) use the GWWA habitat and what factors drive the use (microhabitat and landscape-scale drivers)
- Woodcock song surveys, micro-habitat and landscape data taken from random points within a managed area at least 80 m from edge
- AMWO in the GL responded better to shrub shearing than timber harvests

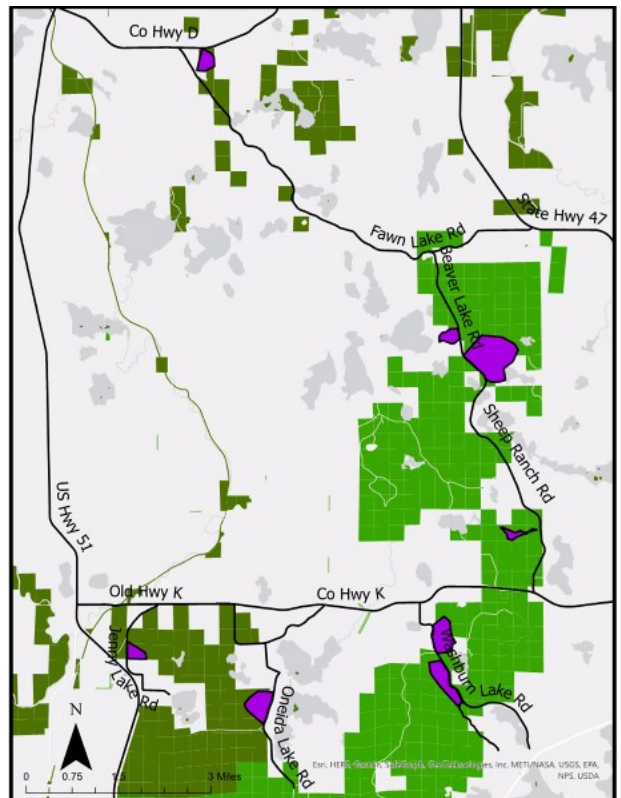
- Factors to increase AMWO occupancy in GL: decreased basal area, increased medium woody stems (1-2m high), ~70 acres treatment size (diminishing returns beyond)
- Factors to increase AMWO occupancy in Apps: decreased basal area, increased grass cover, ~100 acres treatment size
- Regional patterns, Apps lost their robust response which goes to show importance of maintaining YF on the landscape

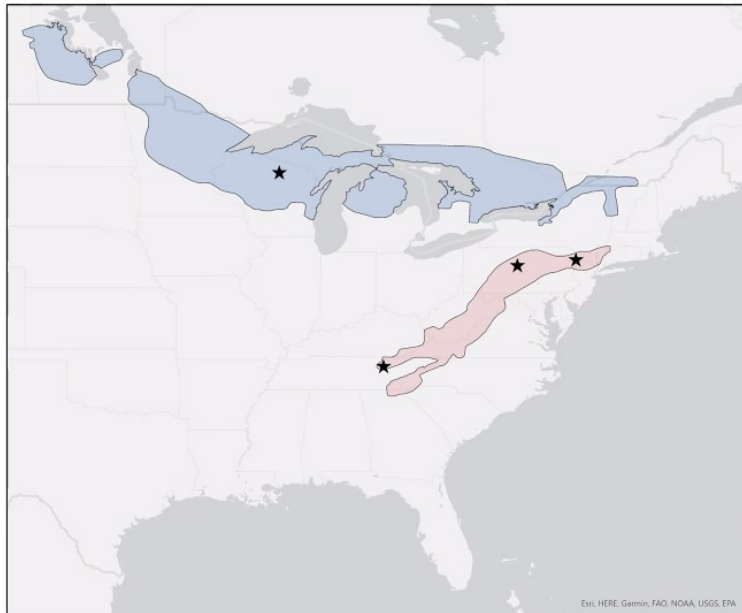
Questions/comments

- Keeping forests dynamic and not just adding more YF is important
- Once published, results can be used to educate professionals and update BMPs, create handouts etc.
- 2-4 ac cuts are way too small, 10-15 good and going higher might not have the greatest woodcock density, but they will be there
- If there is very little grass, when you mow, you should get grass to come back, but it doesn't have to be a certain amount, it usually happens naturally
- If GWWA are there, not ideal to focus efforts on those areas since they will disappear for a while (they will come back with more growing seasons)
- Focus on areas that are mature and in the vicinity of populations, but not where they are already highly dense

Research update – GWWA in WI – Emily Filiberti

- Critical gap of knowledge for female survival so they are using NanoTags and telemetry to collect details on the females to see where they go (don't need to collect tags)
- Goal – female adult survival – integrated population model will help detect primary driver of decline
- Put on NanoTags before nesting in May, playback calls are used to capture, and tags are put on both sexes
- Started in 2021 in the Great Lakes and Appalachians
- 55 Males, 44 Females in GL 51M, 30F Apps
- To the right shows the areas that birds were captured on public land





State	Research Affiliation	Collaborators
WI	University of Maine	Amber Roth Emily Filiberti Jessica Hightower
TN	University of Tennessee	David Buehler Doug Raybuck
PA	Indiana University of Pennsylvania	Jeff Larkin DJ McNeil Cam Fiss Sean Murphy



Preliminary Results : 2021-2022 Return Rates

State	Males Control	Males Tagged	Females Tagged	Females Control
Pennsylvania	26% (5/19)	28% (5/18)	0% (0/7)	0% (0/1)
Tennessee	100% (2/2)	44% (8/18)	0% (0/6)	na
Wisconsin	34% (12/35)	27% (4/15)	10% (2/20)	na
All States	34% (19/56)	33% (17/51)	6% (2/31)	0% (0/1)

ABC RCPP Update – Pat Weber

- RCPP 2014-2020 accomplishments:
 - 6,773 acres of GWWA habitat on private lands
 - Research shows that it's working with 90% of sites having breeding GWWA detected within 3 years (AMWO abundance locally)
 - 675+ site visits conducted and 498+ LO applied for cost-share
- RCPP II 2021-2026 goal is to add 6,670 additional acres of YF with GWWA and Kirtland's warbler BMPs (623 ac so far) with the investment of \$5M matched by \$7.6M in partner contributions over 5 years
 - Utilizing bioacoustics monitoring to expand coverage and reduce costs of monitoring
- RCPP 2023-2027 investment of \$5.4 M will focus on improving oak ecosystem health in the Great Lakes region. Utilizing 3 staff on the ground, they will leverage 21k+ acres of partner managed lands in WI and IL and add 4k acres of private lands

Land Management Workshop @ Trees for Tomorrow

- Trees for Tomorrow in Eagle River has a wonderful campus with classrooms and boarding for various events
- Looking to work with other organizations to host educational events for landowners, professionals, or students
 - Previously had events as part of the Sustainable Living Institute that went over well. Would be interested in doing more or expanding on workshops/events.

11:10 – 12pm

Partnership updates & review of current efforts

- 2021 Annual Report can be viewed at www.wiyoungforest.org/annual-report
- Spring shearing contractor training being planned with ABC to get all contractors on the same page with BMPs, wildlife, technology, and cost-share programs
- LSR grant – WYFP's financial sponsor, Lumberjack RC&D, has received funding for a 3-year Landscape Scale Restoration project focused on forest health, invasive species, demonstration areas, and outreach that WYFP will be a part of
 - April of next year- hope to implement outreach specific for LSR
- Outreach
 - These last 2 years, we've partnered with WDNR Forestry and My Wisconsin Woods (MWW) to work with landowners more efficiently. MWW conducted the mailings, DNR foresters provided site visits, and landowners interested in moving forward would be passed to Randee Smith, WYFP coordinator, to learn about programs and cost-share programs like NRCS EQIP, CSP, WFLGP, MFL, and DMAP.

Upcoming outreach:

- This Winter: My WI Woods 3rd priority mailing to landowners 10-30 acres
 - To landowners that had site visits since 2019 to spring of 2021
- Spring: plan to do a mailing to landowners who had site visits from spring 2021 to 2023
- Spring: expand DNR Forester referral capabilities using shared database to include all counties in our main 21 counties and remind foresters about the collaboration of WYFP and DNR forestry
- 2023: MWW/DNR: There are still large acreage landowners that have not been mailed to - these landowners will be targeted across WI with an offer for a forester site visit

Partner updates – each rep fills us in

- **USFS** – Joel Flory – split between E and W in Chq Nicolet, 5 diff biologists spread out, alder more in west side of forest (Medford-Park Falls 60 ac), several large timber sales going on and continued clean up from storm damage, focusing on hunter walking trails 118 miles in last summer, 2-5 ac min acre openings, fully staffed in wildlife area
- **NRCS** – Allan Braun – inflation reduction act getting additional funding in 2024-

2026 coming into all programs, not sure if certain practices are targeted, forestry practices should be included in that, worried about impact of field offices, opportunities for partners down the road to help with that, uncertainty of how to spend or on what; Climate change mitigation focus on forestry; Joint Chiefs Initiative- wait for congress to pass full year funding bill before deciding on projects; forest plans in general have a big backlog, when talking with LO focus on those new to management (no MFL), have about 40 TSPs to write plans

- **USFWS** – Lara Fondow – Mark Pfof retired in summer and still open position depending on budget, other biologists are covering his counties for now, Lara in role just under a year, have 2 projects going on
- **WDNR Wildlife** – Marc Kenyon – America the beautiful grant- would've brought \$5 M annually to northern WI, written to implement YF across the north, not successful this year but will try for next year, reaching out to find out why not successful and will bring in partners when revamping proposal; Recovering Americas Wildlife Act- figuring out how that might look like and deliver something pretty quick, Mark advocates for young forest and wetlands; Elk management plan- final stages going to natural resources board in march, sharp tail management plan in NW sands area going to board spring 2023; YFH management guidelines- DNR wildlife never really had BMPs written down for own internal wildlife staff, be able to share with foresters etc as a guiding principal (7 habitat types); Assisted oak dispersal project- brought oak saplings up from Missouri to see how they do on wildlife areas; Forest wildlife habitat specialist- position not filled but coordinating wildlife habitat management guidelines on a statewide level with staff; RGS DNR contract 2 RGS biologists (Rhinelander and Hayward) implementing DMAP, making contacts with LO and delivering YF message, working with FS district biologists – these contracts/staff will help deliver GNA and DNR property projects, hopefully March/April get them on the ground
- **WCFA** – Mark Heyde – 30 counties have county forests have 2.4 M acres in northern third state, 17500 ac of aspen 6k oak/scrub oak, Chippewa county focusing on harvesting scheduling, Taylor county RGS area lowland and trails age diversification of aspen, Clark county has a lot with aspen/oak- 2 RGS dedicated areas hunter trail renovation, trails, and age diversification; Revision on America the beautiful grant, communicate with CFA director to work together; Dustin Bronson would be good contact in FS for oak assisted migration
- **ABC** – Pat Weber – RCPP Nov 4 sign up, 35 projects all but 2 are alder shearing, new rule saying only 20% of area can be sheared, worried how that might impact contractors, hired Farm Bill coordinator to work with all programs across the US (working land for wildlife, RCPPs, etc)
- **RGS** – Jon Steigerwaldt – 2022 good year, nationally doubled conservation staff, many in Great Lakes and in WI, Josh Rasmussen in Trempealeau county is in northern part of driftless, 4th conservation coordinator in MN and NW WI, UP conservation coordinator staff- seeking western UP in Kenton MI, talking with Iowa and MN partners about another RCPP in driftless for oak hardwood ecosystems
- **MWW/ALF** – Catie Geib – mailings have been main focus, using 3rd priority mailing with WYFP as a test – paid postage for responses, offering resources vs just cost-

share; large acreage LO 100+, response rate is usually around 10% which is really high, currently looking into how to reach out best to these landowners since they may not identify as a forest landowner first, might have to see what the foresters are able to handle and may adjust mailing for that; summary of some digital content 40% increase in page use, 209 in page visits; any articles/news to be shared with the masses, MWW can send out in newsletter

- **AFF** – Chrissy Shaw – launch learning pilot for family forest carbon project (FFCP)(MN/WI/UP), develop carbon projects with LO designed to increase carbon, aspen and northern hardwoods , 20 year project and each year get a payment, develop a management plan, only carbon program that integrates harvesting – aspen- looked at FIA data, 50 year old aspen harvested and 50% volume taken, FFCP practices lighter 60% harvested, FIA hardwoods was 120 sq ft basal area 20% volume taken, so FFCP says to hold stand a little longer to 130 acre and then 20% taken, practices designed to bring climate benefit but fit LO goals, payments depend on how many acres enrolled min 30 acres eligibility – has to be harvestable within that 20 years, land itself can't be in a carbon program
- **DMAP** – statewide DMAP coordinator started 2 weeks ago, updating online portal, 4 staff across state
- Mark Witecha forest specialist position will cover grouse duties, RUGR management plan update being relooked at, educational plans to be passed around

Wisconsin Young Forest Partnership Leadership

Executive Committee Members:

Jon Steigerwaldt

Tracy Beckman

Allan Braun

Steering Committee Members (and alternates):

USFS: Joel Flory

NRCS: Chris Borden and Allan Braun

USFWS: Ted Koehler

WDNR Wildlife: Marc Kenyon

WDNR Forestry: Kristin Lambert and Sadie Brown

WCFA: Mark Heyde

ABC: Shawn Graff and Pat Weber

RGS: Jon Steigerwaldt

Forestland Group: Shawn Hagan

WWF: Bob Ellingson

SAF: Tom Hittle

Lumberjack RC&D: Tracy Beckman

LP: Chris Weber

MWW and ALF: Catie Geib

WBCP: N/A

PF: N/A

Subcommittee Members:

Personnel/workgroup:

Randee Smith

Jon Steigerwaldt

Pat Weber

Linnea Rowse

Dan Hoff

Jared Elm

Stefan Nelson

Fundraising:

Tracy Beckman

Jon Steigerwaldt

Randee Smith

Outreach:

Randee Smith

Jamie Nack

Amber Roth

Diane Gunderson

Tracy Beckman

Pat Weber

Monitoring/Research:

Amber Roth

Randee Smith