

Notes

AR-LA CDN General Membership Meeting January 23, 2020

Next meeting dates: 3rd week July 2020; 3rd week January 2020

AR-LA Outcomes: Galvanize CDN re-start, leadership, and expectations. Identify timeline for accomplishment.

Tasks & Actions:

(1) Co-Chairs: Schedule Steering Committee Meeting to include:

- a. Meeting or Conference Call before March 15th
- b. Ratify and add steering committee members
 - i. Consulting Foresters, TIMO or Industry representatives
- c. Consider development of AR-LA working groups (watersheds or focus areas)
 - i. Poison Springs, MFFI, Large land holdings (TIMOs or conservation estate)
- d. Co-chairs: Draft proposed Delivery Team tasks and timelines
- e. Draft and approve Delivery Team membership
 - i. Explore technology to expedite outreach and delivery

(2) Delivery Team 2020: Considerations

- a. Load toolbox with all delivery options – multiple delivery resources in CDN
- b. Investigate online tools
 - i. TX Forest Service landowner application – property mapper
 1. Displays needs for Rx fire and forestry assistance
- c. Refine delivery map to integrate and include key “open pine” core conservation estate lands
- d. Review CDN Priority Map using new data resources; refine integrate anchor points

(3) HD – Facilitate the support of successional planning for Family Forests

- a. Develop options for Family lands, keeping it in the family” through LLCs, etc.
- b. Ex. Round Table approach may be an option in local areas

(4) Training – Develop cross-training of State NRCS professionals

- a. Working Group members – (Ryan Diener, David Breithaupt, Amanda Mathis, Bubba Groves, Doug Akin, Josh Smith (unnamed LA forester)
- b. Contact AR-LA NRCS State Conservationist to identify, promote and train forestry practices
 - i. Request target areas and personnel (early adopter group)
 - ii. Farm Bill Training needs (WRE, ALE, EQIP, CSP)
- c. TIMO – Forestry outreach, engagement, and training

Welcome to SAU Campus – Rusty Hayes (Director of Farm Operations)

Welcomed participants and introduced facility manager; mentioned College Rodeo program sales, rodeos, and donkey shows; large stable facility boards about 80 horses throughout the year.

Welcome/Introductions – David Breithaupt: Thanked all 44 members of the CDN, and introduced himself and Ricky Chastain as co-chairs and Steering Committee; round robin introductions followed – David introduced CDN Steering Committee members. steering members and delivery team (and vacancies); all listed on reverse side of agenda, and can be found on the website.



Notes

AR-LA CDN General Membership Meeting January 23, 2020

Partnership Efforts 2019 – Ricky Chastain - PPT #1 (slides 1-4): Reviewed agenda, conservation map, etc.; reiterated need for feedback regarding what you need done and how we can bring resources. **David and Ricky:** the CDN continues successful partnership years at the table in AR and LA. The AR-LA CDN is unlike the MAV partnerships, in that it focuses on upland pine – open forests that promote grassy understories which support many desired species. **Ricky** provided 2019 year-in-review (see website) as summarized in fact sheet handout. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bb3865d2727be6f94acf2fc/t/5e1f99636520195adfb0cf49/1579129187486/AR-LA+CDN+Committee+Members+2020-2021.pdf>

AR-LA CDN History & 2010-2018 Review - Keith McKnight

Provided background of the JV & CDN development - **PPT #1 (slides 5-30):**

Review of JV partnerships (evolution of what they are than, today & how they work); JVs are a science-based informed delivery concept & the LMVJV is encompasses our AR-LA geography. Described the early history of AR-LA & identified those present who were instrumental to early success. Pointed out the handouts (hard copy) of Operating Guidelines (including map of geography and Open Pine model), also available on the website; SHC - honing down landscape of many counties/parishes to less than half identifying the best opportunity for conservation on 40% of our area.

CDN Model – NETX (Connecting the Dots) Jason Estrella - PPT #2

Process steps NETX Strategy Development – The NETX CDN has made major strides because it started out as a grass-roots driven consortium of organizations and agencies (recognize CLI, NWTF) and evolved by collectively defining our most important areas to focus conservation resources. Key to its initial success, participation, and growth was a shared vision development of priority watersheds – landscapes (described mapping process) – NETX has identified the **best 17% landscape** on which to focus conservation resources <https://www.lmvjv.org/ne-texas-cdn>. This NETX strategy is being used to connect with other partnerships like Texas Longleaf, NGO, JV, federal, and state conservation efforts. There is a need for open dialogue between Texas, AR-LA, and OK to enhance delivery in WGCP or BCR 25 – Texas focused its priority conservation on open forest species – with turkey as a driving species – and because we all touch each other and turkey don't recognize state lines, we must all work better together to see more habitat! An important part of the Texas program are conservation delivery dollars; our funding is described as HIP (Habitat Incentive Program) which is a combination of state, federal and grant funds which are important – HIP resources supplements other conservation programs like the farm bill; partners, etc. - Farm Bill can't help industry or TIMOs but through the use of HIP funds – these lands are included in those important focus areas. A variety of Q&A and ideas related to acres for wildlife in AR were discussed; coordination has made delivery more efficient.



Notes

AR-LA CDN General Membership Meeting January 23, 2020

Refining AR Design and Delivery – Bill Holimon AR (pdf Map) PPT #3 & Ricky Chastain CDN (pdf map and Morehouse Family Forest Initiative map) PPT #1 (slides 31-34) Facilitated Discussion:

AR Conservation Map and AR-LA Open Pine should be viewed collectively to develop a future priority map – The original effort in LA and AR developed a map of open pine opportunity areas on the most consolidated ~40% best conservation opportunity forest areas; including the conservation estate was described in detail by Bill Holimon asking the question – How do we refine MORE? Or “better” – How can we include the latest efforts to refine, our conservation priority map such as – AGFC Quail Priority Areas; Wildlife Action Plans for AR and LA. AR Natural Heritage Committee – has 6 personnel; with a mission for protection of rare/desirable landscape needs (data and habitat – natural areas); AGFC has a statewide effort through their Action Plan. AR-LA needs a map and strategy that connects these dots, include 2020 efforts and considerations in order to answer the question by all CDN members - WHATS IN THIS FOR ME? How can the CDN develop a more focused map to deliver programs and identify focal delivery sites. International Paper (IP) also sees a barrier by not having focus or funding for those TIMOs REITs and other larger timber management groups; the delivery of any program must especially shorten TIME lag from strategy to completed project – landowners do not have time to drag on with analysis – lets define new strategies with the timeline task to get conservation delivery done quicker - 6 Months or less. How to be more efficient MUST be resolved between Steering Committee and Technical team.

Consulting Forester approach to Shortleaf Pine (NPFL) - Mike Black

Cultivating Conservation (TIMO & REITs) PPT #4 (pdf) - Mike is a CF and has worked as a forest and wildlife consultant for 11 years – focus on non-traditional income for landowners. Describe how your timber sales were specific to improve wildlife habitat and generate income for recreation. “Most consultant foresters (like Mike) were trained at land grant universities to maximize timber production.” **Times have changed** - many landowners place other property objectives much higher on the list. **Today, RARELY do private landowners want to know the internal rate of return or land expectation value.** Now, more landowners want Escape, Recreation, Family, Aesthetics, etc. Learn how to talk land ownership objectives, ensure state and private consultants open this dialogue first. Keep these “new landowners” – the Human Dimension, in our equation.

NRCS Program Opportunities – AR Asst. State Cons., Amanda Mathis - PPT #5 (pdf) - Overview of NRCS for “private Landowners” for RCPP, ACEP, CSP, CRP, EQIP programs land – explained the key differences, with examples of the type of NRCS work expected. WHERE and WHAT is expected to change in new RULES? May not be clear yet. Described in general how payments are calculated (NO numbers or financial specifics of the practices since all may vary by states). Described Conservation Assessment Resource Tool (CART). **EQIP** – has modified funding “% rate nationally and by state” but this change may not impact AR-LA. **CSP** – is a program which must be meeting on-going conservation plans (i.e. long-term EQIP practice for Forestry has added incentives (\$/ac+) for tree planting, & thinning through a 3-tiered payment schedule. Grassland Conservation



Notes

AR-LA CDN General Membership Meeting January 23, 2020

Initiative (GCI) may be value in Grassland Restoration Incentive Programs (GRIP). **ACEP WRE- ALE**; ALE is a relatively new program to allow easements on at risk-AG lands WRE and ALE have SEPARATE rules – to include 3rd party “holding” Conservation Easements for ALE; ALE includes a payment to keep the land as a working farm or ranch. **RCP** is for targeted areas where a partnership can apply but must have and use non-federal funds - leveraging farm bill funds. CHANGES – to RCP in 2018; RCP is now a stand-alone program with a line item budget. (**NOTE – use state \$ to leverage & add value CEs**) Open Q&A on new Farm Bill rules.

Continuing Education – Field Staff education – state & federal partners promoting Farm Bill. David Breithaupt facilitated discussion: Working with landowners – Cultivating sound stewardship plans means **ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS** – what should we consider? What goes into a good NRCS application –to properly complete an USDA **Conservation Desktop Project Application** (this entry is supported by both NGO and NRCS staff); he provided examples of cultivating WRP/CRP and CSP for private lands. David discussed forestry and described elements of Forest & Wildlife Plan Certification/Stewardship Plans. In discussion the need to develop continuing education for new personnel to support understanding of federal and state (NRCS and SWG grant) opportunities, and how to approach landowners with the right information, tact, and recommendations to allow them to determine which program may be right for them. **Group discussion with Q&A towards NRCS programs.**

Prescribed Fire – working together AGFC/ANHC/TNC Ricky Chastain, Bill Holimon, Ryan Diener, TNC partners facilitated discussion – Building cooperatives, targeting areas of most need. (a) Organizing Resources (People) **Fire Cooperatives**; AGFC **Rx Fire Strike Team** focused in Ozarks; (b) Finding Resources (Funding) Are there options for SWG \$ using fire for open pine (cost-effective \$/ac promoting key areas on corporate ownerships near conservation estate [RCW/Prairie] for conservation) to meet AGFC/LDWF and SWG opportunities; Discussed various options for pulling together state, federal NGO resources (\$ and people) to expand Rx fire delivery to a wider group of forest land managers.

Question - is there opportunity for multi-state SWG? Opportunity for a CDN – NRCS in 2 or more states.

Liability - much talked about, but with a well-planned Rx Fire not really an issue.

MFFI Counties/Parishes for fire assistance; suggestion was to consider a Working Group (MFFI); perhaps a working group for a variety of conservation delivery efforts with a core working group to focus delivery.

Austin Klais & Ashley Waguespack – PPT #6 Summarize Handout: Accomplishment for 2019 – new information since July 2019 meeting, and offer insight into support that would benefit delivery of the planning efforts that have been completed to date. MFFI report summary.



Notes

AR-LA CDN General Membership Meeting January 23, 2020

Membership and Business, Closing Remarks – Breithaupt & Chastain

In closing, we asked to provide feedback on the meeting, ask the Steering Committee to review delivery team skills and membership (need recommendations from steering members) – affirm **steering committee** (ARE ANY Agencies or Organizations missing?). **Proposed a meeting or Steering call soon** to determine team membership and Delivery. Discuss **Leadership** – Chair, vice chair operations; do we move back to a chair – vice chair or retain the co-chair model – currently we have no succession option, with chair, vice chair (for successional planning) we have staged transition and general membership involvement. **Question** - what agencies, organizations ad companies may be missing to build our collaborative base. (We should get recommendations for /from industry, TIMOs etc.). Provide overview of Operating Procedures and Delivery map development; discuss **Delivery Team** membership – guidelines for adding new members and the need to focus on technical involvement from agency staff. **Steering send new Delivery Team recommendations**. Open discussion of geography, how to connect/align with other Arkansas Ouachita and OK shortleaf efforts. Leadership will convene a call.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bb3865d2727be6f94acf2fc/t/5e1f99636520195adfb0cf49/1579129187486/AR-LA+CDN+Committee+Members+2020-2021.pdf>

