

## QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

Quarter: (circle one)      2021\_1st      2021\_\_2<sup>nd</sup>      2021\_\_3<sup>rd</sup>      2021\_4th

Grant Program, Number and Title: RCN 2017-03 GSA 00029, Amendment #2

Contractor: Terwilliger Consulting, Inc.

Project Leader: Karen Terwilliger

Abstract: Summary

Terwilliger Consulting Incorporated (TCI) is contracted to provide technical support primarily for Technical Services that support the NEFWDTC and their Conservation of fish and wildlife diversity. Much of the work focuses on researching, compiling, synthesizing, analyzing and reporting on NE Regional Species of Greatest Conservation Need (RSGCN) as these species represent the priority species in the greatest need of collaborative conservation in the region. Significant coordination and data management is involved, including the NE SWAP Database which was developed as a prototype in 2014-16 and is now in need of an upgrade. TCI technical support this quarter included:

1. Research/crosswalk/QA/QC/coding of limiting factors to CMP/IUCN Threats and TRACS actions to update the new database table module for RSGCN. Maintenance of the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) database. Presentation, technical assistance and training of the database to SWAP Coordinators and NEFWDTC on monthly calls and their annual meeting. Update of launch page and contacts, state staff directory, and taxa team representatives.
2. Research and analyses in support of state diversity programs, taxa teams work with invert team, RSGCN method workgroup and SA to develop RSGCN selection criteria and method. Present to NEFWDTC and SWPA coordinators on monthly calls and annual meeting in September.
3. Providing updates, presentations, and reports to the NEFWDTC for the Directors, Wildlife Administrators, Fisheries Administrators, and Technical Committees of on the status of RSGCN (including birds, mammals, herps, fish, and inverts) based on information from taxonomic experts, SWAP Coordinators, and other sources

Were planned goals/objectives achieved last quarter? Yes.

Progress Achieved: completed tasks focused on RSGCN method development and threats and actions, and coordinated with and presented to both SWAP coordinators and NEFWDTC monthly

Objective 1: identify, review and update RSGCN information. This year's focus- Threats and actions and updating the RSGCN selection method.

This quarter, TCI:

### **1- RSGCN method development**

Worked with Invert overview team to ID which invertebrate taxa should be included in this update.

Met with team several times to ID invert tiers, amount of data, expertise and timeframe to be able to

address each taxon. SA assisted by preparing a report of numbers and taxa remaining to be addressed. Developed and sent a survey to NEFWDTC members to get consensus on top RSGCN method issues. Survey results were compiled and presented to both SWAP coordinators and NEFWDTC members on their monthly calls. Method, selection criteria and filters for prescreening were finalized and data sources were researched to begin compiling data on an updated RSGCN list.

## **2- Threats and Actions for RSGCN**

Survey results were compiled and analyses has begun. The Survey was developed and prepopulated with the top 3 threats and actions from the NE SWAP database and results from the taxa team limiting factor data for most RSGCN (crosswalked results from items 2 and 3 below). The survey included threats levels/characteristics and action prioritization questions.

1. Began analysis of crosswalked limiting factor RSGCN data to CMP 2.0 threat and actions (consistent with the lexicon and synthesis) from taxa teams and NE SWAP database. Updated and finalized database RSGCN module with completed data entry: The Northeast State Wildlife Action Plan Database (Database) was updated to capture priority (most frequently cited) threat and actions that address the limiting factors identified by the taxa teams (including aspects of food, reproduction, mortality, and habitat). Assessment and monitoring needs and data gaps were also captured, to inform NEFWDTC and RCN priorities and projects. Data from expert taxa teams were entered, crosswalked and compared to the NE SWAP database QA/QCd.
2. Completed coding and crosswalking of limiting factors to CMP 2.0 threats and actions from the taxa teams and NE SWAP Database. Documentation and consistent coding with the lexicon of taxonomic team reports including threats and conservation actions. These were compiled, coded and condensed down to the top threats for each RSGCN. Analyzed survey results, confirmed threat and actions and began analyses.

**3- Research, compilation and analyses for threat and action characteristics and levels was conducted. This allowed for consistent coding and data entry to prepare for an efficient Taxa team review:** TCI continued to QA/QC literature, survey data, and database to code limiting factors to CMP threat categories (including CMP, IUCN, SWAP database, State and Federal Listing documents, taxonomic literature, etc.). TCI

- Attended NEFWDTC, SWAP Coordinators, and RSGCN Selection Methodology Committee Meetings
- Compiled and analyzed Taxa Team reviews of Draft Regional Threats and Regional Conservation Actions for RSGCN
- Created new Regional Threats and Conservation Actions for RSGCN dataset
- Begin Drafting Regional Threats and Conservation Actions for RSGCN report
- Prepared and gave presentation for NEFWDTC on draft Threats and Conservation Actions

**4-: NEFWDTC Technical Services Coordination and outreach:** This quarter we coordinated with NEFWDTC and SWAP coordinators on their July, August, and September webinars/conference calls to provide project updates and solicit final comments and edits. We also provided updates and reports on NEFWDTC and SWAP Coordinator monthly coordination meetings and followed up with other presenters to provide information requested of the NEFWDTC.

We worked with state fish and wildlife biologists and SWAP coordinators to improve the classification and description of habitat requirements and threats for RSGCN. We continue to respond to inquiries and data requests from state members and their partners. We provided preliminary results and priorities from

the RSGCN limiting factor/threats and actions work in 2021 to inform NEFWDC and SWAP RCN, C SWG, and other work.

We coordinated with the NEAFWA Habitat Committee and NECASC monthly to include them on several NEFWDC and SWAP webinars to get updates on their programs that provided new information and issues regarding invasive species, energy development, habitat and forestry management issues. We arranged for their participation in the NEFWDC monthly calls and relevant topics.

Objective 2: provide on-going technical support, and evaluation of use of regional Wildlife Action Plan database;

This quarter, we finalized coding and crosswalking limiting factors to threats and actions and are preparing the data to populate the new RSGCN module in the updated NE SWAP database. Data entry and coding of all the limiting factors required significant time but was completed and QA/QC to complete the module and begin linking it to threats and actions. Presentations and technical services on this new module continued to key users.

We provided a status update and recommendations for database future needs to NE WAP coordinators and NEFWDC on their monthly calls and at the annual September meetings. The NEAFWA website continues to track users regarding the regional SWAP database in addressing other program priorities and actions. This quarter, the total rose to 157, with additional state agency, US Forest Service, Academic universities, NGOs, and USFWS users downloading the database for use in their programs. We continued to monitor the use of the database from the NEAFWA website. Some users indicate that they are using it for grant (CSWG, RCN, etc.) applications and proposals in order to include the SGSN, key threats and actions from the NE SWAPs. We briefed several new partners on the database, and it was sent to additional state and federal partners associated with the CASC network.

Data requests, queries and reports of information on Regional Species of Greatest Conservation Need are provided upon request and have been updated and a new tab added. Species menus have been improved to allow more flexibility in searching the database for particular species. The launch page of the database was updated to provide additional access to the database from the Northeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' website. States were asked to link it to their SWAP sites as well. Contact information and website links were also updated on the launch page.

Difficulties Encountered in Meeting Goals and Objectives: The NE SWAP Database has outgrown its capacity and structure and would benefit greatly from an upgrade to a web-based platform.

Expected End Date: February 29, 2023

Costs: federal expense to date: \$0 FY-20-21- year 4: \$17,610 + 17,587.5 + \$25,498= \$60,695.50

Total 2021 YEAR to date expenses (include this quarter): yr 4 qtr 1 + 2 = \$ 28,837.05 + 28,252.50 +61,651 =118,740

Total Approved Budgeted Funds yr 4: \$80,000

Are you within the approved budget plan and categories? Yes, we will likely use 2022-23/yr 5 funding since we are combining tasks and taxa to complete them simultaneously.

**The foregoing information is accurate as of the date set forth below.**

**TERWILLIGER CONSULTING, INC.**

By: *Karen Terwilliger* Name: Karen Terwilliger

Title: President, Terwilliger Consulting, Inc.

Date: 10-2-21