

NORTHEAST REGIONAL CONSERVATION NEEDS GRANT QUARTERLY REPORT

Grant Number: 2007-01

Grant Title: Creation of Regional Habitat Cover Maps: Application of the NE Terrestrial Habitat Classification System

Grant Receipt: The Nature Conservancy

Grant Contact Name: Mark Anderson

Report #- 5 (April 1, 2009 through June 30, 2009)

Were planned goals/objectives achieved last quarter?

Goal 1: Incorporate changes to mapping methods in High Allegheny Ecoregion, get a final map out. We did accomplish this, and held a phone meeting on July 8th to review the process and the map. We posted the dataset and a large-scale pdf for partners, steering committee, and interested parties. Review was generally positive, with the main objections to earlier drafts of the map overcome.

Goal 2: Draft map for the SW part of our region (CAP, SW PA, the non-CAP parts of WV and SW Virginia).

Not done yet. Progress was made on work for the SW region map, but because of a re-ordering of priorities having to do with contacts with partners and a search for new funding sources, we have shifted our focus to the Lower New England/Northern Piedmont Ecoregion. Because parts of 12 of the 13 states in the NE region occur in LNE/NP, the critical work to compile “known occurrence” datasets for the region has accelerated. This expands the work load for this ecoregion, but will ease it as we move through the rest of the ecoregions in the Northeast.

Goal 3: Maintain contacts with steering committee and interested partners as we move along.

Good contacts have been maintained and expanded, though we had something of a communication hiatus with some partners and steering committee members while we wrestled with the technical problems in the High Allegheny. Along with the contacts we have relied on to date for guidance and for occurrence data, contacts with USGS, Partnership for the Delaware River Estuary, and the USFWS Gulf of Maine Program have been opened in search of funding opportunities.

Regional Conservation Need Addressed: Creation of Regional Habitat Cover Maps

Progress Achieved: (For each Goal/Objective, list Planned and Actual Accomplishments))— See details above. In addition, our intern completed work on assembling datasets and performing GIS work that will be used in habitat modeling efforts through the rest of the life of the project.

Difficulties Encountered: Methodological and technical difficulties have all been resolved, and a sound analytical process has been established that should see us through the whole project—though we know

we will have to adapt and adjust the process in various ways, in various ecoregions. In our biggest challenge, Southeast GAP steered us to a tool that enabled us to transfer the results of our large-scale forested systems analysis to visually and ecologically meaningful map units. The effort to get known natural community or forest type or habitat data compiled and tagged to ecological system continues to be time-consuming and difficult, but is going fine.

Activities Anticipated Next Quarter:

Goal 1: Finish a draft map for the Lower New England/Northern Piedmont Ecoregion

Goal 2: Begin work on Northern Appalachian/Boreal Forest Ecoregion, or re-focus on the SW part of the region—decision to be made as we move toward completion of the draft LNE map.

Goal 3: Secure additional funding for the NE Habitat Mapping Project

Goal 4: As before: Maintain contacts with steering committee and interested partners

Costs:

Are you within the approved budget plan? Yes

Are you within approved budget categories? Yes

Signature: Charles E. Ferree, Landscape Ecologist

Date: 8/4/09