

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 #- 7 (Oct 1, 2009 through December 31, 2009)

Were planned goals/objectives achieved last quarter?

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

No. We completed the task of tagging our 2430 “known occurrences” (the confirming points) to system type, a critical step in building the models for the matrix and “large patch” forested systems in LNE. The draft map that is emerging from this matrix/large patch work will be presented to the review team on Jan 15th. Wetland and upland “small patch” system models will be completed by the end of the month and the final map will be ready for review at that point. These steps go much faster than the task of building the matrix models.

It is taking longer than anticipated to complete the LNE ecoregional system map, but we have done a lot of prep work for ecoregions to follow (preparation of spatial datasets and programming repeatable tasks), and will be able to move through them more quickly. This reporting period included annual leave and holiday accounting for a third of the principal analyst’s time. Additionally we are working out methods to speed up the process of tagging the confirming points to the

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

Yes. We have assembled a number of critical datasets that we will need for the NAP work: known occurrences, landscape and environmental variables, 100 acre hexagons.

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

Yes. The USFWS Gulf of Maine Program has awarded a grant that will help see us through this project and a habitat analysis to follow. The “unsolicited proposal” we submitted to the USGS failed to go through.

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

We have made contact with ecologists from various of the 12 states in LNE as we have wrestled with fine and tricky points of tagging our known occurrences to system type. Contact with the larger set of people who are interested in this work resumes with a conference call this Friday.

Regional Conservation Need Addressed: Creation of Regional Habitat Cover Maps

Progress Achieved: (For each Goal/Objective, list Planned and Actual Accomplishments))— See details above.

Difficulties Encountered: We learned that compiling the information we needed on known ecological system occurrences for the 13 political/administrative jurisdictions in LNE was a giant undertaking. As mentioned above, we only recently completed the task of tagging our 2430 “known occurrences” to system type. We are looking into ways to speed up this process for the next ecoregion, and at potential consultants who could help with this step.

Activities Anticipated Next Quarter:

Goal 1: A finished map of ecological systems for LNE/NP. Present it to partners for review.

Goal 2: By the end of March, be well along toward a draft map of matrix and large patch upland forest habitats in the Northern Appalachians/Boreal Forest Ecoregion, with small patch upland habitats and wetland habitats to follow in April.

Goal 3: As before: Maintain contacts with steering committee and interested partners.

Costs:

Are you within the approved budget plan? We have almost used up the original funding, but we have raised funds from independent sources to cover the costs of completing this project. We continue to seek more funds.

Are you within approved budget categories? Yes

Signature:

Mark Anderson, Director of Conservation Science and

Charles E. Ferree, Landscape Ecologist

Date: 1/11/10