

QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

Quarter: (circle one) 2019_1st 2019__2nd 2019__3rd 2019_4th

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

Contractor: Terwilliger Consulting, Inc.

Project Leader: Karen Terwilliger

Abstract: The objective of this five-year RCN project is to continue to identify and update shared priority regional conservation implementation of NEAFWA's Regional Species of Greatest Conservation Need, while simultaneously influencing regional and national conservation by developing technical tools and communication products that clearly define conservation needs and priorities and that move us towards conservation success. Specifically:

1. Provide technical support to facilitate appropriate data use by members and partners
2. Continue to track database use
3. Annually solicit information from users regarding specific applications of the regional WAP database in addressing other program priorities and actions
4. Perform database maintenance to ensure consistency with database platforms and servers.
5. Develop queries and reports that best serve users and that facilitate periodic SWAP revisions
6. Expand RSGCN review and analyses to facilitate the inclusion of additional invertebrate taxa
7. Engage and coordinate vertebrate and invertebrate taxa teams and to respond to data requests for at-risk and endangered species
8. Compile, analyze, update, and interpret the RSGCN status, updates and priority actions for RSGCN
9. Provide draft and final technical reports / communication products for the tech committee and NEAFWA

Were planned goals/objectives achieved last quarter? Yes

Progress Achieved:

Objective 1: identify and review and update RSGCN information.

In 2019-2020 we will update habitat and threat information with the engagement of taxa teams to prepare for the 2021-2022 RSGCN list update.

This quarter we coordinated with NEFWDC and SWAP coordinators on the July, August, and September conference calls to request updated staff directories in order to update taxa team contacts and expertise. We followed up to receive all responses from all states and DC by bringing master sheets to the annual meeting in September. These have been compiled and will be sent for confirmation. We provided a summary approach at the annual meeting and we will contact experts in December to re-engage taxonomic teams in a consistent review process. We are following up on the feedback provided

by the NEFWDTC at their annual meeting. We will populate the new data fields over the fall and send to the taxa teams so they can be engaged over the winter (non-field work season).

Significant prep work has begun to develop the documents and spreadsheets to most efficiently update the RSGCN information. We presented our design of the new data to be updated at the annual meeting and we received feedback to prepopulated the forms to then provide to the taxa teams. A database entry form is being developed to collect information to capture and compile any changes in state status of RSGCN and identify unique habitats and threat vulnerabilities. The four vertebrate taxa teams include bird, mammal, herpetofauna, and fish biologists from each state. The 8+ individual invertebrate taxa teams (freshwater mussel, terrestrial snails, crayfish, moths, dragonflies and damselflies, butterflies and skippers, tiger beetles, bumble bees, and species reviewed in 2021-2022) are being updated.

Work with state fish and wildlife biologists and SWAP coordinators to improve the classification and description of habitat requirements for RSGCN is underway. Consistent classification and coding are being developed to capture habitats and threats to improve our understanding of habitat vulnerabilities and requirements for RSGCN (all taxa) that allow the Committee to focus conservation to benefit the most species and improve certainty in conservation outcomes. Data sources have been compiled and will be used to prepopulate the worksheets for each vertebrate taxa.

We have participated on NEFWDTC Committee and SWAP Coordinator conference calls to request RSGCN and taxa team input and provide project updates each month.

We are planning an additional 2020 symposium to highlight the RSGCN/RCN projects similar to the April 2019 NEAFWA annual meeting to provide updates and communication on the broad array of effective regional projects. We will work with key RCN PIs to highlight key taxa and geographic priority projects and organized the NEAFWA Symposium to focus on RSGCN efforts regionwide. Stonefly, turtle, xerics and others will be presented and a panel discussion could be facilitated to solicit attendees input and feedback on these programs.

Objective 2: provide on-going technical support, and evaluation of use of regional Wildlife Action Plan database; Since January 2018 we have tracked users regarding the regional SWAP database in addressing other program priorities and actions. At least 72 additional users downloaded the database for use. Most users indicate that they are using it for grant applications and proposals in order to include the SGSN, key threats and actions from the NESWAPs. We updated the entry portal page data (contact information by state) and updated the query menu to allow for more searches and exporting to Excel files. We incorporated the results of 2 surveys of state fish and wildlife agencies' staff, and key partners -i.e. USFWS and other federal partners which indicated these requests. We provided the updated database to NEAFWA Website and updated multiple state links and contacts prior to the September Annual NEFWDTC Meeting.

We implemented suggestions from two surveys, one for states and one for partners. The surveys asked users to explain what kind of information they were seeking, whether they were able to find it, how it could be made easier to use, and what additional information it should contain. The responses to the survey have been summarized in a draft report and incorporated in the updated database provided and posted on the NEAFWA website. We continued to monitor the use of the database from the NEAFWA website. We followed up with unusual out of state users to learn of their project uses for the database.

Several western users (from AK, CO and UT agencies, NGOs, etc.) were considering creating such a project in their region.

Data queries and reports of information designating species as Regional Species of Greatest Conservation Need has been updated and 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: none

Expected End Date: February 29, 2023

Costs: \$47,060.57 federal expense to date

Total life to date expenses (include this quarter): \$76,922.57

Total Approved Budgeted Funds: \$80,000

Are you within the approved budget plan and categories? yes

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

TERWILLIGER CONSULTING, INC.

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Title: President, Terwilliger Consulting, Inc.

Date: 10-7-2019