

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON SCIENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY (NCSSF) 2002
SCIENCE PROGRAM

Progress Report, 1 July 2002 to 15 April 2003

Project A-3, Survey the Lessons Learned About Managing Forests for Biodiversity and Sustainability Based on Practical Experiences

Submitted to the NCSSF Board of Directors and James E. Brown, Project Steward, 6 May 2003

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1-Status

- Project about 40% complete overall but varies by each of the four phases: **Phase I**-identify and evaluate components of federal, state, and private programs for biodiversity conservation, at local, state, regional, and national scales; **Phase II**-develop and summarize a database that compares findings from operational programs across the continental United States; **Phase III**-use landscape-level Geographic Information System (GIS) futures analyses to assess spatial/temporal changes in species and habitats that result from specific biodiversity management strategies and landowner responses identified in Phase II; **Phase IV**-organize and present the database, comparisons, simulations, and findings on forest biodiversity so that land managers, practitioners, regulators, scientists, policymakers, and the general public can readily use them
- The data collection (Phase 1) of the A-3 project is behind schedule from that planned in the Statement of Work, mainly because of obtaining Key Informant information in a pre-survey and then incorporating their comments in a prototype extensive survey
- The futures (Phase 3) part of the survey is about 2 weeks behind schedule because of technical difficulties in assigning forest type area to industrial landowners, based on Strict Conservation scenario RULES that were created, using Montreal Criteria and Indicator and Forest Stewardship (**FSC**) indicators

The hurdles mentioned above have been or are being resolved, allowing delivery of high quality products to meet NCSSF goals on time, by 30 Dec 03

2-Issues

What problems have emerged?

- The first problem was how to learn the language and issues of forest biodiversity in Phase I from the landowner perspective, not that of the project scientists; this was done via a Key Informant survey, conducted between Nov 2002 and January 2003—results from 20 Key Informants were then used to draft an extensive survey that could be administered to several hundred forest landowners and land manager respondents
- The second problem was needing to submit and obtain approval for the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Key Informant and extensive surveys—these include approval of all personal, telephone, or mailed interviews; transcripts of planned follow-up phone interviews; and all hard-copy or e-mail contact letters

What opportunities have emerged?

- Discussion and meetings were held with scientists from the NCSSF-A5 Project for exchange of information and data, where possible; an opportunity exists to compare vertebrate species differences between the A5 Project [fine] stand-level data and the A3 Project [coarse] landscape-level data
- The Phase III futures modeling efforts provide a unique opportunity to tap into more than 5 years of work and \$10 million in resources that have categorized forests, humans, and their interactions in the Willamette Valley, from the late 1800s to those envisioned until about 2050; the A3 Project is an enhancement of this effort that will give landowners in three counties new insights into how forest management practices affect forest biodiversity management and resultant vertebrate species under three different forest management scenarios that run 50 years

3-Results

- The only interim product being worked on now is summarization of forest biodiversity language, issues, and concerns as revealed by 20 Key Informant interviews; PSU cooperators have the lead on this effort

4-Remaining Tasks

- Distribute, record, analyze, and interpret results from the extensive survey; the goal is about 500 in-hand surveys, from hard-copy or e-mail distribution; e-mail surveys were sent out on 30 April 03 and hard copy surveys are being mailed the week of 12 May 03
- Summarize and compare results from the extensive survey with data from the Key Informant interviews, completed prototype extensive surveys, and existing literature
- Write RULES for the Phase III modified “on-the-ground-practices” scenario, the third scenario that is in-between the Plan Trend [current trends and environmental regulations until 2050] and a Strict Certification scenario [using Montreal Criteria and Indicators and Forest Stewardship Council (**FSC**) indicators
- Plan regional meetings for discussion and interpretation of project results
- Find a refereed journal that will publish several articles that summarize conceptualization, initiation, conduct, interpretation, and dissemination of A-3 Project activities and results

Outstanding Challenges Faced

- The first challenge was learning the language, terminology, issues, and concerns of “forest biodiversity” from 20 Key Informants—their language and concerns were not necessarily those of the project scientists and cooperators
- Some Key Informants did not like the prototype extensive survey because it emphasized forest biodiversity management too much, that is, some informants felt that forest biodiversity flowed [or followed] from good management practices rather than existed separately and managed for independently
- A second challenge was assembling a survey instrument that was acceptable to a) project cooperators representing three very diverse academic institutions and scientists and b) Key Informants and the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board that has strict protocols for collecting information from human subjects who are owners and/or managers of forested lands across the United States

Potential Barriers to Successful Project Completion

- A major unknown is the return rate for distributed survey questionnaires; for some landowner categories, a 20% sample is used [e.g., USDA Forest Service National Forests, BLM Districts, National Parks; in others, a full sample is used (e.g., all 50 states, all 13 US Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Biologists); 50 Non-Industrial Private Forest (NIPF) landowners will be contacted in AL, OR, and PA, via 250-300 surveys mailed to small forest landowners in each state
- Converting and interpreting raw data from 8-page surveys collected from 500 respondents presents several logistical database management challenges

5-Comments

Linkages

- Convened 3 meetings with Spies, Johnson, and others from the NCSSF-A5 project to exchange CLAMS information; interactions led to limiting futures modeling of the A3 Project to Benton, Linn, and Polk counties where CLAMS also has information for the east side of the Oregon Coast range

Enhancing A-3 Project Work Efforts

- A Penn State representative discussed NCSSF-A3 Project goals and objectives at the last Roundtable on Sustainable Forestry meeting in Denver, on April 23
- Substantial time and financial savings should be possible by holding discussions about the NCSSF-A3 Project results and their interpretations in fall 2003, at already-scheduled regional professional and chapter gatherings

- Joe Kerkvliet starts a 9-month sabbatical in fall 2003 as an AAAS Fellow in Washington, DC, with the EPA National Office; while there, results and insights from the A3 Project will be shared with EPA and other governmental scientists and agency managers

Guidance Needed from NCSSE

- None known at this time

Other Items for NCSSE to Know

- The first A-3 Project Steward meeting with Jim Brown was held on 29 Oct 02; that scheduled for 5 Feb 03 was cancelled and then rescheduled to 21 April 03 due to Jim's becoming the State of Oregon's Environmental Advisor in Feb 03
- The OSU-IRB office approved the submitted hard-copy/electronic copy survey packet on 14 April 03 without a single modification
- The electronic version of the extensive survey can be found at this web site: http://surveys.bus.oregonstate.edu/BsgSurvey2_0/main.aspx?SurveyID=361. The NCSSE password and identification number is **FR75067627** [Case Sensitive—and note that access to this web site is canceled after the Submit button is pressed at the end of the survey].
- Attachments: 1) the survey hard copy and 2) the human subjects cover letters for a) the hard-copy and b) electronic versions of the survey