

RESERVE DESIGN WORKING GROUP MEETING MINUTES
JULY 13, 2016, 10AM-12N @ NATURE CONSERVANCY OFFICE, SOUTHERN PINES, NC

ATTENDEES: J. Marcus, M. Moskwik, P. Rogow – The Nature Conservancy
B. Ball – Fort Bragg
B. Beck – NC Wildlife Resources Commission
R. Bollinger – Longleaf Alliance

1. Longleaf Pine Habitat Survey – J. Marcus

Discussion/Conclusion: Scott Pohlman and Allison Weekley conducted longleaf habitat surveys in stands that Mike Shafale had identified as potential longleaf upland habitat. They reviewed 31 potential areas, 13 of which were natural area candidate sites. Their recommendations included two potential new natural areas, and two expansions of existing natural areas. They also found five new occurrences of a rare plant (*Carex austrodeflexa*), and will provide information to NHP for approximately 14 new natural community occurrences.

Recommendation: members of this group will complete all remaining upland area surveys by the end of 2016

Action: Matthew Moskwik will assign the remaining polygons to members of this group for completion; Brady Beck, Brian Ball, Jeff Marcus, Gretchen Coll, Matthew Moskwik, and Paul Rogow will participate in surveys

Follow-up: January 2017

2. Conservation Research Needs Assessment – M. Moskwik/P. Rogow

Discussion/Conclusion: The group reviewed the summary of the responses to the related survey (46 responses from 18 individuals and/or organization representatives) and did some drill-down to help in prioritizing research needs. In summary, the focus of the recommended research topics was on fire management and other factors impacting, and resulting from, longleaf pine forest preservation efforts.

Recommendations: share results with potential researchers, including those at NCSU, in Sept; share results with Sandhills Conservation Partnership and other stakeholders (presentation now scheduled for Sept 14); potentially contact Fire Exchange and other forestry organizations for potential interest

Action: Matthew Moskwik will present at NCSCP and contact research coordinators this fall; there may be potential to have a Sandhills research symposium in the spring of 2017

Follow-up: January 2017

3. Plans to Update Partner GIS Layers – J. Marcus

Discussion/Conclusion: There was discussion about whether there is a need to update the existing layers of the Reserve Design Plan. Currently, the RCW and Natural Heritage layers are being updated.

Recommendation: when the potential upland habitat surveys are completed, the restoration and natural heritage candidate layers can also be updated; in 2018 the group will consider updating the smoke awareness, wildlife connector, and specialist and generalist habitat guild layers

Action: No action needed at this time

Follow-up: 2018

4. Use of Reserve Design Data: Identification of Longleaf Restoration Areas for NFWF – R. Bollinger

Discussion/Conclusion: NFWF will require each longleaf partnership across the range to map regions where they will focus on restoring and improving longleaf. The Longleaf Alliance would like this completed by October, however they would like North Carolina to complete their analysis by late August, so we can serve as a model for other regions.

Recommendation: using existing spatial information and expert opinion, regions in the Sandhills will be identified for longleaf pine restoration

Action: Ryan Bollinger will provide guidelines; Matthew Moskwik will create polygons for longleaf restoration in the Sandhills and send out to working group for approval

Follow-up: August 2016