

**NCSCP Steering Committee Meeting Summary  
December 18, 2013  
Weymouth Woods - Sandhills Nature Preserve**

Steering Committee Members: (Attendance not recorded at this meeting)

Present

|                |       |                 |
|----------------|-------|-----------------|
| Jon Chase      | Chair | Fort Bragg/DPTM |
| Dave Heins     |       | Fort Bragg/DPW  |
| Phil Doerr     |       | SEI             |
| Ryan Elting    |       | TNC             |
| Brady Beck     |       | NCWRC           |
| Pete Benjamin  |       | USFWS           |
| -              |       | SALT            |
| Linda Pearsall |       | NCDENR/OPCA     |
| Mark Bost      |       | NCFS            |
| Brian Strong   |       | NC Parks        |

Absent

|   |  |     |
|---|--|-----|
| - |  | AEC |
|---|--|-----|

Other Attendees

**Notes**

**Working Groups Annual Reporting:**

- All working groups reported on all of their great work using with the new Annual Reporting Template

**WORKING GROUP UPDATES**

**Resource Management Working Group –**

- NCSCP Resource Manager's Working Group field tour was held at TNC's Calloway Forest on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. The purpose of the tour was to share our lessons learned over ten years of stewardship at Calloway. Highlights included thinning of mature longleaf among RCW clusters, restoration of plantations, plantings, and prescribed fire. Event occurred during government furlough so some agency folk were unable to attend. RMWG is planning a fire/restoration monitoring tour in April.
- TNC's NFWF funded 7-person fire crew began first week in December and are preparing for the upcoming fire season. The crew's first burn was conducted yesterday on Calloway, and is burning today as well.

**Communications Working Group - Susan Miller**

- The Longleaf Pine Opportunities and Management Landowner Workshop was held December 13<sup>th</sup>, in Raeford, NC. The event involved many great presentations in the morning and a field trip to safe

harbor properties in the afternoon. More than 160 individuals participated in the workshop including over 120 landowners.

- The CWG is planning to meet in mid – January to discuss and finalize details for an inaugural State of the Sandhills Report.

#### **RCW Working Group –**

Last meeting on September 18, 2013

- Comprehensive 2013 data for RCW groups - Est. Potential Breeding Groups (PBG)

#### **NC SANDHILLS TOTAL: 659 est. PBG**

##### **SANDHILLS EAST (Primary Core Recovery)**

1. Fort Bragg: (413 PBG)

2. Non-Federal Recovery Properties: (22 PBG Combined), McCain Tract (6 PBG), Weymouth Woods State Nature Preserve (3 PBG), Calloway Tract (7 PBG), Carver's Creek (5 PBG), Johnson (1 PBG)

##### **3. Private Non-Recovery Properties (51 PBG)**

Southern Pines Pinehurst (SOPI - 40) / Moore (MOOR – 4) / Hoke (HOKE – 3) / Cumberland Co. (CC – 4)

- Increase by 10 PBG since 2003 (41)

#### **INTRAPOPOPULATION TRANSLOCATION - 2 DEC 2013**

- FORT BRAGG (DONOR) to MOOR (RECIPIENT)
- 2 juvenile RCW pairs, 1 NEA /3 W. Bragg, moved to unoccupied clusters MOOR 1 and MOOR E03

##### **SANDHILLS WEST (Essential Support)**

1. Sandhills Game Land: (151 PBG)

- Increase by 39 PBG since 2003 (112)

2. Camp Mackall: (14 PBG)

3. Private BLUE and SCOT 1: (8 PBG)

#### **Land Protection Working Group – Ryan Elting**

TNC and WRC are working with the State Property Office to complete the transfer the 262 acre Thomas inholding in Moore County into the Sandhills Game Lands by the end of 2013. WRC received an award from the NHTF in 2012 for \$708,000 to cover the State's portion of the purchase price. TNC received National Fish & Wildlife Foundation funds to restore longleaf pine and native understory to 50 acres of former agricultural lands and is working with WRC to allow for the completion of this work following the transfer.

TNC will be accepting the donation of the 115 acre Studenmund Farm in Richmond and Scotland Counties by the end of 2013. The property is surrounded on three sides by the Sandhills Game Lands, very near to the Camp Mackall boundary.

TNC received Army approval to pursue acquisition of the 83 acre Gozzi Tract in Hoke County, located in the Partnership's Gap focus area, using Army/TNC Cooperative Agreement funds. The appraisal is currently underway and expected the week of this meeting, and TNC will review and likely make an offer. Acquisition would likely occur in March, 2014.

TNC is swapping a narrow swath (15.2 ac) of land along the boundary of TNC's Lafayette tract, including a wildlife fence, for the 15.2 acre McCormick Farms "Arrowhead Tract". The swap has been delayed because of a backup at the title attorney's office and a difficult title search. It is now expected in January 2014. Both Lafayette and the Arrowhead Tracts are intended to be transferred to State Parks.

The NC DOT is working with McCormick Farms to potentially swap the 112 acre Marshbanks Tract, acquired by DOT in 2006 for RCW mitigation, for a 91 acre parcel of McCormick Farms land that would extend the protected buffer along Fort Bragg's eastern boundary, formally protect an active RCW cluster, and effectively consolidate the NC Parks and TNC protected lands around Carver's Creek State Park.

TNC is acquiring two small tracts at Goose Pond Bay in Robeson County (~25 acre Dunn Tract, and 0.75 ac McFadyen Tract) that will complete TNC's ownership of the cypress bay and improve our ability to manage the property. Funding will come from TNC and a NAWCA grant awarded in 2012. The contract on the Dunn Tract is signed, and McFadyen is in the mail. Acquisition of both will occur by March 2014.

**Reserve Design Working Group –**

The RDWG will be holding a meeting in Raleigh on January 7. We are hoping to finalize the Reserve Design Working Group Plan and also plan for field work with ground-truthing potential uplands habitat areas.

**PARTNER UPDATES (Partner Updates were not recorded at this meeting)**

**REGIONAL PARTNER UPDATES (Regional Partner Updates were not recorded at this meeting)**

**Other News and Points of Discussion**

- Review and approval of the last meeting's minutes.
- The next NCSCP Steering Committee meeting will be March 12<sup>th</sup> here at Weymouth Woods.