

6/15/15 WYFP personnel subcommittee meeting notes
Respectfully submitted by Jeremy Holtz, Chair

Present: Jeremy Holtz, WDNR (chair); Dan Eklund, USFS; Curt Rollman, WDNR; Callie Bertsch, ABC
Absent: Craig Thompson, ABC; Michael Stinebrink, NRCS

- Brief explanation of the design of the Partnership regarding the development and purpose of subcommittees. Personnel subcommittee exists to give a leadership and communication framework within which people dedicated to young forest work can collaborate to define priorities, goals, and objectives to move the Partnership forward.
- Additions: Curtis Rollman was hired by Wisconsin DNR to work with Jeremy Holtz in Rhinelander. Half of his time is to be dedicated to young forest work, including site visits and plan writing. He is funded by Jeremy's office budget, and funds are in process from NFWF through ABC for half of one year. Additional funds for future work are in process from the Webless grant and US Forest Service.
- Financial subcommittee report – Dan Eklund
 - finances and personnel are linked; grant dollars pay for staffing and for work
 - working to collect information from partners
 - Who is holding what resources, and where?
 - Provided by whom?
 - What deadlines and deliverables?
 - We need to know from all partners what is going on, where are the gaps, what are the Partnerships assets, and where can we best utilize them.
- Current context: we have begun to ramp up our personnel base. We have two staff in place, a Habitat Coordinator Callie Bertsch and forestry technician Curtis Rollman. A third position is developed and will be filled in the near future. This is an important time to sort priorities, strategically reposition ourselves in light of our current rate of growth, and continue to build infrastructure to increase capacity of our private lands program.
- Work planning meetings – Callie would like to see our semi-regular work planning meetings resume. She sees value in getting together a couple hours once a month or so and reviewing progress, evaluating goals, objectives and metrics, and setting new goals for the next work period. The plan is to schedule a meeting after we are through the Steering Committee meeting July 1.
- Issue: it has become apparent that the Coordinator has not been able to perform the duties as outlined in the position description that was developed by the Partnership and used by ABC when hiring her.
 - Upon starting, NRCS staff identified concerns that the Habitat Coordinator would need to focus on EQIP signups immediately in order to address deliverables assigned by NRCS in exchange for funding a portion of her position.
 - Over time, it became apparent NRCS expected that the Coordinator would continue to make this her focus; a large portion of her time has been dedicated to EQIP signups and related tasks.
 - The Habitat Coordinator feels that both NRCS and USFWS PFW field staff had unrealistic expectations on what the coordinator was going to do.
 - Earlier this year, ABC representatives made it clear that Coordinator's priorities would be defined only by ABC. This resulted in the Coordinator spending a significant amount of time travelling in- and out-state presenting GWWA BMP talks on their behalf.

- The funding of the NRCS RCPP application submitted by ABC and its partners has extremely ambitious goals-it seems apparent that ABC and NRCS would need the Habitat Coordinator and the ABC forester to focus full-time on these deliverables.
 - Upon review of the 2014 list of interested private forest landowners, it is apparent that the Habitat Coordinator has been unable to address last year's outreach backlog.
 - The Habitat Coordinator has not had time/resources to properly develop the database to allow us to track an individual landowner's final disposition.
 - ABC wanted Habitat Coordinator to be an active participant in every subcommittee, and volunteered her for multiple tasks that could have been handled by other partner representatives. Callie feels she could participate in each committee, but more as an advisor/observer and would not have to be in charge of a large list of tasks.
 - The Personnel Subcommittee wants the Coordinator to return to the role originally described in the position description.
- **Resolutions resulting from this issue.** Subcommittee seeks the support of the steering committee on the following recommendations:
- ABC needs to provide a coordinator that performs the duties described in the American Bird Conservancy Wisconsin Young Forest Partnership Habitat Coordinator position description as originally promised.
 - The Executive Committee be authorized to work with NRCS and ABC to address the Habitat Coordinator need.
 - WYFP resources feed the NRCS RCPP as long as the NRCS/RCPP?ABC reciprocate and continue to move landowners through any and all appropriate channels within the Partnership.
- ABC Forester update: ABC conducted interviews for three forester positions—one each in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan. Jeremy contacted ABC to inquire about WYFP representation on the interview panel, but he felt like his inquiry was blown off. To his knowledge no representatives from any identified Partners were invited to participate. Craig Thompson informed Jeremy on 6/10 that their top candidates for all positions withdrew, basically resulting in a failed recruitment. ABC has decided to repost the announcement. The deadline to apply is June 16th with interviews shortly thereafter. There was no indication that any representatives of WYFP would be invited to participate in the interview panel.
- CPW training: a process has been developed by which we can get Certified Plan Writers approved to submit invoices to ABC to be paid for working with private forest landowners using NFWF funds. This process includes a meeting/training scheduled for Wednesday, June 24th in Park Falls. Jeremy Holtz and Dan Eklund will be among the presenters.
- The opinion of the Personnel Subcommittee is that we are dead in the water in some respects, especially in terms of dealing with the 2014 landowner list. With current staffing and workload, the list has not been made a priority. Since Curt has come on, he and Callie have been working to sort out just where we are at with potential candidates, the backlog, and the current list of 100+ interested people from the 2015 outreach effort. There are significant setbacks, though, including an inability to pay CPWs, the delay in hiring the ABC forester, and the lack of clarity on the details about the RCPP which have still not been shared with the Partnership. We are over twelve months with these people, many of whom have been patiently waiting, some impatiently waiting. We as a Partnership either need to supply additional resources to handle this singular task or communicate to the landowners that our reach exceeded our grasp and we are unable to assist them.