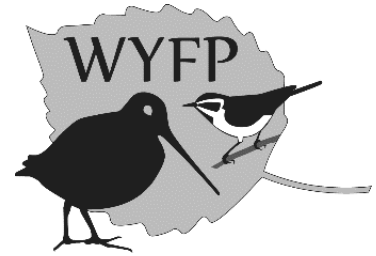


# Wisconsin Young Forest Partnership Partnership Meeting Minutes

9:00am - 3:00pm CDT

November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Nicolet College, Fieldside room 102



## MEETING DETAILS

### Attendees:

Jeremy Holtz – WDNR, Dan Eklund – USFS, CNNE, Randee Smith – WYFP Coordinator, Jaqi Christopher – WDNR, Charles McCullough – WDNR, Tom Carlson – WDNR, Kent Van Horn – WDNR, Chris Weber – LPC, Ted Koehler – USFWS, Shawn Graff – ABC, Callie Bertsch – ABC, Patrick Weber – ABC, Gary Zimmer – WCFA and WBCP, Dan Hoff – RGS, Chris Borden – NRCS, Andy Hart – NRCS, Eric Allness – NRCS, Tom Hittle – WSAF, Tracy Beckman – Lumberjack, Carissa Freeh – PF, Diane Gunderson – Trees for Tomorrow, Rich Windmoeller – WDNR

**Conference line:** Jon Steigerwaldt – RGS, Jared Elm – RGS, Katie Koch – USFWS, Kristin Lambert – WDNR Forestry, Amber Roth – Univ of Maine

**Not represented:** NWTF, WWF, Forestland Group

- Additions to Agenda - none
- Introductions
- MOU – recent additions
  - We have surpassed the 5-year mark for partnership, which means the MOU expired. The MOU ended September 30<sup>th</sup> and has been renewed to November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024. Resigning was a good opportunity to reach out and reengage partners.
  - Wildlife Management Institute decided they could no longer continue to participate in partnership. They host webpage so now we are exploring other options for webpage management.
  - Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities signed on June 4<sup>th</sup>, but unfortunately was unable to sign the renewed MOU due to loss of position in Great Lakes States
  - Still waiting to hear if National Wild Turkey Federation will resign.
- Steering Committee changes since last meeting
  - Pheasants Forever added Carissa Freeh as the PF representative
    - Carissa was involved with partnership in her previous position with the DNR. She is now a Farm Bill Biologist out of Stevens point and covers 9-10 counties in Central WI. Her new role is mainly helping landowners enrolling in NRCS programs, but she also thinks it is important to continue WYFP work through new position.
  - Diane Gunderson moved from WDNR Forestry to Trees for Tomorrow. She will still be involved with WYFP by staying on Outreach Committee.

- The DNR will continue to have private forestry outreach specialist position, but it is not known when the position will be refilled.
  - Woodscamp – Ron Gropp is now the primary contact.
- WYFP updates – Jeremy Holtz
- Drafting Strategic Management Plan
    - The Strategic Management Plan is the next step for White Paper. The White paper was drafted a few years ago and presented to group. The management plan is meant to take the information from whitepaper and turn it into a strategic plan to clearly identify goals and objectives, and is intended to be a living document.
- Financial report – Tracy Beckman
- Underbudget - focus more on marketing to get name out there. Other strategies for contacting landowner – not just mailings
  - As the fiscal agent, Lumberjack has no concerns with spending so far.

1<sup>st</sup> year with coordinator position at Lumberjack RC&D

Grant Name	2018/2019 Budget	Spent from 8/12/2018 to 9/24/2019
NRCS	\$25,000.00	\$22,916.66
DNR Forestry	\$55,000.00	\$55,000.00

There are funds leftover from the year that can be used for items such as marketing.

Grants for 2019

Grant Name	2019 Amount Granted	Spent to Date	Left for 2019
SFI IC	\$6,000.00	\$4,353.20	\$1,646.80
RGS Drummer Grant	\$10,000.00	\$7,212.00	\$2,788.00

Anticipate using most of funds by the end of the year.

- Coordinator Report – Randee Smith
- S.W.O.T. analysis (Appendix A handout)
    - A survey was sent to the steering committee and the results were compiled into a handout.
    - SWOT analysis is the first step. The list discussed today will need to be refined to determine where the focus is for the future. Discussion today was focused on expansion, but that is a small part of the ideas listed. Need to go through list and analyze each point.
    - Executive Committee would like to see everyone pick the top 3 strengths and top 3 weaknesses from the handout. Please send choices by mid-December.

**Strengths**

- Not a 501c3 is an asset. It allows the partnership to be flexible and have a “handshake” partnership with low risk to partners.
- Biggest strength recently is to have coordinator as a fully funded stable position through Lumberjack

## Weaknesses

- Habitat work cost – cost of operating is increasing, and there is a potential that the cost of alder shearing will increase. Demand for work is high, but there aren't enough contractors out there to keep up with demand. A recent project cost \$250/acre to cut grass, \$450/acre to cut brush. Price can vary by region depending on how many contractors are in the area. There might be lower cost in areas with more contractors available. Contractors could also be increasing price because of amount of money landowners are getting for project from NRCS. Some landowners make money from bids – contractors could be charging more if they know the cost share is more.
- Providing deliverables, tracking projects - What are other deliverables the group is looking for?
  - Not everything has to be quantitative → Deliverables can be more qualitative – communication is one of those things
- Overlapping with other organizations
  - Randee has been working with WI Coalition of Forestry Outreach – a group of different organizations doing different forestry outreach. It has been helpful to realize where the overlap is between the organizations. The idea is for WYFP to focus more on assisting landowner with getting into programs and implementation. WYFP can take a subset of existing landowner info from the forestry's database that WoodsCamp and My Wisconsin Woods is using and reach out to these people who have had a site visit or have not enrolled into other programs. WYFP is doing the whole process start to finish, when we can start utilizing other groups and stop duplicating effort. This plan will help reach more unengaged landowners over a wider range.
  - The DNR has formed a committee also looking at overlap for private land outreach.
  - Communication is key between groups to determine where there is overlap and where there is room to expand.
- Narrow focus on only young forest
  - ABC loves the WYFP model so much it has been expanded it to MN group. They have taken it and created a broader "Healthy Forest" initiative, but they don't have the same traction as the WYFP yet. There is a benefit that we have stayed focus on young forest. But there is opportunity to expand to different habitat types – Driftless oak, jack pine.
  - The scope of MOU is written broadly enough to allow the expansion into different habitats and different parts of the state. There is need in other parts of the state, i.e. ruffed grouse habitat in the central and southern part of the state.

## Opportunities

- Expanding the WYFP
  - Cautions to expanding – The WYFP should focus on the current mission and the success of that mission, rather than expanding everywhere. The narrow focus allows us to create specific goals and a plan. Moving into other areas and other species could potentially dilute effort and reduce the overall success. The WYFP would need

to be strategic about expanding.

- There is some need to expand geographically to create “landscape” level impact, not just focus on county-wide projects. There is also a need to expand to different species because structure is more important than species, i.e. rouse and woodcock will use aspen as well as red maple.
  - Other Species and cover types – Historically, partnership focused on aspen and alder because BMPs were clearly defined, there was a need from landowners, etc. The partnership needs to make sure adding species will not dilute the effect on other efforts.
- How do we better market WYFP?
- How do we find more people in target area – have we run out of people because of marketing approach or are there truly no more people interested in program? What have been the more successful outreach strategies? Biggest threats – timber market and running out of interested landowners, and we have no control over timber market, so we should focus on landowners.
  - Sometimes people get the mailing but don’t have the opportunity right away to follow up. They then remember and reach out years later.
  - When money is flush, word gets around in communities and people enroll in programs. There are clusters of projects because of word of mouth between neighbors and communities. Project clusters also indicate the market is not saturated.
  - Statewide there are over 140,000 landowners that have over 10ac not in MFL – we have not saturated the market yet. There was a 7% response rate on mailing for WoodsCamp which was heavily advertised – radio, tv, mailings.
    - The National Woodland Owner survey asked people where they trust to get their information from. People are skeptical of govt programs, but still trust govt for technical advice and information
  - Can utilize social science that has already been done for My Wisconsin Woods.
    - There is already a database that tracks landowners who responded to outreach, site visit, and what have they been enrolled in.
- How do we utilize happy customers to advocate for the program?
- Fish Fry Marketing – word of mouth and local testimonials are some of the most powerful tools in spreading word about the program, but there is no one perfect strategy
  - WYFP has a good education opportunity for professionals that do site visits or outreach to landowners. WYFP does new forester training for DNR but we could find a way to reach existing employees.
  - WYFP could set up workshop days similar to NRCS’s farm demo days by using happy landowners who were satisfied with the program’s results as a way to engage new landowners.

- How do we engage social science and marketing specialists?
  - The Aldo Leopold Society has been working on this for years – would be a good idea to invite them to YF meeting. Alanna Koshollek and Steve Swenson would be good contacts.
  - Tools for Engaging Landowners Effectively – workshop for professionals to engage landowners. DNR forestry has built partnership with Aldo Leopold Society to work on these workshops.
  - DNR does have 2 social scientists. UWSP also has resources for this and has been happy to help in the past.

### Threats

- Difficulty sharing data between partners
  - Many different programs administered by different agencies makes it difficult to share data due to privacy issues. It would be useful to have a map with available habitats and where projects have occurred. Chris Borden mentioned NRCS did create one for their projects, but wouldn't be able to share exact locations for privacy reasons. Randee wants to get a map together of private areas impacted by WYFP compared to public.
    - DNR WisFIRS is a good data set for alder but doesn't distinguish between upland vs lowland.

### Overall

- There is no one perfect marketing strategy. The WYFP will need to determine the best way to use our resources to achieve the goals and create the desired deliverables.
  - Overall, nothing is broken or off track. The partnership is in good shape. There is a small staff, but a dedicated staff and there is not a lot of funding, but it is used wisely.
- Coordinator Report – Randee Smith
- *Meetings attended:* Private lands meeting, SFI Implementation Committee x3, WI Coalition for Forestry Outreach x3, Lumberjack Council
  - *Training:* Timber Marking for Wildlife June 7, Creative Silviculture Aug. 5-6, Leaderfest Aug. 14 sponsored by Lumberjack, Prescribed Fire for Oak Management Oct. 29, Digital Marketing 101 webinars, Behavior Change 101: Theory and Practice webinar, Engaging Small Acreage Landowners webinar
  - Database: 149 “active” landowners
    - “Active” means they took survey but we have yet connected, “idle”- have info and waiting to hear back (do receive follow up calls), site visit queue, referred but keeping track of to determine if they followed through
  - Randee will send out monthly summaries to the committee.

## Subcommittee Reports

### ➤ **Outreach** – Smith

- May 18<sup>th</sup> – DMAP workshop focused on financial assistance for landowners – presentation on WYFP – 40 attendees
- June 8<sup>th</sup> – Natural Resource Foundation trip focused on Golden-winged warbler conservation and young forest habitat – co-lead with Callie Bertsch from ABC – 15 attendees and fundraiser for the Bird Conservation Fund
- August 29<sup>th</sup> – DNR new forester training presentation on WYFP
- September 28<sup>th</sup> – Grouse Camp through RGS – young forest education and new hunter field experience
- iNaturalist flyer created – handouts available
- Mailing update
  - Spring mailing – May – Marinette, Oconto, Florence, Forest
    - 2083 letters sent – 23 responses – 1.11% response rate
  - Fall mailing – August – non-respondents
    - 2037 letters sent – 26 responses – 1.28% response rate
  - For fall mailing letter, edited it to make visually more appealing → increased response rate, whereas 2<sup>nd</sup> letter always had a decrease in response rate
  - In state vs out of state respondents
    - 99.8% of letters sent had out of state addresses
    - 14% of respondents had out of state addresses
- Facebook page – 143 likes/154 follows [www.facebook.com/WIYoungForest/](http://www.facebook.com/WIYoungForest/)

### ➤ **Personnel** – Holtz

- Patrick Weber hired by ABC to work on RCPP projects
  - Hired in August, 26 year career with Kimberly Clark, educational background in upland bird habitat and is happy to start 2<sup>nd</sup> career with ABC
- Carissa Freeh no longer working as DNR LTE with Janet Brehm and is now PF Farm Bill Biologist in Central WI
- Rikki Ratsch new DNR LTE working with Janet Brehm in Lincoln/Langlade

### ➤ **Funding/fund administration**

- SFI IC Grant – Smith
  - Received the full requested \$7,150 for 2020 for anything WYFP may need like trainings, mileage, mailings, marketing.
- RCPP II Proposal Update – Shawn Graff
  - NRCS has guidelines for partnership program. Technical funds were capped at 3%, 18% of that can be used for implementation. That 18% was not enough to cover

forestry salaries for the next 5 years. Because of that, ABC could not renew, they had to reapply.

- With the caps in place, had to eliminate the focus on the Driftless area for golden-winged warblers and woodcock, but they did add jack pine. ABC is currently working with partners to get match for funding.
- Allowing up to 7% for enhancements, which can include monitoring. The goal is to report more than acres or number of contacts and look at tangible results of occupancy and population changes.
- USDA decided that federal dollars cannot be used as match, so ABC can't use National Forest funding like last time. It is better to have diversity of match, i.e. both cash and in-kind.
- How can we reach out to private foresters as potential in-kind leverage? Currently using public land foresters as leverage, but have not utilized private foresters
  - Wisconsin Consulting Foresters – organization in WI worth reaching out to
- There is a meeting next week in Washington D.C. with NRCS to talk through some of the rule changes.

➤ **Monitoring/research**

- In the past, Anna and Chris gave updates, but Anna is now the state bird biologist in Iowa. The woodcock communication chapter of Anna's thesis is in process of being published. She is working on 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of male GWWA response on sheared aspen stands – currently reanalyzing data. The next step would be looking at geo-locating data. Chris Roelandt is currently analyzing woodcock data and hoping to graduate in the spring. He recently got the last of his blood samples back to look at habitat quality vs body metrics.
- Future Needs – are there research, monitoring, or evaluation needs for the future? What are our new needs? Are there old needs that haven't been addressed?
- ABC didn't get grant for Motus Towers, but was told to resubmit it because it was a strong project.

12:00pm Lunch

Partner updates – each rep fills us in

- **USFS** – Dan Eklund – Working Lakewood/Laona blowdown – salvaging aspen. The blowdown was over 150,000 acres, 53,000 of which was very damaged. How much can we salvage and where, how long will timber last on ground? What comes next? Should reforest? 19,000 acres were in process of being harvested. The first priority was getting main roads open, then the next concern is fire, how to limit the fuel source. Washburn has a large timber project that includes 400acre clear cuts, not great for GWWA or ruffed grouse, but good for sharp-tailed grouse. Park falls continues doing ruffed grouse cuts. Fiscal year restarts Nov1.
- **NRCS** – Eric Allness – Continuing resolution for federal government until Nov 1. There were 3 government shutdowns last year, could occur again. Fiscal year 2019 just wrapped

up and over \$38 million was obligated statewide through EQIP. This will help with wildlife, water quality and other natural resources management. Wisconsin is good at securing funds and use that funding for successful projects.

- Forest management plans – landowners need them to sign up for EQIP programs and they can also be used for MFL. This year there are over 222 contracts, last year there were 180 contracts. The goal for 2020 is 300.
- RCPP deadline is December 3.
- Farm bill applications – FY20 will implement the new rules from the 2018 farm bill. There is more flexibility with the new farm bill, but also new implementation challenges. NRCS will be rolling out new software to help customers streamline applications called CART. Typically, they award 20-35 agreements with over 406 million dollars each year.
- Each year, NRCS allots money to partners. They typically fund 6-8 projects each year, many of which are partner staffing needs. NRCS can allot 50-75% of funds sometimes 100%. An announcement will be posted in next 2 months, staffing assistance is priority, but also fund other technical assistance. The grant is called Cooperative Conservation Agreements Partners and you can apply through grants.gov.
- New EQIP practices in state include deer fencing for natural regenerating forest, planting for reed canary grass and under planting for mono-typical ash. CSP – forestry projects were typically 3% of contracts awarded, but that number has been increasing. Andy Hart mentioned one enhancement is forest songbird habitat maintenance which ties in with citizen science. NRCS is working with ABC and Randeel to take the national BMP's and tailor them to be more specific to WI. There are a lot more wildlife funds available through CSP.
- **USFWS** – Ted Koehler – USFWS has yet to get their budget, but there is always money set aside for projects on the ground. The main priority is woodcock. Currently, there is a coop agreement with RGS for young forest projects, and they are seeking more partners to create and manage more projects, including young forest work. The funding can't be used for monitoring or coordinating, but it can be used for on-the-ground work including contractors. USFWS is looking to partner with groups that are willing to do private lands work. By working through a partner, USFWS can provide funding for private lands work without having to do all the paperwork that comes with federal funding.
- **WDNR Wildlife** – Kent Van Horn
  - Strategic Plan – The DNR has been working on a strategic plan for wildlife management for a while, and now there have been 10 action items identified to work on for next 2 years. One of those action items is to evaluate involvement in private lands work. There used to be a private lands biologist, but that position was eliminated years ago to focus on public lands. Since then, several private lands projects have been started by wildlife management (DMAP, VPA, etc.). The goal is to clarify what these different programs are doing, where there is overlap and what are the current and future needs of each program.
  - Forest Wildlife Biologist position – This position existed for a short time but was eliminated. WM is now looking to reenact that position. Funding will be through



different federal and local budgets. The position description has been written and a budget has been outlined and we are just waiting on approval through DOA.

- JV Land Bird Plan – There was a meeting in August to identify focal species. None of the focal species were game species, which may be problematic for broad support and funding. The Land Bird Plan will be similar plan to water bird plan that has already been created.
- Ruffed Grouse Management Plan – This has been finalized and is going to the Natural Resources Board in December for final approval.
- VPA – This program has been in flux over the past years due to staffing changes. Currently, there are 220 landowners. Historically, the program focused on the southern 2/3 of the state in farmland, but they are now looking to expand it statewide. The new grant is being written, and in the meantime, cooperating landowners are being funded through PR money.
- A public land management report is being written for the Natural Resources Board. This document will list all the partners and projects WM has been working on for public land management.
- The sharp tailed grouse management plan is up for review 2021.
- **WDNR Forestry** – Kristin Lambert – no further updates
- **WCFA** – Gary Zimmer – Jane Sieberts retired, Rebekah Luedtke from MN DNR is now taking over her position. The strategic plan is up for revision. Revisions happen every 3 years, which makes the process easier. The Board of Directors and county reps weigh in on the strategic plan. There are over 2 million acres of county forest land in 29 counties, soon to be 30 counties. Adams county is joining association. Locals were seeing former industrial forest lands being turned into farms and wanted to protect water quality along with other natural resources in the area. Once in the association, Adams county will have access to Knowles-Nelson Stewardship money.
  - Clark County Forest is revising their 15 year comprehensive land use plan. Some Ecological Units will have young forest as the main goal, so they reached out to WYFP for input. They are gathering input from other groups as well to comment on the plan. Final plan should be submitted by end of next year. Other counties should be doing similar revisions and may reach out. It might be a good idea for DNR wildlife biologists to reach out to county foresters to add input to revisions.
- **ABC** – Shawn Graff – JV Land Bird Plan team and will make sure to advocate for young forest species and agrees to have a game bird represented. Management lands on federal property – RGS and ABC working together for this project. 3 years of funding for Bird City WI. The program will be expanding nationally and internationally to Canada and Central America. The program will be hiring a coordinator to lead this effort.
  - Callie Bertsch – It is looking to be a good winter for shearing. Cold temps with little snow are ideal conditions. Most of last year's contracts are completed. Currently there are around 30 active contracts. The next sign up period will likely be February or March. There is no more funding left in RCPP, so landowners have to apply through general EQIP which is more competitive and deters some applicants. ABC continues to do public outreach at trainings and fairs.

- **RGS** – Dan Hoff – RGS hired a new CEO last year. The new CEO has a forestry and fire background and is looking to do more on National Forests. The Good Neighbor project with Chippewa National Forest is being finalized and the hope is to include CNNF and Superior.
- **WBCP** – Gary Zimmer – WBCI has officially been changed to WBCP - Wisconsin Bird Conservation *Partnership*. With this change, a new logo was created. WBCP is currently in the process of implementing strategic plan including hiring a coordinator for the new work on important bird areas.
- **WSAF** – Tom Hittle – SAF is restructuring staff in WI and there is now a northern chapter. Paul Delong is the program chair at the state level. Foresters fund grant program which is distributed through state chapters to fund projects. There are 2 different grants available. Nationally, not all the funding has been spent through the cycle.
- **Lumberjack** – Tracy Beckman – The quarterly council meeting was in October. The conservation grant project fund was awarded. There are funds available to help sign up EQIP contracts, but that process has not been finalized yet.
- **LPC** – Chris Weber – From the industrial side, it has been a wet summer and some contractors are struggling to get into areas to cut. A lot of blowdown occurred on lighter ground allowing contractors to get in and cut regardless of wet grounds. Aspen production was down, and hardwood is down. The pine market is tough, mills are still taking some pine, but the market will probably drop by summer. The hardwood and aspen market will be strong though winter. Blowdown – with all the blowdown, the pine and aspen that is broken off might last till May, but if it dries out too much, it loses value. The tipped trees will last longer.
- **PF** – Carissa Freeh – Nationally, PF is not as involved in this partnership as some other partners, but Carissa is available locally for site visits and other tasks and is looking to continue young forest habitat work.
  - Much of the funding for PF programs comes from NRCS, so they try to find projects that fit with that source, but there are other options available to landowners. With the PF programs, much of the interest comes from word of mouth between neighbors and communities.
  - PF is starting to have Women’s workshop days for different programs to engage women landowners. Many of the workshops so far have been ag focused, but there has been one focused on forest management. This is a great opportunity to highlight young forest in Lincoln/Langlade counties.
- **Katie Koch** – There will be a steering committee meeting to look at the future of the GWWA working group. She will make sure to keep an ear out if there is anything they can help contribute to WYFP and vice versa.
- **Tom Carlson** – The main task has been meeting with landowners, many of which tend to be MFL landowners that are already engaged in forest management. These types of visits are more informational than anything. DMAP has been a useful tool for engaging landowners.

## Wisconsin Young Forest Partnership Leadership

### Executive Committee Members:

Jeremy Holtz, Facilitator  
Dan Eklund  
Jon Steigerwaldt

### Steering Committee Members (and alternates):

**USFS:** Dan Eklund and Matthew St. Pierre  
**NRCS:** Chris Borden  
**USFWS:** Mark Pfof and Ted Koehler  
**WDNR Wildlife:** Kent Van Horn and Jeremy Holtz  
**WDNR Forestry:** Kristin Lambert  
**WCFA:** Eric Holm and Gary Zimmer  
**ABC:** Shawn Graff and Callie Bertsch  
**RGS:** Jon Steigerwaldt and Dan Hoff  
**Forestland Group:** Shawn Hagan

**WBCP:** Gary Zimmer  
**WWF:** Bob Ellingson and George Meyer  
**SAF:** Tom Hittle  
**Lumberjack RC&D:** Tracy Beckman and Paul Mueller  
**LP:** Michael Filtz and Chris Weber  
**PF:** Carissah Freeh  
**NWTF:** N/A

### Subcommittee Members:

#### Personnel/workgroup:

Jeremy Holtz, Chair  
Dan Eklund  
Jon Steigerwaldt  
Ranee Smith  
Jacquelyn Christopher  
Callie Bertsch  
Pat Weber  
Janet Brehm  
Rikki Ratsch  
Dan Hoff  
Jared Elm

#### Fundraising:

Dan Eklund, Chair  
Jeremy Holtz  
Jon Steigerwaldt  
Ranee Smith

#### Outreach:

Ranee Smith, Chair  
Jamie Nack  
Chuck Fergus (website)  
Gary Zimmer  
Callie Bertsch  
Amber Roth  
Diane Gunderson  
Tracy Beckman  
Pat Weber

#### Monitoring/Research:

Kent Van Horn  
Amber Roth  
Christopher Roelandt  
Ranee Smith

## S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

### **STRENGTHS – INTERNAL, POSITIVE**

1. Number/diversity of committed public/private partners
2. Support and passion from partners
3. Comradery among group
4. Diversity of partner programs and abilities
5. Commitment to regular meetings
6. Engaged Committee
7. Strong collaborative efforts
8. Low overhead
9. Continued funding
10. Ability to fund full time coordinator
11. Coordinator dedicated to efforts
12. Project coordination
13. Outreach
14. Messaging
15. Compelling Mission
16. Target species are desirable to a wide range of publics
17. Disseminate information
18. Nimble organization
19. Demonstrated capability
20. Maintains accountability
21. Foundation

### **WEAKNESSES – INTERNAL, NEGATIVE**

1. Need grants to operate, but uncertain sources
2. Must rely on fiscal agent as group is not 501c3
3. Money tied to specific deliverables makes it hard to move in other directions if needed
4. Lack of plan/grant writers
5. WYFP needs to provide deliverables
6. Expanding landowner support
7. Landowner involvement
8. YF market limitations for landowners
9. Promoting with landowner success/satisfaction
10. Need to increase diversity of partners
11. Variable partner involvement
12. Some work emphasized to feed particular partners
13. Small staff
14. Diversity of backgrounds/skillsets of staff
15. Brand awareness
16. Efficiently tracking projects
17. Updating founding documents
18. Narrow focus with only young forest habitat
19. Overlap with other organization efforts
20. Need more program analysis

### **OPPORTUNITY – EXTERNAL, POSITIVE**

1. Other forest habitat and larger landscapes to work in
2. Growing state/regional interest in forestry for birds
3. Declining bird populations/habitat
4. Getting involved with partner programs provides more money for support
5. Other conservation organizations can make connections between their work and WYFP's
6. Adding staff and professionals
7. New research to learn about and collaborate with
8. Educational opportunities with professionals
9. Collaborate with other initiatives
10. Many grant opportunities
11. Educate about YF habitat after natural disturbances
12. Groups with overlapping interests can collaborate
13. Renewed interest in wildlife habitat by landowners
14. Carbon sequestration markets and incentives
15. Increase social media efforts
16. Growth of partners/willingness to assist with staffing
17. Other states doing good work and can share

### **THREATS – EXTERNAL, NEGATIVE**

1. Decline in funds to support programs and staff
2. Changes in WYFP leadership/staff
3. Decrease interest from key funding partners
4. Loss of keystone partners
5. A lack of public concern or interest in YF species
6. Public perceptions about forestry
7. Public/landowner distaste for clearcutting
8. Loss of private forest landholdings
9. Run out of interested landowners in target area
10. Fragmentation/parcelization of properties
11. Land conversions
12. Loss of loggers/paper mills
13. Declining timber/fiber markets
14. Economy/political maneuvers that risks habitat
15. Effects of climate change
16. Other programs accomplishing similar things
17. Fires
18. Drastic increase in habitat work cost

## WYFP PRIORITIES

### What should WYFP address immediately?

- Solidify sustained program funding
- Landowner services/deliverables
- Landowner participation
- Improving outreach methods
- Greater visibility among general public
- Make sure everyone knows who all partners are
- Expanding to other at-risk forest types/forest management needs

### What should WYFP preserve at all cost?

- Partnerships/positive relationships between partners
- Collaborative and accountable organizational culture
- Coordinator
- Dedicated landowners

### What future direction/decision should WYFP avoid at all cost?

- Overlapping with others doing the same work
- Limiting future partners
- Breakdown of communication among partners
- Not adhering to their mission
- Try to be all things to all people - remain focused, even as opportunities expand
- Expanding too far, too fast
- Resting on laurels

## WYFP COMPETITION

### What does WYFP do better than other collaborative conservation groups in WI?

- Stays connected to partners
- Get partners to the table
- Communication and collaboration
- Leverage funding from multiple source and deliver goals
- Achieve on ground outcomes

### What do other collaborative conservation groups in WI do better than WYFP?

- Sell the program broad and wide
- Deliverables from the partnership (not the individual partners)
- Fundraise
- Work across boundaries collaboratively
- Landowner outreach
- Political advocacy/strength for group's objectives
- Outreach/website/newsletter

## SUMMARY

WYFP's main strengths are also its weakness. A strong partner base provides needed funds and programs to advocate for and perform young forest habitat management, but continued partner support and funds are not guaranteed. With so many partners and programs, efficiently tracking and serving landowners can be difficult. WYFP needs to expand its focus on habitat type and outreach to better combat potential threats like disinterest from partners and the public. Since there are other groups doing similar work, WYFP needs to find its niche to adequately assist in landscape-scale habitat conservation.