

**SAMAB**  
**Executive Committee Quarterly Meeting**  
**May 22, 2014**

**Members Present:** Gary Peeples, Tommy Gilbert, Jeff Troutman, Susan Schexnayder, Rick Durbrow, Evan Crews, Scott Gain, Jack Ranney, Pat Parr, Adam DeWitte, Carlton Murray, Jim Copeland, Judy Francis and Alice Cohen.

**Meeting Lead:** Rick Durbrow, SAMAB Executive Committee Chair

**Next Meeting(s):** August 12– via phone/webinar – 866-299-3188 code 4045628286#

Draft Agenda: Priority Action Item Update, Website Recommendations, Agency Roundtable, and New Business  
 November 4 - Face to Face Meeting at Twin Creeks in Gatlinburg, Tennessee

ITEM	SDISCUSSION	Action, Contact(s) & Date
Roll Call and Agency Update (brief)	<p>Gary (U.S. F&amp;WS): Potentially acquiring 30 bog sites. Decline in long-eared bat.</p> <p>Tom (U.S. MAB): Member of Biosphere Reserve did an American tour and benefitted from the trip.</p> <p>Jeff (NPS): Trying to find new superintendent, for now Cindy McCloud is acting. NEON project underway. Looking at aquatics, air quality. Hog monitoring via collaring for tracking movement patterns. Acidification monitoring (303d listed streams) reviewing regulations to identify if streams can ever meet ph. standards. Bat study: about 80% of Indiana Bats are unaccountable and white nose syndrome is suspected. Weather intensity study is looking at droplet size and amount of rain fall to gauge impact.</p> <p>Susan (SAMAB Foundation): Foundation-Phil Gibson has resigned. Transition in membership. Recruitment on hold.</p> <p>Evan (TVA): What alignment can TVA find with SAMAB? Refocusing water quality efforts on TVA managed lands, watershed management and public support of partnerships is priority moving forward.</p> <p>Rick (EPA): Budget in place for another year. Downsizing of Regional operations continues with VERA/VSIP and attrition. However, this does provide some opportunity for new staff to align with priorities. Reorganization going on across the Agency. Cross agency strategies are an administration priority: Communities, Partnerships, Sustainability, and Higher Performing Organization. Significant lead on climate change from both the adaptation and mitigation stand point. National Ecological Framework is currently available and EPA can brief other agencies that are interested.</p> <p>Scott (USGS): Drive for efficiency and effectiveness improvements driving reorganization changes in USGS. Water Resource Science Centers being consolidated from 10 down to 3 in the region. Ecological flows looking at stressors on aquatic communities and habitats. National Water Quality Assessment looking at water regulations/water use effects on streams. Climate Science Center work is continuing.</p> <p>Jack (UT retired): Would like invasive species initiative. Used to have “dirty dozen” initiative and if possible, perhaps a workgroup to help assist in rapid response to aquatic, plants, insets and mammals through specific objectives and activities.</p> <p>Pat (DOE): Reorg in DOE/improved communications. Involved in NEON. Need a new plant ecologist. No longer National Reservation Manager, turned over to Neil Giffen. TEPPC has a newsletter and 20-year conference August 1-2. Pat is planning to retire in September/October.</p> <p>Carlton: Woodland Stewards Series, Pisgah Field School is now open, new COF movie, just had Cradle race, mobile app. Opportunity to utilize grant writer to help SAMAB project funding.</p> <p>Jim (U.S. FS): Schenck one of the top programs in country. Restructure. Advanced forestry/fire programs.</p>	

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	<p>Excited to get kids into forestry and bring the information home.</p> <p>Judy (NC): 40% staff reduction.in heritage program. Water infrastructure improvement. Review clean water trust fund applications. Pigeon River fund. Forest Management Plan revisions for Western NC Public Lands Council.</p> <p>Alice (U.S. FS): Erosion problems around TVA lakes. SAHC work. Long eared bat work. Flash flood analysis on Paint Creek to look at big storms and water retention. Restoration team project. Climate change will be included in NEPA process for long term sustainability. 50th Anniversary of the National Wilderness Act. Eleven events in TN culminating on September 3<sup>rd</sup> in Knoxville.</p>	
Administration Review	<p>Financials (Crystal): Please see financial statement. Expenses consistent over last 4-5 years. New management fee is in place in financial statement. Review must be done for incoming grants. No audit this year for grants. Limited financial review/audit will be 6k. No external funds coming in. Funds may exhaust in 2016-2018. No reason to focus on grants without a direct hit on a project. Federally approved indirect cost rate is expensive, but another option is to work through the cost structure of CFIA as an alternative. During discussion, Oak Ridge committed an additional 5K to SAMAB Cooperative. Completed agreement/ and Program Of Work which has been signed by both boards for 2 years. University of Tennessee no longer with SAMAB.</p>	<p>*Make sure to keep the ball rolling when the CFIA needs something pertaining to SAMAB.</p> <p>*Take off Tennessee on Biosphere Reserve Units list for cover letter (adam)</p>
SAMAB Revitalization	<p>(Alice): Recognizing 25 years of initiatives. Continue to be a leader but part of a group that was waning. What are we doing between conferences and “on the ground” initiatives? 3 main goals – workshops to focus on environmental issues/participating in AppLCC/sustainable decision tools development. Group effort with everyone stepping up. Need to have commitments and follow-through so we can continue the partnership. Meeting of EuroMAB in Sweden which is a chance to draw more attention to the group. They have been impressed with SAMAB.</p>	
Community Decision Support	<p>(Judy): At last meeting we talked about launch proposal for Vitality Index and tool for the Appalachian Landscape Conservation Cooperative (AppLCC) and how it can help support SAMAB’s mission. Request for 10K with the foundation for web-based decision support tool with various metrics. 5K addition with interactive map tool. Work will be done in 12 to 18 months depending on addition of map analysis tool. SAMAB members can review. Judy and Jim have been talking to AppLCC about the tool. AppLCC Executive committee is interested in developing the tool and requested a demo of the current Vitality Index in September. Things can be added to expand or improve as we go along. Important to have this as a SAMAB product and it will be branded as such under the proposal. Judy will refine proposal to meet Foundation expectations of potential for increasing SAMAB’s Recognition, Reputation and Resources in the future.</p>	<p>*Judy/Jim will create a proposal for the money from Foundation and submit.</p> <p>*Susan will forward the proposal for a vote by the Foundation.</p> <p><b>*Motion for funding to be approved with revisions by Judy and Jim(Judy) Second (Alice)</b></p> <p><b>All in favor. None opposed.</b></p>
Biosphere Reserves Activities	<p>(Pat): New brochure on Reserves w/ the benefits of each unit to help communicate better with SA Reserves. Ideas passed around on how to better communicate the information. The Reserves imply no actual protection. Project designations can be implemented more efficiently if conducted within a BR. BR provides information, leverages resources, builds on existing programs, potential to assist developing countries with resources, opportunity to bring communities together in support of BR, help facilitate actions pertaining to climate change and other ideas. Why would the community care about these ideas? Do organizations benefit from partnering with BR? Make sure the Foundation knows what the money is going towards for the BR. The brochure will be targeted for an internal audience.</p>	<p>*Jeff Troutman will work on a new biosphere reserves map.</p> <p>*Pat will circulate the BR map to the group.</p> <p><b>*Motion to request up to 2K to Foundation for a BR brochure for an internal audience (Judy) Second(Gary/Alice). All in favor. None opposed.</b></p>
Communications Review	<p>(Gary): Our approach to communications should be campaign-driven around a theme. Hash out a campaign plan to bring back to the group w/ cost on that idea. Prioritize ideas. Would include web vision, brochures, partnering with other conferences and workshops would be involved. What change do we want to see? Should work be</p>	<p><b>*Motion to have Gary lead a work group to direct a campaign (Scott). Second (Alice). All in favor. None</b></p>

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	reflected on the website and how much? Revitalization can be the first campaign. Used to call these “focus areas”. Communication doesn’t necessarily need to focus on past accomplishments. Should articulate on something we intend to do. Gary will reach out to work with other agencies on the capitol campaign. Zoe has been a great asset in the communications department. What are our objectives and audiences? Landscape conversation brought to the level of the community and public. What SAMAB can do for you on invasive species, vitality indices, landscape tools & sustainable economic and human development?	opposed.
Biosphere Reserves	(Tom): Program has grown worldwide. 620 biosphere reserves in 117 countries and at the next meeting in Sweden they hope to have 20 more added. In US there has never been a periodic review. Agreed that the review would now be done. State department is on board to cooperate with the BR units and continue the program. Counsel meeting in Sweden will help to develop an 8-year plan for BR.	
Discover Life in America	(Pat): Been in communication with Todd and he would like to partner with SAMAB on the DLiA conference for 2015. He’s solidifying plans for the conference and thinks it would be a great opportunity to link in with SAMAB. They support research in the Smokies and all-taxa biodiversity program. A brochure about the program was distributed. DLiA has 60-80,000 species of life in the park and they want to share that info with scientists and the public. 931 species that are new to science, 8,000 new to the park. Good opportunity to link in the research done on the Biosphere Reserves. Have reserved potential annual conference dates for the last two weekends in March. What would Todd like SAMAB to do or what can we do for them?	*Pat proposes that we work with Todd on the DLiA project. *Scott will talk to Todd about a commitment to them and bring back to the Executive Committee at our next meeting.
Website and Outreach Update Options	Took a look at the site. Info is out of date and she wonders what the purpose of the site is. Who is the audience? Some key points for review include: relay info as quickly as possible; create clear calls to action on the home page; and engage the audience. Some options for how people use the web now include: 1) pulling them in deeper to content rather than pushing content onto them; 2) use the website as the electronic library/archive with an e-newsletter with updated information to bring them back to website; and 3) responsive design, which allows the viewer to see the website on mobile devices. Current observations note that the site needs a lot of work, but depends on the budget as far as how far we want to go. Can use a “theme” for the website that is a cheaper option. No reason to have social media if we don’t have a website that is updated. All communications should steer folks back to our site. Mail Chimp/Constant Contact are avenues to distribute current information out to the partners.	*Gary will contact Steffi Rausch to have her work with the communications group. *Motion to bring in Steffi for hourly rate not to exceed \$300 to begin work on website options with Gary’s communication team. Motion passed. * Alice will help out with Gary’s team. Gary will give Zoe a call. Rick will participate on calls as needed. Jeff will ask his webmaster folks if they can help.
Other Business	Next meeting is planned for August 12 via phone or webinar. Meeting topics will include update on communication efforts and options to leverage website technology, DLiA conference sponsorship/partucuoatuib opportunity, status of AppLCC partnership activities, SAMAB Vitality Index, and Biosphere Reserve brochure update/options. Next face to face meeting is scheduled for November 4 in Gatlinburg, TN.	*Jeff will coordinate/host the meeting on November 4 at Twin Creeks