

SUASCO CISMA
Steering Committee Meeting
Great Meadows NWR, Sudbury
January 10, 2012

Members Present: Amber Carr (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service), M. John Dwyer (Maynard Conservation Commission), Lee Steppacher (National Park Service/ River Stewardship Council), Libby Herland (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), Laura Mattei (Sudbury Valley Trustees), Barbara Volkle (Friends of Assabet NWR), Ron Genna (Westford Conservation Trust), Dave McKinnon (FROM WHERE?), Tom Largy (Wayland), Ted Elliman (NEWFS), Bob Goldsmith (Wayland), Lynn Knight (Carlisle), Matt Burne (Walden Woods Project), Stephanie Wilson (USDA/NRCS).

Annual elections

The Steering Committee includes 12 members and equally represents the constituencies within the general membership. They have staggered terms. New members were voted in at the fall meeting, so now officers are elected from this newly constituted Steering Committee. Terms for officers are one year. The Admin Committee took the lead in soliciting nominations with the following objectives; to get new representation in the slate of officers; to work to have the vice chair serve with the intention of becoming chair in the future. The treasurer position is closely tied to Mass Audubon, the fiscal agent, so Mass Audubon rep serves as treasurer (Jeff). There is a hope that more of the general CISMA members will want to become involved in our activities – whether by serving on the Steering Committee, or on one of the subcommittees. We cannot have the organization run by the same small group of individuals into the future.

There was a short discussion about the impediments to serving as an officer. Time is probably the biggest impediment. It was noted that to be chair is less time consuming than vice chair. While the chair runs the Steering Committee meetings, the vice chair has been running the Admin Committee. This includes meeting planning, some grant writing etc. The Secretary is responsible for taking minutes at six meetings each year. Members agreed that we should reconsider how responsibilities are allocated so that not too much work falls upon a small group of people. This issue will be addressed at the spring meeting.

The current officers have agreed to serve one more year- Lynn as chair, Libby as vice chair, Lee as secretary, and Jeff as treasurer.

Minutes

A typo was noted – ‘quaking’ will be changed. Ted said that part of the NFWF grant was to look at rare species too. Their survey showed none. With these changes the minutes were approved unanimously.

New Members

The Westford Conservation trust was approved as a CISMA member (Laura/Lynn). Ron said that he hoped that being involved in CISMA activities might energize the Trust.

2011 Highlights

Lynn hopes to put together a summary of CISMA activities for 2011, similar to the one done the

previous year. Using information from the fall meeting will help expand items covered to include CISMA activities as well as some member organization activities. The report will be available at the spring meeting, and will also be sent to elected officials. It will be useful to submit as part of grant applications as well to show how active we are. Submit information by 2/6 to Lynn, then Matt will do layout in time for the spring meeting.

2012 RSC grant ideas

The RSC is requesting ideas for funding by mid February. In past years, CISMA has received approximately \$5K. Possible ideas for funding this year include funds for a videographer to tape the spring meeting; support for web site, annual fee; small grants program to support local management efforts. This would be helpful, for example, to a town who want to hire a contractor to apply herbicide.

Lee announced that there would be an SCA intern working with NPS and FWS for the next 10 months on engaging youth, junior river rangers and invasive species management. There was some discussion of reserving a small amount of funding to support the intern, though the position has funds available for field work.

John said that the website is ready to be launched publicly, but he felt this message got lost at the fall meeting. We should do a press release to announce. Any new features we want to add to the website will cost more money, but first we should get it 'out there' and used. There was a suggestion that the CISMA website contain a link to the Wayland Surface Water Committee's site.

Next Grant Projects

Lynn said that CISMA had applied for another grant from NFWF and are waiting to hear back from them. The proposal is for \$75K, focusing on 6 sites in the watershed with a common theme of meadow restoration.

Lynn has been exploring grants support from REI. Our organization will need to be nominated by a store in order to be eligible to compete. We should know in the next few months if we were nominated. Laura said that SVT had successfully received funds from REI for stewardship activities. We need to be mindful of working together with our partners and not unknowingly competing with them for funding.

Lynn suggested that we put together a few concepts for grant projects and then look to funders for support. Perhaps it could be a focus on a few species. A Garlic Mustard pull was one idea – this is something Lincoln and Sudbury organize within their towns. Barbara suggested a train the trainer project addressing the rearing beetles.

The Admin Committee needs help in developing ideas for grant proposals. Ted and Amber will work together on this.

Nyanza Report

The Natural Resource Damages Trustees have released the Draft Restoration Plan for review. Projects include funds for land acquisition, education, trails and invasive species management among other things. CISMA has been identified as the implementer of the aquatic restoration projects including water chestnut control, purple loosestrife beetle rearing. The State will take the lead in a project focused on the restoration of wild rice.. Funds will allow for another harvester to be purchased and support a 10 person team for 2 months. Additional funds will go to Wayland to manage Heard Pond. Another project will support the rearing of beetles. Some of the funds will help to support the

coordinator who will guide implementation of the projects. Funds will probably go through Mass Audubon as the fiscal agent for CISMA. It is not clear when the funds will be made available – after public comments are received a final plan will be written. CISMA will send a comment letter in support of the projects, individuals may send in letters as well. They are due by January 23..

Funds in the draft plan include: \$525K for beetle rearing, \$269 for water chestnut control and \$300K for wild rice restoration.

Barbara said that the CISMA may look for new funds to address water chestnut outside of the Sudbury River. This project will help us determine how best to do that work, and we can use it to build off of when applying for other grants.

Spring Meeting

Lynn suggested that the meeting focus on the use of herbicides to control invasives. This has been an issue in Carlisle, and likely is a topic of great interest to many local communities. A panel of speakers could address a range of topics including the effectiveness of herbicides and their alternatives, the health risk both environmentally and to humans, new requirements for a federal permit to apply herbicides. Laura agreed that this was a good topic and a concern for SVT as well.

Dave suggested that Lou Wagner from Mass Audubon would be a good speaker. Lee will contact George Papadopolous at EPA as well. Ted suggested a person in CT who works with alternatives to herbicides.

Members felt that all the time in the meeting should be allotted to this topic. The meeting will be held from 2-5 pm. Would it be possible to get professional development credits for applicators for attending this? If the topic is really popular perhaps IPANE would follow up with another presentation for a larger audience. John also suggested that MACC has a meeting in the fall that focuses on one topic. Some of the speakers might want/need to be compensated. Lee will ask the RSC if they are willing to pay travel costs.

The meeting will be held on March 13th.