



Cumberland HCP

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SPRING 2009

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- The Cumberland HCP project was awarded FY09 funding from USFWS Planning Assistance!!!!
- This year, Tennessee and Florida are the only states in the southeast receiving planning assistance grants from USFWS to develop HCPs.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CUMBERLAND HCP PROJECT CONTACT: EMILYKS@UTK.EDU

Notes from Alex Wyss, Cumberland HCP project director

Breaking news! The Cumberland HCP Project has just been awarded a planning grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The HCP project competed with many other HCP projects across the nation for this grant and we are especially appreciative to the Service for their vital support to the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, the HCP project and participating Upper Cumberland communities. The funding could not have come at a better time to build on the progress of both HCPs. As you will learn in this issue of the newsletter, the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) is on schedule for having a draft of their Northern Cumberlands Forest Resources

Habitat Conservation Plan (NCFRHCP) by the end of this year. Continued funding will enable the HCP Project Development Team and the TWRA to maintain their staff involvement in the final phases of their HCP.

For the Water Resources HCP (WRHCP) the new funding will be used to bolster the HCP project staffing by hiring new staff on the Science Advisory Committee this summer. The new staff will include another project coordinator and another scientist who will be employed by Tennessee Technological University and will work exclusively on the WRHCP. By hiring these personnel, planning progress for the

WRHCP will be accelerated considerably. We also will hire a technical writer who will be writing documents for both HCPs, with assistance from Core Team members. With one HCP nearing completion and the other about to receive a substantial planning boost, 2009 will be a pivotal year for the Cumberland HCP initiative. Our progress depends on the support of the long list of participants involved in these projects. If you are already involved in the Cumberland HCP, on behalf of the project team, we are grateful for your continued participation. If you want to learn more and become involved, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Effective streamside buffers help everyone

Streamside buffers (also called riparian buffers) are natural vegetated areas that grow beside streams, rivers and wetlands. Buffers function as a filter and remove pollutants like sediment that collect in rainwater when it hits the ground. As growth continues in the Cumberland HCP project area, more and more impervious surface—for example a parking lot or rooftop—is created. Such a surface no longer allows the ground to soak up water when it rains; instead rainwater leaves the site, taking pollutants with it, and ends up in streams. Therefore, with more impervious surface comes increased runoff when it rains. Runoff is also increased by cutting trees down in a forest, especially near streams.

It causes streams to overflow and degrades water quality for drinking water and for animals that live in streams.

Desired streamside buffer width is site-dependent, varying with slope and type of vegetation growing in the buffer. Streamside buffers help prevent stream erosion and protect property downstream. Also, with buffers more rainwater soaks into the ground, helping to replenish groundwater. All of these benefits are significant to people, animals and plants.

Streamside buffers are an important element of the Cumberland HCP. We will formulate effective and applicable buffers for aquatic and terrestrial covered species.

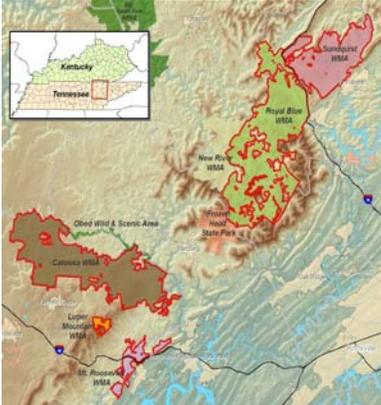
Streamside buffers will help support

habitat for the animals and plants of concern for the Cumberland HCP project and will help provide cleaner water and beautiful scenery in communities of the Cumberland HCP.



Riparian buffers can have trees, shrubs and grasses.

Northern Cumberlands Forest Resources HCP Update



Find map online: http://www.cumberlandhcp.org/forestryhcp_maps.html

The Technical and Core Teams have been hard at work continuing efforts to complete the NCFRHCP Biological Goals, Objectives, and Conservation Measures. The Core Team received great insight and suggestions from Technical Team members during a meeting in February. To follow up on conversations from the February meeting, the Technical Team met again in March. At this meeting, the Core Team presented new maps and documents for the Technical Team to review representing changes from the group's collaborative process.

The Core Team will continue to meet and work this spring to complete revisions and associated tasks.

The Core Team has drafted Reserves and Special Management Areas for the NCFRHCP. Forest Interior Reserves were chosen to provide undisturbed forested habitat that is distributed across the participating WMAs. Cerulean Warbler Management Areas were chosen to set guidelines on the amount of habitat and methods to manage the habitat for this species. Together with the Forest Interior Reserves, these areas will provide large blocks of forested habitat on

Catoosa and the North Cumberland WMA. Early Successional Management Areas were also delineated to ensure habitat was maintained in early successional habitats such as oak savanna and grasslands on the WMAs to provide habitat for the early successional community. The reserves will be used to provide a foundation for a system of forest reserves that are within the WMAs and help set priorities for TWRA land management. Find more information online at: www.cumberlandhcp.org.



Find map online: http://www.cumberlandhcp.org/waterhcp_maps.html

Water Resources HCP Update

Over the past few months the Cumberland HCP staff have developed a workplan to successfully build a HCP with participation from stakeholders in Crossville, Cumberland County and Morgan and Scott Counties. Beginning this summer, an outreach team will be working closely with our outreach coordinator to raise awareness

about the Water Resources HCP and bolster support in the HCP communities. The Core Team will be working with partners to finalize the covered species and activities. To do this, we will be hiring two full-time staff scientists who will coordinate and lead a Core Team process similar to the process used by the NCFRHCP Core Team.

The new staff will be working to determine species needs in the project region and over the next year will be sharing this information and getting key input from the Technical Team and Steering Committee. Further updates coming in the summer and fall newsletters and on our website, www.cumberlandhcp.org.

What is a HCP?

A Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) is a means to protect natural resources and enable sustainable economic growth through a collaborative process of planning for growth.

The HCP process advances "green" development where water quality is protected and endangered and threatened species are conserved.

The Federal Endangered Species Act prohibits the harm (also called "take") of threatened and endangered species and their habitat. Any non-Federal entity (including city and county governments and state agencies) who is conducting activities that might harm (or "take") endangered and threatened wildlife on their land should obtain an incidental take permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to provide protection against violating the

Endangered Species Act.

To obtain a permit, the applicant develops a Habitat Conservation Plan designed to offset any harmful effects the proposed activity (like building a subdivision or installing a utility pipe) might have on the species. With an approved HCP an Incidental Take Permit is issued by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service that allows resources to be used and take

to occur as long as harm to the species is avoided, minimized and mitigated through the HCP.

To learn more about HCPs go to: <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/hcp/index.html>

Science Advisory Committee News



The Science Advisory Committee (SAC) Coordinators have had an exciting spring working with the Core Team on the NCFRHCP and preparing to hire new SAC staff this summer for the Water Resources HCP. The new staff will fill a much needed role in developing a Core Team process for the Water Resources HCP.

NCFRHCP Core Team work

The Coordinators have been compiling NCFRHCP Phase I documents, which will include the biological goals, objectives and conservation measures to share with

SAC members this summer. SAC Coordinators are looking forward to receiving expert scientific feedback via an online survey.

To develop the online survey, the SAC Coordinators received guidance from fellow Development Team member Dr. David Ostermeier at the University of Tennessee. His experience creating and implementing natural resource surveys was helpful when crafting a survey that will be completed by members of the SAC.

The SAC also collaborated with Dr. Vincent Neary, Associate Professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at TTU, to obtain feedback on the current North Cumberland Forest Resources HCP take model. Dr. Neary has extensive modeling experience and provided useful feedback to the SAC team.

Farewell to SAC Technician

The SAC Coordinators would like to say

farewell and thank you to Rebecca Anderson. Rebecca has worked part-time as a Research Technician at TTU on the Cumberland HCP project since May 2008. She has provided support to the SAC Coordinators and the HCP Development Team. Specific projects she has worked on in the past year include: completing abbreviated species accounts for most of the species covered in both HCPs; aiding in the logistics for the SAC 2008 annual meeting; writing newsletter articles; creating a species photo library; and many other small projects. Rebecca will be pursuing a degree in Environmental Engineering from TTU and contributes her decision to her experience working on the Cumberland HCP project. We wish her well in her new journey!

For more information contact Hayden Mattingly, SAC coordinator at hmattingly@tntech.edu.

Featured Species: Purple Bean (mussel)

The Purple Bean (*Villosa perpurpurea*) got its name from the fact that it is shaped somewhat like a bean and the interior of its shell is a pearly purple color. The outer part of the shell is dark brown with faint green rays. It is typically found in coarse gravel substrate with a swift current in the Emory and Obed River systems. The Purple bean is listed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service as Endangered. Populations historically have been found sporadically throughout the Tennessee River drainage including the Clinch River and the North Fork Holston River .

The Southern United States is considered one of the richest areas of

the world in terms of freshwater mussel species. Unfortunately, many of those mussels species are faced with environmental impacts and declining populations. Our featured species, the Purple Bean, is no exception. Surveys of our Science Advisory Committee (SAC) have identified numerous potential threats to the Purple Bean including poor septic systems or straight-pipes, and the introduction of pollutants from some residential development activities. However, most survey respondents referred to sedimentation as the leading threat to the Purple Bean. Dr. Jim Layzer, a SAC Mussels Working Group member and TTU Professor, points out in an interview that Crossville urbanization is a potential source of

significant stress for Purple bean in the Emory and Obed river systems.

Freshwater mussels are excellent indicators of water quality and therefore, the choice of the Purple Bean as one of the six focal species for the HCP is a good one that will help ensure high water quality for the future of the HCP region.



Purple Bean

Upcoming HCP Meetings & Events

Meetings:

NCFR HCP Core Team continues to meet thru summer 2009.

SAC annual meeting, September 17, 2009 at Cumberland Mountain State Park.

Events:

American Fisheries Society annual meeting Aug 30–Sept 3, Nashville
www.fisheries.org.

* Check our website for updates on coming events and meetings—
www.cumberlandhcp.org.

US Fish and Wildlife Service News

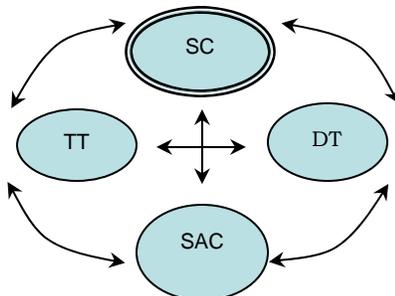
The Cumberland HCP project is proud to announce we have received funding from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) planning assistance grant program to continue development of two HCPs in the upper Cumberland region of Tennessee. The funding is for fiscal year 2009 and will fund the Cumberland HCP project from approximately June 2009 through May 2010.

To successfully develop both HCPs, we work closely with staff from the USFWS field office in Cookeville, TN, <http://www.fws.gov/cookeville/>. Geoff Call, endangered species recovery coordinator and HCP liaison in Cookeville, has been a great supporter of the project. Geoff supports developing the Cumberland HCP as an important step ahead for conservation efforts on the northern Cumberland Plateau in

Tennessee. This is an area rich in biological diversity and is home to several threatened or endangered species. The Service is pleased to support the efforts of state and local governments, academia, and private partners to craft a vision for integrating conservation of those imperiled species into economic development and resource management in the project area. Thanks to USFWS support of the Cumberland HCP project!!

HCP project organization

The Cumberland HCP project is developing two separate HCPs—the Northern Cumberland Forest Resources HCP on TWRA lands and the Water Resources HCP covering Cumberland, Morgan and Scott counties and the cities of Crossville and Wartburg. Each HCP has a steering committee (SC) and technical team (TT). The SCs



HCP project organization and communication flow.

and TTs are made up of volunteer participants from within the project area, as well as people who are interested in the success of the project.

The Science Advisory Committee is a large group of experts who are working to develop the science for both HCPs. They meet annually at Cumberland Mountain State Park.

For More Information about the Cumberland HCP Project contact:

Emily Woodle
Communications and Outreach Coordinator
Phone: 865-974-1955 (o)
865-604-2882 (m)
emilyks@utk.edu

Check us out on the web: www.cumberlandhcp.org

Read past newsletters:
http://www.cumberlandhcp.org/newsandnewsletters_main.html

The Cumberland HCP Project is a coalition of state and local governments, organizations, landowners, and other private citizens who are working together to address issues of growth and conservation of the forests and waters of the Cumberland region of Tennessee.

