



Cumberland HCP

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WINTER 2009

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- The Core Team has made great strides on Biological Goals and Objectives
- There are over 600 approved HCPs nationwide.
- Check our new website format for the Northern Cumberlands Forest Resources HCP Gateway—
www.cumberlandhcp.org

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FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE HCP PROJECT CONTACT:
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Notes from Alex Wyss, Cumberland HCP Project Director

Successful development of two Habitat Conservation Plans in the Cumberlands will largely depend on our ability to efficiently use planning resources and garner support from a broad spectrum of participants. Contributions of volunteer expertise on technical teams, steering and science committees provides critical technical assistance. Nowhere is this more evident than the recent involvement of a graduate course at the University of Tennessee and a spring class at Tennessee Tech. University(TTU).

Last fall the Cumberland HCP project, along with faculty from UT, Knoxville worked with an inter-departmental group of 22

law and graduate students for a practicum and service learning opportunity focused on the Water Resources HCP. The students brought their diverse backgrounds to bear while working in teams to research the multitude of information needs for the HCP. The students began with an overnight watershed tour in Morgan and Cumberland counties. Thanks to many members of the Steering Committee and Technical Team who took time to meet with the students, the students gained an understanding of the people and issues of this region. Seven student teams focused on researching different aspects of the HCP. Products of this class include recommenda-

tions on how to incorporate the HCP into existing funding mechanisms and regulations, GIS analyses, and educational outreach materials. Abstracts of the group's work as well as pictures from the fieldtrip will be posted on our website.

This in-kind support will continue in 2009. During spring semester, students from two classes led by Dr. Hayden Mattingly at TTU will tackle key conservation science planning needs for the HCPs. The HCP team greatly appreciates the students and all our committee members for their time and effort in these HCPs and look forward to our many interactions during 2009.

Sedimentation Control for the Cumberlands

The need for healthy watersheds is an increasingly important issue across Tennessee and the country. Watershed areas designed to provide the best possible water supply for present and future community members is a priceless asset. Sedimentation is a leading cause of degradation to U.S. waters, including streams and rivers here in the Cumberland Habitat Conservation Plan project area.

When addressed effectively the minimization of sedimentation associated with urbanization is achievable. Vince Neary, a TTU professor and Professional Engineer, offered insight into ways excessive sedimentation may be

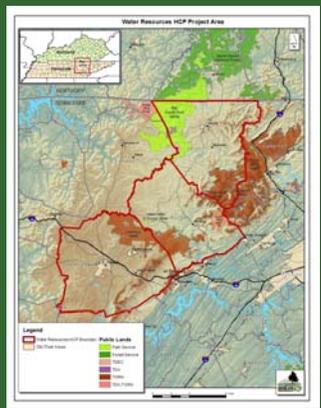
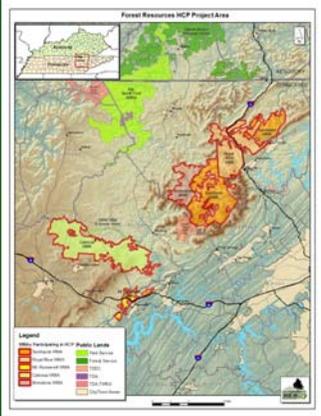
minimized. Reducing and disconnecting impervious surfaces (e.g. asphalt and concrete), preserving green areas with riparian buffers, low-impact development strategies, effective city planning and stormwater management are several structural and non-structural methods described by Neary to reduce negative impacts from sedimentation.

The Cumberland Plateau has experienced high growth rates. Now and in the future, communities must increasingly find ways to minimize excessive sedimentation to protect water quality and habitats for aquatic wildlife. Fortunately, there are many technological advances and practices

that avoid or reduce sedimentation while enabling continued economic development and growth. Following best management practices and other progressive guidelines can alleviate the stress sedimentation puts on the environment. The Cumberland HCP is a way to involve multiple stakeholders to plan for the future of the Cumberland Plateau region, while minimizing sedimentation caused by covered land use activities.

For more information on science-related issues, please contact SAC Coordinator, Hayden Mattingly,
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Northern Cumberlands Forest Resources HCP Update



The Steering Committee for the Northern Cumberlands Forest Resources (NCFR) HCP recently met to learn about work the Core Team of the Science Advisory Committee has been focused on for the past four months. Information presented included a detailed overview of proposed biological goals and objectives. Biological goals and objectives are a crucial element of any HCP. Goals are set based on scientific information and what will work on the ground and

then objectives to meet those goals are developed. This information will then be used to develop the impact mitigation strategies for the NCFR HCP.

The Technical Team will be meeting in February to hear the biological goals and objectives overview. The species working groups will also be asked to review the goals and objectives with final approval coming from the Steering Committee sometime this spring.

Please notice this HCP's name change. As the HCP process has narrowed the focus and the covered activities have become more clear, it made sense to let the HCP name reflect that focus. The Steering Committee approved a name change from the Forest Resources HCP to the Northern Cumberlands Forest Resources HCP!

Find notes and presentations online at: www.cumberlandhcp.org under Forest Resources HCP Gateway.

Water Resources HCP Update

Activities associated with residential and commercial development are likely to be covered under this HCP and a technical team has been working together on these issues for the past year. Last fall, the Water Resources Residential and Commercial Development Technical Team worked with TDEC, the Water Resources and Research Center at UTK, the Southeast Watershed Forum and TVA to learn about

existing construction stormwater permitting as well as new elements of sustainable development practices. The Technical Team began to look at what could apply to activities covered under the HCP. The goal of the Technical Team is to develop recommendations to the Steering Committee and in turn those recommendations will become part of the HCP.

The workshops this past fall

are only the beginning of a process of education around issues of stormwater management on construction sites and on sites post-construction.

Find more information online at: www.cumberlandhcp.org under Water Resources Gateway.

What is a HCP?

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

The Federal Endangered Species Act prohibits the harm (also called "take") of threatened and

endangered species and their habitat. Private landowners, corporations, State or local governments, Tribes or other non-Federal landowners who are interested in conducting activities that might incidentally harm (or "take") endangered or threatened wildlife on their land are required to obtain an incidental take permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to provide protection from violating the Endangered Species Act.

To obtain a permit, the applicant needs to develop a Habitat Conservation Plan designed to offset any harmful effects the proposed activity (like building a subdivision or installing a utility crossing) might have on the species. The HCP process allows development to proceed consistent with conserving endangered or threatened 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.

Science Advisory Committee News



Over the past four months the Science Advisory Committee (SAC) coordinators, Trisha Johnson and Dr. Sean Blomquist, have been busy working with Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) biologists, Kirk Miles and Mark Thurman as a Core Team to develop scientific support for the Northern Cumberlands Forest Resources

(NCFR) HCP. The Core Team has utilized assistance from other TWRA staff, including foresters and managers, and SAC members to produce covered activities and covered species documents and draft Biological Goals and Objectives. Dr. Sean Blomquist has led the effort to create models that will be used to calculate take that will be predicted to occur due to covered activities.

The Core Team is currently in the process of presenting this information to the NCFR HCP Steering Committee, Technical Team, and SAC species working groups. The Core Team is seeking feedback and will use this process to continue to tailor these products to the species and agency needs.

Next steps for the Core Team will include producing avoidance, minimization, mitigation, and monitoring strategies, adaptive management, and cumulative impacts assessments.

The HCP Development Team commends them for their hard work and dedication to this effort!

For more information see www.cumberlandhcp.org

*The
Cumberlands
hold a wealth of
rich biodiversity.
It is home to the
black mountain
salamander, a
species found
nowhere else in
the world!*

Featured Species: Black mountain salamander

Desmognathus walteri, commonly known as black mountain salamander, is a covered species for the Cumberlands Forest and Water Resources Habitat Conservation Plans. Black mountain salamanders are especially important to the Cumberlands HCPs because it is one of the few headwater stream species found in all three participating WR counties: Morgan, Scott, and Cumberland.

Mark Thurman, Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency biologist, SWAP contributor, and SAC member, commented "a healthy stream with intact tree canopy and a good riparian zone," offer an optimal environment for black mountain salamanders.

The identification of these types of key elements will help scientists on the SAC to design beneficial guides to enable preservation of the Cumberland HCPs covered species. Recommending enhanced landuse Best Management Practices (BMPs) for headwater streams where black mountain salamanders and other aquatic species are found (Thurman, pers comm.) is a prime example of how this could be done.

The SAC is also preparing to do its own research on black mountain salamanders in upcoming spring and summer of 2009. Sean Blomquist, Postdoctoral Associate of the SAC, will be leading a research project with the aid of graduate student,

Photo by Zack Felix, 2007



Katrina Smith, to gain more occurrence records and other pertinent scientific data. Thurman agrees that, "this will help develop a better understanding of the conservation status and ecology of this salamander".

Upcoming HCP Meetings & Events

Meetings:

The Northern Cumberlands Forest Resources HCP Technical Team is meeting February 17, 2009 in Knoxville.

Events:

Public events where you can learn more about the HCP project:

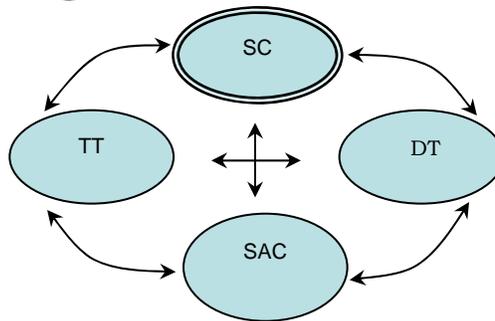
Alliance for the Cumberlands annual meeting—February 22, 2009 at Fall Creek Falls State Park

Discovery Fest—April 18, 2009 in Wartburg

Crossville Sustainability Fair—May 8, 2009 in Crossville

HCP Project Organization

The Cumberland HCP project is developing two separate HCPs—one for Forest Resources on TWRA lands and one for Water Resources 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 SC and TTs are made up of volun-



HCP project organization and communication flow.

teer 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 HCP Project contact:

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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 Cumberlands of Tennessee.



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

Read past newsletters:

http://www.cumberlandhcp.org/newsandnewsletters_main.html