



ASSOCIATION of
FISH & WILDLIFE
AGENCIES

CLIMATE ADAPTATION COMMITTEE

Chair: Thomas Eason (FL)

Vice-Chair: Christie Curley (Ontario)

Date: September 19, 2022

Time: 2 – 4 pm ET

**112th AFWA Annual Meeting
Fort Worth, TX**

Agenda

- 2:00 pm Call to Order/Introductions
- 2:05 pm Review of Agenda/Committee Charge
- 2:10 pm Approval of Minutes for the 2022 North American Meeting - approved
- 2:15 pm Climate Adaptation in Ontario's Fish & Wildlife Management
Jenny Gleeson, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry
- 2:35 pm Climate Change and Fisheries Resources: A Summary of Actions Taken in Texas to
Manage for Resiliency
Tim Birdsong, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- 2:55 pm Proposed revision of regulations governing designation of experimental populations"
Gary Frazer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- 3:05 pm Revised Voluntary Guidance for States to Incorporate Climate Adaptation into SWAPs
Jacob Blandford, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
- 3:20 pm 2022 AFWA Climate Adaptation Survey
Logan Benedict, Florida Wildlife Commission
- 3:25 pm DEI and the Climate Adaptation Committee
Thomas Eason, Florida Wildlife Commission
- 3:40 pm Discussion on 2023 committee workplan
Thomas Eason, Florida Wildlife Commission
- 3:50 pm State and Province Roundtable
*One representative per state or provincial agency highlights a climate legislative and
policy initiative or issue*
- 4:00 pm Adjourn



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Climate Adaptation Committee Report

Chair: Thomas Eason
Meeting of September 19, 2022
Omni Hotel
Fort Worth, TX

Committee Charge

- Build capacity within and among state fish and wildlife agencies to begin integrating climate change into the normal business of the conservation of fish and wildlife.
- Serve as a forum for networking, information sharing, and lessons learned on climate change issues.
- Serve as the coordinated voice of the fish and wildlife agencies on climate change issues with conservation partners, other sectors, legislators, and appropriators.
- Serve as a conduit for sharing emerging research on climate change and climate adaptation and develop recommended approaches for state agencies to incorporate climate change considerations into fish and wildlife conservation.

Meeting convened during 1:00 pm and 3:00 pm chaired by Thomas Eason. Fifty-six participants in attendance, including fourteen current Committee members:

Scheduled Discussion Items

Call to Order/Introductions

- Introductions done in person and anyone virtual introduced themselves in chat.
- Meeting being recorded for internal purposes. Recordings will not be shared.

Review of Agenda/Committee Charge

- Quick review of the Agenda.
- The motion to approve the agenda was seconded and approved.

Approval of Minutes for the 2022 North American Meeting

- Minutes were expected to be reviewed ahead of the meeting.
- The motion to approve the minutes was seconded and the minutes were approved.

Climate Adaptation in Ontario's Fish & Wildlife Management

- *Presentation on climate adaptation in Ontario's fish and wildlife management was given by Christie Curley (Committee Vice Chair) and Jenny Gleeson from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry*
- Christie provided insight on the role of Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.
- Jenny provided insight on climate change adaptation for Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. Started with an overview of Canada's approaches to addressing Climate Change (e.g. 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan (2022), Strengthened Climate Action Plan (2020), Canada's Changing Climate (2019) Pan-Canadian framework (2016)); and scaled down to Ontario's level.

- Hudson Bay Lowlands snapshot: large wetland habitat, permafrost thaw, loss of carbon storage.
- Showcased climate change policies in Ontario (Ontario Invasive Species Strategic plan, Advisory board on climate change, etc.)
- Major points of the program: Natural Hazards Management; Greenhouse Gas Mitigation; Ecosystem based Adaptation; Science and Monitoring.
- Reach out to Jenny or Christie with questions (Jenny.Gleeson@Ontario.Ca; Christie.Curley@Ontario.Ca)

Climate Change and Fisheries Resources: A Summary of Actions Taken in Texas to Manage for Resiliency

- Presentation on climate change and Texas' fisheries resources was given by Tim Birdsong from Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Tim shared issues affecting Texas' aquatic ecosystems. These include loss of connectivity and competing demands with water use by humans and wildlife.
- Determining Conservation Status Thresholds through Nature Serve Tool.
- Tim highlighted a method of prioritization of effort by showing heat maps of T/E species and areas of SGCN, and other spatial tools that are used to help determine priority areas. (e.g. SECAS Blueprint is used version 4.0. and invasive species).
- Highlighted one method of improving resiliency through restoring flows to areas where floodplains have been altered.
- Another important resource referenced is the Texas Environmental Flows Information Toolkit (EFIT More info [here](#)) for water rights and volumes to achieve flow restoration targets.

Proposed revision of regulations governing designation of experimental populations"

- *Presentation on proposed revision to ESA 10(j) was given by Gary Frazer from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*
- Provided update on the 10(J) proposed revisions.
- Question: Asking whether range expansion is causing "historic range" definition to be expanded to fit new climate models or information. Answer: That hasn't been considered yet. Following IUCN guidelines currently. Trying to evaluate this very robustly each time this comes up.
- Question: Asking if insects being considered in this ruling change? Answer: This approach can be used for invertebrates though Gary is not aware of current experimental populations for invertebrates.

Revised Voluntary Guidance for States to Incorporate Climate Adaptation into SWAPs

- *Presentation on the revised voluntary climate guidance for state fish and wildlife agencies was given by Jacob Blandford from Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies*
- Previous information from surveys tells us that 80% of states have incorporated climate change into their swaps. 2018 survey identified there are still gaps needed. Those needs are being addressed in the updated Voluntary SWAP guidance.
- Climate Change Communication is a major need that was identified before and now incorporated into this resource.
- Revisions involved 9 state, 5 federal, 2 tribal, and 5 NGO representatives.
- Motion to approve the revised guidance was seconded and approved by unanimous vote by present committee members

2022 AFWA Climate Adaptation Survey

- Announcement of the 2022 AFWA Climate Adaptation Survey was made Logan Benedict from Florida Wildlife Commission
- Brief overview of the biannual survey provided to the committee.
- Examples provided what information/resources have come out of past surveys.
- Committee and attendees informed that the 2022 survey should be available shortly after AFWA.

DEI and the Climate Adaptation Committee

- Thomas Eason from Florida Wildlife Commission initiated a conversation on increasing DEI in the Climate Adaptation Committee
- The committee members and other participants had a productive discussion about the things AFWA must

consider when working on DEI issues.

- There are experts in this field and AFWA should bring them in to facilitate.
- Just like all projects, DEI needs specific and measurable goals.
- Committee needs to be diverse to affectively incorporate more DEI. Why would diverse partners want to engage the committee if they don't see anyone like them? How do we bring underrepresented groups to the table, and how do we get underrepresented groups to invite us to their table?
- We can start by being more inclusive to Tribes.
- Jacob took extensive notes and will work with Thomas and Christie on next steps. DEI will be incorporated into the committee's 2023 work plan.

Discussion on 2023 committee workplan

- Work plans update briefly given by Thomas given short time. More information to come via email and in future meetings.
- Thomas would like feedback on moving this to a 3-hour meeting instead of a 2-hour meeting.

State and Province Roundtable

- Jacob discussed that based on the 2018 survey the Committee worked to create the Climate Connectivity Toolkit and story map. USFWS created the story map, and it will launch next week.

Other Discussion items

None identified

Progress and Opportunities

The revised Voluntary Guidance for States to Incorporate Climate Adaptation into SWAPs was completed and approved by the committee (Goal 3). The bi-annual climate survey was announced and will be shared. Results will be compiled and a report will be presented in early 2023 (Goals 3 and 5).

Threats and Emerging Issues Identified

None identified

New Opportunities Identified

There is an opportunity to increase DEI in the committee and especially representation from underserved and underrepresented communities. There are opportunities to increase our education and awareness of DEI issues and solutions to address those issues.

Action Items

Draft 2023 committee workplan – Jacob will solicit input on the 2023 work plan. Thomas, Christie, Jenny, Logan, and Jacob will draft the work plan and share with committee members

Create DEI goals – Committee needs to create DEI goals and start working towards those goals. One of the first steps can be to provide education on DEI and how climate impacts underserved communities and the ecosystem service they need.

Submitted by: Thomas Eason