LEADERSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Chair: Dave Golden (NJ)

Vice-Chair: Mark Tisa (MA)

Staff: Elena Takaki, Amanda Myers, Gina Jackson, Bettina Fiery, and Kelly Reynolds

Thursday, March 11, 2021

10:00 – 12:00 Central Time

86th North American Wildlife & Natural Resources Conference

Call to Order/ Review Agenda

Directions given on how to use chat and interact. 28 participants.

Approval of Minutes from 2020 AFWA annual meeting, Lynn Quattro, Ann Forstchen seconded, all in favor.

Dave announced new co-chair for the LPD committee – Mark Tisa from MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. Mark not in attendance due to high level meeting for his agency on license fee increase. Happy to have Mark on board.

Dave introduced new MAT Staff: Elena Takaki and Kelly Reynolds. Elena came on as interim director in Sept 2020 and Kelly as Project Manager.

**MAT training data from 2020 and new offerings for 2021 – Amanda report**

2020 data

19 Online Courses​, 86 Live Webinars​ = 2,149 Students​

3 OnDemand Webinars​ = 1,568 views

2021

Delivered thus far: 2 Online courses and 15 webinars​

New Offerings: The Power of Inclusion, Boundary Setting, and Navigating Change and Embracing the New Normal​

2 New On-Demand Webinars coming soon:​ Creative and Critical Thinking​, Problem Solving and Decision Making

Dave commended MAT for adapting to COVID by addressing new way to do work including increasing online offerings and new topics to address issues people are facing. Encourages all the people on the call and their staff to participate in MAT offerings.

Charge from AFWA to all committees to work on/ discuss Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. MAT and by extension the LPD committee have been out in front of that.

**MAT’s The Power of Inclusion – Bettina report**  
Started developing/ working on DEI back in October 2020. Most of the state agencies who filled out the LPD survey identified DEI issues as important to their agency. National Faculty members worked on the development of the webinar series, got feedback from the Diversity committee, tweaked content and launched with North Carolina. 28 participants in NC – wanted all in one week – not the original, intended schedule. Invited 2 members of WCRC to share feedback. They agreed to minimize number of participants to 16 to better facilitate this topic. Also, in agreement that 4 webinars in one week is too much for facilitators and for participants to focus on homework given to implement practices. Instead do 2 one week and 2 the following for more time to reflect. Amount of prework is not too much. Most of the content is based on the book *Inclusify* by Dr. Stefanie Johnson who worked with Michelle Doerr on development and is letting us use her tools and assessments. Focusing primarily on inclusion since DEI is so broad. Follow ups with participants of the NC pilot are planned to see what’s working, what isn’t working, what can we improve and use that data/feedback to create a toolkit. Planning for developing content focused on diversity in 2022 and equity and justice in 2023. The Power of Inclusion will be ready for wide release in April. It is more rich/robust to focus on individual agencies, so MAT is asking states to reach out for that. There are some states that don’t participate on an agency wide level and have regular MAT students so we will try to offer sessions nationwide for those individuals. Dave agrees one bite at a time is good approach. Ann Forstchen heard good comments from NC about the MAT delivery. Wants to know if we worked with Diversity Joint Venture and feels it should be tailored to conservation organizations. Bettina replies folks who developed this webinar series have background in conservation and this offering focuses on being vulnerable and peeling back layers to see how an individual is part of the system. MAT has seasoned facilitators trained in case-in-point to be able to creates holding environment. NC pilot was focused on upper level managers. Kelly recommends we ask David Buggs about overlap with DJV.

**LPD Survey – Bettina Report**  
MAT completed survey in early 2020 and shared results at North American meeting in 2020. LPD asked for MAT to develop a strategy based on the results to share at Sept 2020 AFWA meeting. When pandemic started the results were put to the side because of the shift in MAT’s work to increase online offerings during pandemic. Survey put on hold until Elena and Kelly came aboard. Looking at results now recognizing DEI is a priority and potentially offering regional NCLI-like AL offerings later this year. Discussion on resurveying to include all AFWA member agencies and assess changes since COVID. Motion to have discussion about the committee endorsing MAT to develop and deliver another survey with updated needs and services and open for amended motion, Charlie Sperry, Lynn Quattro seconded. Dave clarifies if the survey should include all AFWA members and be structured to get more information about training they need now following COVID. Charlie Sperry thought original survey was invaluable and recognizes things may have changed since COVID – thinks if we do this again be thoughtful about what we are looking for and be very targeted/specific. Can we provide quality training virtually? He has observed virtual platforms have helped with inclusion. Charlie says some questions could be informative and we should be purposeful to have value added and not just repeat of first survey. Dave thinks the committee already decided to move forward with sending survey to non-state AFWA members. Changing some questions makes sense to see how we train people in this new environment. Creates great opportunity to move forward DEI that was not included in first survey. What do members need to move forward these ideas on DEI? Ann F encourages making a bigger effort to get more states to respond.

**Action Item:** Elena and/or Dave reach out to Ron to ask AFWA to encourage every state agency to find someone to sit on the LPD committee. Bettina is concerned directors don’t know how to get someone appointed to a committee.

Dave moves to vote. Motion to have MAT develop new survey for all AFWA members – all in support. Committee members will be sent a copy of the survey before MAT sends it out.

**Accelerating Reasoning and Judgment Tools – Kelly report out**

**Purpose for development of these tools:**

* Hasten the development of early and mid-career fish and wildlife professionals​
* Focus on reasoning and judgment (essential for good decision making)​
* More than just staff training

**Habits and Practices of Highly Effective ​Fish & Wildlife Professionals​:**

* Being critically inquisitive and continuously learning​
* Applying multi-level, integrated systems thinking​
* Exercising self-discipline​
* Taking a balanced approach​
* Being conscious of interactions with others

**Assessment Tools​ Available:**

* Individual Self-Assessment Tool​
* Multi-Perspective Assessment Tool​
* Context-Specific Assessment Tool​
* Team Self-Assessment Tool

**Individual Professional Development Plans​:**

* Habit-oriented approach​
* Task-oriented approach

Research focused on successful and highly effective fish and wildlife agency professionals. Distilled down their habits and practices, developed assessment tools, created guidance on building professional development plan on the data from assessments. MAT website has a recording of the webinar held to introduce the tools and instruct on their usage and benefits.

Dave asked if MAT has considered allowing data to be input online for anonymity of individuals giving feedback on a colleague? Kelly answered they looked at different modes to allow that, but none seemed to accomplish what they wanted it to and will check into it further.

Charlie Sperry asking if the data from the assessments could be used in other ways. Kelly shared there is a User’s guide available and tools can be diy. Dave asked if MAT cross walked these through existing training or new module for those trainings. Kelly explains as MAT walks users through a development plan we have recommendations on our training they can use. We will continue to formalize this practice and point to people to resources.

**NCLI update – Report by Amanda, Elena, and Gina**

Cohort 14 (Amanda) – Second residency was held virtually over 3 days in September 2020. Hugh O’Doherty and Jill Hufnagel returned as core faculty. Residency was well received and largely thought to be successful. NCLI Board has approved holding an in-person function for C14 when it is safe to do so. MAT/NCLI staff already working with some C14 members on the planning stages of that event.

Timeframe for C15 (Elena) – There is an NCLI board meeting in April. We do have a contingency plan if residency cannot be in person. Considerations on whether fellows will be allowed to travel and feel comfortable traveling this fall? Staff feels comfortable and prepared to make decision.

NCLI Alumni Conference (Gina) – Gina, Kelly, and over 20 alumni have been planning this conference - a 3-day virtual event. The title is Leadership in Times of Change: The Power of Connection, The Value of Diversity, and The Importance of Resiliency. Presenters include Jill and Hugh with the Adaptive Leadership refresh and wrap-up, Nick Petrie on Resiliency, Andrew Williams on Cultivating Purposeful Teams, Tom Kalous on Managing Emotional and Psychological Resistance, and Mo Sook Park with a deeper dive into Immunity to Change. There are also 4 alumni led sessions planned. There will be coaches for reflection groups to do deeper dive into the content. Planning for 100 participants which is the goal, but there will not be a cap on attendance because we don’t want to turn anyone away. Registration opening at end of March and cost is $150. Contact Gina or Kelly if there is a barrier for you to attend due to cost.

**Adaptive Leadership Working Group – Report by Ann Forstchen**  
Group met yesterday with about 30 people in attendance. Significant work has been happening in the background with multiple people involved in the NJ program and NC program. Will hear from Ali Duvall about the western program. One question that was raised in the working group meeting was “is this working group still needed”? Strong support voiced for needing the working group and the need for it to be focused. Discussion about developing a community of practice. Ann F and Charlie S have been discussing the adaptive challenge to get alumni together and work towards common purpose and opportunities for increased collaboration. Charlie recognizes the thirst for AL and there is more identified need than the current capacity can meet. One theme is people have been exposed to some form of leadership development and thirst for community of practice to refresh skills, troubleshoot, dialogue, training. Will workgroup try to meet original charge as well as meet the need for a community of practice or choose one of those? Alumni conference seems to be creating space for practitioners and space for alumni to interact. Desire for more opportunities like that. Would this be supplementary to MAT or provide different service? Takes lot of work getting an AL program off the ground. Ann asks for suggestions on what to do with working group. Dave recommends the group think about helping states with a framework(s) for a program so states don’t have to start from scratch. Working group or MAT could offer guidance on that. Identify shared a purpose. Ann - group could dig into why people are not using tools developed for them. Bettina shares MAT has taken our 4-week online AL course and added webinars for case consultations to that to create a hybrid program. Could the AL working group partner with NCLI alumni to get them working with MAT in these courses? Dave recommends asking NCLI alumni to promote MAT trainings and services in their agencies. Might be a charge to include in the alumni conference a call to action for alumni to elevate MAT in their agencies.

**Updates on other leadership programs – Report by Ali Duvall and Dave Golden**  
Western regional AL program – Todd Larson with WY, Ann F from FL, and Charlie from MT are very active in developing this program. Decision made by WAFWA in Jan 2020 they were not ready to be administrator then COVID hit and work stopped. Brian Nesvick from WY reached out to Ali and wanted to begin work on it again. IWJV will provide oversight to program. Others involved include a technical team, Alison Duncan and Jimmy Fox, The Wildlife Fund fiscal agent. Working on the operational structure on how to create program and deliver it and thinking about what the needs are. Seen as complementary program – will continue to support and send people to NCLI. Just need additional programming. Emphasis on western challenges. Goal to launch program this year with virtual program. Charlie Sperry - we have discretion to design something unique which will include AL putting western flavor on the new program and possibly add in reasoning and judgment. Don’t view it as competition with NCLI.

Ali encourages synergize and focus on connections and relationships.

**Action Item:** Dave recommends Gina discuss with Ann, Charlie, Ali, and others before the alumni conference.

Dave update on NE program – COVID stalled AL program for NE. Sounds like things are on hold in NC as well.

MAT is talking about developing and delivering regional AL programs.

Dave shared worked with NCLI board of directors about regional NCLI. Was previously decided by board to focus on alumni engagement and if that changes, he is happy to be included in those conversations.

Meeting adjourned.