36th Natural Areas Conference
"Living on the Edge: Why Natural Areas Matter"
Vancouver, WA, USA
September 15-18, 2009

Workshops, Symposia and Special Sessions

(As of August 29, 2009)

Pre-Conference Sessions

Federal Programs Roundtable
This session provides federal natural area managers and other interested participants with the opportunity for discussion and networking. This year's roundtable will highlight the recently completed "*Interagency Strategy for the Pacific Northwest Natural Areas Network"* (provided in your registration package). The discussion will focus on how individuals and agencies can help turn existing collections of natural areas managed under various jurisdictions into "natural area networks" that better address contemporary management and conservation issues than might occur by managing them on a site-by-site or agency-by-agency basis. Five themes will be emphasized -- inventory and designation, management, research, monitoring and data management, and education and communication. Other topics of importance to participants may also be discussed.

Facilitators: *Steve Shelly, NAA Board Member and Regional Botanist/Research Natural Areas Coordinator, U.S. Forest Service; and Todd M. Wilson, Wildlife Biologist/Research Natural Areas Coordinator, U.S. Forest Service.*

State Programs Roundtable
The State Natural Area Programs Roundtable brings together state natural area administrators who work in an array of urban and rural settings to conserve and restore biodiversity. Recognizing that each state's program is unique, roundtable participants see the benefit of an interactive forum for sharing successes, learning to survive challenging situations and bringing new suggestions to colleagues back home. Every state program represented at the Natural Areas Conference is invited to participate in the verbal "Roll Call of the States" during this roundtable session. This year we'll also discuss program development activities and public outreach. Bring your examples of "strategic planning" documents or general promotional items your program has created (including web pages).

Facilitators: *Curt Pavola is the Natural Areas Program Manager with the Washington Department of Natural Resources; and Pete Colverson is an environmental communications specialist with Pandion Systems, Gainesville, Florida.*

ArcPad/GPScorrect/GPS Analyst workshop
Jim Lahm

ArcPad is software for mobile GIS and field mapping applications using handheld and mobile devices. ArcPad provides field-based personnel with the ability to capture, analyze and display geographic information, without the use of costly and outdated paper map books and data sheets. This workshop will cover the fundamentals of GIS and all aspects of a data collection project with ArcPad, including building and optimizing a geodatabase, using ArcGIS tools for AcPad, using the Trimble GPScorrect extension for differentially correcting GPS positions, data collectioin with GPS and processing data with GPS Analyst software.

Jim Lahm is an ESRI Authorized ArcPad Instructor from Electronic Data Solutions of Portland, OR.

Conference Symposia and Workshops

Track #1 - Species and Community Conservation

Pollinators in Natural Areas: A Primer on Habitat Management
Scott Hoffman Black

Pollinators are essential to our environment. Animal pollination, which is mostly done by insects, is necessary for nearly 75 percent of the world's flowering plants. This includes more than two-thirds of the world's crop species, whose fruits and seeds provide over 30 percent of the foods and beverages that we consume. Native pollinators are also essential for the health of wild areas. Fruits and seeds derived from insect pollination are a major part of the diet of approximately 25 percent of birds, and of mammals ranging from red-backed voles to grizzly bears.

Despite the recognized importance of pollination services there is a growing body of evidence that suggests pollinators are at risk. Causes of declines are difficult to pinpoint, but loss of floral diversity and habitat due to increasing urbanization, expansion of intensive agriculture, invasive plants, widespread use of pesticides, climate change and disease and parasites have all had a negative impact on pollinator populations.

This presentation provides a summary of how land and wildlife managers can account for the habitat needs of pollinators and provides a series of recommendations for land managers on how tools such as fire, grazing, mowing, and herbicides can be adjusted to limit the impact on pollinators.

Scott Hoffman Black is Executive Director of the Xerces Society, the international organization dedicated to protecting biological diversity through invertebrate conservation. He is an, ecologist and entomologist.

All Things Considered: Conservation Action Plans

Kara Nelson

Over the past 15 years, The Nature Conservancy has developed an integrated process for planning, implementing, and measuring conservation success for its conservation projects. This process is called the “Conservation Action Planning (CAP)” process. The CAP process guides project teams to identify effective conservation strategies. It provides an objective, consistent and transparent accounting of conservation actions and the intended and actual outcomes of conservation projects. It enables project staff to responsively adapt their actions to improve strategy effectiveness and achieve greater conservation impact.

Kara Nelson is a conservation planner with the Washington Field Office of The Nature Conservancy in Seattle, Washington.

Track #2 – Community Involvement and Education

Fostering a Passion for Nature

Part One—Reclaiming Our Special Places
Robert Michael Pyle

Everyone at this conference can likely trace his or her conservation ethic back to particular encounters in the out of doors. In his influential book *Last Child in the Woods*, Richard Louv has pointed out that such encounters are growing rare in our culture. The Children & Nature Network, Green Heart, and many “No Child Left Inside” initiatives have arisen to counter this trend. In this interactive workshop, Pyle will lead you back to your own place of natural initiation. We’ll discuss the traits such special spots share, why and how their loss can affect the culture, and how we as conservationists can meet our own goals for natural areas while resisting what Louv has called “Nature Deficit Disorder.” Bring pencil and paper, an open mind, and your unguarded memory.

Part Two-- Creating Cultural Connections Between Communities and the Natural World
Eli Sterling

Understanding that the passionate advancement of natural lands protection is steeled by personal experiences in the out of doors, this session explores the perspective that unless entire communities likewise have a similar social identity of personal connection to nature, natural lands protection will be compromised by competing values and public demands. The challenge, then, is not just about bringing the community to the remaining natural lands and protected areas. It is likewise about bringing the lands into the cultural identity of the community. Beginning with a personal, experiential exercise involving a pair of stones (newly found or previously held in one's possession...bring two stones from lands you love!), we will focus on uniting cultural identity with the natural environment, then explore specific challenges offered by workshop participants.

Robert Michael Pyle, Ph.D. is a noted naturalist and biologist, author of several books and founder of the Xerces Society.

Eli Sterling is the director of Earthbound Productions in Olympia, WA, a community non-profit organization advancing effective environmental action and education through creative cultural programs and civic partnerships.

The Green Seattle Partnership - A Success Story in Urban Forest Restoration and Sustainability
Mark Mead

The Green Seattle Partnership is a citizen-driven program that was established in 2005 to battle the declined tree health and invasive species found in over 70 percent of Seattle's 2,500 acres of forested parklands. In the face of the 2009 economic crisis, the Green Seattle Partnership (GSP) is on track to add 100 “new” acres to 300 acres already in forest restoration, maintaining an annual budget of $2.3 million. This workshop provides a proven model, the Urban Forest Sustainability Model, for protecting and restoring urban forests by simultaneously addressing three essential elements; developing and retaining community partnerships, creating technologies and best management practices that inform restoration efforts and the development of sustainable long term financial and management infrastructure. This talk will explore how leading-edge restoration science, community activism and long-term vision are translating into executive support, increased budgets and the integration of urban forestry issues across the city. This program was built to be applicable in all cities and has already been adopted by five municipalities in the region.

Mark C. Mead is a certified arborist and the Senior Urban Forester for the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation.

Landscope America/Landscope Washington: Sharing Priorities, Building Partnerships
John Gamon

LandScope America (www.landscope.org), a new online resource for the land-protection community and the public, is a collaborative project of NatureServe, National Geographic Society, and many state and local partners. Its goal is to inspire and inform conservation action across the United States. LandScope America can enhance partnerships at all levels by helping organizations focus conservation action around shared priorities, learn about each other’s priorities and projects, and promote successes to the public. In addition, LandScope America provides excellent resources for natural resource managers, such as a state of the art map viewer with geotagged photos, videos, case studies and analyses and a platform for viewing and analyzing spatial data. The Washington Natural Heritage Program is one of five chosen nationally to help develop the pilot website.

John Gamon is Program Manager of the Washington Natural Heritage Program.

Track #3 - Conservation at a Landscape Level

Ecological Integrity Measures as a Tool for Conservation Planning and Real World Application
Rex Crawford, Joe Rocchio, Mary Anne Thiesing, Janet Sutter, Ginna Correa

This session will explore the utility of using multi-scale assessments of ecological integrity to inform conservation and management objectives. Presentations will provide a variety of examples of using ecological integrity measures as a basis for informing management, restoration, and conservation of upland and wetland ecological systems. A panel discussion will follow the presentations. The goal of this symposium is to share and explore ideas of how natural area managers and scientists could more effectively and efficiently set priorities for conservation, benchmarks for restoration monitoring, and assessing management success using measures of ecological integrity.

Rex Crawford, PhD and Joe Rocchio are ecologists with the Washington Natural Heritage Program. Mary Anne Thiesing, PhD. is a senior wetlands ecologist with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Seattle, Washington. Janet Sutter and Ginna Correa are with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Cooperative Conservation: Developing Effective Networks of Conservation Partners
Hannah Anderson

Great emphasis has been placed on achieving results through cooperation and partnerships. Nowhere is this more evident than with those facing issues related to natural resources, such as recovery of rare species and managing their habitat. Natural systems do not adhere to human concepts of political boundaries like county borders or agency jurisdictions. A paradigm shift has occurred in which entities have recognized this truth and moved from essentially working in isolation to working together. Many states have identified the need to cooperate in their Wildlife Action Plans; there is even an executive order from the office of the President directing federal agencies to cooperate. But how is cooperation attainted? This 3-hour workshop will outline a simple and useful framework for designing your program or project to achieve results through cooperation. Specific techniques for bringing people together, finding common ground, and affecting momentum will be presented. Framing your program around the cooperative model and using these basic tools, will enhance your ability to move your conservation work forward.

Hannah Anderson is the Rare Species Project Manager of The Nature Conservancy's South Sound Program in Olympia, Washington.

Track #4 – Climatic Factors

Climate Change – A Hot Topic in Natural Areas Management
Patty Glick, Jessica Halofsky, Geoff Hammerson, Jeremy Littell, Mark Quinn, Karen Reagan

Climate change is always on everyone's mind, but what does it mean for natural area management? This symposium will include some of the latest research and thinking about the potential impacts on natural systems we'll be facing in the (near?) future. Hear about the trends being tracked on a local, regional and global scale. Learn what makes a species more vulnerable or resistant to the changes of an altered climate. Discover the anticipated effect be on forested systems and the species dependent on them. This session is designed to allow for interaction with participants, hearing from some of the best researchers and thinkers in the field and providing time for discussion of what the implications might be for the habitats and ecosystems we manage.

Patty Glick is a Senior Global Warming Specialist with the National Wildlife Federation, Seattle, WA. Jessica Halofsky is a PhD candidate in the Forest Science Department at Oregon State University. Geoffrey Hammerson is a research zoologist with NatureServe. Jeremy Littell, PhD., is a research scientist at the University of Washington. Mark Quinn serves as a board member for the Washington Wildlife Federation, the state affiliate for the National Wildlife Federation. Karen Reagan is a PhD candidate and researcher at the University of Washington.

Track #5 - Habitat and Ecosystem Restoration

Seeds of Success: Creating Restoration Solutions through a National Native Seed Collection Program
Mary K. Byrne

Climate change means that coordinated native seed banking efforts are going to become increasingly important for maintaining and restoring resilient vegetation communities that provide the foundation for wildlife habitat, and that are ultimately essential to the ecological services that humans depend on. Wildland seed collection programs, such as Seeds of Success (SOS), are connecting organizations around the country to collect and preserve plant diversity before it is lost. This work is creating a vital seed bank for native plant materials development, research, and habitat restoration that your organization can contribute to and benefit from.

In need of native plants for your restoration projects? Concerned about the impacts of climate change on the habitats you manage? If so, please join us for a one day workshop on Seeds of Success. Find out the many ways you and your organization or agency can get involved and benefit from this program while working to safeguard native plant genetic diversity for the future.

SOS is the national native seed collection program, under the umbrella of the National Native Plant Materials Development Program, led by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). This partnership includes many federal agencies and hundreds of non-federal organization. SOS' mission is to collect wildland native seed for the development of genetically appropriate native plant materials for landscape level restoration.

The afternoon portion of this session is a field trip.

Mary K. Byrne is the National Collection Curator for the Seeds of Success Program, Bureau of Land Management.

Track #6 – Current Research and Program Development

Using Social Media for Natural Areas
Ash Shepherd

There is a lot of excitement around the topic of social media these days. For these tools to be effective you must understand their benefits as well as their practical implications. This session will look at the definition and context for what social media is, explore how social media can be used to support your offline conservation activities and consider what's needed to make informed decisions about using social media for your organization.

Ash Shepherd is a technology consultant with TACS &N Power Oregon in Portland, OR

State Program Special Session - Measuring the Benefits from your Work
Pete Colverson

Join us for a discussion about the methods each state program might utilize in measuring the effectiveness of their conservation activities. Topics will include: Methods of measuring. What's available in the performance measurement toolbox? Who's your audience? Using the right tools to amplify your key messages

Pete Colverson is a communication specialist with Pandion Systems in Gainseville Florida

Interagency Strategy for the Pacific Northwest Natural Areas Network
Todd M. Wilson

The Pacific Northwest Interagency Natural Areas Committee has promoted the establishment and management of natural areas in Oregon and Washington for more than 30 years. This growing collection of sites is now unmatched in its diversity and representation of both common and unique ecosystems found throughout the region. Visions, goals and actions have been identified that can help transform these natural areas into a resilient network that can meet a growing number of challenges including managing for ecological processes over the long term, responding appropriately to climate change and invasive species, protecting the ecological integrity of sites as human use increases, promoting research and educational activities, and communicating the importance of wildlands to a public that is growing apart from the natural world. A natural areas network can play a pivotal role in developing regional and global approaches to conservation that meet diverse human and ecological needs.

Todd M. Wilson is a wildlife biologist and Research Natural Areas Coordinator with the Pacific Northwest Research Station, U.S. Forest Service, Portland, Oregon.

Track #7 Invasive Species

Developing Herbicide-Based Strategies to Manage Grasslands while Minimizing Effects on Non-Target Species
Cheryl B. Schultz

Rapid spread of invasive plants poses a significant challenge for managing Oregon and Washington prairies, as well as grasslands across North America. Managers are turning to herbicides as a promising tool to reduce challenging invasive species —yet effects on non-target species in the grasslands, especially insects, are poorly documented. Due to the immediacy of the need, managers often use a trial-and-error approach, with little communication with managers in nearby areas. There is a vital need for communication across regional natural areas so that managers can learn from each other.

This discussion will have two parts. First, we will discuss alternative herbicide strategies to manage grasslands across North America and observations of non-target effects. Second, we will break up by region to discuss specific strategies in the region and to facilitate discussion amongst local scientists and managers.

Cheryl B. Schultz is an assistant professor at Washington State University Vancouver and is a member of Washington's Natural Heritage Advisory Council.

Aquatic Invasives
Cort Anderson and John Wood

Invasive aquatic species are a growing problem, nationally, and in the Pacific Northwest. In order to prevent or slow the spread of invasive species, detection and monitoring methods that reliably identify and detect aquatic invasives need to be developed, and these methods need to be cost-effective and broadly available. This workshop will review and critique current methodology for detection and identification of aquatic invasive species, with special attention to molecular methods currently in use or in development. DNA-based methods for species identification and detection have great utility, but there is also potential for inappropriate use of this technology, and some confusion about how this technology should best be deployed. This workshop will explore the potential uses and limits of DNA-based detection methods, potential pitfalls, and develop a summary document that will assist land managers and agency officials charged with managing aquatic invasives in making best use of this technology.

Cort Anderson, PhD., is the research assistant professor and manager, UI Laboratory for Conservation and Ecological Genetics, College of Natural Resources, University of Idaho. John Wood, PhD. is a researcher with Pisces Molecular, LLC, Boulder, Colorado.