

Minutes for Southwest PARC Conference Call – June 7, 2006

A total of ___ people joined the call (see attached list of participants and their contact info). We were very pleased to get such a good turnout and we are poised to move forward with vitalization of SW PARC, including a first-ever annual meeting in 2007. Due to a recent flurry of activity in PARC, both in other regions and nationwide, progress in SW PARC has been slow, but we now plan to have monthly conference calls and likely more frequent communications with those involved in planning the 2007 meetings.

The call on June 7, 2006 started at 1030 PDT and lasted for about 1.5 hours. We started by having everyone introduce themselves and then Matt Goode thanked the participants and turned the floor over to Priya Nanjappa-Mitchell (States Coordinator) and Ernie Garcia (Federal Agencies Coordinator) who provided synopses of PARC at the national level, and a brief history and information on progress made at the regional level (Southeast, Northeast, Midwest, and Northwest).

Matt Goode, SW PARC Senior Co-Chair, followed with a brief history of SW PARC, mentioning that an initial meeting was held in Tucson back in 2002, which included representatives from OK, TX, NM, AZ, NV and UT (CA and CO were not represented). The minutes for this inaugural meeting can be found on the PARC website (www.parcplace.org) under the SW region link. Although substantial progress has been made in AZ PARC, and a few other states have had initial meetings (CA and CO), SW PARC has not been active at the regional level.

Craig Ivanyi, SW PARC Jr. Co-Chair, gave an inspired soliloquy on why he decided to become active in SW PARC, giving his views on the importance of herp conservation and the critical role that PARC will play if we all do what we can to make it happen.

Jeff Holmes, SE PARC Chair, was kind enough to join the call to give participants an idea of the accomplishments that have been made in the SE region, the most active region of PARC to date, and somewhat of a role model for SW PARC as we strive to get up to speed with other regions. Jeff talked about the most recent SE PARC regional meeting, which was very well attended and included some great speakers and lots of discussion on regional priorities for herp conservation.

Bruce Taubert, National PARC Co-Chair, also joined the call and gave the group his perspective on PARC as one of the co-founders of the organization. We are lucky to have Bruce located in the region (Arizona Game and Fish), because he has been instrumental in establishing PARC as an important player in herp conservation.

After about 20-25 minutes of background information and introductions. We called on participants for their input. The first topic that came up for discussion was where to hold the regional meeting. Polly Conrad mentioned the DAPTF meeting in Las Vegas, January 11-12, 2007. Holding a meeting in conjunction with DAPTF would ensure that a number of people would attend and would reduce costs and ameliorate travel restrictions. Esther Nelson said that holding the meeting at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum in

Tucson would be good for Forest Service folks. Mark Howery and Mike Sredl both mentioned decreasing budgets and travel restrictions on state agency employees and this is also true to federal agency employees as well. Erin Muths said that it was more important what happened at the meeting than where it was located. Ernie Garcia said that, based on his experience attending several PARC meetings, having a stand-alone event would be the most effective, so participants could give it their full attention. Larry Jones said that Arizona would be a good spot if the meeting was held during the field season, because it is a great place to go herping. Priya mentioned that she thought the most important consideration was that it be held at a cheap venue. Andy Holycross volunteered to look into holding the meeting at Arizona State University in Tempe, which has all the facilities and is centrally located and easily accessible. Phil Rosen added that Arizona might be good, because so much interest has already been generated in AZ PARC (two meetings totaling approximately 140 participants) and we could capitalize on this prior activity.

It was decided to form a meeting planning committee for which the following people volunteered:

Larry Jones
Kerry Schlick
Andy Holycross
Frank Toupial
Esther Nelson
Marty Teugel
Cristina Jones

We will strive to have additional conference calls and discussions with the planning committee in the near future. Meeting plans will be shared with the larger group and suggestions will be solicited as we progress towards the meeting date.

Tom Giermankowski talked about developing a forum for discussing SW PARC, suggesting a listserv and/or website. It was mentioned that there is a national website, but there was little further discussion on this issue, although it is obviously an important consideration that will be discussed further.

Priya told the group about the upcoming Joint Meeting of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists (July 12-18), where PARC will have a separate room reserved for conferees to view posters and other materials, and talk with volunteers about PARC. She also mentioned "sublistserves" for regions. Matt asked participants to start putting together lists of people in your states, so we will have an up-to-date contact list that can be used when inviting people to the meeting in 2007 and to participate in conference calls leading up to the meeting. We all need to be thinking of who to get involved in our respective states to make for a well-represented region.

There was some limited discussion of Habitat Management Guidelines. Although early efforts in the region produced a draft HMG, the format of HMGs nationally has changed

and the SE region will be the first to publish a guide that will be used as a national template. The SW HMG will need to undergo considerable revision, but we should be able to use much of what has already been written, including photographs. The original SW HMG only included the arid desert regions of the far Southwest, so considerable effort and expertise will be required to expand the guide to cover the entire SW region of PARC.

Plans are currently underway to schedule the next conference call, so you will be receiving the details of that call in the next few weeks. In the meantime, please let Matt or Craig know if you would like us to invite other people from your state to join us in the call.

Thanks again and we look forward to keeping the ball rolling on SW PARC in the near future!