

Notes: Northwest Environmental Data-network Steering Committee and PNAMP Data Management Work Group Meeting

Time: 2006-12-06 from 9:00 to 4:00

Location: Conference Room: Northwest Power and Conservation Council
851 S.W. Sixth Avenue, Suite 1100
Portland, Oregon 97204

NED AGENDA ITEMS

Present: Bruce Schmidt (StreamNet), Tom Pansky (BPA), Peter Paquet (NPCC), Tom O'Neil (NWHI), Phil Roger (CRITFC), Tom Iverson (CBFWF), Michael Beaty (USBR), Curtis Cude (ODEQ), Stewart Toshach (NED). On Phone: John Piccininni (BPA), Michael Newsom (USBR), Jen Bayer (USGS), Jim Geiselman (BPA), Joy Paulus (Wa IAC), John Piccininni (BPA). Jimmy Kagan (Oregon Natural Heritage Information Center) and John Harrison (NPCC) joined the meeting for the afternoon work session.

Posting NED products to the NED web site. The NED web site has been updated with a slightly revised look. Suggestions for future changes included setting up an archive space, linking the Portal directly to the Portal site, making it easier to find documents that are in preparation, posting a calendar (at least of meeting dates or copying the calendar/format used by CBFWF), adding a search capability, and adding older meeting records that are not already posted to the site. Stewart and Peter Paquet will discuss with Eric Schrepel who maintains the NED web site and develop some alternatives.

Report on PNW-RGIC meeting, 2006-11-14. At the PNW-RGIC meeting there was a suggestion for a combined NED/PNAMP/PNW-RGIC 2007 workshop – with a focus on engaging executives for a joint presentation from NED/PNAMP/PNW-RGIC with a decision on direction.

Comments included the following. The agenda/scope for the 2007 workshop has not been decided, so would the proposed executive meeting replace the workshop audience previously used? Coordinating roles/functions is workable but it may be more difficult to convene a meeting to arrange joint funding – this could require a follow up meeting. Is it necessary to involve executive at all, at this time – would it not be more productive to bring executive together to decide on alternative arrangements to the Columbia River Basin Data Center Proposal? Since the NED MOU expires in December 2007 there is also an opportunity to discuss what follow-up agreements are needed. It is more important to focus on completing tasks we have begun and identify successes – this is more likely to influence regional executive towards a new MOU. There is a need for clear statements about what NED, PNAMP and PNW-RGIC do - so that others have an understanding of the differences. How do they complement each other?

There was agreement that as a first step NED/PNAMP/PNW-RGIC coordinators would convene a meeting or meetings, together with participation from their respective Steering Committee membership, as needed, to draft a common statement.

4) NED Proposal and Work Plan for 2007. The 2007 NED work plan had been summarized to a tabular format and posted to the NED web site (see the NED agenda for December 6, 2006). The Council will consider the NED work plan along with a macro-look at regional information management issues at the January or February Council meeting after micro-level presentations (including proposed StreamNet data priorities) in December. The challenge is to show how the parts fit together in a coherent design and support regional data needs. The focus for NED is on coordination of the various elements – pulling it together and focusing on broader data discovery, and sharing issues. It was agreed that NED SC members would make their comments available to Stewart by COB on December 20th. If possible a wiki would be set up to manage comments with a link from the NED web site to the wiki. A conference call would also be scheduled for Thursday December 21st from 8-10 to discuss comments. A revised draft would then be completed in time for discussion at the next NED SC meeting on January 3rd, when it would be finalized.

5) Update on StreamNet and NWHI proposals.

StreamNet is focusing on responding to four needs identified during the CBFWA data management meeting: Salmonid population abundance, metadata with the development of a template for tabular data, adding data collection with emphasis on Tribal data and increasing timeliness and efficiency of data management practices. This will mean that some current secondary priorities will drop off the task list. A copy of the proposal can be seen at http://www.nwcouncil.org/news/2006_12/Default.htm - see the Council Agenda for Wednesday December 13th 2006 – “Continuation of Council Meeting Agenda”.

The NWHI is focused on five tasks: continued operation and maintenance for the biodiversity data system, addition of a sub-basin mapping component, coordination of habitat monitoring and evaluation, development of a GIS locator (ELVIS), and provision of some GIS services for the CBFWA State of the Resource Report.

6) Progress with NED Portal. In November, Tom Pansky attended a State of Oregon GIS day held at the Oregon State Capitol and demonstrated the NED Portal.

The Portal has been upgraded with the latest software from ESRI which has a slightly different front end. The main Portal issues are how and when to launch it and actions needed to populate and support it. More information about the Portal is in the afternoon work session notes –below.

7) Update on Metadata Training arrangements with USGS. There has been a response from about 20 potential participants for the USGS sponsored metadata training. The training will be convened in Portland at the BPA Computer Training Laboratory in May 2007. Tom Pansky has been helping to coordinate logistics, including security permissions to run metadata software on BPA lab computers. Viv Hutchison from the USGS will coordinate the training. Bruce Schmidt

and Phil Roger asked for more information and may have more participants. Stewart will forward the solicitation to them.

8) Other Updates

- Using Wiki to comment on NED document/s. There was some interest in trying again to use a Wiki to gather comments on a NED document. It had worked well for those who had used it in the past but not many had tried it. The major limitation was that other potential reviewers or users were either not familiar with it so needed more experience or they were reluctant to use two different systems to manage information – anything beyond e-mail required another tracking system.
- International Columbia River Basin Center of Knowledge. Peter reported that there was no further progress on this initiative with the Council waiting to hear from the Canadian counterparts about next steps. Peter will update when more information is available.
- OFWIM Conference. Bruce reported that there were many presentations on the use of open source software for GIS applications with many as an alternative to ESRI and also many applications for E-Web hosting and display. Bruce provided a briefing on NED as a part of a presentation entitled “Collaborative Approaches to Monitoring and Data Sharing in the Pacific Northwest” and “The Perils of Portals: Avoiding Pitfalls in Sharing Data via Web Portals”. A link to the workshop materials will be provided when is available.
- FCRPS BiOp data needs. Jim Geiselman identified a need for the development of a data management strategy to meet FCRPS BiOp needs and anticipates meetings to discuss and develop this further. There is a need for a broad data management strategy for the FCRPS BiOp, RM&E and Recovery Planning and identify data management actions that can support these efforts. Existing materials, including the previous FCRPS plan, would be reviewed as a part of the effort and relevant materials would be reused where possible. Jim anticipated needing coordination and facilitation input from both NED and PNAMP.
- Joy Paulus reported that the State of Washington had been successful in applying for an EPA grant to develop an xml schema and node for the exchanging data for geo-processing. A driver for the effort is to lessen the burden for data collection – for example, when data forms require the provision of multiple overlapping geographic references – e.g. township-range, county, state river reach, and etc., and where much of this data could be provide or shared behind the scenes using exchange technology.
- Phil Roger provided a brief update on the hatchery reform data project – the next step is to reconcile a master list of populations with those in the subbasin archives. The task is consistent with the draft NED work plan, with a goal of mapping populations to a new 6th HUC salmonid population data layer. There has also been discussion about what data would be needed for the next round of subbasin planning including discussion about the usefulness of LIDAR data and how to incorporate those huge data sets. Currently there are many different LIDAR consortia, working to develop LIDAR data sets for particular and different purposes.

B. PNAMP DATA MANAGEMENT AGENDA ITEMS

- 1) Report on Protocol Manager Testing from 2007-11-28. Mike Beaty reported on progress made at the November 28th meeting which had good attendance including staff from ISEMP, NED, CRITFC and PNAMP. The current focus is on testing capability of protocol manager for use with different regional data sets. Current testing involves the upper Columbia Protocols, the AFS Fishery Monitoring Protocols. Testing will also be undertaken with PCSRF and PISCES project performance protocols to evaluate functional capability to manage data dictionary components. Next steps will be developed after the user acceptance testing. Next meeting will be at CRITFC on February 1st 2007.
- 2) Update on PNAMP Aquatic Monitoring Inventory and next steps. A first round of data entry to the Inventory has now been completed. There is some interest from other groups about potential collaboration on data reporting and a PNAMP meeting has been scheduled for December 18th from 9-noon to discuss – see PNAMP calendar.
- 3) Update on Data Management Needs for Regional Project Tracking to Support Implementation and Effectiveness Monitoring. Comments closed on Friday December 8th and 2 new substantial comments were received. The current plan is to bring the document back to the PNAMP SC at the end of January for a decision.
- 4) The PNAMP SC has received a comment on the NED Best Practices for Reporting Locational and Time Related Data. The comment concerns the NED recommendation to use the International Standards Organization protocol for reporting date, which is yyyy/mm/dd. The primary authors, Joy Paulus and Stewart Toshach will consider the concern, discuss with the NED SC, develop a recommendation, and provide to PNAMP before the January, 2007 PNAMP SC Meeting.

C. AFTERNOON NED PORTAL WORKSESSION 1:00 through 4:00

- 1) Q&A on NED Portal functionality versus other web applications such as EPA” Waters”. There was a thoughtful discussion on the differences between these applications – both of which are provided over the web. There was consensus that the applications serve different purposes, operate on different platforms and standards, and that EPA Waters is not a substitute system for the NED Portal.
- 2) Decisions on Portal Index/Directory. The group decided to adopt the Portal Index/Directory developed by the State of Oregon with the changes as identified at the last meeting of the NED Data Discovery and Sharing work group. BPA staff was asked to load the current index into the Portal and look at ways to easily expand/collapse categories (with just a ‘mouseover’?) that contain data. Consider adding a BiOp and/or Protocol Manager category or channel. It was noted that the index can easily be modified over time as experience is gained.

3) Draft NED home-page materials. Stewart provided a draft one pager that would pull double duty as a home page and a press release. It was agreed to use the draft as a basis for the home page materials and a press release. John Harrison agreed to help develop press materials from the draft – and asked us to develop a worked example – for the Portal that interested users could explore.

4) Channel Management tasks.

There was a lengthy discussion on Channel Management tasks. The sense of the Steering Committee is that we have made a substantial and valuable investment to get the Portal running, and recommend a concerted effort to populate the Portal. Three distinct types of tasks emerged from the discussion:

- Portal Channel Manager. This task has been described and is included in the [Portal Channels and Data Steward Roles and Responsibilities](#) document. Initial tasks would need to be narrowed from the document. This task can best be described as keeping the Portal contents up and running. The initial goal is for a one year effort with one FTE Portal Channel Manager.
- Portal System Administrator. This task is being defined in a draft document under preparation by Tom Pansky. This activity can be summarized as actions needed to keep the Portal operating system up and running, taking care of security issues and upgrading software and hardware as needed. It is estimated that this task can be completed with an input of less than 0.25 of an FTE.
- Portal Administrator/Developer. This task involves technical portal development and maintenance is partly described in the document Tom is preparing. The task is to ensure that the Portal has a functional and appropriately detailed metadata reporting capability, to make technical changes as necessary to the Portal directory materials and metadata templates, manage metadata, manage users and groups, manage repositories and upload functions. This task will involve less than 0.5 of an FTE. It is possible that Portal development tasks can also be completed by the Portal Channel Manager, if there is the right mix of skills, or alternatively, can be provided with contract staffing.

5) Formal Portal Launch.

We have reached an important milestone. It was agreed that the NED SC would target a launch of the Portal during the Council's January or February meeting which is scheduled to be held in Vancouver, WA, January 16-18, or, alternatively, the February 13-15 meeting in Portland. The immediate task for the Portal Launch is to develop a compelling demonstration. Stewart and Tom will take a first cut at developing a demonstration. The focus of the demonstration would likely be on demonstrating how to locate Salmonid population/abundance/escapement and trend data, and show it in relation to other data, such as projects to recover populations or habitat.

It needed to be made clear, that the Portal by itself will not meet all NED strategic goals, and in particular that it is not intended to provide for automatic integration of disparate tabular data sets.

While this is an important regional goal for NED it is not the purpose of the Portal. The Portal is designed to allow users to discover whether data exists, to find out how to access that data (or be directly routed to it) and to overlay any of the data sets that are already spatially enabled.

6) Collaborative Portal Project with State of Washington.

The State of Washington is interested in working collaboratively with NED, and helping to fund an effort to develop a Natural Resources Information Portal metadata template and style sheet that can be used to automatically harvest data from SWIMTAC and make it available through the NED Portal. The style sheet would need to be ISO and FGDC compliant. A limited amount of technical support from ESRI will be needed for this task. Tom Pansky and Joy Paulus will collaborate on this effort and involve ESRI as needed. A follow up technical discussion is being planned for the January NED Steering Committee meeting.