

NEBWG Business Meeting Minutes 11 January 2012  
Notes by Julie Zeyzus

Tom Kunz Update - Nate Fuller provided an update on Tom Kunz's condition by reading information prepared by Tom's daughter. Tom is currently in Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital in Cambridge, MA.

"Our little corner of the web," [www.nebwg.org](http://www.nebwg.org) - John Chenger discussed the [www.nebwg.org](http://www.nebwg.org) website that he developed.

- Examples of the website's use included a repository for past meeting minutes, notes, abstracts, announcement of upcoming events. The upcoming events section is the only regularly updated portion of the site.
- Some highlights include the Annual Meetings page where information regarding past and future annual meetings can be found; the Listserv page that includes instructions on subscribing and unsubscribing to the Listserv and guidelines for general use of the NEBWG Listserv; the Get Involved page where the NEBWG Committees are listed, including information about the membership list
- John reviewed the technical details of having a website including the commercial web service being used (Fat Cow) and registering a domain name.
- He also discussed the fees involved in each: Fat Cow = \$170 for three years; Domain Name = \$70 for five years; Volunteer time from John to develop/maintain/expand
- Others are welcome to contribute to the website, just contact John.

Membership List - Kristen Watrous provided a brief update on the membership list developed by Marilyn Kitchel (Marilyn was not present to provide the update). Currently 152 members are on the list. If updates are need, see Kristen (or contact Marilyn).

Bat Rehabilitation and WNS - Christina Kocer, USFWS discussed rehabilitation protocols. The protocols were developed to assist states with bat rehabilitation.

- Rehabilitation protocols were recently reviewed in light of WNS and updates to the protocol are needed
- Christina discussed permitting/licensing for wildlife rehabilitators (including federal permits for federal listed T&E species)
- Christina mentioned that a sick bat is not necessarily obvious - signs of WNS can show up a short time after the bat is taken to a rehabilitation facility
- A guidance document is being proposed by the USFWS to provide rehabilitators a background on WNS and provide general rehab guidelines (including quarantining, isolation, and handling of bats; decontamination; record keeping, references, and resources)
- Christina commended rehabilitators on their contribution to WNS research including treatment trials, captive handling and husbandry research, identification of newly affected areas.

White-Nose Syndrome National Plan - Jeremy Coleman, National WNS Coordinator provided information about the National Plan.

- Jeremy reviewed the Organizational Chart of the groups and committees involved in the National Plan
- He also discussed the seven elements to be addressed by the National Plan. Each element will be administered by a working group responsible for the coordination of activities within each element. Anyone can be part of a working group; it is not limited to agency representation. The seven working groups include:

- Communications
- Data and Technical Information Management
- Diagnostics
- Disease Management
- Epidemiological and Ecological Research
- Disease Surveillance
- Conservation and Recovery
- Jeremy also reviewed the Draft Government Agency Expenditures to Address WNS for FY2012. The USFWS was directed to “fund WNS research and response activities at no less than \$4 million...” Funding will be used for the following categories:
  - Internal/Staffing
  - State Support
  - Research
- Jeremy identified pressing tasks to include:
  - Estimate total mortality; Regarding the total mortality estimate, this number is “politically” important. NEBWG should help come up with this number being that the majority of the mortalities are within NEBWG states
  - Assess and understand remaining bat populations post-WNS (Why do we still have a remaining population of bats?)

Caving Advisory Committee: WNS Saturated States. Greg Turner discussed a statement that was devised by the Cave Advisory Committee to address caving in light of WNS.

- Greg addressed the various sections of the statement and wanted feedback from NEBWG members regarding:
  - Do the NEBWG members agree with what the Committee came up with and the overall direction of the statement?
  - Do we agree to post the statement to the NEBWG webpage to obtain feedback?
  - What is the final purpose of the statement?
- Some feedback from NEBWG members included:
  - There is a concern that the statement does not address the main problem: those who cave and ignore warnings and posted signs especially for the caves on private lands
  - A suggestion was made to condense the Statement
  - The question of How would the Statement be enforced? was posed
  - A suggestion was made that federal laws should be in place to make restrictions more uniform
  - Other questions posed: How do we address these issues? Address issues through a Committee as part of the National Plan? How do we implement something nationally and still meet the objectives of the states?
- The statement will be posted on the NEBWG website and additional feedback will be welcome.

Excluding bats from buildings - Kristen Watrous discussed BMPs for bat exclusions.

- Non-lethal exclusions are required or recommended throughout the states
- Exclusions are restricted to non-maternity season (different states have different time periods). The “one-way door” exclusion strategy is recommended throughout the states
- Bat box deployment after exclusion is strongly recommended. Kristen noted that in five studies on bat exclusion, all but one study had favorable reaction to bat box use after exclusion.

BMPs for Wind Development - Rick Reynolds presented the progress of the Wind BMPs Committee.

- A copy of the Draft Wind BMPs was posted to the NEBWG website
- Objectives for the development of the wind BMPs include:
  - o Development of minimum guidelines for siting wind facilities
  - o Develop minimum guidelines for monitoring impacts to bats at wind facilities
  - o Develop minimum guidelines for mitigating impacts to bats
- Rick provided a general overview of the document and encouraged interested members to join the Committee Wednesday evening to discuss content in more detail. The document is in the process of completion.

2014 NASBR, Albany, New York- Emily Davis provided an overview of the location and venue for NASBR in 2014.

- NABR 2014 is supported by many organizations including NEBWG
- More information will be posted at [www.nasbr.org](http://www.nasbr.org)

NEBWG 2013 Update - Michael Fishman is hosting NEBWG, 9-11 January 2013 in New York.

- Michael discussed details of four potential New York cities he researched for the meeting. The cities include: 1. Syracuse; 2. Albany; 3. Newburgh; and 4. Binghamton. He also mentioned that a fifth potential location was recently recommended to him: Niagara Falls. Being a new suggestion he did not have information on Niagara Falls.
- Results from a hand vote of the audience's preference resulted in Syracuse and Albany as finalists
- The results from casting a secret ballot resulted in **Albany** as the winning location

Other business - A group discussion took place about making NEBWG an official organization.

- Since NEBWG has grown substantially over the years, some members believe it is time to take this step
- There are boilerplate charters on-line that can be used as a model for NEBWG's needs.
- Some members' comments on the subject included:
  - o We would need state and federal applications and the federal application has a fee
  - o By becoming a 501c3, we would save money in taxes that would cover filing costs
  - o The midwest and southeast bat working groups have already taken this step
  - o Dues for membership will help with fees
  - o We have grown and need to do this for logistics
- Michael Fishman volunteered to research charters for 501c3 organizations and will update us on his progress via the NEBWG listserv.