

SE Red Fox Symposium - Working Group Notes  
“Needs and Next Steps for Managers”  
January 20, 2010

**List of general needs (in order discussed):**

- MONEY – for equipment, staffing, educational materials and research
- RESEARCH –
  - Site specific projects
  - “Standardized” reporting data protocols (e.g. predator identification, partial vs. complete predation of sea turtle nests)
  - Centralized database and/or linking existing databases such as sea turtle and shorebird volunteers
  - Transparency of data
- MANAGEMENT RESPONSE OPTIONS –
  - Centralized authority such as WRC (currently General Assembly has authority and response is decentralized among counties/municipalities); note that WRC may consider seeking changes in authority in 2011
  - If WRC seeks changes in authority, support for this change is needed
  - Site specific controls are needed
- SPECIFIC RESEARCH PROJECTS –
  - Scientific assessment of predator control activities (long-term)
  - Identify potential researchers (e.g. NCSU) and sites (e.g. NCCR) for projects; utilize existing infrastructure like sea turtle volunteers to collect data; gather additional information and communicate with researchers from other states (e.g. Florida)
  - Tracking to determine ranges and populations (e.g. on Pleasure Island); consider mark-recapture, cameras, PIT tags with stationary receivers, and scent stations (short-term) to extrapolate population numbers
- LOCAL ORDINANCES –
  - Pursue “do not feed wildlife” ordinances at the municipal and possibly state levels (use existing examples from Caswell Beach and Bald Head Island for consistency)
  - Utilize ordinances as education tool with public
  - Note that enforcement is difficult

**List of specific management response needs (in order discussed):**

- Immediate and timely response to problems
- Predictable fox behavior and/or flexibility in management response options
- Website/blog for real-time dissemination of data/information (e.g. early and mid-nesting season)
- Personal stories about red fox encounters (property damage, rabies, scares)
- Masonboro Island needs volunteers and fencing to protect nesting shorebirds and/or direct predator control option
- Communication among volunteers and increased public awareness (e.g. sharing new ideas and flexibility to adjust management options quickly, consider presenting information at annual NC WRC Sea Turtle Permit Holder’s meeting)

- Generalized list of recommended protocols/guidelines that different people have tried and found successful in different situations (“tools in the tool kit”); recognize that each situation may require flexibility and adaptability in response
- Consider adjusting human behaviors (e.g. behavior at nests and sand disturbance, trails)

**SUMMARY – Prioritized List of NEXT STEPS:**

1. Funding
2. Standardized reporting & centralized database
3. Study/monitor fox populations
4. Scientific assessment of predator control activities (long-term monitoring)
5. Centralized administration to reduce complications for managing predation problems
6. Sharing information (website/blog)
7. Consistent local ordinances (e.g. feeding prohibitions)
8. Communication and public awareness
9. Flexibility of response (many “tools in the tool kit”)

**PRELIMINARY WORKING GROUP:**

Hope Sutton, DCM-NCNERR

Matthew Godfrey, WRC

Joanne Harcke, NC Aquarium at Fort Fisher

Colleen Olfenbuttel, WRC

Maureen Dewire, Bald Head Island Conservancy

Katharine Womble, Fort Fisher State Recreation Area

Jean Lynch, Fort Fisher State Recreation Area

Jeff Owen, Fort Fisher State Recreation Area