

Research Funding Framework

Rapid Prototyping Case Study
Structured Decision Making Workshop
July 21-25, 2008
National Conservation Training Center

Background

- Each year, the USFWS Northeast Regional Director selects projects for USGS SSP funding.
- These selections are based on Regional Science Committee recommendations.
- The RSC needs a decision process for:
 - identifying research priorities,
 - soliciting proposals, and
 - selecting projects for funding.

Background

The process will include three steps:

1. Identifying regional SHC-based resource management priorities.
2. Identifying regional research priorities (based on step 1 results) and soliciting appropriate proposals from USGS scientists.
3. Selecting proposals that best meet the solicited research needs and other considerations.

Background

Constraints:

- Funding is limited (~ \$500K available annually, divided between ongoing and new projects)
- Proposals must focus on FWS priority species
- Proposals must address information needs as a component of the SHC framework
- Proposals must have:
 - clearly stated objectives
 - robust design and methods
 - attainable outcomes

Decision Problem

For this week's case study, the RP team is seeking a structured, integrated approach for identifying research priorities and selecting projects for funding (steps 2 and 3), including cataloguing unmet needs. The intent is to develop a prototype framework for these steps. This framework will then be reviewed and refined by the RSC and the RDT.

Decision Structure

- Step 2 – Methods not yet clear. In order to identify the most valuable avenues of research, a framework for deriving research objectives and evaluating them against current management uncertainties is needed.
- Step 3 – General method (multiple-objective decision theory) is clear, but objectives, means of evaluating proposals, and considerations in evaluating trade-offs will need to be developed.

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Rapid Prototyping Team

- Coach: Mike Runge
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- Co-coordinators: Rick Bennett, Mary Parkin
- Team members: Sal Amato, Lamar Gore, Diane Pence, Dave Perkins, Jan Taylor
- Special guest: Mary Ratnaswamy