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CHAPTER VIII.

USE OF NEW INFORMATION TO
ADAPT CONSERVATION ACTIONS
DURING IMPLEMENTATION



Green Salamander, *Aneides aneus*

CONSERVATION ACTIONS FOR THE SWAP WILL BE ADAPTED WHEN NEW INFORMATION ARISES OR CONDITIONS CHANGE, WITH GUIDANCE FROM THE FIFTH ELEMENT.

Using the best available communications technology, the DFW is sharing information with conservation partners and encouraging dialogue about the SWAP.

Experts and conservation partners participated in the SWAP revision process by providing information about wildlife, including SGCN and habitats. In addition, the revision fostered collaboration and information sharing among the conservation community. The 2005 and 2015 plans established an extensive database of contact information for technical experts and conservation partners. This database allows for conservation partnership opportunities and serves as a tool to contact experts throughout Indiana.

The SWAP is intended to create more extensive collaboration and information sharing as new knowledge, tools, and concepts are developed. As new information, changing conditions, or emerging issues arise, the conservation actions will be adapted. The actions will be adapted based on the best science available on emerging threats and opportunities, such as invasive species, emerging diseases, climate change, market forces, and other threats or opportunities that will influence species and habitats in Indiana over the next decade.

The DFW elected to utilize the Roster of Indiana Animals, Insects, and Plants that Are Extirpated, Endangered, Threatened, or Rare (also described as Special Concern) as our list of SGCN for the SWAP. Inclusion of an animal or plant on the roster is determined based on the best current information available. This list is dynamic and adjustments to the list of SGCN may occur as additional data becomes available. This list is generated with the input of multiple species experts from within and outside of the DFW and DNR. These experts form TACs that review relevant information about the abundance and distribution of species of concern and potential concern and the TACs make recommendations to the NRC for inclusion on the Roster of Indiana Animals, Insects, and Plants that Are Extirpated, Endangered, Threatened, or Rare (also described as Special Concern).

Using the best available communications technology, the DFW is sharing information with conservation partners and encouraging dialogue about the SWAP. Through sharing of habitat and species monitoring efforts, participation in professional organizations, and implementation of the SWAP, the DFW will aid in the sharing of significant information to create adaptive management practices based on science. Communication between partners, as the implementation of the SWAP proceeds, will ensure that conservation actions respond appropriately to new information or changes in condition.

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CHAPTER IX.

FUTURE STRATEGY FOR REVISION AND UPDATE



Clubshell, *Pleurobema clava*

ELEMENT SIX OF THE CONGRESSIONAL GUIDANCE DIRECTS THE SWAP BE REVIEWED AT LEAST EVERY TEN YEARS.

The next major revision of the SWAP is scheduled for completion on or before 2025. It is expected to build on the 2015 effort and to benefit from over 20 years of experience gained from the implementation of both the original CWS and the current SWAP.

The CWS established a strong baseline of fish and wildlife resources and conservation actions needed in Indiana. The SWAP is expected to improve usability and implementation throughout the DFW and the conservation community. Development of this revised plan engaged more experts and partners resulting in more trustworthy data. Indiana's SWAP was created with a variety of lenses by providing information for species and habitats at statewide and regional levels. All types of conservation partners should be able to identify how they can fit into the plan to advance conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitats.

Both the CWS and SWAP utilized online surveys to gather information on SGCN and their habitats. In future iterations, this information can be updated and used to replicate this study at regular intervals to track the progress of Indiana's conservation efforts. Comparison of results from each plan will provide the best long-term evaluation of the conservation efforts guided and supported by this congressionally mandated and funded strategic process. While Indiana is making progress on specific conservation actions for species and habitats, the next step for the 2025 plan might be to identify a way to measure large statewide conservation goals and objectives, as well as continuing to work toward assessing habitat quality.

Element seven provides direction to ensure the SWAP provides effective guidance by requiring ongoing coordination with partners in the review, revision, and implementation of the action plan. Indiana has a large number of potential partners in the conservation community to assist in implementing the SWAP. The SWAP Advisory Team, whose members helped to develop the current plan, will continue to be key partners in the implementation and advancement of the SWAP.

The large list of partners found in Appendix U indicates a diversity of conservation organizations with varying geographic, habitat, or wildlife species focus. It is intended that the members of this diverse list will be able to utilize the SWAP, specifically the regional actions so that the conservation community will focus efforts and continue to move fish and wildlife conservation forward in Indiana.

The magnitude of the conservation needs identified in the SWAP highlights that the logical next step is to provide more attention on implementation. This focus will be accomplished through concerted efforts and dedicated staff within DFW to provide more coordination with Indiana's conservation community over the next ten years. Involvement from partners is crucial to making a significant positive change for Indiana's fish and wildlife resources. SWAP coordination provided by the DFW will determine how to engage conservation partners in order to implement and track actions and to build a stronger community focused on relevant conservation needs of the state.

The DFW currently has several different tools to keep partners engaged and communicate the successes and progress implementing the plan. The SWAP website has been used throughout the planning process to keep partners and the public engaged. This site will continue to be a primary platform for official public communication. Additionally, an online collaborative site that has been utilized during the SWAP revision process will allow our Advisory Team and closest partners to communicate and provide input towards specific projects related to the SWAP. The DFW also has had success over the last several years of receiving input directly from the public via an online comment platform called Got Input. All these proven options can continue to be used when engaging the public and partners.

Partner organizations communicate with their members and the public in various ways, such as newsletters, member letters, email, or website updates. All partners will be encouraged to report to their respective audiences on their activities related to SWAP implementation. In order to connect different types of partners to Indiana's SWAP, the DFW is also developing partner strategies for outreach and implementation. These strategies will be used by key DFW staff implementing the SWAP, and our partners' organizations, as we continue to find ways to collaborate more effectively.

Both the DFW and our partners feel strongly that in order for the SWAP to be effective, it will be critical to have a position to coordinate the efforts of the conservation partners to address the threats and actions in the SWAP. As this revised plan is being finalized, the DFW is identifying a position and forming a job description to lead this charge. It is expected this additional support will be the most effective part of the implementation strategy. Ultimately, this will enable the DFW to be more effective at building a strong conservation community that is working together to address the threats to and conservation actions for species and habitats in Indiana.