

## **Memorandum of Understanding between Partners of the Weed Action Coalition of HNG (WAC-HNG)**

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is made and entered into by and between the following Partners: CMLC, TNC, FCNC, NCNHP, NCFS, NCSP, the Town of Lake Lure, the Village of Chimney Rock, Friends of HNG, WNC Alliance, Rumbling Bald Resort, and representative landowners of the gorge. Each group listed will be referred to as a *Partner* elsewhere in this document. This list is not all-inclusive and may change at any time as new Partners are added, or request to be removed.

### **1. Purpose**

This MOU is intended to establish a mutually agreeable cooperative whose purpose is to detect, reduce and control the establishment and spread of invasive exotic plants in HNG as defined by the 94-square mile watershed of the gorge, thereby seeking to maintain and improve the ecological health of the gorge. Management will occur through the organization of participating Partners in WAC-HNG as determined in this document.

### **2. Statement of Mutual Goals, Interests, and Benefits**

- a. The Partners to this MOU mutually agree to work cooperatively in preventing the establishment and spread of invasive exotic plants, and share the following common goals:
  - i. Funding -- Establish sustainable funding methodology for WAC-HNG which also stimulates the economic engine of the area through the ensuing need for services which contribute to the reduction of invasive exotic species in the gorge.
  - ii. Inventory, Restoration and Monitoring -- Determine extent of invasive exotic infestation, and develop operating plan protocols 1) to return habitats to an ecologically healthy state and 2) that establish continued monitoring.
  - iii. Control -- Promote effective, integrated management of priority invasive exotic plants within designated areas as described in the strategic and operating plans.
  - iv. Education & Outreach -- Increase public awareness of both the impacts of invasive exotic plants and the importance of natural resource conservation.
  - v. Manpower -- Establish an effective, sustainable source of volunteer labor for WAC-HNG projects.
- b. The Partners to this MOU shall develop and implement a long-term Invasive Plant Management Strategic Plan, which outlines and describes in greater detail the management goals and objectives of WAC-HNG. Participation in the development of the Invasive Plant Management Strategic Plan will be voluntary although all Partners are encouraged to review and provide comment.
- c. To the extent feasible, each organizational signatory of this MOU will contribute material and staff resources towards the shared goals of WAC-HNG. These staff will be under the direction of their agency or organization, but may cooperate with the execution of the objectives of this MOU.

- d. Signatories of this MOU are not committed to working in all areas identified by the Partnership as priority management sites.
- e. WAC-HNG may cooperate with other landowners, private or public, or other organizations in carrying out the goals and objectives of this Partnership.
- f. Management activities will not commence without the expressed, written approval from the appropriate landowner or land managing agency pursuant to their policies and procedures.

### **3. Responsibilities of the Signers**

#### Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy

- a. Provide correspondence and coordination between participating and potential Partners.
- b. Facilitate planning meetings with participating Partners and distribute meeting agendas and summaries.
- c. Seek additional funding opportunities to sustain partnership as per operating plans.
- d. Organize monitoring activities before and after control efforts.
- e. Recruit volunteers for workdays per WAC-HNG's operating plans.
- f. Assist in training volunteers on the identification of priority plants and control techniques in addition to safety oversight on volunteer workdays.
- g. Contribute tools and equipment on volunteer workdays.
- h. Maintain a current North Carolina Pesticide Applicator License.
- i. Construct a long-term Invasive Plant Management Strategic Plan for review and development by all participating Partners.
- j. Assist in the development of annual operating plans.
- k. Provide documentation of WAC-HNG activities in an annual report that includes relevant text, data, graphics, and maps.

#### North Carolina Forest Service

- a. attend steering committee meetings as a member of WAC-HNG
- b. contribute to development of overall strategic plan and as well as operating plans as a member of a subcommittee in one or more of following areas:
  - i. Outreach
  - ii. Funding
  - iii. Inventory, restoration, and monitoring
  - iv. Control
  - v. Manpower
- j. Provide technical assistance services to private landowners within the focus area. Assistance would include identification of problem species, recommendations for control, potential cost share funding to assist in recommended control activities.
- k. Provide control services to landowners, private or public, on a fee basis.

#### North Carolina Natural Heritage Program

- a. attend steering committee meetings as a member of WAC-HNG
- b. contribute to development of overall strategic plan and as well as operating plans as a member of a subcommittee in one or more of following areas:
  - i. Outreach

- ii. Funding
- iii. Inventory and restoration
- iv. Control
- v. Manpower
- c. provide technical assistance or expertise to the steering committee when called upon.
- d. provide organizational support for control and monitoring of invasives in the form of either manpower, equipment, herbicide or a combination of all.
- e. contribute to inventory of invasives species.
- f. contribute to monitoring for sensitive species as per operating plan.

#### North Carolina State Parks

- a. attend steering committee meetings as a member of WAC-HNG
- b. contribute to development of overall strategic plan and as well as operating plans as a member of a subcommittee in one or more of following areas:
  - i. Outreach
  - ii. Funding
  - iii. Inventory and restoration
  - iv. Control
  - v. Manpower
- c. provide technical assistance or expertise to the steering committee when called upon.
- d. provide organizational support for control and monitoring of invasives in the form of either manpower, equipment, herbicide or a combination of all.
- e. contribute to inventory of invasives species.
- f. contribute to monitoring for sensitive species as per operating plan.
- g. Assist in training volunteers on the identification of priority plants and control techniques.
- h. Help provide safety oversight on volunteer workdays.

#### Town of Lake Lure

- a. attend steering committee meetings as a member of WAC-HNG
- b. contribute to development of overall strategic plan and as well as operating plans as a member of a subcommittee in one or more of following areas:
  - i. Outreach
  - ii. Funding
  - iii. Inventory and restoration
  - iv. Control
  - v. Manpower
- c. provide technical assistance or expertise to the steering committee when called upon.
- d. provide organizational support for control and monitoring of invasives in the form of either manpower, equipment, herbicide or a combination of all.
- e. contribute to inventory of invasives species.
- f. contribute to monitoring for sensitive species as per operating plan.

- g. Assist in training volunteers on the identification of priority plants and control techniques.
- h. Help provide safety oversight on volunteer workdays.
- l. Provide private landowner perspective during development of both strategic and operating plans.

#### Chimney Rock Village

- a. attend steering committee meetings as a member of WAC-HNG
- b. contribute to development of overall strategic plan and as well as operating plans as a member of a subcommittee in one or more of following areas:
  - i. Outreach
  - ii. Funding
  - iii. Inventory and restoration
  - iv. Control
  - v. Manpower

#### The Nature Conservancy

- a. attend steering committee meetings as a member of WAC-HNG
- b. contribute to development of overall strategic plan and as well as operating plans as a member of a subcommittee in one or more of following areas:
  - i. Outreach
  - ii. Funding
  - iii. Inventory and restoration
  - iv. Control
  - v. Manpower
- c. provide technical assistance or expertise to the steering committee when called upon.
- d. provide organizational support for control and monitoring of invasives in the form of either manpower, equipment, herbicide or a combination of all.
- e. contribute to inventory of invasives species.
- f. contribute to monitoring for sensitive species as per operating plan.
- g. Assist in training volunteers on the identification of priority plants and control techniques.

#### Foothills Conservancy

- a. attend steering committee meetings as a member of WAC-HNG
- b. contribute to development of overall strategic plan and as well as operating plans as a member of a subcommittee in one or more of following areas:
  - i. Outreach
  - ii. Funding
  - iii. Inventory and restoration
  - iv. Control
  - v. Manpower

- f. contribute to monitoring for sensitive species as per operating plan.
- j. Provide technical assistance services to private landowners within the focus area. Assistance would include identification of problem species, recommendations for control, potential cost share funding to assist in recommended control activities.
- k. Provide control services to landowners, private or public, on a fee basis.

#### Western North Carolina Alliance

- a. attend steering committee meetings as a member of WAC-HNG
- b. contribute to development of overall strategic plan and as well as operating plans as a member of a subcommittee in one or more of following areas:
  - i. Outreach
  - ii. Funding
  - iii. Inventory and restoration
  - iv. Control
  - v. Manpower
- c. provide technical assistance or expertise to the steering committee when called upon.
- e. contribute to inventory of invasives species.
- g. Assist in training volunteers on the identification of priority plants and control techniques.

#### Friends of HNG

- a. attend steering committee meetings as a member of WAC-HNG
- b. contribute to development of overall strategic plan and as well as operating plans as a member of a subcommittee in one or more of following areas:
  - i. Outreach
  - ii. Funding
  - iii. Inventory and restoration
  - iv. Control
  - v. Manpower
- g. Assist in training volunteers on the identification of priority plants and control techniques.
- i. Recruit volunteers for workdays per the WAC-HNG operating plan.

#### Bob Wald

- a. attend steering committee meetings as a member of WAC-HNG
- b. contribute to development of overall strategic plan and as well as operating plans as a member of a subcommittee in one or more of following areas:
  - i. Outreach
  - ii. Funding
  - iii. Inventory and restoration
  - iv. Control
  - v. Manpower
- l. Provide private landowner perspective during development of both strategic and operating plans.

Rumbling Bald Resort

- a. attend steering committee meetings as a member of WAC-HNG
- b. contribute to development of overall strategic plan and as well as operating plans as a member of a subcommittee in one or more of following areas:
  - i. Outreach
  - ii. Funding
  - iii. Inventory and restoration
  - iv. Control
  - v. Manpower
- 1. Provide private landowner perspective during development of both strategic and operating plans.

Diana Richards

- a. attend steering committee meetings as a member of WAC-HNG
- b. contribute to development of overall strategic plan and as well as operating plans as a member of a subcommittee in one or more of following areas:
  - i. Outreach
  - ii. Funding
  - iii. Inventory and restoration
  - iv. Control
  - v. Manpower
- 1. Provide private landowner perspective during development of both strategic and operating plans.

Robin Proctor

- a. attend steering committee meetings as a member of WAC-HNG
- b. contribute to development of overall strategic plan and as well as operating plans as a member of a subcommittee in one or more of following areas:
  - i. Outreach
  - ii. Funding
  - iii. Inventory and restoration
  - iv. Control
  - v. Manpower
- 1. Provide private landowner perspective during development of both strategic and operating plans.

**4. Understanding**

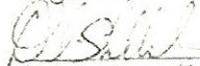
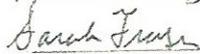
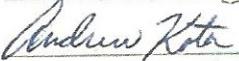
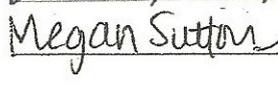
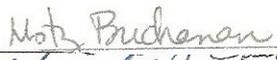
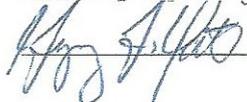
It is mutually agreed upon and understood by and among the Partners of this MOU that:

- a. All Partners will work together in a coordinated fashion to prevent, detect, and control invasive exotic plants infestations in priority areas within WAC-HNG.

- b. In no way does this agreement restrict involved Partners from participating in similar agreements with other public or private agencies, organizations, and individuals.
- c. To the extent possible, all Partners will participate in the development of a long-term Invasive Management Strategic Plan.
- d. Nothing in this MOU shall obligate any Partner to the expenditure or transfer of funds. Any endeavor involving reimbursement or contribution of funds between the Partners of this agreement will be handled in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and procedures. Such endeavors will be outlined in separate agreements that shall be made in writing by representatives of the Partners involved and shall be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority. This MOU does not provide such authority.
- e. This MOU is not intended to and does not create any right, benefit, or trust responsibility.
- f. This MOU will be effective upon the signature of all Partners and may be modified as necessary by mutual consent of the Partners by executive of a written amendment signed and dated by all Partners. Any Partner may terminate its participation in this MOU by providing written notice to all other Partners.

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The following agencies, organizations and individuals support the goals and objectives of the WAC-HNG:

Signature	Printed Name & Title	Agency/Organization	Date
	Debbie Shepley	coordinator WAC-HNG	12/13/12
	Sarah Fraser	Stewardship Director CMLC	12-13-2012
	DIANA Richards, Pres.	FHNG	12/11/12
	Tom Fanslow, Land Prot. Dir.,	CMLC	12-13-12
	ROBERT WARD	CHIMNEY ROCK VILLAGE	12/13/12
	Bob Gale	WNCA	12/13/12
	Clint Calhoun	Town of Lakeview	12/13/12
	Andrew Kota, Stewardship Dir.,	FCNC	12/17/2012
	Megan Sutton	Southern Blue Ridge Prog. Dir. TNC	12/31/12
	MISTY Buchanan, Inventory Manager,	NC NHP	1/9/2013
	GREGORY F. YATES, REGIONAL FORESTER,	NCFS,	4/16/13