

Development/business plan workshop  
Chair: Michael Doochin  
TACF Restoration Plan  
April 16, 2011  
Abington, Virginia  
4-H Center

## Introduction

Approximately 20 board and cabinet members serving on the development cabinet with The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) met on April 16, 2011, during TACF's spring board of directors meeting in Abington, VA. The purpose of the workshop was to gather ideas and input for the development of a strategic business plan. This workshop represents a preliminary step towards gathering information to help TACF develop a long-term restoration plan for the American chestnut. A functional restoration plan embraced by TACF's members and partners is critical to the long-term success of the organization.

This document provides an overview of the discussions held at the meeting for the purpose of allowing TACF members, partners and other interested parties the opportunity to provide additional input. We invite comments on this document. Please submit comments to: Betsy Gamber, TACF VP operations, 160 Zillicoa Street, Suite D, Asheville, NC 28801 ([betsy@acf.org](mailto:betsy@acf.org)). Please provide comments by November 1, 2011. Written comments may be sent anonymously.

Science is the cornerstone of TACF's programs. However, adequate funding and infrastructure are critical to support our science. As TACF moves forward with our mission, the complexities of various scientific issues will only increase; TACF must expand our funding base and infrastructure.

An understanding of the term "restoration" is necessary to properly evaluate the enormous magnitude of TACF's restoration plan. The term "restoration" is often confused with the term "reintroduction." In actuality, the term restoration refers to a **process** where practices (such as reintroduction) are put in place to bring something back to its historical condition.

The Society for Ecological Restoration defines ecological restoration as an *"intentional activity that initiates or accelerates the recovery of an ecosystem with respect to its health, integrity and sustainability."* *The practice of ecological restoration includes a wide scope of projects including: erosion control, reforestation, removal of non-native species and weeds, revegetation of disturbed areas, daylighting streams, reintroduction of native species, as well as habitat and range improvement for targeted species. The term "ecological restoration" refers to the practice of the discipline of "restoration ecology."*

In reality, TACF initiated restoration of the American chestnut with the formation of the organization in 1983. The practices we use to work through our restoration process are breeding, testing, and finally reintroduction (including long-term monitoring) of the species back into the forest. The process of restoring the American chestnut to our eastern forests is a long-term proposition, likely to span several generations during the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Such a long-term scope will require TACF to continually reassess and modify our plans for restoration.

## **Discussion overview**

### **Use regionally adapted chestnuts for reintroduction efforts**

The majority of participants agreed that the majority of chestnut seed used for large-scale reintroduction must come from state chapter orchards. This ensures TACF is using locally adapted stock as outlined in TACF's original breeding plan. The state-chapter-produced material must be placed into significant production orchards, and progeny from these production orchards used for the bulk of TACF's reintroduction efforts.

### **Seed production**

Participants agreed that "production" must be measured by millions of nuts produced annually, not thousands of nuts. This level of production is not feasible if TACF relies on smaller 2 to 3-acre production orchards. Realistically, TACF, working with our partners, should develop multiple orchards on the scale of 10 to 100 acres in size.

A key decision necessary for TACF to develop a business plan is to establish WHO will actually produce the seed/seedlings used in reintroduction. Workshop participants clearly supported the concept that TACF should work with other partners to develop seed production orchards and produce bare-root seedlings (or seeds). The process of large-scale production requires tremendous infrastructure and technical skill sets that are very limited within the organization. Participants largely agreed that TACF must develop agreements with producers to allow TACF to have enough seed available to make any significant impact towards our mission. This includes adequate production levels to permit adequate testing of TACF's trees, and eventually for reintroduction activities.

### **Location of seed production orchards**

The participants also discussed the location of the production orchards. While some of the orchards might be the primary responsibility of individual states, other orchards might be created regionally. For example, orchards could be established in the Land Between the Lakes region between Tennessee and Kentucky, or between Tennessee and North Carolina in Appalachia. The geographical location of the orchards would depend not only upon the science of conserving the diversity of the American chestnut genome--with the growing of that genome in its natural range-- but where land, staffing, and supervision by TACF could be best procured.

Another interesting question which arose was whether production orchards should be restricted to the historic range of the American chestnut. For example, there are currently plantings in Indiana which are outside of the historic range. There was consensus that tree plantings such as the ones in Indiana (under the direction of its state chapter, scientists, and members) which extend outside the historic ecological range are considered a normal part of restoration; however, using scarce Foundation resources to breed trees, for example in the Pacific Northwest region, is not recommended even though American chestnut trees have been found to grow well in this region. In stating this, the group was well aware the boundaries

of the American chestnut range have been constantly shifting, even during recent historic times, but the range of the American chestnut encompasses a general region and our restoration efforts should be focused on that region.

### **When do we start seed production?**

The remaining question that must be addressed is the following; when does TACF start mass production of seed (what level in the breeding program)? Participants stated this answer must come from the science cabinet. Once the level of breeding is determined (e.g. B3B2 or other generation), state chapters should work through the national office to establish seed production orchards. The national office should oversee all contracts and agreements with partners that enter into agreements with TACF for seed production.

### **Use a linear and parallel approach to our seed orchards.**

Initial development of seed production orchards does not represent a “final product” for TACF. Later seed production orchards are expected to produce seed with increased levels of resistance and better American chestnut growth characteristics. The group agreed that TACF should use a linear and parallel approach to producing seed. In other words, as new material comes on line, TACF will focus production on the newer production orchards and start phasing out earlier production orchards. This process of continual establishment of new orchards and cessation of old orchards will likely continue indefinitely. The group strongly supported the idea that TACF should not wait for the “perfect” tree before initiating seed production for reintroduction.

### **Seed orchard security**

The issue of orchard security when planted on private land also was discussed by the group. The development of an orchard is an expensive proposition, not only in the materials and effort required to establish the orchard, but also in the research and development that has gone into developing the trees planted in the orchard. The group identified two specific legal tools to provide TACF some security: leases and conservation easements. Whatever tool is used, participants agreed that some type of legal agreement was necessary to protect TACF’s investment.

### **Use of Seed Produced at Meadowview Research Farms**

Production of Restoration Chestnuts from the Meadowview Research Farms is significantly useful to the organization. The use of Meadowview Research Farms is very useful to all state chapters to help the organization with initial reintroduction and evaluation of our trees. Currently, Meadowview does not have the capacity to provide enough chestnut material to make any landscape-level impact to reintroducing the chestnut. But participants agreed that until state chapter material is available, trees from Meadowview can help TACF get a start and use the Restoration Chestnuts as a learning experience, develop relationships with partners, and energize TACF volunteers.

### **State Chapter Flexibility**

However, it was pointed out that volunteers should have the opportunity to play some role in chestnut production. Several participants noted some chapters (especially chapters from small states) may desire to manage their own seed production orchards. In addition, some chapters may have access to people with the skill sets and infrastructure needed to develop and manage production orchards. Although the participants were not in complete agreement over this, in general, all recognized the need for flexibility within the plan for the individual state chapters.

### **Germplasm agreements and patents**

Workshop participants expressed lesser agreement on the future use of the germplasm agreement or other licensing agreements on TACF's materials. The concept of patents was recognized by many of the workshop participants as an option, but it was suggested that TACF should finish testing before licensing the material. Others expressed opposition to any patent or germplasm agreement on TACF material. This represents an issue the group must still address. Without any type of ownership of material, commercial interests will certainly put TACF material into production and sell the product under the concept that this is the "final product."

Allowing private nurseries to take ownership of TACF material would remove the organization's ability to pursue additional research and breeding needed to refine and improve future versions of blight-resistant trees. After all, why would anyone support TACF if they can purchase a supposed "blight-resistant" chestnut from their local nursery? TACF's ultimate genius established by its founders was the principle that TACF was in this for the long haul, not to develop a quick fix and walk away. TACF must focus on real success with a long-range focus.

### **Developing blight-resistant tree is not the finish line**

Having a blight-resistant tree in hand does not guarantee that TACF can fulfill its ultimate mission of restoring the species to the point where the population can perpetuate itself indefinitely. Having blight-resistant trees only guarantees you have a tree to plant. Actually reintroducing the species in an effective manner is another matter altogether.

### **Lessons learn from restoration of longleaf pine**

The restoration of the longleaf pine ecosystem provides a good case study to illustrate this point. The longleaf pine occupied a historic range to the same extent as the American chestnut (about 200 million acres). However, the loss of longleaf pine was not due to a tree disease, but due to forest land conversion (e.g. conversion to loblolly pine) and loss of key forest management practices (e.g., prescribed fire). Longleaf pine seedlings are readily available on the market, but the recovery process has been very slow, mainly due to lack of landscape level reintroduction and appropriate forest management practices. To recover the Longleaf pine, organizations such as the Longleaf Alliance outreach to forest managers and provide technical assistance, cost-share incentives (mainly through established federal cost-share programs), and demonstration projects to facilitate the restoration of this important forest ecosystem.

Even with a readily available blight-resistant tree, TACF will experience similar challenges in reintroducing the American chestnut. TACF will have to implement a multidisciplinary and

intensive effort to actually reintroduce the chestnut back to our forests in a manner that will allow for the species to expand on its own. TACF must look beyond tree breeding and develop a long-range business plan that will allow for reintroducing the species back into our forests.

The complexities of reintroducing the chestnut into our eastern forests are equally as complex as the science that is behind our breeding effort, and most certainly the reintroduction phase of our mission will require resources far greater than resources needed for the breeding program. Our mission, restoration of the American chestnut, extends the organization far beyond breeding and includes the complex and monumental task of actually reintroducing the tree. If TACF gives up our ability to leverage the financial value of our product, we may not be able to effectively implement the practice of reintroduction.

### **Conservation of native chestnut germplasm**

The conservation of native germplasm was recognized as an important objective of TACF. In fact, the participants agreed the use of pure American chestnuts is critically underutilized and not promoted adequately by TACF. Even though these trees will die back from the blight, planting of American chestnuts establishes the root stock long term and helps ensure the native germplasm is conserved indefinitely. The workshop participants also identified this as a revenue generating opportunity for TACF.

## **Paying for our science**

### **Revenue from seed?**

As large amounts of Restoration Chestnuts become available, TACF will need to determine how to distribute the seed. Will TACF sell the seed and use revenues to fund additional breeding and reintroduction efforts? Will TACF assign rights to select nurseries and use funding derived from a licensing agreement to generate funding for programs? Or will TACF use the value of the material as a private match towards grants for larger landscape-level restoration efforts? To date, TACF has been successful in using the value of the seedlings as a private match and used the monies derived from grants to support TACF science programs.

Participants provided diverse opinions on what TACF should charge for seedlings if the organization decides to move in that direction. Several participants pointed out that there are different markets for chestnuts (different types of customers). These markets were identified as 1) wildlife (e.g. hunters), 2) forestry, and 3) ornamental plantings. Each market represents a different price point. For example, the ornamental market usually drives a higher price point as compared to the other side of the spectrum (forestry) which requires that chestnut be treated more as a commodity and at a much lower price.

A critical element in determining how TACF will provide material to the public is answered through our existing mission statement; the restoration of the American chestnut. If TACF truly desires to see this tree reestablished on the landscape where it can start to spread on its own, then the appropriate model of seed distribution is critical. For example, providing trees only to the ornamental (and as membership incentives) and the wildlife market may maximize

revenues, but it will surely not fulfill the organization's mission. Planting just a handful of trees will not adequately position the species with the necessary genetic diversity and seed production potential to allow it to expand on its own.

To the contrary, providing the tree to the general forestry market, where seedling prices run \$.40 to \$.80 per seedling, will place the chestnut into a category where it is treated like any other commodity, such as oak and pine seedlings. This model would likely result in TACF being able to get trees out in the large numbers needed to establish populations of chestnuts, but would provide very little opportunity for the organization to invest in additional research and development (breeding), and would not provide the organization with the resources needed to address our reintroduction efforts.

A balanced approach is critical to ensure the organization can continue to expand our science programs, and get trees planted on the landscape to achieve our ultimate mission priorities. To attain a balanced approach and achieve TACF's goals, the workshop participants recommended TACF investigate marketing to different niches with different pricing structures. This might be accomplished by marketing the latest and most advanced lines of potentially blight-resistant trees at a higher price to the ornamental and wildlife market before the trees could be delivered in a larger supply to the general forestry market (i.e., it takes time for a production orchard to ramp up production).

Likely, TACF must use a combination of all these models. In addition, the quantity of seed actually being produced at the time will also become a major factor on TACF's business model. Pricing for chestnut will, to a large degree, follow the principles of supply and demand. Continuing to use the trees as a membership incentive will help TACF attract more active volunteers to the organization, and using the value of the trees as a private match through grants will help make material available for large-scale plantings without having to charge seedling prices that are unattainable for our partners and cooperators.

### **Funding through grants**

TACF has successfully used the trees as a match through grants to attain funding for TACF science programs. For example, last year TACF developed and was awarded a grant from the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) to establish 6 plantings (approximately 1,500 nuts) of our most advanced material (Restoration Chestnuts). All six plantings were established as progeny tests, an organizational priority to begin with. In addition, TACF was able to use the value of the seeds/seedlings provided for the planting (at \$150 per seedling) and leverage this for an additional \$80,000 from SFI to fund the initial development of our Trees Database.

If, however, TACF had followed the traditional forestry pricing structure in the above example, TACF would have generated \$750 to maybe \$1,500 from the sale of the seedlings/seeds (compared to \$80K through the grant). Granted, the seed would be available at a very competitive price, but these revenues would not have provided TACF the resources necessary to achieve other scientific needs (e.g. the Trees Database).

As TACF moves forwards with our programs, resource demands will continue to expand. New programs will evolve, existing programs will grow, and the need to adequately serve the membership will continue to expand.

Workshop participants explored other opportunities for TACF to diversify our income base by 1) expanding our partnerships with corporations, 2) expanding the fundraising capability of our Restoration Branches, and 3) working more with our board and membership to grow our donor base.

### **Corporate support**

Corporate partners represent a tremendous opportunity for TACF to expand our programs and our ability to implement our mission. Corporate partners managing a land base (forestry companies, energy companies) offer a tremendous opportunity to help TACF strategically reintroduce the chestnut.

The participants discussed the meaning of the TACF's main mission and how it might be best used in a partnership. There was consensus that TACF should investigate several different layers of partnerships as opportunities arose. At some point, TACF might feel comfortable with a primary partner, which met a higher standard of compatibility with TACF goals, or shared important mutual interests with TACF; at the same time, TACF might choose to have several other partners to provide a more inclusive base to help implement such a large project.

However, there are some concerns within the membership about partnering with corporate America. The main concern centered around TACF being monopolized by any one corporate entity, or the potential for a corporation to put TACF in a bad light.

### **Case study – working with coal companies**

The majority of corporations in America do operate using appropriate ethical and responsible business practices. Even companies that do directly impact the environment in negative ways, such as energy companies, still strive to deliver their product to the consumer while limiting or even remediating damage created by their business operations. Corporate entities in the US today typically take a long-range approach to their business operations and understand the benefits of operating in ways that build community support compared to business practices exhibited in the past.

Coal companies offer an excellent case study for TACF. The US coal region lies directly over the historic range of the American chestnut. Whether or not TACF partners with a coal company will have absolutely no bearing on whether or not a coal company will extract coal, or the practices they will use to extract the coal. The method and quantity of coal extracted will be determined by supply and demand as well as federal and state policy.

There is currently 1 million acres of abandoned mine land within the range of the American chestnut that are currently planted to non-native plant species (e.g., tall fescue, lespedeza) that

offer no value to wildlife or biodiversity. In addition, these sites do not support any substantial forests due to lack of appropriate site prep.

Coal companies have no legal or ethical obligation to do any work on these abandoned mine areas. In fact, most of these abandoned mine areas are owned by private landowners. However, many of these companies along with the landowner would likely partner with TACF and other conservation organizations to take these abandoned mine areas and return these sites to healthy and functioning forest ecosystems.

The motivation that would encourage a coal company to voluntarily work on these abandoned mine areas is straightforward. These companies are comprised of people; from the miner up through management, these employees are as interested in conservation as any TACF member. Successful companies let their people shape the branding of the organization because it fits with the overall corporate mission and goals of delivering a sustainable and responsible product, serves to raise employee morale, and boosts shareholder value. Partnerships with these corporate interests are dependent on finding and working with the appropriate individuals within the corporation.

TACF is a science based organization with the mission of restoring the American chestnut. TACF does not support, or take a stand against coal mining. It is simply not within the organization's mission. TACF's interest must focus on using our mission to maximize the greatest benefit to our natural resources, specifically the restoration of the American chestnut.

#### **Corporate support – workshop recommendations**

Several workshop attendees expressed concern that some corporations, especially companies that exploit natural resources, may try to use TACF to “green wash” their actions. To manage this potential, attendees recommend that TACF do the following in partnering with corporations:

- 1) Develop written agreement with the entity to allow TACF to manage messaging (this is typically SOP between NGOS and corporations)
- 2) Work with a diversity of corporate partners, not just a few
- 3) Retain ability to pull out of any partnership
- 4) Stay out of politics
- 5) Engage in projects that improve the environment
- 6) Retain authority/control over any merchandising
- 7) Exercise some control over public relations or any statements or advertisements that are issued to describe the partnership with TACF through written agreements

Participants recommended that TACF staff be responsible for vetting corporations, developing and managing agreements, and providing oversight in working with these corporate partners.

### **TACF Branch Events**



Forming a local Restoration Branch of TACF is both a fun and rewarding experience and a way for local communities to get involved with chestnut restoration. As we continue with our state breeding efforts, and eventually expand into early reintroduction, TACF will need grass-root community support to move our mission forward.

The concept of a Restoration Branch is simple; host an annual dinner or event in your local community to share the conservation efforts of TACF. TACF Branches provide your community the opportunity to get involved locally to bring the American chestnut back to our forests. The price of the ticket *must* include the cost of a TACF membership. This way, attendees will receive TACF publications and have the opportunity to learn more about the American chestnut. By having the ability to communicate with these new members through TACF publications, chapters will enhance their ability to expand the on-the-ground volunteer force needed to accomplish state-level priorities.

#### **Goals of TACF Restoration Branch (specific goals depend on state objectives)**

- Provide support to your TACF state chapter to build and support local breeding efforts
- Support testing and evaluation of *Restoration Chestnut* plantings including progeny testing, field testing, and future reintroduction plantings
- Share the story of the American chestnut with your local community through outreach to schools, establishing outreach and educational plantings (could include *Restoration Chestnuts*), etc.
- Recruit new members to help work on local reintroduction and breeding projects
- Provide opportunity for the community to become involved locally with TACF conservation efforts
- Support germplasm conservation by planting pure stands of American chestnuts
- Raise funds to support local, state, and national goals

#### **Workshop recommendations**

Workshop participants agreed the expansion of TACF Branch events represented a tremendous opportunity to grow TACF at the grass-roots level, expand our network of active volunteers, and provide opportunities for local fundraising. To expand the fundraising potential, participants recommended that TACF look for more chestnut related products to auction off at the events, such as chestnut related art.

Participants also recognized that TACF must invest in additional staffing to support this program. State chapters currently have a tremendous workload with the breeding program and recommend TACF hire staff to help the chapters implement the Branch program.

Participants felt overall TACF membership goal over the next 10 years should be 50,000 members. Increasing this membership size will enhance our diversity and help us recruit more volunteers to work on our on-the-ground projects. Strategically, participants suggested TACF establish Branches, focused mainly within the range of the chestnut, about 75 miles apart and focus Branch establishment in larger metropolitan areas.

As TACF expands our role to include widespread reintroduction efforts, access to a large and organized group of volunteers is critical. Ultimately, reintroduction occurs at the local level and this grass-roots approach to expand TACF's reach is absolutely necessary for TACF to carry out its mission.

TACF currently has an outstanding base of committed donors. This commitment is very evident in TACF's ability to not only weather the recent downturn in the economy, but even grow despite the challenges.

Expanding our membership base also allows the organization to expand our donor base. The more members, the larger the pool of donors the organization has to work with.

### **State Chapter Support**

TACF's network of state chapters represents the backbone of the organization. The state chapters are the ultimate source of locally adapted, blight-resistant Restoration Chestnuts and *Phytophthora*-resistant chestnuts that TACF will use for large-scale reintroduction. Strengthening the state chapter system is an obvious top priority to allow TACF to move forward.

Expansion of the Restoration Branches obviously offers a tremendous tool to not only grow the state chapter, but also provide them with the active volunteer base needed to carry out the organization's mission.

#### **Workshop recommendations – state chapter support**

Workshop participants agreed better support through communications was a high-priority need for the state chapters. Participants recommended that TACF restructure the website to allow more functionality and utility for the state chapters and the membership. Participants felt it would be very helpful if the National office hosted the state chapter websites. National could provide a template for the state website and host the site for the chapter. This would provide for a more cohesive look for the websites, better standardized information sharing, and better support chapter activities. Participants also recommended that TACF offer a RSS feed with events.

Participants indicated they would like to have their state newsletters inserted into the *Journal of The American Chestnut Foundation*. Inserting the newsletter into the *Journal* would allow the state chapters to customize the magazine to better communicate with the members in their state.

#### **Staff support**

Participants recognized and supported the necessity for additional staff to support the state chapters. In addition, participants recommended that all staff hired be managed through the National office to ensure better employee oversight (versus state chapters hiring and supervising their own staff). In addition, one reason the participants gave for the state chapters

to not hire and supervise their own employees was to reduce any issue of “we versus them” with the National office.

Participants noted that it was easy for staff to overstep their role with volunteers and the National office should provide the necessary training to ensure this does not happen (author’s note: will need to get more clarification on this topic—I can’t recall if any examples of this to clarify more).

The types of employees that TACF must hire are diverse. Participants all agreed that TACF must continue to recruit talented scientists. In addition, TACF will need to bring in other professionals as the organization expands: foresters, additional communication specialists, graphic artists, project managers, and fundraisers.

### **The Role of the TACF Volunteer**

TACF is a volunteer organization. Without the volunteers, TACF ceases to exist. Over the last 28 years, TACF has invested over \$20 million towards its mission. When you incorporate the value the TACF volunteer has provided, the investment figure is probably in excess of \$1 billion.

Historically, the role of the volunteer was focused; develop 10 different lines into the breeding program at the state level. As the complexity of TACF’s programs expands, the role of the volunteer will expand as well (and another reason TACF needs to build membership).

Participants identified several obvious roles TACF volunteers play now, and in the future. Collecting data on tree performance and entering this into the Trees Database is one example of a critical volunteer role. TACF can’t afford to (and no organization can) hire enough staff to collect these data. Nor should TACF hire these staff; again, it’s the power of volunteers that makes TACF what it is today.

As TACF expands our programs to include reintroduction, TACF volunteers represent the front-line conservationists to develop relationships with partners that will help TACF reintroduce the species. Although our volunteers will most definitely be involved with on-the-ground planting projects, the sheer magnitude of this project will require our state chapters and volunteers to work with the National office to secure the partners needed to follow through on landscape-level planting projects.

TACF already has an extensive list of current partners in place to help facilitate reintroduction. State wildlife and forestry agencies, the USDA Forest Service, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative, Quality Deer Management Association, and the National Wild Turkey Federation are just a few partners that TACF can work with to implement reintroduction activities. In other words, TACF state chapter and volunteers should not, and can not undertake the reintroduction work by themselves. Instead, our state chapters and volunteers will lead and facilitate the reintroduction work.

To support this, participants stated that the National office must hire more “boots on the ground” to help oversee reintroduction, and focus our efforts locally.

## Education

The American chestnut has been gone for a long time. Youth today have little idea about the role the American chestnut played in our forest ecosystems. Yet, TACF will need today's youth to lead the organization in the future.

To better engage our youth, TACF has developed a Chestnut Learning Box (CLB) to help today's youth learn about the chestnut. Participants unanimously agreed that TACF must continue to provide focus on youth education and the expansion of the CLB concept into our schools.

### Notes from meeting:

#### Breeding/Testing/Reintroduction

##### 1. Plan Implementation

- a. Who will grow our seedlings?
  - Not volunteers- producing seedlings is very technical and requires expensive infrastructure.
  - State/federal are well suited partners to help TACF produce seedlings, depends on the state. Some states are losing their nurseries
  - Could be grown in one location (i.e., one state)
  - Volunteer may want some flexibility to produce some seedlings, especially in some smaller states such as the New England states.
  - Need to have facilities/expertise/manpower to do production
  - Bad move to say volunteers have no role, but not sure what volunteer role will be
  - State agencies/ fed and private nurseries will likely take the lead
  - Define what volunteers can do: small scale planting
  - Seed production must be large scale – millions of nuts
  - Efficiency may not be only consideration
  - Don't rule out chapters being able to develop orchards to some degree
  - When do we go into production (orchards)? B3F2? Need guidance from scientists
  - B3F2 good place to start?
  - Need 10 to 100-acre orchard to produce enough seed
  - Need to start purchasing now and improve over time
  - Seed orchards within 200-300 miles of origin
  - Must be regional seed orchards
  - Regional cooperation for breeding stock (B3F1 crosses). Need regional breeding centers.
  - Find effective ways to move into productions by allowing volunteer opportunity for flexibility
  - Replicate seed orchards to ensure flexibility
  
- b. Establishment of pure American seed orchards for wildlife/habitat restoration projects. Establish orchard to preserve local genetic diversity and improve wildlife habitat and generate revenue.
  - This use of pure American chestnuts has been critically underrated
  - Take advantage of the opportunity!
  - Great opportunity for volunteer participation
  - Germplasm conservation critical

- Can dig up sprouts in mountains and transplant
- c. If orchards are established on private land, how does TACF protect this investment on establishing seed orchards?
  - Draw up a lease
  - Conservation easement
  - Action item: TACF should develop a policy to provide guidance on this
- d. Cost to produce- Look at how elm does it?
  - Have to charge a fair price
  - Should not charge too much (\$5, 10>)
  - Different markets for trees (forestry vs ornamental)
  - Keep price where you can afford to plant large numbers
  - Market to different niches—wildlife, forestry, ornamental
  - Different niches will require different pricing structures
- e. May lose control over material © creativecommons.org, patent should transfer to successive generations
  - Wait until you come out of testing before licensing
  - Strongly against patent or germplasm agreement
  - may want to keep germplasm agreement to deal with future issues

## 2. Funding Sources

- a. What additional sources of funding should TACF pursue?

### Corporate support

- Incentivize participation
- Developed agreement with corp to manage message
- Thing about: do we have several major sponsors or many smaller?
- Bring to board concept for partnering with corporation
- We develop criteria
- Several different layers for partnership
- Be careful with getting involved with any one group
- Need to be able to pull out of any partnership
- Maintain ownership and identity
- Work with industry but manage this
- Management will make this decision on companies to work with
- Be sensitive toward limiting our diversity
- Don't want to be political, monopolized, etc...
- Entity we work with should be enhancing the environment
- Look at AEP agreement
- Concern that our name would get drug in the mud
- Merchandise- minimal role in business plan

### Branch events - merchandising

- Need to find chestnut products
- Need chestnut related art
- Need appropriate staff support
- Make merchandise more targeted- find out what people want

- Value of merchandise is in awareness
- Pens

Working with membership to find donors

- Close communication with chapters
- Build trust
- Chapters need better reporting to show donations from national
- Need brainstorming meeting for drill down
- Need improved reports to chapter
- Chapters should reach out to donors to involve them—provide the TACF experience

Should TACF expand and diversify our board of directors to attract more business leaders and directors connected to financial resources?

- Need a board member with expertise in communications
- expand board to include members with business contacts

3. Membership/Chapter development

a. How large should we be?

- Goal 50,000 members
- Will provide better diversity
- Branches are the mechanism to grow membership
- Must have Website improvement
- Ideally, make chestnuts available to members who come to branch events
- increase the number of seed for members, 3 or 4
- Branches > 75 miles apart (20-75 mi)
- Focus on population size
- Upper end 500

b. Chapter Support-how do we better support?

- Something (website) to help- National host. Need template
- Calendar of events on National page
- RSS feed with events
- Newsletter insertion in magazine
- Follow up in email
- Lots of stuff going on at state chapter but difficulty getting involved
- Chapters could advertise locally to help chapter manage projects

c. Staff

- Indiana would like full time, but manage through national
- States hiring employees may cause more Us vs them
- National should manage all staff
- Very easy for staff to overstep their role with volunteers. Staffs need proper training
- Need good scientists

d. As TACF Role of volunteer

- Data, trees database
- role in defining the role (?)
- many volunteers are site specific; ID site and line up funding for reintroduction

e. Future needs – what will be the role of the volunteer as we start with reintroducing the tree

- How much help depends on chapters ability to leverage help
- Reintroduction will come from state chapter
- Staff will focus on on-the-ground reintroduction
- Hire both in-house researchers and external (universities)
- More hired guns to help on ground
- Focus more local
- Rex's grid concept great way to ensure appropriate distribution of planting sites

f. Role of state agency (forestry/wildlife)?

- May or may not depending on economy
- May make more progress working with land trusts, conservation orgs, private landowners

g. B3F2 – do we see a point in time that we will need them?

h. Forest restoration specialist training- a good model to follow

4. Final thoughts

- Communications
- Youth education
- Education box- more of them! Sell sell sell
- Chestnut beer
- Large annual meeting