The following document summarizes the input received during and immediately following the 2018 Controlled Wood Regional Meetings and provides rationale for the resulting mitigation options for the Patch-Nosed Salamander (PNS), along with definition of any identified gaps in the final set of options.

*Consultation Insights: Overall, stakeholder feedback on the proposed mitigation options for the PNS was generally limited. However, this limited feedback does provide support for the following thematic approaches: research, conservation initiatives, and education and outreach to foresters, landowners, etc.  Additionally, comments on similar themes for other risk topics have consistently suggested merging thematically similar options, adapting options to provide flexibility (e.g., don’t specify certain NGOs, don’t limit the management tools that may be used for conserve biodiversity), and also being more specific regarding the intent of the mitigation option and what it is expected to achieve. Finally, consistency of mitigation approaches between risk topics should provide the potential for efficiencies for Organizations that would like to take similar approaches for different risk topics, or in different regions, and therefore, the following revised options draw from options for similar themes that were developed for other risk topics.*

**Please note that almost any of the proposed mitigation options may be done individually or in collaboration with other certificate holders, or other entities that have similar desired outcomes. Collaboration is encouraged to scale up potential mitigation impact, and FSC US will seek to assist with that collaboration when feasible.**

**CENTRAL THEME: Research**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Original Proposed Option  (#2) Invest in research to improve knowledge of species distribution, other population characteristics and best management practices | Topline Input   * Strong support across perspectives for research * Include monitoring * Need to improve knowledge of species (including distribution) and impacts of BMPs * Yes, needed, but not sure if the certificate holder’s responsibility |

**Proposed Revised Mitigation Option**

**The following is offered as a two-part option for ‘high impact’ organizations:**

1. **Engage with and/or provide monetary or in-kind resources to an entity or alliance that is currently conducting, or has the capacity to initiate, research on effectiveness of water quality Best Management Practices for conserving Patch-Nosed Salamander (PNS) populations, or improving knowledge of the species, including distribution; and**
2. **Use the results of research to improve implementation of another mitigation option.**

**CENTRAL THEME: Conservation Initiatives**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Original Proposed Options  (#1) Actions that will reduce negative impacts at known sites  (#3) Develop partnerships with universities and other NGOs that can influence land management within the species range (e.g., organizations associated with recreation within the National Forests that could become champions for the species)  (#5) Support working lands easements within the species range; consider contributions to FSC that are pooled and used together to maximize their impact | Topline Input   * #1 is not auditable * Already protected within streamside management zones * Need to implement amphibian BMPs, even if species specific information not available * Known and potential sites * Partnerships are important (universities, NGOs, USFS) * Clarify what ‘influence’ means * Mixed feedback on easements, with opposition to taking land out of production |

**Proposed Revised Mitigation Option**

**The following is offered as an option that could be scaled for any impact level:**

**Engage with and/or provide monetary or in-kind resources to conservation organizations or similar entities that are supporting or promoting programs or projects to develop new or augment existing programs that will: 1) result in increased and improved implementation of management practices for conservation of Patch-Nosed Salamander (PNS) populations; or 2) result in increased access to incentive programs for landowner who conserve PNS populations within the specified risk area and the Organization’s supply area. These entities may include: non-governmental organizations that have active programs/projects to conserve amphibians and their habitat; and/or federal, state and/or local governmental organizations.**

**CENTRAL THEME: National Forest Management Planning**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Original Proposed Option  (#4) Participate in Chattahoochee and Sumter National Forest management planning discussions to influence management within the species’ range | Topline Input   * All feedback received was supportive of participation in National Forest management planning |

**Proposed Mitigation Option**

**The following is offered as an option that could be scaled for any impact level:**

**Engage in National Forest management planning processes and the implementation of plans that include, or could potentially include, goals, objectives and/or actions that are intended to achieve conservation of Patch-Nosed Salamander (PNS) populations within the specified risk area and the Organization’s supply area.**

**CENTRAL THEME: Education & Outreach**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Participant Proposed Options  Provide education on best available knowledge of practices to promote this habitat to landowners | Topline Input   * Support for education as a mitigation approach * For landowners, loggers, foresters and others * Needs to address management practices that will promote PNS habitat |

**Proposed Revised Mitigation Options**

**The following is offered as an option that could be scaled for any impact level:**

**Using materials (as described below), and with a desired outcome of engaging landowners, foresters, and loggers within the specified risk area and the Organization’s supply area in conservation of Patch-Nosed Salamander (PNS) populations, communicate to audiences (as described below) the conservation values of PNS, potential threats from forest management activities, and opportunities for conservation through management that maintains, enhances, or restores habitat for PNS and reduces or eliminates potential threats.**

* **Materials: Developed by, or developed in cooperation with, organizations/individuals with expertise in PNS or amphibian conservation, or FSC US, and delivered in a manner that will be the most effective in achieving the desired outcome of engaging landowners, foresters, and loggers in conservation of PNS populations, while reflecting the specific context and characteristics of the Organization.**
* **Audiences: Audiences will reflect the specific context and characteristics of the Organization, but communications should be directed toward those audiences where the communications will be most effective in helping to achieve the desired outcome of engaging landowners, foresters, and loggers within the specified risk area and the Organization’s supply area in conservation of PNS populations. Depending upon the Organization’s location in the supply chain, communications may be directly with landowners, foresters, or loggers, or through intermediaries such as community members, suppliers, or in collaboration with organizations/individuals already addressing PNS conservation needs.**

**The following is offered as an option for Organizations with suppliers that are land managers or that purchase directly from the source forest:**

**Develop/adapt a procurement policy that reflects the above communications themes and clearly states the expectation that suppliers will promote conservation of PNS populations and will not provide materials from forests where this HCV is threatened as a result of the forest management activities that produced the forest materials. This will require providing a description of the forest type (as it occurs in the supply area), potential threats from forest management activities, and the kinds of activities that would maintain or enhance PNS populations in the supply area.**

**NOTE: Actions to demonstrate policy enforcement and communicate policies on sourcing to suppliers should be audited under the Due Diligence system requirements within the 40-005V3-1 standard section 1.1**

**GAPS IN THE SET OF MITIGATON OPTIONS**

FSC US Staff evaluation of this set of mitigation options, through the lens of the shared criteria, did not identify any significant gaps, with the possible exception of the requirement for 'auditability.' We will be looking to your comments for suggestions on how to address this potential gap, as well as for identification of any other gaps and suggestions for their resolution. Additionally, we will be meeting with Certification Bodies during the consultation and expect that they will also provide input on improvements in auditability.