

The North American Bird Conservation Initiative

Why should your agency care about bird conservation?

Birds have intrinsic, ecological and economic value.

- Migratory birds undertake some of the most phenomenal migrations on our planet, which reflect our human and ecological connectedness.
- Birds provide irreplaceable ecosystem services, such as insect control, flower pollination, and seed dispersal.
- The public values birds. According to a 2006 national survey, nearly 71.1 million people participated in wildlife watching in 2006 and spent approximately \$45.7 billion. Additionally, 2.3 million migratory bird hunters spent \$1.3 billion.

Many bird populations are declining precipitously

- Birds are declining due to habitat loss, climate change, development, pollution, pesticides, and collisions with human-made structures. Their decline signals dangerous hemispheric and global ecological changes.

Birds are indicators of ecosystem health

- A decline in migratory bird numbers indicates widespread loss of biodiversity and represents widespread loss of ecological services — losses that directly impact human survival and quality of life.

How can birds help your agency address critical issues such as climate change and development?

Birds are well known and conspicuous

- Birds are excellent flagship species for educating and motivating the public to support conservation.

The science behind bird conservation is strong

- Baseline and population data from surveys such as the U.S. Geological Survey's Breeding Bird Survey, waterfowl survey data, Christmas Bird Counts, and State Fish and Wildlife agencies' breeding bird atlases can help manage resources.
- The bird conservation initiatives provide a sound biological foundation (e.g., population and habitat objectives) to make strategic management decisions.

Monitoring data is essential to manage for climate change

- This extensive temporal and spatial baseline data for birds will be invaluable in assessing the broader impacts of climate change and determining management actions to deal with those impacts.

An extensive network is dedicated to conserving birds

- Joint Ventures – a key delivery mechanism – are in place to deliver biologically driven conservation on the ground across the country and the continent.
- State and federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, bird conservation initiatives, and public citizens can all play an active role in delivering effective bird conservation.

Why is the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) one of your key partners?

The NABCI Committee can bring solutions to critical management and conservation issues. It is a 22-member committee with the capacity to tackle cross-agency bird conservation issues and integrate bird conservation efforts. NABCI offers one venue to access the bird conservation community. This collaboration bridges taxa, people, and programs that span geographic, taxonomic, organizational, and socio-cultural divides.

What can your federal agency do for bird conservation?

- **Partner with Joint Ventures and state fish and wildlife agencies** – Agencies should integrate information from Joint Ventures, State Wildlife Action Plans, and bird conservation initiative plans into their biological and habitat programs.
- **Institute large scale public policy changes** – We need strong conservation provisions in the Farm Bill and increased funding for the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, State Wildlife Grants, Joint Ventures, breeding bird survey and international conservation programs to successfully meet our common conservation goals.
- **Improve our ability to monitor bird populations** – Baseline data for some birds is adequate, but we need more complete information for most species to successfully conserve birds in the face of climate change, development and other environmental challenges. Our ability to coordinate monitoring across agencies will help us meet common conservation goals.
- **Coordinate across programs and agencies** – We need to foster partnerships among our agencies and with other private organizations to successfully conserve birds.
- **Foster cross-border collaboration** – Human-induced changes to migratory birds and their habitats – especially those broad in scale, like climate change – require international collaboration. Birds require conservation measures on a range-wide basis, including their breeding, migration and wintering areas, which are often outside U.S. boundaries.

U.S. NABCI Committee Member Organizations and Individuals

American Bird Conservancy, David Pashley
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, John Hoskins, Missouri Department of Conservation, Chair
Association of Joint Venture Management Boards, Kirk Nelson, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
Bureau of Land Management, Dwight Fielder
Department of Defense, Peter Boice
Ducks Unlimited, Inc., Scott Yaich
Farm Service Agency, Matt Ponish
Migratory Shore and Upland Game Bird Working Group
National Audubon Society, Greg Butcher
National Flyway Council, Bob Ellis, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
National Park Service, Bert Frost
Natural Resources Conservation Service, Terrell Erickson
North American Waterfowl Management Plan, David Goad, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
Partners in Flight, Gary Myers, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
Resident Game Bird Working Group, Breck Carmichael, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
The Nature Conservancy, Dave Mehlman
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Dale Hall
U.S. Geological Survey, Sue Haseltine
U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan, Catherine Hickey, PRBO Conservation Sciences
USDA Forest Service, Val Mezainis
Waterbird Conservation for the Americas, Jim Kushlan
Wildlife Management Institute, Steve Williams

