



September 6, 2006

Dear Colleagues:

Avian monitoring is a vital component of bird conservation in North America. Recognizing this, the U.S. North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) Committee (Committee) formed a Monitoring Subcommittee to identify opportunities to foster organizational cooperation for effective monitoring of bird populations and develop methods to fully integrate monitoring into conservation and management decisions. The Subcommittee has prepared a draft interim report, *Opportunities for Improving North American Avian Monitoring* (enclosed and at <http://www.nabci-us.org/monitoring.html>). It follows a 2004 report produced by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' Science and Research Committee.

The draft interim report presents the Committee's goals, recommendations, and actions for improving the effectiveness, efficiency, scope, and value of bird monitoring programs. This draft report is a starting point. After considering your comments, we will produce a final report for broad distribution as well as an implementation strategy, with possible products to include national guidelines and a framework for guiding our collective efforts.

On behalf of the Committee, I ask for your input on the content of the draft report and priorities for its implementation. As a part of your comments, please consider answering the following questions: *Where are the gaps – what opportunities were overlooked? How should the report be implemented and what strategies (e.g. guidelines) would you recommend? What are the priority steps for this implementation? How can your organization contribute to the implementation?*

The Committee is dedicated to ensuring that effective and efficient coordinated monitoring programs are in place and institutionally supported as integral components of successful conservation programs. The bird conservation community is challenged to provide effective conservation and management and greater accountability for those actions, with limited resources and increased public oversight. Monitoring information is a critical tool to guide conservation decisions and demonstrate beneficial outcomes for birds.

Making a difference hinges on commitment to action – action by all organizations involved in bird and habitat conservation. I hope you are as excited about this effort as the Committee and that you and your organization will take the necessary steps to help make coordinated bird monitoring a reality.

Please send your **comments** to NABCImonitoring@fws.gov by **October 16, 2006**.

Sincerely,

Bruce McCloskey
Chairman
U.S. NABCI Committee

enclosure