



## NABCI

# U P D A T E

U.S. NABCI Committee  
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*Advancing  
integrated bird conservation  
in North America*

## THE NORTH AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVATION INITIATIVE

### U.S. NABCI Committee Work Plan Update – September 2008

The U.S. North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) Committee (Committee) is dedicated to helping partners across the continent meet their common bird conservation objectives by ensuring that organizations have the capacity to support and deliver integrated bird conservation on-the-ground. At the same time, the Committee is fostering increased cooperation and collaboration through partnerships that span geographic, taxonomic, organizational, and socio-cultural divides.

Over the past three-and-a-half years, the Committee has been making great strides to further integrated bird conservation by focusing on the following priorities: (a) Advance effective and efficient bird monitoring; (b) Advance the science of conservation design; (c) Increase institutional support for bird conservation within public agencies; (d) Increase the bird conservation benefits of private lands management; and (e) Promote international conservation. For more Committee information, please visit <http://www.nabci-us.org>.

#### The Next Five Years

At its August 2008 meeting in Arlington, Virginia, the Committee discussed its accomplishments and future direction. New challenges such as climate change and what the Committee wants to accomplish in the next five years dominated the discussion. Two resounding themes were the need to engage the millions of bird watchers and hunters and to speak with one voice on bird conservation issues. This was the start of a strategic planning discussion that will continue through the Committee's winter 2009 meeting, and will lay out future goals and objectives.

#### Bird Monitoring

The Monitoring Subcommittee (Subcommittee) is working to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of monitoring strategies through increased cooperation among public and private wildlife organizations. Members of the Subcommittee represent state and federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, academia, and the bird initiatives. The Subcommittee's report, *Opportunities for Improving Avian Monitoring*, is available at <http://www.nabci-us.org/monitoring.html>. To see the January issue of *The All-Bird Bulletin* dedicated to the importance of bird monitoring, visit <http://www.nabci-us.org/news.html>.

To promote the report's recommendations, the Committee developed a Memorandum of Understanding, which has been signed by NABCI partners, and a resolution that was approved by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. The Committee is now acting on specific tasks. For example, the Subcommittee has made preliminary recommendations to the Committee on database management needs, which will be the basis of a strategy to help secure current databases and support the completion or development of new and future databases. The Subcommittee is focusing on securing the most important databases from each bird conservation initiative. They are also working on providing managers with a tool to help determine how well bird monitoring programs meet conservation and management needs.

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### Institutional Support

Bird-related recreation is the fastest growing outdoor activity in the United States. To ensure the continued survival of these species, state and federal agencies must be fully engaged in managing and conserving birds as well as the many other wildlife species under their responsibility. To this end, the Committee met with the heads of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Farm Services Agency (FSA); engaged National Park Service as a new member of the Committee; and presented to the Bureau of Land Management's Deputy State Directors. The Committee will take advantage of the upcoming opportunity to discuss bird conservation with the transition teams of a new administration. It is finalizing key bird conservation messages that will be included in all of the federal agency Committee members' briefings for the transition teams starting in November.

### Private Lands

The Private Lands Subcommittee works to advance bird conservation and management on private lands. The Subcommittee is advancing the concept of strategic habitat initiatives with NRCS leadership and state conservationists and biologists. Strategic habitat initiatives will involve using biological and conservation design information available through the bird community to help NRCS target program delivery. The Subcommittee conducted a web cast with NRCS biologists on the topic. It believes that the 2008 Farm Bill will provide an excellent opportunity to develop these initiatives because of specific wording in the legislation related to 'partnerships' and 'development of initiatives.' The Subcommittee will be updating the Farm Bill User's Guide, published in the late 1990s for wildlife conservationists, after the rulemaking process is completed in December 2008. The Subcommittee will be monitoring this process as the final rules will significantly impact how conservation programs are carried out.

### International Bird Conservation

The U.S., Canadian, and Mexican members of the Tri-national NABCI Committee met in May 2008, and reaffirmed the importance of advancing regional alliances in Mexico and funding the Continentally Important Proposals (Proposals) — goals cited in the NABCI Declaration of Intent signed in 2005 by all three countries. Partners developed Proposals for five priority sites in Mexico (i.e., Laguna Madre, Marismas Nacionales, Chiapas — El Triunfo, Yucatan, and Chihuahuan Desert grasslands — Janos and Saltillo). All are linked to corresponding proposals in the U.S., and three have further linkages to Canada based on migratory bird species. The Proposals are large in scope, and promote a long-term vision to increase funding for continental bird conservation. The June 2008 issue of *The All-Bird Bulletin*, dedicated to the importance of continental cooperation, presents important partnership and project needs from the Proposals. To get a copy of this informative issue, contact Deb Hahn at [dhahn@fishwildlife.org](mailto:dhahn@fishwildlife.org).

### U.S. NABCI Committee Members

**Peter Boice**, Department of Defense

**Greg Butcher**, National Audubon Society

**Breck Carmichael**, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources for the Resident Game Bird Working Group

**Bob Ellis**, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries for the National Flyway Council

**Terrell Erickson**, Natural Resources Conservation Service

**Dwight Fielder**, Bureau of Land Management

**Bert Frost**, National Park Service

**David Goad**, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission for the North American Waterfowl Management Plan

**Dale Hall**, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**Sue Haseltine**, U.S. Geological Survey

**Catherine Hickey**, Point Reyes Bird Observatory, for the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan

**John Hoskins**, Chair, Missouri Department of Conservation for the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

**Jim Kushlan**, for Waterbird Conservation for the Americas

**Dave Mehlman**, The Nature Conservancy

**Val Mezainis**, USDA Forest Service

**Gary Myers**, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency for Partners in Flight

**Kirk Nelson**, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission for the Association of Joint Venture Management Boards

**David Pashley**, American Bird Conservancy

**Matt Ponish**, Farm Services Agency

**Vacant**, Migratory Shore and Upland Game Bird Working Group

**Steve Williams**, Wildlife Management Institute

**Scott Yaich**, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.