



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 2009

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 sociocultural divides. The Committee recently revisited its priorities. Through its Subcommittees and work plan, the Committee will focus on the following priorities over the next 3-5 years.

- Advance and support the Bird Habitat Joint Ventures.
- Develop and promote the *State of the Birds* report.
- Increase institutional support for bird conservation.
- Advance effective and efficient bird monitoring.
- Increase the bird conservation benefits of private lands management.
- Promote international conservation.
- Advocate for critically needed policy changes.

For more information on the Committee, please visit <http://www.nabci-us.org>.

August 4-5 NABCI Meeting Summary

Bird Monitoring

The Committee established a Monitoring Subcommittee to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of monitoring strategies through increased cooperation among public and private wildlife organizations in monitoring bird populations and their habitats in North America. The Subcommittee is now acting on specific tasks, including technical aspects of data storage and management. It conducted a workshop in July 2009 with representatives of the bird initiatives, database managers, and IT staff to develop criteria to assess the resources needed to improve the initiatives' priority databases. The Subcommittee is also developing national best management practices for database management.

State of the Birds

The landmark *State of the Birds* report (www.stateofthebirds.org) was completed in March 2009. Its success is being demonstrated in many ways. The report has been cited numerous times in bird conservation testimony on the Hill. Congress cited the report as the driving force behind its allocation of money for the conservation of Hawaiian birds. The website is visited frequently and won the "Website of the Week" award from Voice of America. The Committee continues to promote the report's messages and encourages all organizations and agencies to put a link to www.stateofthebirds.org on their website. The State of the Birds Subcommittee, which created the report, is well on its way to producing the first themed report in 2010. It will focus on birds and climate change.

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Private Lands

The Committee established a Private Lands Subcommittee to increase the bird conservation value of private land management. Recently, a group of partners, including members of the Private Lands Subcommittee, developed a white paper on the importance of increasing biological capacity to effectively deliver conservation programs of the Farm Bill. The white paper (www.nabci-us.org) highlights the need for an increase in Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) capacity and partner biologists. More resources are needed to help state agencies, non-governmental organizations, and NRCS enter into creative agreements to put “boots on the ground” throughout the country to implement conservation programs. The Subcommittee also produced *Field Guide to the 2008 Farm Bill for Fish and Wildlife Conservation*. The guide is available in pdf form at <http://www.nabci-us.org/aboutnabci/FBGuide1.pdf> and as an interactive website at <http://www.nabci-us.org/fbguidhome.htm>. The website will be updated periodically as new information becomes available and as Farm Bill rules are finalized. In March, the Committee commented on interim rules for Farm Bill conservation programs to support bird conservation needs.

International Bird Conservation

The U.S., Canadian, and Mexican members of the Tri-national NABCI Committee are working jointly to help partners implement the Continentally Important Proposals and advance regional alliances in Mexico — goals cited in the NABCI Declaration of Intent signed by all three countries. Working with other partners such as the Sonoran and Rio Grande Joint Ventures, the Tri-national Committee and the national NABCI coordinators submitted a proposal to CEC for \$150,000 for the Northern Grasslands in Mexico. The proposal was accepted. The money will support the creation of a regional alliance, enhanced monitoring, and development of a map of priority grassland areas. The proposal is part of a larger tri-national grasslands strategy.

Joint Ventures

The Committee met with Bird Habitat Joint Venture Coordinators and some of their management board members on August 4 in Arlington, Virginia. Approximately 40 people attended the day long meeting. Participants exchanged information and developed a list of tasks the Committee could work on over the next three years to support the needs of the Joint Ventures, which were the objectives of the meeting.

Communications

The Communications Subcommittee is one of the Committee’s most integral Subcommittees. It will be helping develop common messages for policy issues, private lands conservation, database management, and the *State of the Birds* report. The Subcommittee just completed its communications framework that will guide it over the next 3 years.

U.S. NABCI Committee Members

Peter Boice, Department of Defense

Greg Butcher, National Audubon Society

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

Terrell Erickson, Natural Resources Conservation Service

Arthur Feinstein, Association of Joint Venture Management Boards

Dwight Fielder, Bureau of Land Management

Matt Frank, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for Partners in Flight

Bert Frost, National Park Service

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

David Graham, Ohio Division of Natural Resources for the Migratory Shore and Upland Game Bird Working Group

Sam Hamilton, 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

David Pashley, American Bird Conservancy

Matt Ponish, Farm Services Agency

Steve Williams, Wildlife Management Institute

Scott Yaich, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.

Vacant, Resident Game Bird Working Group