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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 – February 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 sociocultural divides.

The Committee has been making great strides to further integrated bird conservation. Through its work plan, the Committee has focused on the following priorities:

- Advance effective and efficient bird monitoring;
- Advance the science of conservation design;
- Increase institutional support for bird conservation within state and federal agencies;
- Increase the bird conservation benefits of private lands management; and
- Promote international conservation.

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

Bird Monitoring

The Monitoring Subcommittee is working 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. Members of the Subcommittee are from state and federal agencies, NGOs, 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 promote the report's recommendations, the Committee developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which has been signed by NABCI partners. The MOU encourages partners to help advance the report's goals and objectives through their agencies and organizations. The Subcommittee developed a resolution that was approved by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. The Committee is now acting on specific tasks in the report such as technical aspects of data store and statistical design, communications, and developing monitoring sessions at the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference and the Partners in Flight international conference.

Conservation Design

The Conservation Design Subcommittee is facilitating the development of technical tools to improve the bird community's ability to perform conservation design. The Subcommittee is also working to increase knowledge and support for these practices at administrative and management levels. To achieve these goals, the Subcommittee is helping develop technical sessions at the Partners in Flight conference in February 2008. Based on the results of the sessions, the Subcommittee will develop workshops to bring together partners to further advance these conservation tools and techniques.

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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 is currently implementing specific strategies to work with state and federal agencies to help augment their capabilities to contribute to and engage in integrated bird conservation. For example, Committee members meeting with the heads of federal agencies to talk about how to work together toward common conservation goals. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) was the first on the list. Others that are being approached include Bureau of Land Management, Department of Defense, and U.S. Geological Survey.

Private Lands

The Private Lands Subcommittee works to advance bird conservation and management on private lands. In June, the Subcommittee presented information on integrated bird conservation to the NRCS leadership. The presentation discussed monitoring, conservation design, and opportunities for partnerships between the NRCS and the bird conservation community. The Subcommittee is also developing lines of communication with NRCS state biologists and conservationists, and worked with a number of them to produce the June issue of *The All-Bird Bulletin* (<http://www.nabci-us.org/news.html>), which was dedicated to promoting private land conservation projects and programs that benefit birds. The Subcommittee is currently discussing the development of strategic habitat initiatives for birds in conjunction with NRCS and FSA staff. The Subcommittee is also updating the Farm Bill User's Guide developed in the late 1990's. The updated User's Guide will be available as soon as possible after the Farm Bill is reauthorized.

International Bird Conservation

The U.S., Canadian, and Mexican members of the Tri-national NABCI Committee are helping advance regional alliances in Mexico and have developed Continentally Important Proposals (Proposals) — goals cited in the NABCI Declaration of Intent signed in 2005 by all three countries. Partners have developed Proposals for five priority sites in Mexico. All of the them 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 bird conservation. They aim to conserve over 1 million acres of key habitat and benefit hundreds of species.

To advance these and other international priorities, the U.S. NABCI Committee held a joint meeting with the Mexican NABCI Committee in August 2007 in Mexico City. Attending were 11 representatives each from the United States and Mexico and two representatives from Canada. The Committees compared and contrasted bird conservation in the three countries, strengthened their partnerships, and developed a list of priorities for collaboration over the next five years. These include research and monitoring, further development of regional alliances, completion of continentally important proposals, improving communication between the countries and between NABCI Committees, generating additional funding, capacity building in Mexico, developing ways to address major threats that are common among countries, and tri-national species assessment. Meeting minutes are available at www.nabci-us.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

Vacant, Farm Service Agency

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

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

Sue Haseltine, U.S. Geological Survey

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

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

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

Duane Shroufe, Arizona Game and Fish Department for the Migratory Shore and Upland Game Bird Working Group

Steve Williams, Wildlife Management Institute

Scott Yaich, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.