

NABCI NGO SUBCOMMITTEE

DECEMBER 7, 2000

WMI - Washington, DC

Present - George Fenwick, Rollie Sparrowe, Alan Wentz, co-chairs
Paul Baicich, Tony Melchiors, Keith McKnight, David Pashley, Jim Woehr

Relationship between the NGO Subcommittee and the Funding Group - The Funding Group currently consists of individuals who also serve on the NGO Subcommittee, but there is no formal linkage between the two because some actions of the former may not reflect the perspective or goals of all of the members of the latter. Although there would be benefits to the Funding Group if it could claim to somehow officially represent NABCI and the actions of the Funding Group reflect in general the goals of the NGO Subcommittee, it was nevertheless decided to maintain this official separation. The Funding Group, therefore, should not represent the NGO Subcommittee, but rather the individual organizations involved as they support NABCI. Nevertheless, funding issues can be discussed at NGO Subcommittee meetings, eliminating the need for separate meetings of the Funding Group.

Communication Strategy - All agreed that NABCI is widely misperceived, and that effective communication is a very high priority. It was also agreed that, although there are multiple target audiences, the first one consists of staff of partner agencies and organizations. The NGO Subcommittee therefore endorsed the strategy written by Ken Williams. It is probable that \$15K from a grant from the CEC to ABC can be applied to achieve the stated communications goal, and the NGO Subcommittee challenges the Federal Agency Subcommittee to raise an additional \$30K to this end (it being concluded that the \$30K total suggested in the draft strategy is insufficient). Given that it was not clear what exactly would be the best strategy to pursue in terms of contracting professional help and providing guidance, the NGO Subcommittee suggests that a small team be assembled for this task. David Pashley and Jim Woehr could be members of such a team, and it was suggested that Bob Ford, Jack Capp, and Ken Williams be among the others who participate.

Business Plan - The NGO Subcommittee recommends that funding of the above Communications Strategy be incorporated into the US NABCI "business plan" for infrastructural needs.

Legislative Update - The CARA Coalition is exploring options for the next session; the Commerce-Justice Appropriations bill is still in limbo, but may have \$50 million in Title 3 related funds attached. Within USFWS, administration of the Neotropical Bird Act will be carried out in the International Division, while \$50 million in grants to states will be managed by the Endangered Species office. The intent is not to fund projects for listed species, but perhaps to concentrate on conservation of those vulnerable to listing. There will be significant turnover in Committee chairmanship during the next session of Congress.

North American Wetlands Council meeting - The Council met this week, approving a slate of projects for the United States out of the \$40 million recently appropriated. Additional funds will be addressed at the March meeting, where it is expected that \$1.5 million in small grants, funds

for Mexico and Canada, and some minor additional funds will be allocated (approximately \$20 million). A resolution was passed to work with the four bird initiatives to determine if any biases exist among taxa in wetlands in the technical scoring process, with the intent of judging all 2002 projects on the basis of a system that may be revised. There is an intent by Council to inform people about the NAWCA process and to correct any misperceptions. There was also discussion that Council staff should determine how to evaluate more upland projects by the time the 2003 funding cycle begins, should opportunities to fund such projects arise. While the Council wants to protect existing funding and partnerships, it also seeks new funds for upland projects. These new funds can originate from new sources, or perhaps through expansion and evolution of existing authorities. The Council has determined to seek new funding that will extend to the conservation of all birds.

The NGO Subcommittee offers its assistance to the Wetlands Council both in terms of the short-term technical scoring issues and also, most importantly, in the longer term issue of seeking increased funding. David Pashley will draft a letter to be sent to the Chair of the Council from the NGO Subcommittee co-chairs offering such assistance as well as seeking the opportunity to comment on any issues related to the review and scoring of projects.