

# US NABCI Committee Meeting

## Tasks and Summary

### January 24-25, 2006

Committee members in attendance: Bruce McCloskey (IAFWA), Dale Hall, (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), Scott Yaich (Ducks Unlimited), Laurel Moore-Barnhill (For Breck Carmichael, Resident Game Bird Working Group), David Pashley (American Bird Conservancy), Jack Capp (for Val Mezainis, U.S. Forest Service), Richard Bishop (North American Waterfowl Management Plan), Jim Kushlan (Waterbird Plan), Catherine Hickey by phone (Shorebird Plan), Sue Haseltine (US Geological Survey), Gary Kania (The Nature Conservancy), Gary Myers (Partners in Flight), Randy Gray (Natural Resources Conservation Service), Kirk Nelson (Joint Ventures), Sally Benjamin (Farm Service Agency), Don Childress (National Flyway Council), and Greg Butcher (National Audubon Society).

Others: Debbie Hahn, Paul Schmidt, Eric Lawton, Guy Foulks, David Smith, Seth Mott, Bob Ford (by phone), Roxanne Bogart, Steve Hilburger, Garret Lowe, Frank Riviera, and Jaime Pawlak.

The Committee agreed the purpose of meeting was to:

- welcome and introduce new committee members,
- review progress on 2005 work plan objectives,
- modify visions and objectives as needed,
- finalize draft 2006 work plan, and
- plan dates and agenda for August meeting.

#### **Next US NABCI Committee Meeting**

August 28-29, 2006 (Start 8:30am, End 12 pm ET at the latest on day two) - Arlington, VA

Current Topics for the August meeting include but are not limited to the following:

- Specific discussions and modifications to 2006 work plan
- Finalize the details of a potential NABCI award
- Finalize the IAFWA 2006 Plenary session
- Discuss the membership of the Trinational Committee

#### **Tasks**

1. Committee – Provide comments to Roxanne Bogart on the integrated bird conservation one pager (end of month).
2. Committee – Provide Deb with information on your staff person.
3. Committee members attending the North American – Short meeting at North American to look at Bruce’s draft regional presentation. Date and time TBD.
4. Bruce – Provide potential speakers for a Sage Grouse presentation in the plenary to the Conservation Design Subcommittee.
5. Deb – Finalize the Charter to reflect meeting discussion

6. Deb – Finalize the 2006 work plan based on Committee discussions.
7. Deb – Get Bruce on the NE and SE regional association agendas.
8. Deb – Work with Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to ensure their participation on NABCI (by August meeting)
9. Deb – Reinvigorate the International Subcommittee.
10. Roxanne/Deb – NABCI update for the North American meeting.
11. Kirk – Discuss the potential of a NABCI Award with the Joint Ventures at their February meeting.
12. Sally and Randy – Lead a discussion based on ideas from the meeting in regards to the Committee’s involvement in bird conservation on private lands and report back at the August meeting. (Breck, David, Greg, Sue, USFS state and private forestry representative, USFWS private lands program representative, IAFWA).
13. Conservation Design Subcommittee – Conduct a conference call in the next few weeks. Refine the agenda and Craft key messages for the IAFWA plenary session based on Committee discussions. Provide key messages to the Communications Subcommittee for use in Bruce’s regional presentations.
14. Communications Subcommittee – Continue to work with the chairs of each subcommittee to develop communication messages and action plans.
  - a. Laurel – Develop a draft action plan for State Fish and Wildlife Agency bird program managers (by the August meeting)
  - b. Roxanne – Begin developing Bruce’s presentation to the Regional Associations (Draft by North American)
  - c. Roxanne – Finalize the Integrated Bird Conservation one pager
15. Paul Schmidt/Eric Lawton – Plan two meetings—a small strategic meeting to discuss the Subcommittee and a full meeting of the Subcommittee to discuss the charge from the Committee.
16. David and Greg – Reengage the Bird Conservation Funding Coalition

## **Monitoring**

Paul Schmidt presented an overview and the progress of the Monitoring Subcommittee. The next meeting of the Subcommittee is on March 9-10, 2006. An interim report will be available for the North American Conference in March.

The Committee reemphasized the need to communicate the activities of the Monitoring Subcommittee to the larger community. The Committee reiterated its strong support for the direction and momentum of the Monitoring Subcommittee and stressed the importance to the work for the whole US NABCI Committee.

One of the main challenges the Subcommittee faces is completing specific parts of the work without a full time person. There is not full agreement on the Subcommittee whether this is necessary yet. David Pashley offered some assistance from the individual that is being hired to work on a coordinated monitoring plan for the northeastern. He wants this person to implement the NE framework based on work by the Subcommittee and to help with some of the Subcommittee’s work. Bruce McCloskey acknowledged the importance of this effort and offered to provide some support to hire someone if necessary. It was also noted that the USFWS was hiring new monitoring positions. Paul will ask the Subcommittee to come to

final decision whether they need to hire someone or not at the March meeting. He will get back with both Bruce and David after this discussion.

The North American Partnership – A handout was disseminated to provide background on the North American Partnership. The Natural Resource Monitoring Partnership is an interagency effort to create two online databases that would be populated and shared by all interested natural resource agencies: one database for existing monitoring programs and one that for monitoring protocols. They asked for support from the Committee in two particular ways and the Committee agreed to the following.

1. The Monitoring Subcommittee will continue to participate in the development of the databases providing input on data fields, etc.
2. Once the databases are developed the Committee will encourage its members and partners to submit information on their monitoring activities.

Outcomes:

1. Interim documents will be available by the North American Conference.
2. Paul will determine the need for a full time position and discuss this with David and Bruce.
3. Paul will stress the need for the Monitoring Subcommittee members to communicate to their constituents and will put short meeting updates on the NABCI website.
4. The Committee agreed to support the North American Monitoring Partnership as stated above.

## **Conservation Design**

The Committee has been discussing Conservation Design in two veins—improving the communities' ability to perform conservation design by developing the technical tools and increasing the knowledge and support for conservation design at administrative and management levels.

Outcomes:

1. The Committee would like to discuss the potential to facilitate/support additional workshops beyond the April PIF Workshop that could address aquatic habitats or additional technical tools for conservation design
2. The Committee reviewed and commented on the draft agenda for the 2006 IAFWA plenary session. Comments and recommendations included the following.
  - a. The plenary needs clear messages that are woven through all the presentations
  - b. We only have 90 minutes so the last presentation before the wrap up should be removed.
  - c. Bruce's wrap up should be given 10-15 minutes.
  - d. The presentations need to emphasize that this is beyond birds but that birds are the initiators. That we can use birds to do proactive conservation for the state wildlife plans.
  - e. Recommend emphasizing how you use science and management to do your job better and more effectively. Conservation Design is not known by that name by everyone (E.g., collaborative management).

- f. The Conservation Design Subcommittee needs to consider how to get directors interested and in the room (e.g., raffle, we can help you save your job or make your job easier, The information help target NRCS programs?, more effective on the ground conservation, What is good for mussels is good for small mouth bass. etc.)
  - g. Bruce will provide potential names for the Sage Grouse presentation.
  - h. We need concrete action items that we are asking of Directors at the end of the session (E.g., Send your staff to a Conservation Design workshop, Expectation to organization that they need to integrate conservation design, put on a state workshop in conjunction with a JV)
  - i. The Communications Subcommittee will introduce the plenary in Bruce's regional association presentations.
  - j. The Committee discussed having IAFWA's President John Cooper write to the Directors about the importance of the plenary.
  - k. NABCI Committee members that are also in state fish and wildlife agencies need to talk this up (Richard, Don, Duane, Gary, Bruce, Breck, Kirk)
3. The Subcommittee will have a conference call in the next few weeks to move this forward.

## **International**

The U.S., Mexico, and Canada have signed the Declaration of Intent (DOI). The Trinational NABCI Committee has drafted 6 goals for implementation of the DOI, including the development of Trinational projects and regional alliances in Mexico. The DOI has also become part of the Securities and Prosperity Partnership Agenda (SPP) for the Trinational discussions among the governments of each country. Staff (including USFWS, US State Department, Canadian Wildlife Service, Canadian Foreign Affairs, MX CONABIO) are still exploring the SPP expectations. The US State Department has indicated that it is unlikely that much money will come from this partnership. However, in Canada a request for a proposal to begin implementing the DOI was requested. The resulting proposal included 15 Million for starting the Trinational projects. With a change in Administration the fate of the proposal is currently unknown.

The International/Trinational Agenda for the US NABCI Committee has several components a major portion of which is the development of Trinational projects. Mexico has produced five draft proposals from critical sites in Mexico that include Marismas, Chiapas, Janos, Laguna Madre, and the Yucatan. Species lists have been developed for each site. The species lists are currently being used to develop maps that delineate where the birds go in the US and Canada.

**The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act is continuing toward reauthorization. The Senate has recommended a reauthorization level of 10M but the House is recommending 8M.**

The Trinational Committee attended the January meeting of the Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative (WHMSI). The WHMSI meeting was held on January 17-20, 2006 in San Jose Costa Rica. There were approximately 110 participants from 30 different

countries. Although the initiative began as a bird initiative from a request of the Ministers from at the Summit of the Americas it has expanded to be all migratory species. The interim steering committee will continue to guide the initiative in the near term. The interim steering committee will be focused on the GEF proposal for now. Another meeting will most likely be held in 2 years.

#### Outcomes:

1. The Trinational Committee and its counterparts in Canada and Mexico will continue developing the Trinational projects.
  - a. Finalize Mexico proposals by conducting site visits.
  - b. Present developments to the IAFWA Bird Conservation Committee
  - c. Finalize maps.
  - d. Begin developing proposals for the appropriate sites in the US and Canada based on results of the maps.
  - e. Develop a package with all the proposals and pertinent information
2. Develop a one to two page document that explains the need (E.g., biological understanding; threats – identify rapid changes; So what – moral issues? Endangered species? Priority birds? What is in it for me? Keep off the ESA? How many species that could become endangered depend on habitats to the south?)– David, Bob, Frank, Deb
3. Begin targeting funding sources – the recommendation was to develop a one pager that can be shopped around at the same time the proposals are being developed. Communicate the need for big money.
4. The Committee is interested in investigating their relationship to WHMSI and potentially formalizing that in some way depending on what the WHMSI Interim Steering Committee decides. In the same vein, a stronger tie between the Trinational Committee and the US International Subcommittee will be explored.
5. The Trinational Committee will meet in conjunction with the Trilateral meeting in San Diego, CA from May 15-19, 2006.
6. A discussion of potentially changing the composition of the Trinational NABCI Committee was tabled till the August 2006 meeting.

#### **Institutional support**

Much of the discussion focused on the lack of clarity some Committee members have with this section of the work plan. At past meetings, the Committee has agreed that most of the near term actions will be specific to federal and state agencies although NGOs and private landowners are also an audience. As a result, much of the tasks were given to the Federal Agency Subcommittee.

The last meeting of the Federal Agency Subcommittee was on January 9, 2006. The members in attendance expressed frustration about what the Subcommittee's mission is and what role it should play for the Committee. There were also discussions about who will lead the Subcommittee since the employees of the USFS and the USFWS that have played that role in the past are no longer there.

Originally the role of the Subcommittee was to give Federal agencies a voice because the only agency on Committee was the USFWS. The Committee now has a number of Federal Agencies at the table (USFWS, USFS, USGS, NRCS, FSA, and BLM). Even so there are many agencies not at the table and the Committee does not want to lessen the role of Federal agencies in NABCI.

Outcomes:

1. Paul Schmidt and Eric Lawton will get in touch with Ken Williams and Carol Lively to have strategic discussions before setting up a meeting of the entire subcommittee.
  - a. Committee charge to Subcommittee - They stressed that the Subcommittee, like the other Subcommittee's needs to work within the NABCI work plan. They recommend the Subcommittee work through the current work plan tasks and if necessary develop a new strategy to affect federal actions for bird conservation – energy policy, non traditional federal agencies, budget issues, pelagic bird conservation, and information management. This could include developing a presentation for Dale Hall to give to the Federal agency head round table, focusing on agencies that are not at the table such as DOT, or setting up Committee member visits with Federal Agency heads.
  - b. Discuss leadership of the Subcommittee
  - c. Update contact and membership lists.
2. The Committee accepts Dale Hall's offer to take the NABCI message and NABCI priorities to the Federal agency round table meeting.
3. Update the tasks and objective under "Institutionalize Bird Conservation" based on the Federal Agency Subcommittee discussions (August meeting).

### **Private Lands Management**

The Committee has struggled to find its niche in private lands management even though private lands are a critical piece to fulfilling NABCI vision for bird conservation. Possible avenues mentioned include the following.

1. Help guide the placement of Farm Bill dollars with conservation by design.
2. Encourage and facilitate State wildlife agency Directors meeting with their state conservationist (NRCS) or state executive directors (FSA).
3. Encourage and facilitate State wildlife agency or bird conservation practitioner's involvement in state technical committee.
4. Encourage cooperative agreements between State wildlife agencies and state conservationists.
5. Engage NRCS and FSA in implementation of the State wildlife plans.
6. Providing assistance to Charlie Rewa and the CEAP effort.
7. Work with Audubon where needed to help with the waterbirds and farmlands project.
8. Invite State conservationists to State agency regional meeting.
9. Get involved with the IAFWA 2007 Farm Bill reauthorization process.

Outcomes:

1. A small group of people led by Sally Benjamin and Randy Gray will discuss the options listed above and others in regards to the Committee's involvement in bird conservation on private lands and report back at the August meeting. (Breck, David,

Greg, Sue, USFS state and private forestry representative, USFWS private lands program representative, IAFWA).

## **Communications**

The Committee is still supportive of the direction the Strategic Framework and the State Director Action Plan are going. Scott Yaich stressed the need for more participation on the Subcommittee. If any Committee members have communications staff that could participate they should get in touch with Scott.

### **Outcomes:**

1. A 1 page update will be developed for the 2006 North American meeting that highlights the direction of the Committee that is focused on priorities and tasks.
2. Based on the State Director Action Plan
  - a. Roxanne Bogart and the Communications Subcommittee will develop a presentation on NABCI/IBC to be presented at each State Wildlife Agency Regional Association meeting in 2006 beginning in April (draft by North American). The presentation will also be considered for use in other venues such as USFS meetings or the Federal Agency Head Round Table. The presentation will incorporate the following.
    - i. What exciting work NABCI is doing now.
    - ii. What IBC is.
    - iii. What the Directors can expect from the 2006 plenary session
    - iv. A request for a NABCI liaison in each region.
    - v. A recommendation that each regional association consider the development of a bird committee similar to the WAFWA.
  - b. The Communications Subcommittee will work with the Conservation Design Subcommittee on the IAFWA plenary session (see conservation design section below).
  - c. NABCI Awards – The Committee decided that the idea of a NABCI award has potential as long as it is in conjunction with the Joint Ventures (JVs). The Committee asked Kirk Nelson to take the idea to the JVs and see what they think. Kirk will report back on the next conference call.
3. The Communications Subcommittee with Laurel Moore-Barnhill as the lead will develop a draft State bird/diversity program manager action plan.
4. A one pager on Integrated Bird Conservation (IBC) was developed and distributed. Committee members and their staff will review and get comments to Roxanne by the end of the month.
5. The Federal agency action plan is on hold pending the outcome of discussions within the Federal Agency Subcommittee.
6. The Committee recommended keeping the website as up to date as possible with meeting minutes and other documents.
7. The Committee will continue to consider integrating into the new directors forums at the IAFWA annual meetings.

## **Miscellaneous**

1. Greg and David will take the lead on reengaging the Bird Conservation Funding Coalition.
2. Debbie will update the following pieces of the Charter and send out the final.
  - a. 20 members
  - b. Change the sentence under autonomy and partnerships to reflect that the Committee strives to represent “all perspectives of those involved in bird conservation”
  - c. Under Coordinator and Staff strike “but not necessarily one serving on the committee”