

**US NABCI Committee Meeting
Summary and Highlights
June 7 and 8, 2005**

**US Fish and Wildlife Service
Arlington, Virginia**

Committee members in attendance: Matt Hogan (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), Steve Williams (Wildlife Management Institute), Bruce McCloskey (IAFWA), Scott Yaich (Ducks Unlimited), Breck Carmicheal (Resident Game Bird Working Group), Gary Myers (Partners in Flight), David Pashley (American Bird Conservancy – NGOs), Val Mezanis (U.S. Forest Service – Federal Agencies), Richard Bishop (North American Waterfowl Management Plan), Jim Kushlan (Waterbird Plan), Catherine Hickey (Shorebird Plan - 6/7, by phone), Brad Andres (Shorebird Plan -6/8, by phone).

Others: Paul Schmidt, Jack Capp, Debbie Hahn, David Smith, Seth Mott, Dave Vikers, Paul Baicich, Jennifer Wheeler, Gary Kania, Ken Williams.

The Committee agreed the purpose of meeting was to:

- review progress towards draft vision and 2005 work plan objectives,
- modify draft vision and objectives as needed,
- determine resources to accomplish 2005 objectives,
- develop draft 2006 work plan,
- discuss Committee leadership and staff changes, and
- plan dates and agenda for August meeting.

During the meeting, for each action item, the Committee

- received a brief background of the vision and 2005 objectives,
- discussed current status of progress towards that objective,
- proposed changes, as needed, to 2005 objectives as provided by staff,
- developed realistic 2005 results, and
- laid the ground work for the 2006 work plan.

Next US NABCI Committee Meeting

August 29-31, 2005 (2 full days) in Arlington, VA

Topics for the August meeting that resulted from the June meeting include the following.

- Specific discussions and modifications to 2005 work plan items
- Further development of the 2006 Committee work plan
- Conservation Design workshop and discussion (2-3 hours)
- Committee and staff structure

- Update Charter and/or develop MOUs

Committee leadership and staff changes

1. Bruce McCloskey will assume chairmanship of the US NABCI Committee (Committee) for 2 years starting at the August 2005 meeting.
2. Debbie Hahn will assume the role of the US NABCI Coordinator. A transition between Bob Ford and Debbie Hahn will occur through September 2005. Bob Ford will continue to assist with the Trinational NABCI Committee actions at least through the end of 2006.
3. The Committee agreed that formal staff designations are necessary.
Bruce McCloskey – Debbie Hahn
Val Mezanis – Jack Capp
Matt Hogan – Bob Ford (till July 2005)

Committee members discussed potential staffing options
Richard Bishop - Terry Little
Breck Carmichael - Billy Dukes or Laurel Moore-Barnhill..

The Committee also discussed the role of the Bird Initiative coordinators as staff to the appropriate committee member.

Catherine Hickey – Brad Andres
Jim Kushland – Jennifer Wheeler
Gary Myers – Terry Rich

4. The US NABCI Committee formally asked the U.S. Geological Survey to become a member of the US NABCI Committee.
5. Other changes to Committee membership were tabled until the August 2005 meeting. The working group that explored alternatives to Committee structure previously will meet again and provide proposals for consideration during the August meeting.

Communications

The working group has begun work on the Communications Strategy. A draft will be provided to the Committee in August 2005. State Agency Heads were identified as a major audience of a communications message on integrated bird conservation. The Committee agreed that addressing the State Agency Heads at the Regional Association meetings was the best venue.

Communications is fundamentally based around delivering the message of integrated bird conservation to those that need to know. However, the Committee also wants to communicate their annual work plan to target audiences that can help implement and

support specific NABCI objectives. The Committee decided that NABCI was at a point that it needed to be an entity working on issues.

Actions:

1. Present a draft communications strategy for discussion at August 2005 meeting; the working group may incorporate an overview of changes in bird conservation since NABCI inception as part of the communications strategy.
2. Provide NABCI Fact Sheets for the upcoming Regional Association meetings
3. Using Committee members as much as possible, establish a liaison from the US NABCI Committee for each Regional Association meeting.
4. Draft a Special Edition of the All Bird Bulletin for Committee review in August.
5. Develop message for the New Directors Forum at IAFWA meetings, to be reviewed at the August meeting.
 - Specifically, prepare key messages and requests for Regional Association meetings that, for example, incorporate Monitoring objectives and State Plans.
6. Provide an annual update, ideas for the next calendar year work plan to states and initiative councils, re-enforce regional messages at the Bird Conservation Committee at the fall 2005 IAFWA.
7. Explore Doris Duke Foundation grants to state planning efforts – how to integrate NABCI priorities for monitoring.

Monitoring

Paul Schmidt presented a report outline proposed by the Monitoring Subcommittee. The Committee is supportive of the direction the Subcommittee is taking. The Committee asked that the Subcommittee maintain an informal interaction with the IAFWA Science and Research Committee.

Actions:

1. Provide portions of the report will be drafted August to the Committee for review at their August meeting.
2. Provide an update on the proposal drafted under the Bird Conservation Committee NCN at the August meeting.
3. Paul Schmidt requested help with funding members of this Subcommittee for travel and the development of projects and products. Several Committee expressed ability to assist, Paul will contact those members prior to the August meeting.
4. The Monitoring Subcommittee should integrate key messages about monitoring into NABCI messages for Regional Association meetings.

Conservation Design

A working group (David Pashley, Catherine Hickey, Bob Ford, Debbie Hahn, Carol Lively, Jack Capp) proposed that the Committee reconsider, or better define, the value of national workshops on conservation design. The working group recommended that the Committee consider facilitating and encouraging regional workshops instead.

Although the Committee felt this was an important topic, there was agreement that the Committee needed more information about Conservation Design to decide on a plan of action. The Committee asked staff to develop a 2-3 hour discussion on current examples of Conservation Design at the August meeting.

Actions:

1. The working group should develop a 2 to 3 hour workshop for the US NABCI Committee for the August meeting.
 - The workshop should include concepts of conservation design such as multiple scales, adaptable, how birds fit within broader planning work, and incorporate fairly complex ideas.
 - The purpose of the workshop is for the Committee to agree to common understandings and definitions of Conservation Design and, with that understanding, better decide upon a course of action for 2006,
 - The workshop should be developed in such a way that the information provided may be useable by multiple audiences;
 - Workshop topics should include, at a minimum, the following:
 - 1) a definition for Conservation Design that the Committee can consistently use,
 - 2) an overview of what each Joint Venture is doing for Conservation Design by BCR,
 - 3) explore mechanisms to bring non-traditional national perspectives into JV planning (such as Forests on the Edge or Agriculture on the Edge maps, global warming trends, etc),
 - 4) status of NCN for Conservation Design;
 - 5) consideration of range-wide population objectives for each initiative.

International

The Committee expressed support for work that is going on for the reauthorization of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act. The International/Trinational Agenda for the US NABCI Committee has several components; the annotated agenda for the June 2005 meeting provides specific actions and status to date for each of these components.

The Trinational NABCI Committee reported results from their recent meeting in Zacatecus Mexico. Based on the signing of the NABCI Declaration of Intent, the Trinational NABCI Committee developed a Draft Trinational Action Plan that includes 6 broad goals to advance the Declaration of Intent, as follows:

1. Building and sustaining regional alliances in Mexico

The immediate priority is sustaining the regional alliance in Marismas and supporting the development of regional alliances in other priority areas (e.g., Laguna Madre, Yucatan, El Triunfo, and Janos). Each country has designated representatives to further develop project specific proposals for at least 3 areas in Mexico: Marismas, Janos, and Laguna Madre. Draft proposals will be presented at the August meeting. Projects will be closely tied to the further development of Regional Alliances (Joint Ventures) in Mexico, and partnerships among Mexican regional alliances and US and Canada Joint Ventures will be encouraged. The U.S. Forest Service, among others, offered support for proposal writing and planning.

2. Securing sustainable and significant new funding in the three countries for projects of continental importance.

The immediate priority is the development of proposals from Mexico for projects of continental importance involving priority regions in Mexico (e.g., Laguna Madre, Marismas Nacionales, Janos) along with complimentary proposals from Canada and the United States. Continental proposals will be promoted for funding in all three countries

3. Ensuring the development of needed decision-support tools – which could include Coordinated Bird Monitoring, Species Assessments, planning within Bird Conservation Regions

4. Development of a strategy or policy for engaging countries outside of North America

The immediate priority term is exploring linkages/synergies with WHMSI and other existing and emerging international

5. Ensure commitment and support from non-signatory partners for the Declaration of Intent

Priority in immediate term is to obtain supporting documents from non-signatory partners.

6. In recognition of priority on terrestrial ecosystems within NABCI to date, NABCI Trinational intends to promote action to address marine ecosystems and birds

Actions:

1. The U.S. NABCI Committee agreed to the recommendations from the Trinational NABCI Committee and requested frequent status reports on progress.

2. A working group of Committee members and staff will explore opportunities for funding continental projects and other initiatives through international funding sources such as World Bank, GEF and others.
3. The Committee requested more discussion regarding the meeting between WHMSI and the Committee because the Committee was not sure that they had the capacity for such a meeting. The Committee proposed that this meeting could involve the Trinational Representatives only.

Institutional support

The U.S. NABCI Committee agreed that most of these actions were specific to federal and state agencies and required further development through the Communications Strategy. The Federal Agency Subcommittee was not able to meet prior to the June 2005 US NABCI committee meeting, although the Subcommittee plans to meet June 14.

State actions are described above under the Communications Strategy, and emphasize the importance and role of Regional Association of Fish and Wildlife meetings, and interaction with State Wildlife Agency Heads.

Actions:

1. Federal Bureau Directors meet twice a year to discuss priorities and strategy; the Committee will explore with Tom Melius the possibilities for NABCI on their agenda.
2. The Federal Agency Subcommittee will consider a draft strategy for institutionalizing bird conservation across agencies; a report will be provided to the Committee at the August meeting.
3. The Committee recommended that the NGO Subcommittee consider developing a similar strategy, perhaps in conjunction with the next Bird Conservation Alliance meeting.
4. The Federal Agency Subcommittee should have a standing agenda item linked to development and implement of FWS MOUs for bird conservation.

Private landowner technical assistance

David Pashley provided an update regarding the development of technical assistance brochures for biologists working with private landowners. Through a contract with Natural Resources Conservation Service/Farm Service Agency, the American Bird Conservancy (ABC) will develop specific guidelines for agricultural practices in each Bird Conservation Region (BCR) in the U.S. over the next two years. Prototypes will be developed for the Lower Mississippi River Valley and the West Gulf Coastal Plain. The Committee agreed to assist with review, dissemination, and promotion of the brochures once they are complete depending on the needs of NRCS and FSA.

Actions:

1. ABC will use the constituencies and staff of US NABCI Committee member organizations for review and comment on brochures. The list of bird contact developed for the State Wildlife Strategies will be sent to ABC.
2. After review, ABC will provide a statement of endorsement from the US NABCI Committee on brochures and build messages into the Communications strategy.
3. Discuss a template brochure at the August Committee meeting.

Meeting highlights and summary prepared by:
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