

US NABCI Committee Meeting Tasks and Summary August 29-30, 2005

**USFWS Offices
Arlington, Virginia**

Committee members in attendance: Bruce McCloskey (IAFWA), Paul Schmidt (for Matt Hogan, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), Scott Yaich (Ducks Unlimited), Breck Carmichael (Resident Game Bird Working Group), David Pashley (American Bird Conservancy – NGOs), Val Mezainis (U.S. Forest Service – Federal Agencies), Richard Bishop (North American Waterfowl Management Plan), Jim Kushlan (Waterbird Plan), Catherine Hickey (Shorebird Plan), Sue Haseltine (USGS).

Others: Debbie Hahn, David Smith, Seth Mott, Paul Baicich, Jennifer Wheeler, Ken Williams, Dana Roth, Bob Ford, Roxanne Bogart, Mike Wilson, Dan Casey, Jane Fitzgerald, Tim Jones, Bea VanHorne.

The Committee agreed the purpose of meeting was to:

- review progress towards draft vision and 2005 work plan objectives,
- modify visions and objectives as needed,
- develop draft 2006 work plan,
- discuss Committee structure and staff changes, and
- plan dates and agenda for January meeting.

Next US NABCI Committee Conference Call and Meeting

Conference Call

October 28, 2005, 10:30 ET

Agenda

Discuss Draft 2006 Work Plan

Make a decision on a proposed March 2006 Technical Workshop on Conservation Design based on David Pashley's one page description.

Discuss progress on the 2006 IAFWA plenary session

2006 Meeting

January 24-25, 2006 (till 12 pm ET on the 25th) in Arlington, VA

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

- Specific discussions and modifications to 2006 work plan
- Finalizing the 2006 Committee work plan
- Discussion on the pros and cons of a NABCI award

- New Members
- Advancing the IAFWA 2006 Plenary session

Tasks

Deb - Update the Charter to reflect staff and committee structure changes (by end September)

Roxanne/Deb – Finalize Fact Sheet for 2005 IAFWA meeting. (by IAFWA meeting)

Deb/Bruce - Craft and send invitation letters to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Farm Services Agency (FSA), National Audubon Society, Joint Ventures, the Nature Conservancy, the American Bird Conservancy, and the US Forest Service. (by end September)

Bruce – Offer formal invite to the Joint Ventures at their November meeting in Denver, Colorado if there is space on the agenda. (Early November)

Bruce – Contact Don Childress about NFC seat on the US NABCI Committee (Before October Conference Call)

Bruce/Scott/David – Meeting on September 12 at 1:30 in room Governors Chamber A to discuss Bruce’s pitch on the IAFWA plenary session to the Meeting/Awards/Nominating Committee on September 13, 2005.

David Pashley – Produce a one page summary of the proposed technical meeting in March 2006 on Conservation Design for the Committee’s review on the October Conference Call. (Before October Conference Call)

David Pashley/Scott Yaich/Bob Ford – Provide updates to the 2006 Workplan to Debbie by September 23.

Communications Subcommittee – Work with the chairs of each subcommittee to develop communication messages and action plans.

Paul Schmidt/Scott/Roxanne – meet to discuss monitoring messages and action plan after September 2005 Monitoring Subcommittee meeting. (October – November)

Scott Yaich and staff to bird initiative Committee members – Discuss the idea of developing NABCI awards. Present a proposal at the January 2006 meeting.

Roxanne Bogart – Update the website to better reflect NABCI as an entity and NABCI’s priorities.

Communication Subcommittee – Develop a one pager on integrated bird conservation based information in the draft Strategic Framework.

Committee Structure and Staff

The US NABCI Committee (Committee) has been discussing Committee structure and staff needs at the last few meetings. The Committee was looking to resolve these issues at the August meeting.

Bruce McCloskey assumed chairmanship of the Committee for 2 years starting at the August 2005 meeting. Debbie Hahn assumed the role of the US NABCI Coordinator.

Sue Haseltine representing USGS attended the August meeting as the US NABCI Committee's newest member.

Outcomes:

1. The Committee agreed to the following in regards to the structure and function of the US NABCI Committee.
 - A. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Farm Services Agency (FSA), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the National Audubon Society, and Joint Ventures will be invited to become a member of the Committee.
 - B. The US Forest Service and the American Bird Conservancy will be asked to assume an official seat on the Committee. They will no longer represent the Federal Agency Subcommittee and the Non-governmental Subcommittee, respectively.
 - C. The National Flyway Council (NFC) will be approached about continuing membership. The NFC has been absent from meetings for a couple of years and is focused on regulatory issues, which is not within the realm of the US NABCI Committee.
2. The Charter and Committee structure will be reviewed and updated every two years.
3. Persistent absence from Committee meetings will be discussed by the Committee in regards continued membership.
4. All Subcommittees and Working Group will be called Subcommittees. A complete list of Subcommittees is as follows—Monitoring, Federal Agency, Conservation Design, Communications, and International Subcommittees. There is no longer a NGO Subcommittee because the Bird Conservation Funding Coalition exists. The Trinational NABCI Committee will remain the same and the Trinational designees will be members of the International Subcommittee. A member of the Committee will chair each Subcommittee. Subcommittees can be created or disbanded, as the Committee deems necessary to meet its priorities.
5. The Committee agreed that formal staff designations are necessary.
6. The Charter will be updated to reflect the Staff discussion and changes to membership. The Charter update will also include an addendum that lists current Committee representatives and their staff and Subcommittee membership.

Communications

Communications is fundamentally based around delivering the message of integrated bird conservation to those that need to know and to communicate the Committee's annual work plan and accomplishments to target audiences that can help implement and support the Committee priorities. The Committee decided that they was at a point that it needed to be an entity working on issues; therefore, the communication strategy needed to be updated.

A draft Strategic Framework for Communications and an Action Plan for State Directors were presented to the Committee. The Committee was supportive of the direction the Strategic Framework and the Action Plan were going. The Committee realized they need consistent messages communicate to the bird conservation community from the Committee and its Subcommittees. The Committee felt the Strategic Framework did a great job explaining NABCI and could be used as an outreach tool to explain NABCI to others.

Outcomes:

1. The Committee agreed that the Special Edition of the All-Bird Bulletin (ABB) is important; however, because we need more time to craft the specific messages and determine our target audiences the ABB will not be ready in time for the IAFWA September meeting. The Committee asked that NABCI's name be more prominently displayed on the ABB in the future and that we phase in a name change over time so that we end up with a title such as "NABCI's Newsletter."
2. The Committee asked that a Fact Sheet be developed for the IAFWA 2005 meeting that highlights the new direction of the Committee that is focused on goals and priorities.
3. Based on the Draft State Action Plan
 - a. Bruce McCloskey agreed to give a NABCI presentation at each State Wildlife Agency Regional Association meeting in 2006. The idea of establishing liaison from the Committee to each Association is still on the table.
 - b. The Committee agreed to pursue using the plenary session at the 2006 IAFWA meeting to connect NABCI, the conservation of all species through conservation design for birds, and the State Strategies pending Bruce's discussions with the Annual Meeting/Awards/Nominating Committee on September 13, 2005.
 - c. NABCI Awards – Scott and the initiative staff will develop and present a proposal at the January 2006 meeting to accept or reject the idea of developing

NABCI awards. The Committee wants the group to discuss the connection with the PIF and NAWMP awards, how a NABCI award would integrate the other initiatives into the fold and whether NABCI awards are necessary.

4. Need to develop 3 or 4 other Action Plan drafts. The Communications Subcommittee will work with the Chairs of the other Subcommittees to develop the drafts. The drafts will be based on the conceptual framework laid out in the draft Action Plan for State Directors and will be developed using the questions Roxanne laid out in her presentation of the Strategic Framework.
5. The Committee OKed the new template for NABCI Fact Sheets.
6. The Committee recommended that a one pager on Integrated Bird Conservation be developed. Much of the information is already on page 15 of the draft Strategic Framework.
7. The Committee recommended updating the website to better reflect what NABCI is doing and increase the profile of NABCI. The website should highlight the priorities of the Committee.

Monitoring

Paul Schmidt and Bea VanHorne presented an overview, and progress and outlook update of the Monitoring Subcommittee. The next meeting of the Subcommittee is on September 28-30, 2005.

The Committee was supportive of the direction the Subcommittee is taking. 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. The Committee feels that the Monitoring Subcommittee's work is long term, should be nonjudgmental and value-added, and move slow enough to make sure all the partners invested in monitoring are included.

Even though the Cornell Lab of Ornithology is on the Monitoring Subcommittee, the point was made that the one missing piece of the Monitoring Subcommittee was a strong citizen science component. The Committee acknowledged the ongoing debate on monitoring occurring in the scientific community but asked that for the sake of conservation the Monitoring Subcommittee move forward while the debate continues and not get drawn into it.

Outcomes:

1. All documents and reports will be vetted and reviewed by the Committee.
2. The Committee supported the idea of a post doc to help advance the work of the Subcommittee.
3. The Monitoring Subcommittee should work with the Communications Working Group to develop and integrate key messages about monitoring into NABCI messages for Regional Association meetings, fact sheets, and in the development of Action Plans.

Conservation Design

Based on the recommendations of a team of people (David Pashley, Catherine Hickey, Bob Ford, Debbie Hahn, Carol Lively, Jack Capp), the Committee decided to increase its knowledge of Conservation Design in order to reevaluate the role of the Committee in advancing Conservation Design. A 3-hour workshop was held on Monday afternoon. The purpose of the workshop was to agree to common understandings and definitions of Conservation Design and, with that understanding, decide upon a course of action for 2006.

The presentations included an overview or general framework for conservation design (Seth Mott) and three examples of how Conservation Design is practiced in the Intermountain West JV (Dan Casey), Central Hardwoods JV (Jane Fitzgerald), and Atlantic Coast JV (Tim Jones). The presentations were followed by an extensive discussion on the Committee's role in Conservation Design and focused around 5 topics (biological integrity, implementation linkages, accountability, mega trends [global warming, disease, etc.], and international linkages).

The workshop was well received by the Committee. The Committee agreed that the Overview presented a good framework for Conservation Design. They felt the framework would promote the development of compatible approaches to Conservation Design while allowing ecological differences to influence the details and allow for creativity. Overall, the Committee felt that

1. at a broad level JVs should be on the same page when performing Conservation Design;
2. there might be ways that the Committee could influence policy such as the Farm Bill with the information from Conservation Design for birds;
3. that evaluation and accountability are a key part; and
4. that the overall framework of Conservation Design needs to be communicated.

The Committee discussed changing Bird Conservation Region (BCR) boundaries. Numerous JVs in the United States would like to update the BCR boundaries. The Canadian NABCI Committee has voted not to update BCR boundaries in Canada and Mexico needs some time to work with the current map before making changes. It was acknowledged that the US could change its boundaries without Mexico and Canada changing theirs but that the same

decision rules should be used when the three countries make changes. No decision was made.

Outcomes:

1. Pursue collaborating with the IAFWA meeting in 2006 to promote a link between conservation design, all wildlife, and the State Strategies. Conserve birds and you conserve many other species. A meeting between Scott Yaich, David Pashley and Seth Mott will be held in October to brainstorm on the IAFWA plenary session.
2. The Committee is considering supporting a technical workshop on conservation design but felt it needed more information. David Pashley will write a one pager to better define the what, why, and who of the workshop. The Committee will make a decision on their October conference call. In the meantime, PIF will discuss the idea at its Implementation Committee meeting in September.

International

The U.S., Mexico, and Canada have signed the Declaration of Intent. The Trinational NABCI Committee has drafted 6 goals for implementation of the Declaration of Intent, 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 Dept, CWS, Canadian Foreign Affairs, MX CONABIO) are still exploring the SPP expectations, but an Action Plan (under development) and specific habitat and capacity building projects seem to be a high priority. The International/Trinational Agenda for the US NABCI Committee has several components; the Updates and Committee discussion was broken down below by the components.

1. **Developing Continental/Trinational Projects** – Bob Ford, Debbie Hahn, Greg Wathen, representatives from Mexico (Humberto Berlanga, etc) and from Canada (Gary Donaldson and Silke Neive) have been working on the development of initial proposals for three sites in Mexico. The next steps are to refine these proposals, have site visits from US and Canadian representatives, and to develop US and Canadian proposals that are complimentary. A discussion about Continental Projects will be had at the IAFWA’s Bird Conservation Committee.
2. **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.

3. **Development of a strategy or policy for engaging countries outside of North America** – The priority in the immediate term is to explore linkages/synergies with the Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative (WHMSI). To this end, Marina Ratchford and Paul Schmidt presented a short history of WHMSI and invited the US Committee to attend the January 2006 WHMSI meeting in Costa Rica. The Canadian and Mexican councils have been invited also. The Canadian Wildlife Service is interested in developing a better connection to WHMSI.

When Jon Turner was at the State Department he was one of the champions of the initiative. The first meeting of WHMSI was about 1.5 years ago in Chile. Both Gary Myers and David Pashley represented the Committee at this meeting. An interim steering committee was developed and the NGO representative chosen was David Pashley. Since the meeting a matrix of needs has been developed and progress has been made to increase the number of countries involved in the initiative. The purpose of the meeting in Costa Rica is to pursue capacity building, discuss the WHMSI structure, formalize WHMSI documents and discuss the connection to NABCI and other initiatives.

4. **Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act** – The reauthorization is moving forward. We hope to have it reauthorized in September and October. Likely changes include an increased authorization level to 8 or 10 million, insertion of Canada into the Act and changing the match requirements to 1 to 1.
5. **In recognition of priority on terrestrial ecosystems within NABCI to date, NABCI Trinational intends to promote action to address marine ecosystems and birds**

Outcomes:

1. Paul Schmidt will provide an update on the Trinational Projects at the IAFWA Bird Conservation Committee meeting in September, expected discussion points include the potential opportunities with State Wildlife Grants and overlap from the presentation there by Brad Jacobs.
2. Site visits to Mexican projects (Canada, US, Mexican biologists) will occur this fall or winter to strengthen the habitat conservation portions of each proposal and to further explore linkages to sites and partners in the US and Canada.
3. The Committee asked that the Trinational members attend the WHMSI meeting in January if possible. It was recommended that the Committee chair attend also.

4. NABCI staff and others will continue to explore the opportunities for development of Mexican Regional Alliances through the Mexican MesoAmerican Biological Corridor Project.
5. Continue to explore opportunities with the SPP agenda and expectations from each country's government.
6. Explore potential for presentation about the Mexican habitat proposals at the 2006 IAFWA meeting in Colorado – one theme is wildlife in Mexico.
7. The potential for a NABCI presentation at the WHMSI meeting will be investigated. A recommendation was made that if such a presentation happened it may be better for a Mexican NABCI representative to make it.

Institutional support

The Committee agreed that most of these actions were specific to federal and state agencies and required further development through the Communications Strategy. The last meeting of the Federal Agency Subcommittee was on June 14. However, since both Bob Ford and Jack Capp have left their previous positions, the Subcommittee is currently without permanent leadership. The US Forest Service has agreed to be the interim lead until Bob and Jack's positions are refilled and additional federal agencies are invited to join the Committee. At that time the long term leadership of the Subcommittee will be revisited.

Outcomes:

1. The Committee agreed to move the 2005 tasks into 2006 because of the leadership changes. The Committee decided to update the vision to better reflect its focus on State and Federal agencies.

Private landowner technical assistance

David Pashley provided an update regarding the development of technical assistance brochures for biologists working with private landowners. The Committee had a discussion on what NABCI's role is since this is a contract between NRCS and ABC. The Committee does not want to appear to be taking credit for aspects of the contract.

Outcomes:

1. The Committee decided that they would like to update the vision and develop a different 2006 objective to better reflect the need to work on private lands. The Committee is still willing to support NRCS and ABC when developing the guidelines but will not be listing the action in their 2006 work plan objective.

2. The Committee discussed the potential need for a private lands Working Group and decided to wait till NRCS and FSA are at the table to begin discussing 2006 private lands tasks or a working group for private lands.