

**US NABCI Committee Meeting**  
**Tasks and Summary**  
**August 28-29, 2006**  
**Arlington, Virginia**

Committee members in attendance: Bruce McCloskey (AFWA), Paul Schmidt (for Dale Hall, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), Breck Carmichael (Resident Game Bird Working Group), David Pashley (American Bird Conservancy), Carol Lively (for Val Mezainis, U.S. Forest Service), Richard Bishop (North American Waterfowl Management Plan), Catherine Hickey (Shorebird Plan), Sue Haseltine (USGS), Gary Myers (Partners in Flight), Steve Williams (Wildlife Management Institute), Dwight fielder (Bureau of Land Management), Dave Mehlman (The Nature Conservancy), Greg Butcher (National Audubon Society), Randy Gray (Natural Resource Conservation Service), Sally Benjamin (Farm Service Agency), Kirk Nelson (Association of Joint Venture Management Boards).

Others: Debbie Hahn, David Smith, Seth Mott, Ken Williams, Roxanne Bogart, Chris Eberly, Peter Boice, Eric Lawton, Steve Hilburger, Judd Howell, Antoinette Condo, Herb Raffaele.

The Committee agreed the purpose of meeting was to:

- discuss progress on 2006 objectives,
- modify 2006 objectives and tasks as needed,
- determine resources needed to complete 2006 objectives,
- review products of the Subcommittees, and
- plan dates and agenda for Winter 2007 meeting.

**Next US NABCI Committee Meeting**

February 27-28, 2007 (till 12 pm ET on the 28th) in Arlington, VA

**Tasks**

Deb - Update Charter, Work Plan and Committee Contacts to reflect staff and committee changes

Conservation Design Subcommittee –

1. Receive comments on presentations (by September 6).
2. Finalize presentations (by September 8)
3. Finalize Bruce's talking points with updates from meeting (by September 8).
4. Expand subcommittee membership to include the St. Louis workshop planners and the IPA position between the NRCS and TNC.
5. Get an evaluation of the St. Louis workshop from workshop attendees (What were the strengths and weaknesses? What do they think the next steps should be?)

**6. Redraft the Vision for Conservation Design in the Work Plan.**

Greg Butcher – Discuss Audubon’s willingness to lead the Communications Subcommittee with support of Audubon’s new Communications Director (ASAP).

Private Lands Subcommittee –

1. Develop the agenda for the half-day NRCS bird management workshop in 2007 (by November 2006)

Communications Subcommittee –

1. Continue to work with the chairs of each subcommittee to develop communication messages and action plans.
2. Kirk Nelson will develop the details of the NABCI award with the help of Paul Schmidt, Dave Mehlman, and Catherine Hickey. The first award will be presented at the North American in March 2007.
3. Finalize Fact Sheet for 2006 AFWA meeting. (by AFWA meeting)

International Subcommittee –

1. Bruce and Herb Raffaele will sign the NABCI/WHMSI agreement
2. The Committee would like the International Subcommittee in coordination with the Tri-national Committee to pursue a joint meeting with the Mexican NABCI Committee in the summer 2007. The meeting will most likely be preceded by a small meeting of a few US NABCI members meeting with some key Mexican partners in March or April 2007.

Federal Agency

1. The Committee accepted the proposal. They would like a report at their February meeting about the status of the Subcommittee and how the Subcommittee recommends proceeding with the tasks in the Work Plan.
2. The Committee recommended that Bruce meet with the new head of the NRCS to discuss NABCI and integrated bird conservation.

**Committee Membership and Staff Updates**

1. Peter Boice will represent Department of Defense on the Committee. Chris Eberly will be his staff.
2. Catherine Hickey is now the Shorebird Plan representative
3. Terry Little has stepped down as staff to the NAWMP member due to position changes.

**Monitoring**

Paul Schmidt presented the draft interim report *Opportunities for Improvements in Avian Monitoring*. The report was well received by the Committee. The members agreed that they were all comfortable in general with the report even though they had some comments. The Committee asked that comments be solicited from the broader

community. Comments should be received by October 16, 2006. A cover letter was drafted and any minor comments from Committee members should be sent to Paul Schmidt by September 1, 2006. The draft interim report will be sent out for review and comment the week of September 4, 2006. Committee members will be responsible for forwarding the report and cover letter to their constituency. Most likely the Subcommittee will meet in fall/winter 2006 to discuss and address the comments. An updated draft will be submitted to the Committee before their February meeting. Major comments included

- We don't want to dissuade good conservation actions because they do not have intensive monitoring programs
- The development of national "guidelines" or a national "framework" for monitoring would be ideal. The product would not necessarily have regulatory teeth but would be consulted and followed in the development of any monitoring program.
- They would like to see some prioritization of goals and actions.
- They would like to see an implementation strategy that fleshes out the priorities and exactly who would do what.

#### Outcomes:

1. The Draft interim report will be sent out for review and comment the week of September 4, 2006.
2. Comments should be received by October 16, 2006.
3. An updated report with comments addressed will be completed by late December and submitted to the Committee for review at their February meeting.
4. The Committee needs feedback on what an MOU would look like and the Subcommittee's recommendations for the 2007 Work Plan tasks.

#### **Private Lands**

Randy Gray and Sally Benjamin lead the discussion. They presented the 5 recommended tasks of the Subcommittee to the Committee. The Committee asked that a new member be added to the Subcommittee from the IOWA Department of Natural Resources.

#### Outcomes

1. Develop a half-day training on integrated bird conservation at the NRCS National Biology Workshop in Albuquerque, NM on March 28, 2007. - The Committee was supportive and excited about the opportunity to interact with both the NRCS biologists and the State Conservationists. The Committee recommended that a subset of the Subcommittee (David Pashley, Terry Rich, Brad Andres, Jennifer Wheeler, Catherine Hickey, Dave Klute, Dave Mehlman, Greg Butcher and one additional state representative) be approached to develop the agenda by November 2007. We want to influence how the money is spent to help improve bird conservation on the ground. The agenda could include information on the variety of bird plans that are available, the work American Bird Conservancy is doing with NRCS, scenarios or examples of management actions that have a positive impact on birds from a habitat perspective, technical information that could help identify where the money could be spent for bird conservation, or case

- studies (prairie chickens in eastern NM, mountain plovers or the use of EQUIP) that identify opportunities for collaboration between programs (e.g., NRCS and state programs, USFWS partners program, etc.) to demonstrate how to enhance the benefits of all programs.
2. Farm Bill User's Guide – The Committee recommended waiting till the Farm Bill was reauthorized to update the Farm Bill user's guide.
  3. Active participation in the reauthorization of the 2007 Farm Bill to ensure bird conservation is adequately addressed – The Committee felt that every NGO and State at the table was already involved in the reauthorization. The recommendation to the Subcommittee is to work with Jen Mock and the AFWA Farm Bill Working Group as needed. They also discussed using the Bird Conservation Alliance to get grass roots groups more involved in the Farm Bill. They asked for an update on reauthorization from Jen Mock at their February 2007 meeting.
  4. Provide input into the Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP) as it relates to bird habitat conservation when requested – Charlie Rewa gave a presentation on CEAP. More information can be found on the website - [www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/NRI/ceap](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/NRI/ceap). The intent is to document the effects of conservation practices on fish and wildlife resources. NRCS conservation programs have about 160 different practices (riparian buffers, in field buffers, tree establishment, nutrient management, etc.). The question is how they are working together and what effects do they have on fish and wildlife resources? Ray Evans is working with AFWA to gather research and monitoring information for the project. The Committee recommended that it is necessary to look at the economic benefits also. WMI has some information on the economic benefits.
  5. Determine how the State Wildlife Action Plans can be used to further the conservation of birds on private lands – The Committee recommended this be a longer term goal and that the Subcommittee work with Dave Chadwick and NRCS on this task.

### **Institutional support**

At the request of the Committee, the last meeting of the Federal Agency Subcommittee was in July 2006. The objective of the meeting was to discuss the future of the Federal Agency Subcommittee. Paul Schmidt and Eric Lawton presented the following proposal from the Subcommittee

Reform both the federal agency subcommittee and the PIF Federal agency committee to consolidate and reduce duplication. For the next year, have meetings in January and August before the NABCI meetings. Paul will lead the formation of a meeting in January 2007 and will solicit ideas for topics. After a year, Subcommittee will revisit whether this approach is working and if there is still lack of attendance and lack of tasks it will dissolve. This proposal will be presented to the PIF Council in September 2006.

Outcomes:

1. The Committee accepted the proposal. They would like a report at their February meeting about the status of the Subcommittee and how the Subcommittee recommends proceeding with the tasks in the Work Plan.
2. The Committee recommended that Bruce meet with the new head of the NRCS to discuss NABCI and integrated bird conservation.

### **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.

#### **Outcomes:**

1. The Committee asked Greg Butcher to consider taking over as the Chair of the Communications Subcommittee.
2. The Committee asked that a Fact Sheet be developed for the 2006 AFWA meeting.
3. Liaisons to the State regional associations include Breck, Gary, Bruce, and Kirk. We need to find a liaison for the northeast.
4. The Committee expressed a concern about using email to correspond with administrators although this might be effective at the staff level.
5. The Committee asked that a future All Bird Bulletin highlights the new hot linked BCR map and the Monitoring Subcommittee work.
6. A NABCI award will be presented at the USFWS Directors Reception at the North American Conference in March 2007. Kirk will lead a group of people including Catherine Hickey and Dave Mehlman to finalize the details of the award. They will talk with the PIF Awards Committee to ensure communication.
7. The Committee asks that PIF articulate the objectives of the partner survey including some sample questions and provide that to the NABCI Committee at their February 2007 meeting. They asked that PIF work with the other initiatives when doing this.
8. The Committee asked for recommendations for changes and additions to the Work Plan priorities at their February 2007 meeting.

### **Conservation Design**

David Pashley and Seth Mott presented the presentations and talking points for the Plenary Session. Handouts describing conservation design examples from around the country will be provided at the plenary and in the State Directors welcome packets. They will include some fish habitat examples. The Committee recommended that we stress that "Conservation Design" is not a new catch phrase but really a process similar to adaptive management, TNC's Conservation by Design, or FWS's Strategic Habitat Conservation that includes good science, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Outcomes:

1. Committee member comments on the talking points or the presentations should be sent to David Pashley by September 6.
2. The State Director Packets should include a memo that is ready to send to one of their staff asking that they brief the Director on what their state is doing on conservation design.
3. The amount and list of funding sources will be added to the handouts where available.
4. The Subcommittee will expand Subcommittee membership to include the St. Louis workshop planners and the IPA position between the NRCS and TNC. They will get an evaluation of the workshop from workshop attendees (What were the strengths and weaknesses? What do they think the next steps should be?). They will re-craft the Vision for Conservation Design in the Work Plan.

**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.

Paul Schimdt provided an update on the Trinational Projects. The Tri-national Committee of the NABCI is seeking to fund up to 5 continentally important, Tri-national Projects, to promote and further bird conservation efforts in Mexico, the United States, and Canada. The Committee envisions that the proposals will be ambitious in breadth and scope, demonstrating the critical need and benefits for international partnerships to achieve significant accomplishments in migratory bird conservation. The Committee further expects that each project will deliver between \$2-3 million in migratory bird conservation benefits, with a total of up to \$10-15 million to be expended over a 3-5 year period.

The Tri-national Committee and its staff are working with Joint Ventures in the U.S. and Canada to begin developing proposals that complement and add to the Mexican proposals developed in April 2006. Workshops will be held in the fall/winter 2006 for partners in Mexico, Canada, and the U.S. to integrate the proposals.

The International Subcommittee met in August 2006. They will meet in late October to determine where to go as a Subcommittee. One task will be the meeting with Mexico NABCI (see outcomes below).

Outcomes:

1. Bruce and Herb Raffaele will sign the NABCI/WHMSI agreement
2. The Committee would like the International Subcommittee in coordination with the Tri-national Committee to pursue a joint meeting with the Mexican NABCI Committee in the summer 2007. The meeting will most likely be preceded by a

small meeting of a few US NABCI members meeting with some key Mexican partners in March or April 2007.

3. Changes to membership on the Trinational Committee include Dave Mehlman as NGO representative and Carol Lively as the Federal representative. Gary Myers will retain his seat as the State representative.