

PARTNERS IN FLIGHT/SHOREBIRD/WATERBIRD WORKING GROUP

Report

Wednesday, March 9, 2022

87th North American Fish and Wildlife Conference Virtual Meeting

Chair: Vacant

Vice-Chair: Eric Gardner, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Highlights:

- 47 people attended
- The WG is still without a Chair and is in need of a new chair and vice-chair
- Reports were provided on PIF, US Shorebird Conservation Plan, and the Waterbirds of the Americas Conservation Plan Council
- Technical difficulties led to challenges with 2 agenda items (an issue with a remote participant, not N.A. or Whova related)
- The 2022 work plan, including the 2021 report was reviewed and subsequently finalized
- Translator services a challenge for international work such as being conducted by the Waterbirds of the Americas Conservation Plan Council (consider an NCN?)

Agenda

8: 00 a.m. Welcome/Introductions/Review Agenda

Eric Gardner, Washington Dept. Fish & Wildlife

- Introduction of Susana Mateos- Bird Conservation Program Manager and U.S.

NABCI Coordinator

- Discuss the need for a new Chair and Vice-chair of the WG

8: 30 a.m. Goal 1: Integrate outcomes of land bird, shorebird, and waterbird initiatives

- Partners in Flight – Bob Ford;

See PowerPoint and PIF summary document; highlights included:

The Partners in Flight Steering Committee launched a long- and short-term visioning exercise to consider obstacles and opportunities for bird conservation for the next 10 – 30 years and to determine desired short term (1-2 years) results. For long term visioning, three working groups were formed to consider Partners in Flight's

- History – successes and challenges,
- Engagement with diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice topics, and
- Future obstacles and opportunities in bird conservation (“Horizon scanning”).

Partners in Flight Steering Committee held two virtual sessions of three hours each to identify how the Steering Committee can best function to ensure that we continue to look forward and use the strength of the Partners in Flight network to address challenging topics as they arise for bird conservation.

- US Shorebird Conservation Plan Partners / Council – Brad Andres

See PowerPoint and check to see if a written summary can be provided; highlights included:

Will be working with IMJV and eBird on a shorebird project, a priority project for the Pacific Flyway Nongame Technical Committee. UT focus.

- Waterbirds of the Americas Conservation Plan Council – Dave Gordon; no summary document provided.

Highlights included: Held meeting with over 30 participants; there was a lot of support to pull the group together in a formal setting. Scheduling of follow-up meetings is in progress (should occur this spring); looking into options for translator services – this is a significant challenge for this type of international partnership. Eric suggested considering a NCN for this type of service. Group will update governance documents. A Doodle poll will be sent to setup the next Waterbirds meeting.

9:00 a.m. Goal 2: Address significant threats to land bird, shorebird, and waterbird populations

- Loss of habitat – grasslands; properly managed, contiguous forests; wetlands and

shorelines

Planning for a grasslands workshop in CO is moving ahead (shooting for May 2022); mtg on Mtn. plover

- Mortality factors – predation by free-ranging domestic cats; collisions with

building glass; neonicotinoids

No updates provided

- Update on Common Threats Analysis; discussion on next steps – John Alexander

Last meeting - presented an example of common threat analysis using Open Standards for Conservation common lexicon (CMP Direct Threats Classification v 2.0)

Included cross geography and cross taxa examples

Next steps -- move to crosscutting strategies framework

Now being applied

Sara Schweitzer -- Atlantic Flyway Nongame Migratory Bird Technical Section's Landbird Committee

Small group to work on prioritizing species and habitats to focus on, as well as actions.

Once the species were identified, worked through the common threats analysis procedure using data, conservation plans, literature, etc. available.

Once High and Medium threats were identified, we worked through a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats exercise.

SWOT results identified potential actions or projects states could take for each species.

We presented these findings at the flyway meetings and received feedback

Following up soon to work through the feedback to determine next steps to take, and actions to pursue.

Becky Stewart -- Mid-elevation Forests Conservation Investment Strategy
Focused on forest (and shade coffee plantations) as conservation target
helps address major threats to migratory birds, broadens scope, addresses multiple species
mid-elevation forest of focal interest was defined by the distributions of 3 focal migratory bird species (see below)
3 conservation targets: GWWA, CERW, CAWA plus residential birds for each country
BUT the main focus is where their threats are common and related to habitat loss and degradation
Compiled threats and strategies from previous plans
Confirmed threats and strategies with larger group, prioritized accordingly
Then undertook Conservation Standards process to unpack 5 of those strategies
Similar approach is being taken for the Gulf-Caribbean slope

Brad Andres -- Midcontinent Shorebird Conservation Initiative's Conservation Framework
Developed a situational model for midcontinent North and South America.
Used the lexicon as background for developing list of threats
Used the threat-ranking tool (scope, severity and irreversibility) to identify threats within designated ecoregions and throughout North and South America
Used the lexicon as background for identifying a set of strategies and then rated strategies based on potential impact, feasibility, and urgency.
Developed multiple theories of change for North and South America.

John Alexander -- Western Forest Birds and western Joint Ventures
We are cross walking threats from Western Forest Conservation Investment Strategy with western forest restoration priorities funded through Infrastructure Package
This could be a huge opportunity to steer investments in western forests restoration to ensure benefits to birds

9: 20 a.m. Goal 3: Evaluate new strategies for bird conservation action & make recommendations to AFWA leadership

● Data management needs - John Alexander

Two large Avian Knowledge Network data pushes recovering data that were at risk of being lost as support for federal database management was being lost.

Colonial Waterbird data extension

Started with Pacific and Mississippi Flyway standardization of monitoring methods and data forms (WMI contract)

Atlantic Flyway funded a large data push, training, and decision support project

Atlantic Flyway – 23,711 in warehouse, 43,580 in catalog, sampling locations 6021

Atlantic Historic – 92,001 in warehouse, 11,873 in catalog

The USFS Region 8

20 years of bird data through 2020 have been uploaded (i.e., federated) and stored into the Avian Knowledge Network (AKN)

1,116,951 observations and 13,716 sampling locations.

Data entry system has been created and is ready for partner review and testing

Species distribution modeling project is underway; scoping, Landsat processing, and user interface (UI) development have been completed, and data processing is underway in order to produce the models.

DoD investing in development of AKN enterprise System coalescing and delivering historic and ongoing data projects

Ongoing training (one 2-day training this week at NA)

Protocol standards

Decision support

- Road to Recovery Initiative - Paul Schmidt

Action Item, fix agenda and notes to reflect correct name (Paul) Schmidt

See PowerPoint. Highlights included:

Will be holding virtual Engagement Sessions:

1. State programs
2. International

Hiring a ½ time state director, in place in April, then a Bio and a Social Scientist. Later-on hope to hire International/policy support position. Looking to find and secure additional match. Hoping to support species working groups or establish where needed. Secured funding for Golden-winged Warbler, Lesser Yellowlegs, and Evening Grosbeak Pilot Projects.

Discussion about lesser yellowlegs as a focal species; important to the Mississippi Flyway & others.

[Road to Recovery Guidance Document](#) updated in July 2021.

9: 40 a.m. Goal 4: Support policies, legislation, and funding initiatives that favor land bird,

shorebird, and waterbird protection and restoration. Identify high priority issues affecting the conservation of land bird, shorebird, and waterbird populations and habitats and provide recommendations on these issues to the Bird Conservation Committee.

- Updates on current legislation affecting bird populations and habitats

- o MBTA

Mention of UT legislation re: water conservation related to The Great Salt Lake and federal legislation for The Great Salt Lake and similar waterbodies

9:50 a.m. Review & Edit 2021-2022 Work Plan; Further Discussion; Items for read-out to BCC

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Plan was quickly reviewed, participants asked to provide comments by end of week (3/11/22). None was received and the Work Plan is now final.

10:00 a.m. Adjourn