



## Waterfowl Working Group 2018-19 Work Plan

<b>Subcommittee Work Plan</b>		
<b>Date: September 4, 2018</b>		
<b>Subcommittee Name:</b> Waterfowl Working Group		
<b>Chair:</b> Jeff Ver Steeg, CPW	<b>Vice Chair:</b> Craig LeSchack, DU	<b>Staff:</b> Dean Smith
<b>Subcommittee Charge:</b>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Contribute to the implementation of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) 2012 Revision to conserve priority landscapes for waterfowl habitat and to advance the human dimensions aspects of the Plan.</li> <li>2. Advance policies, legislation, and funding initiatives (NAWCA and others) in support of wetland protection and restoration, with consideration of drought, water quality, and climate change issues.</li> <li>3. Fully implement the <i>AFWA Action Plan for State Contributions to Waterfowl and Wetland Habitat Conservation Projects in Canada</i>.</li> <li>4. Initiate and support wetland and waterfowl habitat information sharing with Congress, state, federal, and NGO partners, and the public.</li> </ol>		
<b>Changes to the Charge:</b> None		
<b>List Major Activities and Objectives Accomplished During the Last Year:</b>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Guidance document prepared by USFWS for Use of PR Funds for NAWMP Projects in Canada</li> <li>2. Initiated development of a Business Case for investment in the breeding ground – Southwick – econ benefits to link where birds come from to the state where harvested.</li> <li>3. The Waterfowl Working Group discussed the widespread wetland drainage/conversion occurring in the Prairie Pothole Region and initiated an action item for the Bird Conservation Committee. As a result, the AFWA President sent a letter to the USDA expressing the immediate urgency that NRCS take appropriate action to:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Resume use of current, technically rigorous methods for wetland determination;</li> <li>b. Ensure intent of Swampbuster is implemented and public benefits of wetlands are retained;</li> <li>c. Provide a commitment to use appropriate data necessary to accurately delineate wetlands, consistent with the OIG report and the Congressional intent of Swampbuster provisions.</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Engaged the State Contributions Task Force to initiate a branding effort to enhance the profile and exposure of this important international conservation program.</li> </ol>		

**List Activities and Objectives that Will be Accomplished in the Coming Year:**

**1. NAWMP Implementation**

- a) Facilitate discussions to identify and promote ways to better understand and incorporate user / supporter desires (human dimension elements) in planning and delivering waterfowl management actions and assist in the coordination of NAWMP human dimension efforts with other BCC bird working groups, NABCI, Flyway Councils, etc.
- b) Support the efforts of the HDWG-PET to 1) find additional resources for further analysis of the HD survey data, 2) encourage states to include waterfowl hunting in their R3 planning, and 3) initiate development of a birdwatching R3 Plan.
- c) Identify priority actions to assist states, NGOs and others to effect waterfowl conservation at state and national levels and to achieve the new NAWMP objectives.
- d) Continue to provide overviews of NAWMP implementation, including reports from IIC, PET, HDWG, etc. and discuss the direction and needs of the waterfowl community to advance the implementation of the 2012 NAWMP Revision and development of the 2018 NAWMP Update.
- e) Seek ways and means to encourage increased integration of waterfowl management elements through discussions and contribute to a potential review of the efficiency of existing waterfowl management processes and structures.
- f) Encourage participation in efforts to advance NAWMP implementation.

**2. Wetland Conservation / Protection**

- a) Re-establish the Federal Duck Stamp Task Force to work on two issues. First, analyze state duck stamp sales data for potential impacts of the recent price increase, if any. Second, work with US Fish and Wildlife Service and Amplex (e-vendor for the Federal Duck Stamp) to implement and collect data via a mail and/or web-based survey and to improve marketing of the Federal Duck Stamp. The previous task force examined the impacts of Federal Duck Stamp price increase on license sales, recruitment and retention of hunters and other issues, resulting in a set of recommendations for AFWA's consideration.
- b) Explore need for Water Task Team and assess the value of developing a special topic session for consideration at a future North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference and to examine and report on water-based issues emerging across the states that have a relationship to wetland habitat loss/conservation (e.g., increasing algae outbreaks, municipalities with increased treatment costs due to nitrogen).
- c) Continue to share policy/legislative information and strategies to support state and NGO efforts to increase NAWCA appropriations and to ensure the legislation or companion programs (i.e. P-R interest, coastal funding) are re-authorized by Congress.
- d) Continue work with the Bird Conservation and Budget and Legislative Committees on the issue of funding for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Migratory Bird Program to ensure adequate allocation of resources to support critical programs. Monitor funding and staffing levels and allocation of these resources within the USFWS.

**3. State Contributions to Canada Action Plan Implementation**

- a) The Task Force on State Contributions to Canada will continue to develop a branding program and present it to the WWG during its meeting at the 2018 AFWA Annual Meeting (pending approval of name from an outside agency).
- b) The Task Force on State Contributions to Canada will develop a draft annual work plan for implementing the revised State Contributions Action Plan.

**4. Information Sharing**

- i. Engage with the NAWMP Public Engagement Team to identify opportunities to broaden support for wetland habitat conservation and wetland management by creating a greater understanding of the value and impacts of wetland conservation on human (societal) health and welfare.

- ii. Inform members about wetland conservation issues affecting waterfowl, and future direction of related programs.
- iii. Inform legislative leaders (state/national) about wetland and waterfowl issues and accomplishments of state and NGO actions, using normal AFWA governance procedures (e.g. committee recommendation for action or annual resolution and approval at business).

**Comments:**

None