



**Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and  
State Fish and Wildlife Agencies  
International Collaborations  
2018-2019**

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**XXIV Meeting of the Canada/Mexico/U.S. Trilateral Committee for  
Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management**

**April 8-11, 2019, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada**

**Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and State Agencies Report to the Executive Table**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Global Forums

- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)
- Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species Wild Animals (CMS)

### Western Hemisphere

- Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network
- Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA)
- Southern Wings
- Conservation Business Plans for Birds

### North America

- Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management
- Monarch Butterfly Conservation
- North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) and North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA)
- Flyway Councils
- Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs)

### Binational: Mexico – U.S.

- Mexican Wolf Recovery
- Joint Ventures
- Border Governors Wildlife Table
- Mexico-U.S. Border State Wildlife Agencies

### Binational: Canada – U.S.

- Trapping Work with Canada
- Canadian Wildlife Directors Committee

State Fish and Wildlife Agencies work throughout the world on conservation issues both as individual states and as members of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA). They understand that achieving conservation goals requires a global scale approach especially for migratory species. This is not comprehensive report but rather a summary of major ongoing international projects and action taken by AFWA and state fish and wildlife agencies.

## ***- Global Forums -***

### **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES)**

International treaties, agreements and initiatives offer opportunities and challenges to state fish and wildlife agency management. Especially for CITES, the state agencies working relationship with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is critical for both partners. The CITES Technical Work Group, comprised of one representative from each of the four Regional Associations (SEAFWA - Buddy Baker (LA); NEAFWA – Vacant; MAFWA – Carolyn Caldwell (OH); WAFWA – Jim deVos (AZ)), has worked in partnership with the USFWS to engage on CITES issues since 1992 and has proven to be both effective and efficient. They represented the state fish and wildlife agencies and when applicable Provincial and Territorial interests at the Animals, Plants, and Standing Committees, CITES work group, and interagency meetings in 2018.

### **The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands**

The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, called the Ramsar Convention, is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. The U.S. is a signatory to the convention and has designated 38 Ramsar sites. AFWA works with NGO partners and the U.S. State Department to engage in the Conference of the Parties every 3 years.

### **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**

AFWA is a member of IUCN on behalf of the state fish and wildlife agencies. The next IUCN World Conservation Congress is in 2020. AFWA will work with partners across the globe to influence decisions and discussions on topics such as waterfowl conservation, trophy hunting, climate change, livelihoods, and the use of lead ammunition. AFWA is an active member of the IUCN Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialists Group.

### **The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) a legally binding instrument that aims to promote "the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources." It entered into force in 1993. Sustainable use of biological diversity is one of the three objectives set out in the Convention. Various measures are to be undertaken by signatories to promote sustainable use of biological diversity. The U.S. is not a Party to the CBD; therefore, the state fish and wildlife agencies are not directly impacted by decisions made by the CBD. However, the strong stance on sustainable use of biodiversity makes this

convention extremely useful to the state fish and wildlife agencies as they promote and advocate for sustainable use of wildlife at home and abroad. Last year the Association participated as a member of the US Delegation to the Standing Committee.

## **The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species Wild Animals (CMS)**

Because of international concern over the threats faced by migratory species, CMS, also known as the Bonn Convention, aims to conserve terrestrial, marine and avian migratory species throughout their ranges. The U.S. is not a party to CMS. However, the Association participated in the Conference of the Parties in 2017 and has engaged on discussions surrounding lead ammunition and migratory bird conservation.

## **- Western Hemisphere -**

### **Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network**

AFWA sits on the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) Hemispheric Council to help conserve shorebirds. The Hemispheric Council last met in September 2018. The Network aligns with the simple strategy that we must protect key habitats throughout the Americas to sustain healthy populations of shorebirds. The Network includes 106 sites in 17 countries to conserve and manage almost 40 million acres of shorebird habitat from the Arctic to Patagonia. (<http://www.whsrn.org>)

### **Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA)**

Through the NMBCA, partnerships have received more than \$66 million and raised \$250 million in matching funds for 570 projects in 36 countries and at least 28 U.S. states and several Provinces. In 2018, over \$3.8 million in federal funds was matched by more than \$14 million in partner contributions went to 29 collaborative conservation projects in 16 countries across the Americas. Numerous state agencies through Southern Wings or through their own projects are involved in conservation projects in the U.S. and Mexico, Central and South America and the Caribbean through the NMBCA. Arizona Game and Fish Department staff participates in the proposal review process. The NMBCA IMPACT Program targets 13 highly threatened Neotropical migratory bird species, with the goal of achieving a **measurable biological improvement** in these species over the next 5-10 years. The 13 species are all considered Species of Greatest Conservation Need in at least 15 and upwards of 32 states.

### **Southern Wings**

Southern Wings facilitates state fish and wildlife agency participation in conservation of migratory birds on their breeding, migration, and nonbreeding sites.

#### *Southern Wings:*

- offers an easy, transparent, and flexible process for states to effectively conserve their migratory bird species of greatest conservation need when they are not in the U.S.;
- is a critical complement to in-state investment on migratory bird stop over and breeding habitats;
- leverages limited state funds;
- can provide non-federal match for State Wildlife Grants and Pittman-Robertson funds;

- identifies strategic, biologically relevant projects with high quality partners that provide the most bang for your conservation buck;
- helps keep species off the Endangered Species Act (ESA) by addressing annual life cycle conservation needs; and
- provides an effective and efficient way to engage in successful conservation partnerships and the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA), the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) and other funding sources.

Thirty-one states participate in the Program (Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin, and NEAFWA [Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, and DC]). **Since its inception, state agencies and their in-state partners have contributed over \$2,800,000 in funding.** All state contributions are matched at a minimum of 100% by non-state funds before directly supporting on-the-ground projects.

## **Conservation Business Plans for Birds**

The bird conservation community has embraced annual life-cycle conservation of birds and is advancing the development of conservation business plans or investment strategies to guide bird conservation funding. Business strategies differ from standard conservation plans by focusing on a set of well-developed actions that link funding to specific, measurable conservation outcomes, rather than producing long lists of possible actions, some of which may not be clearly defined.

- **ATLANTIC FLYWAY SHOREBIRD BUSINESS STRATEGY:** All the states within the flyway were involved in the development of the Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Business Strategy Phase I. The Plan was finalized in 2015 and can be found [here](#). The goal of this conservation strategy is to create a long-term platform for stability and recovery of fifteen focal species identified. The cumulative impact of the projects developed herein, will increase current shorebird population levels by 10%, by 2025, at a cost of approximately \$90 million. NFWF has developed an [initiative](#) to help implement the Plan.
- **PACIFIC FLYWAY SHOREBIRD CONSERVATION STRATEGY:** The Strategy focuses primarily on the Pacific coasts of North, Central and South America. The project area is subdivided into four focal geographic regions (e.g., Arctic/subarctic, North-temperate, Neotropical and South-temperate) that share broad habitat characteristics and similar conservation challenges and opportunities. Together, these regions encompass the suite of habitats used by 21 target shorebird species during their annual cycles along the Pacific coast of the Western Hemisphere. They were chosen as conservation targets because they are representative of specific habitats in the Flyway, populations of conservation concern or endemic to the Flyway. State agencies in California, Arizona, Nevada, Idaho, Utah and Washington were involved in its development. The Strategy can be found [here](#).
- **CHIHUAHUA GRASSLANDS CONSERVATION INVESTMENT STRATEGY:** The Rio Grande Joint Venture (RGJV) is spearheading the finalization of the Chihuahua Grasslands Conservation Investment Strategy and will collaborate with Bird Conservancy of the Rockies to host workshops in Texas, New Mexico, and Chihuahua in 2019-2020 to get input from experts and stakeholders of the plan.

## **- North America -**

### **Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management**

AFWA and individual State Wildlife Agency representatives actively participated in the Tables of the 2018 Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management that took place in the United States. In addition, state agencies also participate at the Executive Table. Understanding the national policy directions in bilateral efforts enables the state wildlife agencies along the U.S.-Mexico border to support and strengthen the bilateral priorities presented at the Trilateral.

### **Monarch Butterfly Conservation**

- The 2018-2019 monitoring report by CONANP and WWF-Fundación Telmex Telcel reported 6.05 hectares of occupied area by the colonies, an increase of 144% from the previous year. This is the largest area occupied by monarch colonies since the 2006-2007 period. Of the fourteen colonies identified in the states of Michoacán and Mexico, a new colony was in ejido Ojo de Agua.
- The Monarch Joint Venture (MJV), which has been housed at the University of Minnesota since its inception in 2008, is transitioning to a standalone nonprofit (501c3) organization by the summer of 2019. It has grown from 10 original partners to over 80 partners across the United States and is close to signing a letter of intent to transfer MJV assets to the NGO. The 2018 annual partners meeting was held in Nebraska City, Nebraska in November 2018. The 2019 annual meeting will be held in Arizona. On the MJV Steering Committee, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) represents the Southeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA).
- The Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (MAFWA) has completed their Mid-America monarch conservation strategy which is available online. A technical working group of southern states (Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Arkansas, and Missouri) continues to collaborate with researchers from USFWS, the University of Arkansas, and additional institutions to develop a spatially-explicit model of resource availability across this Southern geography. The goals of this modelling effort are to identify resource gaps to inform prioritization of on-the-ground conservation efforts.
- The Texas Monarch Consortium continues to work on the State plan. The working groups that were established are Rights of Way, Urban/Suburban, Protected Lands, Rural Working Lands, and Native Plants and Seed Production. TPWD's Invertebrate Biologist is a key member of the Consortium, but the position is currently vacant.
- Research projects funded by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts on the hazards of the eastern monarch fall migration and potential mitigation were published in *Landscape Ecol and Biological Conservation*.
- The MJV is conducting an Integrated Monarch Monitoring Program (IMMP) workshop in Austin, Texas, in March to train facilitators that can train others to expand the IMMP through citizen science. IMMP data contribute to existing population and habitat models that inform broad scale monarch conservation.

## **North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) and North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA)**

State Wildlife Agencies recognize the importance of taking a continental approach to conservation for migratory birds and have been addressing waterfowl conservation at the flyway level for decades. In recognition of the importance of breeding habitat in both the United States and Canada, the state wildlife agencies have been contributing funds through conservation organizations, like Ducks Unlimited, who match the money and put it to work on wetland and waterfowl projects. NAWCA requires non-federal funds as match, and this incentive helps partners to more than quadruple funding important breeding habitat projects.

Since 1986, State wildlife agencies have contributed over \$83 million of non-federal match to the AFWA initiative for Canadian NAWMP/NAWCA projects. In 2017-2018, 41 states contributed a total of \$3.48 million. Ducks Unlimited or Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation match each dollar from the State agencies, and these funds are in turn are matched with NAWCA funds. Canadian partners provide additional match to multiply the impact of each state's contribution on the breeding grounds at least four to five-fold.

Texas and Arkansas continue to lead the states in annual contributions with \$525,000 and \$580,000, respectively in 2017-2018. Contributions continue to grow from states with many trying to reach their target amount, as defined by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, for projects on the waterfowl breeding grounds in Canada. Several states are expected begin contributing again in 2018-2019, and others are planning to increase their funding from the previous year.

Texas became the first state to contribute to wetland and waterfowl projects in Mexico in 2016-2017 through partnerships with Ducks Unlimited and DUMAC. Projects in Mexico include wetland restoration along the southern part of the Laguna Madre in Tamaulipas. TPWD is again contributing \$50,000 in 2018-19.

Since the NAWMP called for the establishment of the Migratory Bird Joint Ventures in 1986, the Joint Ventures have grown to cover nearly all the U.S. and Canada and a good portion of Mexico. Established in 1999, the Sonoran Joint Venture (SJV) was the first binational Joint Venture with Mexico, and the first Joint Venture formed to address the needs of all birds—not just waterfowl. The Pacific Bird Habitat Joint Venture is the other international joint venture that focuses its efforts on collaborative conservation between Canada and the United States along the Pacific coast from California to Alaska.

The NAWMP has undergone an update roughly every five years in accordance with the North American Wetlands Conservation Act. The 2012 Revision changed the goals of the Plan for the first time, adding an explicit “people” goal. The new goals underscored the importance of understanding human needs and desires, social capacity for supporting ongoing conservation of waterfowl and wetlands, and the role of ecosystem services provided by waterfowl and wetlands. One element of implementing the 2012 Revision has been the ground-breaking human dimensions research involving U.S. and Canadian surveys of hunters, birders, and the public.

Building upon the 2012 NAWMP Revision and the recently completed human dimensions research, a team of professionals from Canada, Mexico, and the United States prepared the 2018 NAWMP Update.

The Update was signed by all three countries during the fall of 2018, and is available in English, French, and Spanish at <https://nawmp.org>.

## **Flyway Councils**

The Pacific, Mississippi, Central and Atlantic Flyway Councils are international bodies that include members from both the U.S. state agencies and the Canadian provinces. Each flyway is involved in international projects for waterfowl and other migratory bird conservation. For example, biologists from state, federal, and provincial agencies conduct surveys each year to determine the status of waterfowl populations, evaluate habitat conditions, and to estimate waterfowl harvest. Banding programs are used to estimate survival and migration patterns. Data are used cooperatively to manage migratory game birds and play a paramount role in the annual establishment of hunting regulations. Primary continental waterfowl habitats are monitored during the Waterfowl Breeding Population and Habitat Survey in May. Biologists from federal, provincial, and state agencies survey areas via fixed-wing aircraft to evaluate the conditions of habitats in the north-central United States and southern Canada.

## **Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCC)**

The LCCs, which extend beyond the U.S. border into Canada and Mexico, have basically been disbanded by the FWS. Current projects are working toward completion. The Desert LCC:

- Organizers of the 2017 Rio Grande / Rio Bravo Binational Forum that brought together water users such as farmers, ranchers, city officials, tribal members, policymakers, business leaders, conservationists, and scientists from Mexico and the United States to discuss river management and water challenges in the basin, are now exploring the possibility of a second forum, likely to be held in Mexico.
- With funding from the USFWS, selected the binational Dos Ríos (Rio Grande-Rio Conchos) Landscape Conservation Design (LCD) as one of three pilot areas and awarded funds to Sul Ross University for coordination of this collaborative to develop conservation goals and measurable objectives for focal resources; produce spatial data and cultural and economic information; visualize potential effects of climate change; and develop implementable adaptation responses to help achieve common goals. The Dos Rios LCD coordinating team held regular team meetings via telephone, has presented at several conservation workshops and conferences, and held an in-person meeting in Ojinaga, Mexico in July 2018. The group compiled a set of spatial data layers for the binational geography and is working with the Remote Sensing and Spatial Analysis team at the University of Arizona to develop more spatial data products. Between December 2018 and January 2019. The group created and distributed to 377 conservation professionals an Ecosystem Stressors questionnaire in the Chihuahuan Desert and Rio Conchos Basin. Questionnaire results will help inform a second questionnaire to identify management strategies that can be utilized to address the top stressors in each of the priority ecosystems. The group plans to share questionnaires' results with participants in the spring of 2019 and to develop an online management strategies toolbox and spatial data explorer for the Dos Rios geography. The hope is to include all products from the Dos Rios LCD into an online story map to be published later in the year.

## **- Binational: Mexico-U.S. -**

### **Mexican Wolf Recovery**

From December 2015 to February 2017, state wildlife agencies from Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Colorado participated in recovery planning workshops for the Mexican wolf, sponsored and lead by the FWS. The purpose of these workshops was to provide, analyze, and review the most up-to-date scientific information available on habitat suitability, population demographics, and prey availability for the recovery of the Mexican wolf (*Canis lupus baileyi*). Representatives from Mexico's Wildlife Office (Dirección General de Vida Silvestre-SEMARNAT) and the Priority Species Office of CONANP, as well as independent scientists from the US and Mexico, also participated in these workshops. Information gathered during these workshops was used to produce three important documents in November of 2017: 1) the Mexican Wolf Recovery Plan, First Revision; 2) the Mexican Wolf Recovery Implementation Strategy; and 3) the Mexican Wolf Biological Report: Version 2, that included a) Population Viability Analysis for the Mexican Wolf Integrating Wild and Captive Populations in a Metapopulation Risk Assessment Model for Recovery Planning, and b) Mexican Wolf Habitat Suitability Analysis in Historical Range in the Southwestern U.S. and Mexico.

Arizona is contributing close to \$75,000 annually to support Mexican wolf conservation actions in Mexico that include 1) monitoring the extant Mexican wolf packs (including terrestrial, satellite, and camera trap monitoring of individuals living in the wild which includes home range analysis, habitat use, births, and mortalities); 2) management actions undertaken in the project (including new releases, supplemental feeding, and coexisting techniques); and 3) outreach to local ranchers and communities to build positive relationships for the acceptance of the reintroduction program. This effort is closely coordinated with the Mexican Government thru the Priority Species for Conservation Office within CONANP. Arizona's contribution has been critical to maintaining essential conservation actions in Mexico. In 2018, the USFWS contributed with \$150,000 for recovery efforts in Mexico to complement existing funds over a 5-yr period.

Arizona Participated at the Mexican Wolf Species Survival Program master planning meeting held on July 13-14, 2018 in Chicago, IL, hosted by the Brookfield Zoo. Comprehensive genetic and demographic analyses of the captive Mexican Wolf SSP population was performed during this meeting. New Breeding and Transfer Plans for this species were completed in July of 2018. A central topic of discussions during this meeting was the importance of cross-fostering as a conservation tool for the Mexican wolf.

The year-end minimum population count for 2017 was 114 wolves in the wild in Arizona (63) and New Mexico (51). Annual surveys are conducted in the winter as this is when the population experiences the least amount of natural fluctuation (i.e. in the spring the population increases dramatically with the birth of new pups and declines throughout the summer and fall as pup mortality generally occurs in this period). Thus, the IFT summarizes the total number of wolves in the winter at a fairly static or consistent time of year. Counting the population at the end of each year allows for comparable year-to-year trends at a time of year when the Mexican wolf population is most stable. Due to the Federal government shutdown that lasted from December 22, 2018 until January 28, 2019, the Mexican Wolf Recovery Program Monthly Update for December did not include any project information for the State of New Mexico. Year-end population counts for 2018 continued during the month of January. Results of the survey will be made available to the public in March.

At the end of January, there were 25 packs (11 in AZ and 14 in NM) and seven single collared wolves. There were 76 wolves with functioning radio collars that the Interagency Field Team was actively monitoring. Not all wild wolves are collared. Studbook numbers following individual pack names below denote wolves with functioning radio collars.

## Joint Ventures

State wildlife agencies have an active role in supporting international partnerships in many of the Bird Habitat Joint Ventures, by sitting on management boards, providing technical expertise, or, in some cases, collaborating in specific projects.

The Sonoran and Rio Grande Joint Venture are bi-national Joint Ventures that continue to work collaboratively across the U.S./Mexico border. Other Joint Ventures like the Appalachian Mountains Joint Venture (AMJV) and the Pacific Coast Joint Venture (PCJV) have formal international collaborations with partners in Mexico. State wildlife agencies sit on the boards of and participate actively in all Joint Ventures.

**The Sonoran Joint Venture (SJV)** is a partnership of diverse organizations and individuals from throughout the southwestern United States and northwestern Mexico that share a common commitment to the conservation of all bird species and habitats within this range.

- Arizona chairs the SJV Management Board with representatives from the USDA Forest Service International Programs, USFWS Region 2, Point Blue Conservation Science, Bird Conservation of the Rockies, Sky Island Alliance, Northern Arizona University, Sierra Club, CONABIO, Pronatura Noroeste, CICESE, Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas, A.C., among others. In addition, Arizona is an active member of the Science Working Group which provides the Management Board and SJV staff with expertise regarding biological planning, prioritization, monitoring, and evaluation for bird and habitat conservation.

**The Rio Grande Joint Venture (RGJV)** developed a cross border 5-Year Strategic Plan in 2018 to guide conservation planning, design, implementation, monitoring, and communications and conservation partners are now using it to strengthen collaboration.

- Texas chairs the RGJV board and Mexico's board members include CONABIO, CONANP, DUMAC, Pronatura Noreste, The Nature Conservancy-Mexico, and Pasticultores del Desierto, A.C. Mexican state wildlife agencies participate in the technical committees and are encouraged to participate in board meetings.
- RGJV is spearheading development of a Conservation Investment Strategy for the Chihuahuan Desert Grasslands in Mexico and the U.S. to facilitate collaborative, adaptive management of critical wintering habitat for grassland birds, including establishing goals and tracking progress toward grassland bird and habitat objectives. The partnership works closely with American Bird Conservancy, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, and other partners to plan workshops in the U.S. and Mexico in 2019-2020 to obtain input for the plan.
- *South Texas Grassland Restoration Incentive Program (GRIP)*, funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and the San Antonio Quail Coalition Chapter, conducts grassland restoration on private lands in South Texas focusing on restoring and improving early successional grassland habitats for monarchs, other pollinators, quail, and other grassland birds. TPWD, NRCS and other partners worked with RGJV staff to develop a South Texas GRIP

program modeled on the OPJV GRIP program.

- *Chihuahuan Desert Grassland and Riparian Habitat Conservation* integrates RGJV watershed restoration efforts, TPWD's Landowner Incentive Program in the Big Bend region, the Dos Ríos Landscape Conservation Design project that the Desert LCC is funding through Sul Ross State University, and NFWF's Pecos Watershed Conservation Initiative to accomplish more habitat improvement projects for grassland and riparian migratory birds of conservation concern to Mexico and the U.S.
- RGJV worked with Pronatura Noreste, A.C., CONANP and other conservation partners to host a Binational Watershed Conservation Workshop in Brewster and Presidio Counties, Texas, April 23 – 27, 2018. Forty conservation practitioners from Texas and Northern Mexico attended this successful information exchange, and the group is planning a similar workshop in Mexico in 2019.
- RGJV staff and partners continued to help plan a Mainstreaming Biodiversity workshop focused on Chihuahuan desert grasslands to be hosted by CONABIO and the Migratory Birds Table of the Trilateral Committee in Mexico City in 2019.
- The RGJV continues active collaboration with Mexican and international partners to develop conservation actions for the Reddish Egret throughout its range of distribution, particularly in México and the U.S. Staff helped review and update the conservation strategies of the Reddish Egret Conservation Business Plan for Mexico, which will serve as a model for the U.S. business plan. Staff is also collaborating with the core team of U.S. and international partners currently revising and updating the range wide 2014 Reddish Egret Conservation Action Plan.
- The RGJV continues active collaboration with TPWD and Mexican partners monitoring Red-crowned parrot populations, habitat use, and threats in central Tamaulipas. Priority nesting, feeding and roosting sites and their threats have been identified and the development of a conservation action plan for the species is currently underway.
- Conservation planning for priority birds and Monarch butterfly in northern Mexico is coordinated with Pronatura Noreste, CONANP, and key regional stakeholders.
- The RGJV continues to support NAWCA and NMBCA management and conservation projects proposed and implemented by partners in Mexico.
- RGJV staff and partners participated in the first Foro Gobernanza del Agua (Water Governance Forum) organized by the Consejo de Cuenca del Río Bravo (Rio Bravo Watershed Council) in Monterrey, Mexico, in November 2018. The forum's "Towards a shared vision" theme, brought together governmental, non-governmental, research, academia, environmental, industry, and urban representatives to discuss the sustainable use of water, a common resource, on the Mexican side of the Rio Bravo watershed. The search for a shared vision on sustainable use involved little discussion related to the binational nature of the watershed but the need for increased and improved coordination with US counterparts was discussed.

## **Border Governors Wildlife Table**

The Border Governors Wildlife Table was established in 2004 as Mexico began to decentralize wildlife functions to the Border states. In the last few years, the governors have not held cross border meetings, but the Safari Club International (SCI) convention continues to invite the ten border state wildlife agencies as the Border Governors Wildlife Table, and the Mexican states support continuing this relationship as the Border Governors Wildlife Table. The first meeting at the SCI convention was held in 2007, where Federación Mexicana de Caza (FEMECA) inquired about the International Hunter Education Association and the BG Wildlife Table assisted FEMECA in the creation of the IHEA-Mexico chapter. The

SCI convention is considered the best venue to promote sustainable use, is accessible to Mexico, and offers the opportunity to promote other regions in Mexico. Dirección General de Vida Silvestre has attended in previous years. Texas coordinates this partnership with SCI. At the 2019 SCI convention in Las Vegas:

- SCI hosted a reception for the US/Mexico Border states, Latin America, and international industry leaders.
- Tamaulipas had a 10-booth exhibit area and the governor attended the convention.
- Baja California had an exhibit area and the governor attended the convention.
- Sonora has had an exhibit area since 2012.

## **U.S. - Mexico Border State Wildlife Agencies**

### **Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD):**

- *Wetlands Training Program* - Since 1996, the Arizona Game and Fish Department has been implementing wetlands conservation workshops in Mexico. Through the years, the Department has partnered with multiple agencies and groups from Canada, Mexico, and the United States, such as the Canadian Wildlife Service, the U.S. Wildlife Service, Mexico's Commission of Natural Protected Areas (CONANP), Ducks Unlimited de Mexico A.C. (DUMAC), Sonoran Joint Venture (SJV), the Ramsar Convention, the Society of Wetlands Scientists, several of the Pronatura organizations, and others. On March 19-30, 2019, AGFD implemented a wetland training workshop in Chetumal, Quintana Roo, Mexico, in collaboration with the Government of the State of Quintana Roo, University of Quintana Roo, Amigos de Sian Ka'an and ECOSUR-Chetumal.
- *Sonoran pronghorn conservation* – Sonoran pronghorn are endangered in both the U.S. and Mexico. As part of a binational effort in recovery, partners have implemented several successful binational efforts aimed at recovery of the subspecies in both countries. These activities include: conducting range-wide surveys in both countries on a two-year interval, equipping Sonoran pronghorn with GPS-based and VHF telemetry collars in Mexico and the U.S., implementing a captive breeding program in Arizona to provide offspring to augment wild populations in Arizona and Sonora, implementing forage enhancement and water projects, conducting genetic and diseases studies, and providing training efforts in survey methodology and other important wildlife management practices for collaborators in Mexico. In Arizona, the Cabeza and Kofa breeding programs continue to do well. Temporary holding pens at two release sites, including a new release site, were constructed during November 2018. The new release site is located on the East Arm of Yuma Proving Ground east of Highway 95 and adjacent to Kofa National Wildlife Refuge. The second release site was at Kofa National Wildlife Refuge; although, no animals were released this year at Kofa NWR. Trapping attempts for the capture and release operation at Kofa National Wildlife Refuge started on January 4th; initial attempts to capture all the animals were successful, but on January 6th all animals escaped via a small side gate on one of the bomas. Attempts were made to re-capture the herd the following week but they were unsuccessful; consequently, no animals were released from the Kofa pen this year. In mid-December, 18 animals were captured at the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge pen, processed, and moved into a holding pen for their subsequent release at the new release site after three weeks of acclimation. Additionally, the Arizona range-wide survey was conducted on December 8th –

16th. The estimated population in the wild is 215 Sonoran pronghorn. This agenda item is an update on progress made on binational conservation activities.

- *Lesser long-nosed bat* - This species has been the subject of long-term monitoring and conservation by collaborators in Arizona and Sonora and beyond for over 20 years. During that time, collaborators have conducted annual simultaneous bat emergence counts at the largest maternity and late summer roosts in northwestern Mexico and Arizona. In 2013 in a joint statement, the National University Autonomous of Mexico (UNAM) and SEMARNAT announced the recovery and delisting of the lesser long-nosed bat in Mexico. Through binational partnerships, researchers have achieved significant breakthroughs thanks to the use of leading-edge telemetry technology not used previously in any other bat species. With miniaturized GPS tracking units, UNAM researchers have been able to follow movements of individual bats and demonstrate nightly cross-border movements into Arizona. Over the last three years, AGFD provided financial assistance to conduct a research study about foraging routes and distances traveled utilizing GPS tracking units deployed by UNAM.
- *North American Society for Bat Research* – The AGFD co-sponsored (Bronze level) the 2018 NASBR Annual Conference was held on October 24-27 in Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco, Mexico. In addition, AGFD personnel participated with a scientific presentation titled "Status of *Leptonycteris verbabuena* in Arizona."
- *Black-tailed prairie dog in northern Mexico* - Arizona continued collaborating with the UNAM the Janos Biosphere Reserve in northern Chihuahua, Mexico to implement conservation actions for the black-tailed prairie dog and black-footed ferret. The Janos Biosphere Reserve is a unique grassland ecosystem containing the largest prairie dog complex in North America. There were monitoring activities carried out in the Janos Biosphere Reserve to evaluate distribution, abundance, and health status of BTPD. The complex occupied 8,150 acres (3,323 ha) inhabited by around 30,000 individuals. The results of the clinical examination indicate that BTPD have a good health status. Restoration and outreach efforts were also conducted in priority sites within the Janos Biosphere Reserve. No population assessments were conducted in Sonora in 2018.
- *Black-tailed prairie dog in Arizona* - In 2018, the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) continued with the re- establishment of black-tailed prairie dogs (BTPD) to the southeastern portion of Arizona. There were two trapping events to assess the health and determine the population of the three colonies of BTPD at Las Cienegas National Conservation Area (LCNCA), one in March and another in September. These monitoring efforts have indicated a steadily growing population with estimates of over 350 prairie dogs and 21.2 occupied acres. Colonies are continually monitored throughout the year by the AGFD. To encourage the participation of volunteers and expand citizen science efforts, this year we developed a smart device application to collect information on prairie dog counts, weather conditions, and other species observations.
- Grassland restoration has been on-going in grasslands surrounding the existing colonies. Grassland restoration includes removing invasive mesquite trees, rehabilitating grasses, and prescribed fires. To date, over 550 acres of grasslands have been restored and BTPD have quickly started to expand into these cleared areas. AGFD and the Bureau of Land Management

completed these restoration activities with funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Additionally, the AGFD Contract's branch completed a six-year study (2010-2016) investigating the effects BTPD have on a Lehmann lovegrass dominated grassland community in southeastern Arizona and submitted a final report.

- *Bird Conservation Projects* - Arizona is collaborating with several partners in Northwest Mexico to support projects that benefit both shared migratory and resident bird species of concern. Other projects have contributed to clarify or prevent the need of listing a bird species. Several of these projects are supported as part of Southern Wings- an AFWA initiative that facilitates partnerships between state fish and wildlife agencies and partners in Mexico, Central, South America and the Caribbean to conserve shared migratory bird species throughout their annual lifecycle. Current projects we are supporting include:
  1. Conserving neotropical migratory birds by implementing best management practices in old-growth forests of the Sierra Madre Occidental - For Neotropical migrants and Thick-billed Parrots (TBPA), OVIS and other partners are working to conserve habitat by incorporating habitat management practices that benefit migratory and resident birds in more than 30 ejidos in the Sierra Tarahumara (500,000 ha). The project will also implement conservation actions and monitoring of breeding populations of TBPAs in the protected areas of Tutuaca, Papigochi, Campo Verde, Mesa de Guacamayas and Madera. This project is one of Arizona's longest-running bird conservation collaborations in Mexico, having initiated the collaboration with Pronatura Noroeste and ITESM over 10 years ago. In addition, AGFD met with OVIS and San Diego Zoo Global in December 2017 to develop a short-term (2 year) strategic work plan, an exercise that can be used to seek additional funding. Ovis field staff monitored the main known breeding areas to estimate flock sizes, track reproductive success, and document potential predators (camera traps indicated mammalian predators may be a significant threat). Partners also protected a core breeding site in Papigochic (148 acres) through the construction of a perimeter fence and in the Tutuaca area enhanced drinking sites by stabilizing them to increase permanency of water availability. Significant progress was made at understanding migratory patterns, by successfully deploying two prototype satellite transmitters on two adult thick-billed parrots. Effort resulted in the first ever tracking of a migrating individual along the Sierra Madre Occidental (SMO). In the area of habitat conservation, OVIS worked with forestry practitioners to integrate thick-billed parrot habitat needs (and other biodiversity values) into forest management plans to promote sustainable forest certifications. Finally, partners met in Mexico in January 2019 for their annual binational coordination meeting to plan and discuss short term conservation activities.
  2. Status of Western Yellow-billed Cuckoos in Sonora - Universidad Estatal de Sonora is surveying known and suspected YBCU locations across the state to document species occurrence. In collaboration with Universidad Estatal de Sonora, yellow-billed cuckoos surveys were conducted across multiples sites in Sonora. To date, over 35 areas have been surveyed, covering riparian, uplands, and desert washes habitats.
  3. Conserving and monitoring Golden Eagles within high priority regions of Mexico - Pronatura Noroeste and partners are training biologists to deploy satellite tracking technology, identify occupied territories and areas for conservation, determine causes of

mortality, enhance habitat on private ranches, and conduct environmental education and capacity building. The Arizona Game and Fish Department continued its collaboration with Pronatura Noroeste to support conservation efforts in Sonora and Chihuahua, that included; training community members to monitor golden eagles, surveying several areas for potential and known breeding territories, and contributing to the development of a golden eagle field identification guide.

4. The Pacific Flyway Shorebird Survey: Identifying Threats and Conservation Hotspots in Northwest Mexico - Terra Peninsular and partners are conducting annual non-breeding bird surveys of 10 wetland sites across NW Mexico and compiling these survey data into the Pacific Flyway Shorebird Survey. The Department collaborated with multiple partners in supporting annual non-breeding midwinter shorebird (including snowy plover) and waterfowl surveys in Baja California. Partners also conducted snowy plover breeding surveys (May) and monitored several breeding areas (May and June). Outreach and Education activities included guided bird walks during World Wetlands Day at Estero de San José del Cabo and celebration of the 2nd Bird Festival of Bahía Todos Santos.
5. Bald Eagle population assessment in northern Sonora - CEDES will survey the confluence of the Bavispe and Yaqui rivers, as well as the Pinacate Biosphere Reserve. AGFD provided training to CEDES staff on Arizona's bald eagle productivity monitoring program on February 6-7, 2018. Training consisted of classroom presentations and Q&A discussions as well as field training in Arizona.

In the past, other projects included: 1) Establishment of Breeding Bird Survey routes in Sonora, 2) Masked Bobwhite monitoring and habitat assessment, 3) Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl population estimates and genetic analysis, 4) Yuma Ridgway's Rail surveys in the Colorado River Delta, and 5) Gould's Turkey reintroductions.

### **Baja California**

- Had a booth at the Safari Club International (SCI) convention to promote hunting and fishing. Governor Francisco Arturo Vega de Lamadrid attended. Participated in the reception hosted by SCI for the Border states and Latin America.

### **Chihuahua**

- Invited the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to co-sponsor a Wildlife Management Workshop in Chihuahua City later this year to foster the development of UMAs with sound, scientific wildlife management practices throughout the state. Workshop planning is underway.
- With a pronghorn donation from New Mexico, a pronghorn reintroduction was implemented in November 2018.
- Hosted the Annual Plenary meeting of the New Mexico-Chihuahua Binational Commission in Creel in September 2018 to exchange information on extreme meteorological events, forest fires and conservation easements.

- Participates in the Dos Rios: Rio Grande and Rio Conchos Landscape Conservation Design and attended the group's meeting held in Ojinaga in July 2018.
- Attended the annual Texas-Mexico wildlife agencies coordination workshop held at Chaparral Wildlife Management Area in Texas in June, where participants focused on project updates to deal with invasive exotic wildlife and predator control issue.
- Plays a major role in feral hog control efforts in the Ojinaga-Manuel Benavides border region and other areas of the state.
- Participated in the Waterfowl Conservation and Management Workshop held by Ducks Unlimited de Mexico in January 2018.
- Ojinaga, Chihuahua Fire Department helped to contain a major brush fire in the Presidio, Texas area in late February.

### **Coahuila**

- Participated in a binational workshop hosted by Texas in February to protect and improve the water quality of the Rio Grande/Rio Bravo length that Mexico and Texas share.

### **New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF)**

- New Mexico has worked over the years with Mexico under an ongoing MOU to facilitate capture and exchange and technical guidance between Mexico and New Mexico. The Department has exchanged New Mexico pronghorn for Mexican bighorn sheep and biologists continue to communicate on the status of the animals exchanged. In 2017, the NMDGF proposed an exchange of animals to strengthen Pronghorn populations in the state of Chihuahua, and Gould's turkey populations in New Mexico. In 2018, parties developed a project to identify and assess the potential sites and conditions in order to determine the best sites in which pronghorns could be released and obtained the necessary approvals from the landowners in Chihuahua to prepare the reception of the animals. As a result, in November 2018, a group of 100 pronghorns were captured in Colfax County in the state of New Mexico, and released in Hacienda Corralitos and in Rancho Ojo de Federico, in the State of Chihuahua.
- In September of 2018 a NMDGF representative traveled to Queretaro, Mexico, to meet with representatives working on Mexican wolf recovery in Mexico to get an update on the status of the current recovery program. The NMDGF worked with this group to determine where the Department could assist in recovery efforts in Mexico.

### **Nuevo León**

- Participated in the Annual Texas-Mexico wildlife agencies coordination workshop focused on invasive exotic species and predator control that was held at Chaparral Wildlife Management Area in June.
- Participated in a binational workshop hosted by Texas in February to protect and improve the water quality of the Rio Grande/Rio Bravo length that Mexico and Texas share.

### **Sonora**

- Forestry and Game Dept. has had a booth at the Safari Club International (SCI) convention since 2012 and participated in this year's reception hosted by SCI for the Border States and Latin America.

### **Tamaulipas**

- Visited Austin, Texas in May to attend the Lone Star Land Steward Awards ceremony where TPWD recognizes exceptional management of wildlife habitat and to attend the Toyota Bassmaster Texas Fest at Lake Travis to have access to behind the scenes operations and equipment, especially best practices for bass tournament fish care.
- In June 2018, participated in the annual Texas-Mexico wildlife agencies coordination workshop which focused on invasive exotic species and predator control and was held at Chaparral Wildlife Management Area.
- In December 2018, participated the Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Symposium to discuss updates on the scientific research and CWD surveillance protocols.
- In December 2018, participated in the TPWD-IHEA Mexico advanced workshop for instructors which focused on waterfowl conservation in Brownsville, Texas.
- In January 2019, had another outstanding exhibit at the SCI convention in Reno, Nevada, and attended the Border States-Latin America reception hosted by SCI. Governor Francisco Javier García Cabeza de Vaca attended.
- The Tamaulipas Parks and Biodiversity Commission continues to work on Monarch butterfly conservation projects.

### **Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)**

- **NAWCA** - Texas is the first state to contribute to wetland and waterfowl projects in Mexico since 2016-2017 through partnerships with Ducks Unlimited and DUMAC. Projects in Mexico include wetland restoration along the southern part of the Laguna Madre in Tamaulipas. TPWD is again contributing \$50,000 in 2018-19.
- **Collaborative Institutional Development** – Since Texas and four adjacent Mexican states share habitats and ecosystems, the institutional development of the new sister wildlife agencies in those states is a TPWD priority. TPWD will continue to invite Mexican colleagues when it holds new training for its staff and will continue to accommodate requests from Mexico for coordination workshops on various topics. The Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) serve well to demonstrate field techniques and results. Regularly scheduled WMA workshops are open to Mexican colleagues and landowners. Federal colleagues routinely participate in these activities. This period's major activities:
  - Annual Texas-Mexico wildlife agencies coordination workshop focused on invasive exotic species and predator control and was held at Chaparral Wildlife Management Area in June.
  - Tamaulipas Hunting and Fishing Commissioner was a special guest at the Lone Star Land Steward Awards ceremony to recognize excellence in private lands conservation.

- Chronic Wasting Disease Symposium (CWD) in December in Buda, Texas, presented updates on the scientific research and CWD surveillance protocols.
- A proposal from Chihuahua's Wildlife Department to TPWD to conduct a Big Game Management Workshop in Chihuahua City in 2019.
- **Dirección General de Vida Silvestre (DGVS)** – DGVS and TPWD are organizing an Ecotourism/Birdwatching Workshop that will be held in May 2019 in South Texas.
- **Monarch Butterfly Conservation** – TPWD participated in various Monarch conservation activities listed on pages 6-7.
- **Hunter Education** – At the annual meeting of the International Hunter Education Association (IHEA), the IHEA-Mexico Chapter was elected to preside over IHEA-World. The joint workshop that TPWD and IHEA-Mexico hold annually for hunter education instructors focused on Waterfowl Conservation and included topics on waterfowl identification and wounding loss as well as a one-day waterfowl hunt in South Texas. IHEA-Mexico resulted from a 2007 partnership between Federación Mexicana de Caza (FEMECA) and the Border Governors Wildlife Table.
- **Tamaulipas-TPWD Fisheries Memorandum of Agreement Implementation**
  - Professors from Universidad Tecnológica del Mar de Tamaulipas (UTMarT) participated in a two-week capacity building visit at the Marine Development Center in Corpus Christi, Texas. Though red drum (*Sciaenops ocellatus*) reproduction and culture was the priority for Tamaulipas, TPWD introduced additional topics and potential partners for Tamaulipas, such as the Harte Research Institute/Texas A&M University and private aquaculture businesses.
  - Tamaulipas Hunting and Fishing Commission attended the 2018 Toyota Bassmaster Texas Fest in May at Lake Travis as a special guest to have access to behind the scenes operations and equipment, especially best practices for bass tournament fish care.
- **Internships at Wildlife Management Areas** – Mexican universities have expressed interest in internships for their students at Wildlife Management Areas. TPWD developed a bilingual fact sheet to introduce Mexican colleagues to internship opportunities and application procedures.
- **Rio Grande Joint Venture** – TPWD helped to establish and co-chairs the Rio Grande Joint Venture (RGJV). Partners from Mexico include CONABIO, CONANP, DUMAC, Pronatura Noreste, The Nature Conservancy-Mexico, and Pasticultores del Desierto, AC. State wildlife agencies participate in the technical committees and are welcome to attend board meetings. TPWD staff contributes substantial technical support to RGJV activities. Current cooperative projects are listed on page 11-12.
- **Red-crowned Parrot Conservation** - Starting in January 2016, TPWD initiated a Lower Rio Grande Valley-wide roost survey of Red-crowned Parrots (RCPA). Approximately 70 observers gather before dusk at the 4 known roosts to help estimate RCPAs. These surveys are now quarterly, and estimates show seasonality changes among cities. Participants include a few biologists from Mexico but their efforts, thus far, have been on the U.S. side of the border. RGJV is a major partner in this project.

- **Feral Hog Control** – TPWD developed a bilingual fact sheet on feral hog control responsibilities in Texas to help Mexican colleagues identify Texas partners for cross border feral hog control projects. In 2013, Consejo Estatal de Flora y Fauna de Nuevo Leon (CONEFF) conducted a feral hog control workshop and launched a website. In 2014, TPWD organized a binational feral hog control workshop in Laredo, Texas, and made available a DVD of all feral hog control technical publications in Spanish by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, which continues to be available to anyone conducting these workshops. The binational workshop enabled Chihuahua to refine its control techniques in the Ojinaga area, and Coahuila conducted a workshop in 2015. CONEFF and the USDA-APHIS Mexico City office conduct these workshops throughout Mexico. Mexican colleagues recommended that TPWD organize another feral hog control workshop to review results and explore ways to increase these efforts. TPWD works in collaborative research projects with Australian partners, National Wildlife Research Center, and USDA Wildlife Services associated with the registration of a feral swine toxicant. Work focuses on deployment and effectiveness of test products in pasture settings after the Environmental Protection Agency granted an experimental use permit.
- **Other Chihuahuan Desert Projects**
  - In November 2018, TPWD conducted aerial surveys of desert bighorn sheep and aoudad in the Big Bend region and south into Mexico. The good news for Mexico is that it has fewer aoudad, aoudad groups tend to be smaller, and deer observed were in very good condition. The success of desert bighorn sheep restoration in Texas requires continued support by Mexican partners.
  - TPWD continued the Transboundary Conservation Program along the Borderlands of Texas and Mexico by funding the Chihuahuan Desert Wintering Grasslands Bird research grant with the Borderlands Research Institute of Sul Ross University. The Principal Investigator was hired from Universidad Autonoma de Chihuahua and has commenced the research program.
  - Participates in the Chihuahuan Desert Grassland and Riparian Habitat Conservation with the RGJV and other partners. More information on page 6.
  - Participates in the Desert LCC Dos Rios (Rio Grande-Rio Conchos) Landscape Conservation Design (LCD). More information on page 9.
  - Native Fish Conservation Network (NFCN, <http://nativefishconservation.org/>) is a partnership of conservation professionals from non-profits, universities, TPWD and other state and federal agencies who cooperate on landscape conservation assessments, watershed-based conservation planning, and delivery of strategic, science-based actions to protect and restore native fishes and their habitats. NFCN would like to strengthen Mexico's participation in conservation assessments, planning, and delivery within the Chihuahuan Desert ecoregion (<http://nativefishconservation.org/plans/chihuahuan-desert-texas/>). Efforts center on delivery of a holistic, habitat-oriented approach to conservation of focal species, restoration and protection of aquatic habitats, restoration of habitat connectivity, and management of non-native species. Cross border threats that require collaboration include habitat fragmentation, loss of natural flow regimes, reduced stream flow, channel narrowing and sedimentation, and groundwater pollution. A substantial source of funding recently became available for conservation delivery within focal watersheds of the Chihuahuan Desert ecoregion through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Southwest Rivers Program. The

Southwest Rivers Program was established in 2017 to “fund effective conservation projects that achieve measurable outcomes and fill knowledge gaps where they exist, reinvigorating habitats throughout this unique landscape” ([www.nfwf.org/swrivers](http://www.nfwf.org/swrivers)). Grants totaling \$1,535,755 were awarded in 2018 to TPWD and local partners for multi-year projects that restore streams, riparian buffers, and grasslands in the region to benefit focal fish species, several of which have native ranges that extend into Mexico. Contingent upon continued funding, restoration efforts are expected to continue through at least 2026.

- **Sea Turtle Conservation Program**

- During the 2018 Kemp’s Ridley nesting season, 17,945 nests were registered from Tamaulipas beaches with 72% documented from the Rancho Nuevo beach. This represents a 27% increase from 2017 nesting numbers.
- 828,462 hatchlings were released into the Gulf of Mexico (64.4% from Rancho Nuevo), an 18.8% decrease from 2017.
- The first nest of the 2018 season was registered at the Rancho Nuevo Field Station on March 29. The last nest of the 2018 season was also registered at the Rancho Nuevo Field Station on August 11.
- Of the registered nests from all six turtle conservation camps during the 2018 season, 60.6% were protected in corrals and 28.2% were left *in situ* and monitored throughout the incubation period. Ninety-seven percent of these *in situ* nests were registered at Rancho Nuevo.
- Over the last 41 years (1978 through 2018) over 296,000 registered nests have been recorded and over 14,660,000 hatchlings have been released.

- **Past projects include:**

- In 1977, Mexico donated 6 desert bighorn sheep to Texas.
- In 1996, former Governor George W. Bush and SEMARNAP signed a cooperative agreement to facilitate wildlife exchanges. Since the 1970s, Texas had made multiple donations of white-tailed deer, and the cooperative agreement facilitated those donations plus donations of mule deer to Mexico.
- In 1985, TPWD and the National Park Service launched the Border States Conference on Recreation, Protected Areas and Wildlife, which was held every couple of years with the venue alternating between the U.S. and Mexico. Capacity building workshops held in Mexico evolved from the networking at this conference. With the creation of the Border Governors Wildlife Table in 2004 and of the Rio Grande Joint Venture plus ongoing work by the Sonoran Joint Venture, the conference was considered duplicative and was discontinued.
- In support of Tamaulipas and Nuevo Leon fish hatchery programs, TPWD has donated brood fish, fingerlings and hatchery equipment.

## **- Binational: Canada - U.S. -**

### **Trapping work with Canada**

The United States and Canada continue to collaborate to improve the welfare of furbearers captured in traps through the Best Management Practices for Trapping program in the US (BMPs) and the Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards in Canada. For the US, Canada has provided invaluable data and research results, primarily on bodygrip traps, which have been used toward the development of BMPs. The US has provided extensive data to Canada on restraining traps to allow certification of various foothold, foot encapsulating and cage traps through the Canadian program. Researchers collaborate annually on research agendas and field and lab results. Data sharing prevents the need for duplicating research efforts and provides for the efficiency of the respective programs. The two countries have plans to continue this important partnership as they continue working to evaluate and develop capture devices that meet international animal welfare standards. Since the start of the respective testing programs in 1997, over 600 types of commercially available traps have been evaluated for 22 furbearer species. Reports and resource material are available at for the US testing program on the AFWA website <https://www.fishwildlife.org/afwa-inspires/furbearer-management> or for the Canadian testing program at <https://fur.ca/>

### **Canadian Wildlife Directors Committee**

The Canadian Wildlife Directors Committee (CWDC) is composed of the wildlife directors and agency leads representing the jurisdictions/agencies (13 Provinces and Territories and Environment Canada, Parks Canada Agency, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada) with responsibility for wildlife conservation in Canada. The role of the CWDC is to provide leadership in the development and co-ordination of policies, strategies, programs and activities that address wildlife and habitat issues of national concern and contribute to the conservation of biodiversity. AFWA and state wildlife agency representatives attend this meeting each year. Last year the CWDC met in October 2018. AFWA's Executive Director, Canadian Liaison, and International Relations Director attended the meetings.