

AFWA Bird Conservation Committee (BCC) 2022 Work Plan

BCC CHARGE

- Keep the Association informed of developments affecting bird conservation.
- Promote policies necessary to ensure the long-term conservation of bird populations and their habitats, sustainable hunting and the public's ability to enjoy birds.
- Maintain coordination with federal agency and NGO partners and partners throughout the western hemisphere.
- Work closely with the flyway councils and the North American Bird Conservation Initiative.
- Contribute to the activities and involvement of the International Relations Committee and other groups regarding international issues that affect birds.

The Bird Conservation Committee currently has four long-term Working Groups and five finite-duration Work/Task Groups that carry out the actions and tasks of the Bird Conservation Committee. Southern Wings is an independent initiative that originated from and reports to the Bird Conservation Committee.

Long-Term Working Groups

PIF/Shorebird/Waterbird Working Group

Chair: Vacant

Vice-Chair: Eric Gardner (WA)

Work Group Charge:

To serve as a forum for discussion of bird conservation initiative-related issues among representatives of State, Territorial, and Provincial fish and wildlife agencies, and other Association organizations. The WG may advance issues to the BCC from which information and requests can be presented to state directors.

Focus Area and Goals

1. Integrate outcomes of landbird, shorebird, and waterbird initiatives (Bird Conservation Plan Partnerships);
2. Clearly identify significant threats to landbird, shorebird, and waterbird populations;
3. Evaluate alternative strategies for bird conservation action, come to agreement, and make recommendations to AFWA leadership;
4. Support policies, legislation, and funding initiatives that favor landbird, shorebird, and waterbird protection and restoration.

Major Activities and Accomplishments during the last year (Oct. 2020 – Sept. 2021):

Goal 1. Integrate outcomes of landbird, shorebird, and waterbird initiatives

1. See PIF Action Brief provided by Bob Ford and submitted to BCC2
2. See US Shorebird Conservation Plan Partners / Council brief provided by Brad Andres
3. Waterbirds of the Americas Conservation Plan Council – Dave Gordon
 - a. Worked with partners to revitalize council activities; meeting on Oct 16 planned to discuss opportunities and direction for the group
 - b. Next steps for the Council will be presented during 2022 meetings of the WG
 - c. The Council has representation from CAN, US, Mex, Central America, academia, state agencies (through the flyways), and previous council members. Will work on membership principles, possibly dividing into subgroups; likely to update the waterbird plan (there is an interest)
4. Representatives from this WG led or served on:
 - a. Feral and Free-Ranging Cat WG;
 - b. Grassland WG;
 - c. Bird and Fish Related Conflicts WG;
 - d. NABCI temporary committee working to reactivate the Waterbird Council to update the Waterbirds of the Americas Conservation Plan and Initiative;
 - e. Southern Wings Committee. Eric Gardner is now the state liaison for SWs. A presentation was provided at WAFWA and a Call-to-Action flyer was developed by Deb Hahn for inclusion in the Director's AFWA business meeting packet.
5. Members represented State agencies on the USSCP Council, PIF Executive and Steering committees, Flyway Councils, Sea Duck Joint Venture (JV), Atlantic Coast JV, and contributed to work by each of these initiatives.

Goal 2. Clearly identify significant threats to landbird, shorebird, and waterbird populations

1. The Partners in Flight Science Committee hosted a virtual summer meeting on July 13 and 14; topics included discussions about climate vulnerability and population estimates, the Boreal Avian Monitoring Project, the Avian Conservation Assessment Database (ACAD) and more. Notes from the meeting are available on the Partners in Flight web site (partnersinflight.org).
2. Partners in Flight's Western Working Group has formed a new team focused on western forest bird conservation issues. The western forest team will provide a science and knowledge foundation for forest bird conservation for Joint Ventures and others, as the attention to birds in western forests is growing along with human well-being targets, such as fire management and watershed protection.
3. A small team established at the last AFWA PIF/Shorebird/Waterbird WG meeting has begun work on a Common Threats Analysis. Work was done to cross-walk medium and high ranked threats from different threat assessments
4. Members of this WG, including the Chair, concluded work with the Feral and Free-Ranging Cat WG, which originated from a proposal by the PIF/SB/WB WG. Several products were produced, including a Toolkit for agencies addressing free-ranging

domestic cat issues. See: <https://www.fishwildlife.org/afwa-acts/afwa-committees/feral-and-free-ranging-cat-working-group>

Goal 3. Evaluate new strategies for bird conservation action and make recommendations to AFWA leadership

1. Two historic dataset batches were federated and operationalized into the Avian Knowledge Network (AKN). The AKN has begun identifying tools and training needs for use.
2. Significant progress continues to be made regarding the use of data submitted to eBird and work to show how the data can be used continues.
3. Helped facilitate participation in multi-state projects using the Avian Knowledge Network (AKN) for data management (e.g., 2nd Workshop on Avian Conservation Database Management with the Atlantic Colonial Waterbird Database being a case study for full development). Version 1.0 of the Database is being tested with multiple state agencies and Pacific and Mississippi Flyways have uploaded their colonial waterbird data into the AKN node. Work on these databases is ongoing using conference calls and virtual meetings.
4. After submitting the Resolution on the loss of 3 billion birds that was approved at the September 2019 AFWA business meeting, members of the WG representing state and federal agencies, NGOs, and academic scientists formed the Road to Recovery initiative as a means of coordinating the response to 3 billion birds lost across the bird conservation community and focusing attention on the most urgently declining species. Road to Recovery hosted three workshops in 2020 and 2021 focused on (1) identifying causes of species declines; (2) advancing science and filling knowledge gaps for species on the brink of endangerment, and (3) developing a process for recovery of non-listed species using co-production and insights from social science. More on the Road to Recovery effort located at: <https://marralab.com/road-to-recovery/>.

Goal 4. Support policies, legislation, and funding initiatives that favor landbird, shorebird, and waterbird protection and restoration.

1. Identify high priority issues affecting conservation of landbird, shorebird, and waterbird populations and habitats and provide recommendations on these issues to the Bird Conservation Committee.
 - a. A Resolution ([Compilation of resolutions 2021.pdf \(fishwildlife.org\)](#)) that was approved by the Bird Conservation Committee and taken to the Directors' Business Meeting for approval at the September 2019 AFWA meetings was revised and sent to the Resolution Committee (2021-03-07 Control and Management of Free-Ranging Domestic Cats).
 - b. Information on Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act grants was shared: <https://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/pdf/grants/nmbcaApplicationInstructions.pdf>