

THE U.S. SHOREBIRD PLAN COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES AND PROPOSED ACTIONS

5 April 2002, 8:00 am - 12:00 pm  
North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference  
Hyatt Regency, Dallas, Texas

Below are minutes of the above-stated meeting. Included are a brief description of the topics discussed and the actions that are needed to address specific topics; a few of these actions items were developed in the week following the meeting. Completion dates and Council member leads are noted. Implicit in actions is staff support by the National Coordinator. Progress on actions items identified at past meetings is also addressed. Thanks to all who contributed to the presentations and discussions.

**INTRODUCTIONS.** Jon Andrew opened the meeting and Council members and observers were introduced as needed. Jon has taken a new position as chief of National Wildlife Refuges in Atlanta, Georgia, but hopes to stay involved with the Council.

**TERMS OF REFERENCE.** Catherine Hickey led a discussion of changes to the Terms of Reference that govern the operation of the Council. The major changes involve the formation and operation of an expanded Executive Committee, how actions will be approved by the Council, and a general outline of operation of the technical working groups. A copy of the Terms of Reference is attached for Council members; copies are available from Brad Andres.

**Action:** Solicit nominations and select an additional state representative to sit on the Executive Committee. [31 May 2002; Steve Miller]

**Action:** Further define roles and purviews of working groups for inclusion as addendums to the Terms of Reference. [31 May 2002; Catherine Hickey, Jon Bart, Heidi Luquer]

**Action:** Solicit participation on Council by industry representatives. [31 July 2002; Catherine Hickey]

**PLAN EVALUATION.** Seth Mott, Coordinator of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP), presented a case-study of how evaluation of the NAWMP has proceeded. He stressed the importance of making evaluation an integral part of the plan. The shorebird conservation effort should consider an iterative process of planning, implementation, and evaluation. Knowledge gained from implementation can be used to further address factors that limit populations.

**Action:** Begin discussion of how the Council can address evaluation of shorebird conservation efforts and how the plan will be updated. [March 2003; Stephen Brown]

**INTERACTION WITH THE JOINT VENTURES.** Carol Lively prepared a report that summarized shorebird activities within the Joint Ventures, impediments to achieve shorebird conservation within a JV framework, and recommendations on how to overcome these obstacles. Many of the concerns are associated with communication and capacity-building. The role of JVs in development of the Program for Regional and International Shorebird Monitoring (PRISM) should be further explored. Details of these recommendations can be found in Carol's report which is enclosed with these minutes.

**Action:** Distribute the report to all Council members, particularly targeting Regional Working Group chairs. [30 April 2002; Brad Andres]

**Action:** Draft letter to JV coordinators that further solicits possible involvement in PRISM. [30 April 2002; Jon Bart/Carol Lively]

INVOLVEMENT IN FARM BILL DELIVERY. Ron Helinski, Wildlife Management Institute, lead a discussion on how the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan Council can get involved with Farm Bill programs such as the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Ron walked the Council through a process to help identify what the shorebird community can bring to the implementation of these programs. Specifically, can the Council infuse itself into the process to find a value-added niche among the current and long-term players? The Council's initial role will likely focus on outreach to state contacts in wildlife agencies and National Resource Conservation Service offices. From information gained through interactions with these colleagues, the Council can develop a strategy that will help insert shorebird conservation as a more visible component of Farm Bill implementation. The Council will work with WMI in development of this strategy, and its efforts should be tied into the other bird conservation initiatives (via NABCI). State shorebird partners are key players in this effort.

**Action:** Make presentation to the IAFWA Agricultural Conservation Task Force regarding niche the shorebird community could fill [18 September 2002; Steve Miller].

**Action:** Develop a strategy on how the Council will proceed to define its role with Farm Bill implementation [5 November 2002; Catherine Hickey].

NORTH AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVATION INITIATIVE. On behalf of the Council, Steve Miller provided comments on several items that precipitated from the NABCI committee retreat held in mid-January (minutes of this meeting are included). The Shorebird Plan provided comments on the Memorandum of Understanding for the Conservation of North American Birds and Their Habitats and on development of Trinational NABCI projects. In summary, the MOU appeared to not place enough emphasis on the NABCI vision and on migratory birds, which was the original intent of the NABCI committee. Comments offered on the development of demonstration projects suggested a multiple approach to raising the visibility and utility of NABCI among U.S./Canada partners, the Commission for Environmental Cooperation, and within Mexico. Positive comments on the Director's Order (USFWS) that establishes guidance on the formation of Joint Ventures was submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Copies of all comments are available from Brad Andres. As an aside, a letter to the editor, explaining the development of the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan, was sent by Chair Jon Andrew to Audubon Magazine in response to their article that featured shorebirds.

IAFWA WATERBIRD-SHOREBIRD WORKING GROUP. Larry Niles chaired a meeting of this group at the North American. Major discussion items included the presentation of Version 1 of the North American Waterbird Conservation Plan, encouragement of use of State Wildlife Grants for supporting waterbird and shorebird projects, increasing visibility of the bird plans, and updates on the IAFWA all bird workshops. Larry Niles took the lead on generation of a letter that will be distributed to State Directors to encourage them to support waterbird and shorebird projects with SWG funds. A companion effort will encourage state biologists to work with regional working group chairs to develop projects that need objectives identified in the regional plans. The involvement of states in the development of PRISM was also discussed and will be highlighted in the above letter.

WORKING GROUP REPORTS. A report on the activities of the Monitoring Work Group was made by Jon Bart, Chair. Jon discussed advances made in the development of the PRISM and encouraged Council members to search for support for conducting regional assessments of monitoring potential for shorebirds during the non-breeding season. Per last year's recommendation, a workshop on temperate breeders has been organized for the Waterbird Society meeting in November. A letter from Jon Andrew was sent, in early February, to 42 partners that solicit support for PRISM activities in 2002. A funding package is being developed for 2003 and beyond. Jim Corven, on behalf of Heidi Luquer, presented an update on activities of the Outreach and Education Working Group. A few of the highlights include: development of two shorebird tracking projects, airing of the electronic field trip "Winging Northward: A Shorebird's Journey" on May 8, 2002, development of a new Central Flyway website "Shorebirds: Prairies to Patagonia", and production of a new "Shorebirds Make Good Neighbors" poster for teachers and the public. Time did not allow for reports of Regional Working Groups.

**Action:** Compile summery report of recent activities of the Technical and Regional Working Groups. [30 May 2002; Brad Andres]

**Action:** Convene a meeting of Regional Working Group chairs to discuss roles and implementation of regional plans. Tentative place and date is Minneapolis, MN, the week of 30 September. Some travel funds will be available. [Andres]

(RE-) FORMATION OF THE RESEARCH WORKING GROUP. Catherine Hickey lead a discussion on the feasibility of re-vitalizing the Research Working Group. Although a comprehensive Research Needs document was prepared, some effort is probably warranted to help raise the visibility of immediate research needs. Research addressing development and refinement of monitoring methods would be handled under the Monitoring Working Group; the Research Working Group would focus on other issues such as limiting factors. There is interest in forming this committee as a joint committee with the Canadians (and possibly the Mexicans).

**Action:** Determine what research is being done in each region (produce an annual report). Convene a symposium to address a specific topic (e.g., limiting factors during the breeding season?). Use the symposium to narrow research needs topics that can be forwarded for potential funding. Solicit a volunteer to champion this effort. [31 July 2002; Susan Skagen, Garry Donaldson, Stephen Brown, Catherine Hickey]

BUILDING A WESTERN HEMISPHERE PERSPECTIVE. Heather Johnson summarized the Latin American activities of Council members and reminded them of the report produced last fall on actions that are needed to expand shorebird efforts to the south. Many opportunities exist with Joint Ventures, WHSRN, Wetlands International, Ducks Unlimited, and state and federal agencies. The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act offers an immediate opportunity to bolster projects in Latin America (the deadline has been extended to 13 May 2002; see [http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NMBCA/eng\\_neo.htm](http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NMBCA/eng_neo.htm)).

**Action:** Develop a directory of shorebird biologists in Latin American. [31 August; Heather Johnson/Heidi Luquer/Jim Corven/Garry Donaldson]

**Action:** Work with the Canadian Shorebird National Working Group to further refine actions specific actions to embrace a hemispheric perspective. [5 November 2002; Heather Johnson, Garry Donaldson]

CONSERVATION PLAN AND WHSRN UPDATES. Copies of the Canadian Shorebird Conservation Plan, and the U.S. Shorebird Conservation, are available from Brad. Canada continues to develop regional plans and has put in much effort in developing PRISM. The inaugural meeting of the Mexico Shorebird Plan will be held 19-21 April in Tepic, Nayarit, Mexico. The plan will focus primarily on identification and management of sites important to shorebirds, and waterbirds where appropriate, in Mexico. The Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network approved three site nominations during the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference. WHSRN is submitting several proposals for Neotrop Act funding and has been working in Sinaloa on restoration of a former shrimp farm.

IMPORTANT SHOREBIRD AREAS (November action). The Council has submitted a preliminary list of "important" shorebird sites to John Cecil, National Audubon, for consideration in the IBA program. Council members will continue to work with John as the IBA database is developed.

COMPENDIUM OF DOMESTIC FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES (November action). A near-complete draft of a document that highlights funding opportunities for shorebird projects in the U.S. will be circulated for review. [31 May 2002; Brad Andres]

SHOREBIRD CONSERVATION PLAN WEBSITE. A website will be developed where minutes of the meetings, contact information and other documents can be placed. This site will be linked to the U.S. NABCI site. [31 July 2002; Brad Andres]

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING - The next Council meeting will be held in conjunction with the 26th Annual meeting of the Waterbird Society on (likely) Wednesday, November 6, 2002, from 1:00 - 5:00 pm at the Radisson Hotel in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

#### COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Jon Andrew, Division of Migratory Bird Management, USFWS, Chair  
Catherine Hickey, PRBO Conservation Science, Vice-Chair  
Stephen Brown, Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences, Executive Committee  
Susan Skagen, Midcontinent Ecological Science Center, USGS, Executive Committee  
Carol Lively, Prairie Pothole Joint Venture  
Keith McKnight, Ducks Unlimited, Inc  
Jon Bart, Snake River Field Station, USGS, Chair, Research and Monitoring.  
Barbara Pardo, USFWS, Upper Mississippi Valley/Great Lakes region (for Bob Russell)  
Chuck Hunter, USFWS, Southeastern Coastal Plain/Piedmont  
John Cecil, National Audubon Society (for Frank Gill)  
Melanie Steinkamp, North American Waterbird Conservation Plan  
Bill Howe, USFWS Non-Game Coordinators  
Heather Johnson, USFWS Division of International Conservation  
Garry Donaldson, CWS, Canadian Shorebird Conservation Plan  
Gary Myers, IAFWA Bird Conservation Committee  
Cindy Ragland, USFS Taking Wing:  
Larry Niles, NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife, North Atlantic region Jim Corven, WHSRN  
Brad Andres, USFWS, National Coordinator

#### MEETING OBSERVERS

Steve Wendt, Canadian Wildlife Service  
Greg Butcher, Midwest PIF Coordinator  
Carol Beardmore, Western PIF Coordinator

submitted by: Brad Andres, 26 April 2002. Please direct any questions, corrections, or comments to [Brad\\_Andres@fws.gov](mailto:Brad_Andres@fws.gov)