



The U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan

Building Partnerships for Shorebird Conservation

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The U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan Council (USSCP) has begun discussions about the need to provide an **assessment and evaluation of the accomplishments** since development of the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan. This idea has previously arisen within the USSCP Council, and there is now some external pressure to conduct some sort of assessment. One problem is that there has not been dedicated funding for shorebird plan implementation, so an in-depth accomplishment report is probably not warranted. We believe we should coordinate this effort with Partners and Flight and Waterbirds to develop a consistent assessment format. We plan to assemble a team to develop a set of assessment components; some alignment with the plan's goals and strategies would be desirable. We also plan to review the "Desired Characteristics" of the species and habitat Joint Ventures to use as a template for the assessment. We want to include funding aspects and an assessment of how we are doing with species or populations we have deemed "highly imperiled" under the plan. The team would need to decide on a general approach; what to measure, relative to goals; how to measure (metrics, outcomes vs. outputs); and how to report (accomplishments and projections).

The third meeting of the **Western Hemisphere Shorebird Group** was held at the Hotel Playa Mazatlán in Mazatlán, Mexico, from 9 to 13 March 2009. The purpose of the meeting was three-fold and included science, management and outreach. The science agenda: 1) brought together biologists studying breeding, staging and wintering shorebirds throughout the Western Hemisphere in one location, 2) promoted information sharing on methodology and study design among biologists working on different shorebird species, 3) promoted range-wide studies of shorebirds by fostering collaborations among biologists interested in particular species, 4) integrated science into the implementation of various shorebird conservation plans, and 5) generated enthusiasm among the shorebird community to conduct additional, future studies of shorebirds. To further the science component, a two-day *Population Demographic Modeling Workshop* was led by Dr. Brett Sandercock, and a four-day *International Course on Avian Movements and Migration Technology* sponsored by MIGRATE (Migration Interest Group: Research Applied Toward Education). The meeting was attended by >130 individuals, and 96 papers and 21 posters were presented. We hope the relationships built at the meeting will continue into the future to further shorebird conservation across the hemisphere.

The **Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network** (WHSRN) is updating their strategic plan. The USSCP Council will provide input on the interaction between WHSRN and itself, with respect to roles and responsibilities for furthering shorebird conservation goals. Currently, the USSCP generally reviews and solicits nominations into the network. The plan will be completed in the next year.