

U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan Teleconference Notes

26 June 2013

Present: Allison Vogt, Brian Smith, Bill Vermillion, Catherine Hickey, Joel Jorgensen, Matt Reiter; Brad

Andres

Absent: Brad Winn, Larry Niles, Stephen Brown, Susan Skagen

1. Representation on the WHSRN Council. The discussion was deferred, because Larry Niles was on Southampton Island chasing Red Knots. Decision on permanent representative to the WHSRN Hemispheric Council. Since Dave Mehlman stepped down, Larry, John Cecil, and Catherine have represented the USSCP Council at WHSRN Hemispheric meetings. In preparation for the WHSRN meeting in Colombia in September we should try to finish up the US WHSRN site questionnaires (Andres to send reminder by 5 July; need to summarize results by September).

2. Brian Smith as Council Replacement for Stephanie Jones. Brian Smith, Deputy Chief of the Migratory Bird Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Denver Regional Office, agreed to replace Stephanie Jones on the USSCP Council. Brian previously served as Appalachian Mountains Joint Venture Coordinator. Brian set in on for most of the call, but left at the end for the remaining Council members to discuss his participation. Having heard from seven councilors (of 9), Brian was unanimously approved. Welcome Brian.

3. TriST Actions and Meeting. Actions resulting from previous meetings and teleconferences of the Tri-Plan (Initiative) Science Team were circulated with the call announcement. The immediate actions include: a) developing a list of species shared by multiple Joint Ventures to develop range-wide population and habitat objectives (temperate breeding species suggested by Andres), b) determine how to incorporate annual cycle conservation and population models into development of a work plan with input from plan coordinators, c) develop a set of standard values and approaches to be used in energetics models to determine shorebird habitat objectives (some progress hopefully by 1 August), d) provide comments on TriST work plan (done), and e) develop an operational assessment of TriST. A meeting of TriST is planned for Minneapolis in early August (in conjunction with the NSST). Brad Andres may not be able to attend, and Bill Vermillion may be able to represent shorebird interests there. Other participants are welcomed. Perhaps check with Bob Russell (USFWS) since he has worked with the Upper Miss/Great Lakes JV and is stationed in Minneapolis.

4. NABCI Actions. The US-NABCI Committee meeting will be held on 6-7 August in Arlington, VA. The draft agenda was attached to the call agenda. Allison and Catherine went over some of the items on the agenda. An effort was undertaken in the last six months to create a value proposition for NABCI. One structural change is that an Executive Committee was created, and Catherine serves as representative for the three nongame plans. Please send any comments you have on agenda items to Catherine.

5. Pacific and Atlantic Flyway Plans. The Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Business Strategy has been completed and can be found at: <http://www.manomet.org/publications-tools/shorebird/general-publications>. The primary audience for the plan was the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and focused on US actions; however actions are not NFWF-specific. Workshops will be held at the Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds meeting in July and in Colombia in September. Based on this model, an effort is underway to develop a similar strategy for the Pacific Coast. A preliminary workshop is scheduled for PIFV and a follow-up meeting for Colombia.

6. USSCP Work Plan. Although the Council has not has a face-to-face meeting in a while, it is important to continue to make sure we are moving the USSCP forward. Catherine and Brad will work on developing a work plan for the Shorebird Plan Council and partners. Some augmentation/re-structuring of the Council may be needed and regular communications should be established. In an effort to continue to gain support from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service leadership, Clint Riley, Assistant Regional Director for Migratory Birds in the Denver Regional Office, has agreed to serve as a champion for the USSCP among the USFWS Migratory Bird leadership. Since the call, Brad has met with Clint to give him background on the USSCP.

Remember that information on the USSCP can be found at <http://www.shorebirdplan.org>

Please send me and additions or corrections.

U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan Council Call

16 December 2013

On call: Alison Vogt, Brad Winn, Brian Smith, Catherine Hickey, Larry Niles, Stephen Brown, Susan Skagen, Brad Andres, Bill Vermillion

USFWS Migratory Bird Decisions

Jennifer Wheeler and Terry Rich are leaving; there is uncertainty regarding filling those positions. One scenario could be that Brad would be tasked with some duties related to waterbirds and perhaps landbirds in addition to shorebirds. The letter signed to USFWS Division of Migratory Birds Headquarters staff was in part an effort to allow Brad A. to continue to focus on implementation of the USSCP solely.

There is also concern among USFWS DMB regional staff regarding the possible repercussions to workloads if Wheeler and Rich's positions aren't filled. Possible scenarios are being developed by a USFWS DMB team.

NABCI is preparing to develop a 3-4 year work plan, so some statements regarding the importance of USFWS support to the initiatives could be inserted.

State of the Birds

2014 marks the 5 year anniversary of SOTB publications. The trend analysis included in the 2009 SOTB will be revisited in the 2014 version to identify positive or negative change.

The 2014 will probably include an introduction/review of the Watch List/Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC), with some on the brink species highlighted.

Opportunities via conservation and policy actions will be highlighted.

The 2014 SOTB provides an opportunity to highlight shorebirds as an indicator, but as an indicator of what? This SOTB status infers the ability to analyze change in populations; may be possible using migration data along the Atlantic coast; a complementary wintering methodology is recently established through Point Blue for the Pacific coast.

Birds of Conservation Concern, Watch List

There is a move/desire to consolidate the BCC with Audubon/American Bird Conservancy Watch List. Brad A. is working through shorebird assessment using the PIF methodology. So far Brad A. believes changes are acceptable but he would like input from the shorebird conservation community. A new aspect of threat assessment will be vulnerability to climate change; the details of how this will be measured aren't hammered out yet.

The initial objective of the BCC was to identify species at risk of listing as Federally threatened or endangered. It has drifted away from that objective somewhat and combination with the Watch List may bring it further away from that purpose; will need to be addressed.