

USSC Council Teleconference Notes – 11 August 2016

Present: Stephen Brown, Larry Niles, Judith Scarl, Susan Skagen, Brian Smith, Bill Vermillion.

Staff: Brad Andres

Guests: Monica Iglecia, David Mizrahi

NABCI

Monica Iglecia is the USSCP representative on the NABCI Private and Working Lands Subcommittee and reported on the progress of developing a workshop with the Joint Ventures and the Farm Service Agency (FSA) in 2016, which are modeled after the successful workshop with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The proposal was sent to the Council prior to the call. As these develop, the Council agreed to offer whatever technical assistance we can on providing information on breeding shorebird response to various grass types.

Judith reviewed the agenda for the upcoming NABCI meeting, and we discussed the revision to the NABCI strategic plan. The website is being revised and there is interest in identifying actions to take in response to the State of the Birds. A few general comments were to have objectives for NABCI be more explicit and perhaps reducing the number of activities to help focus action and increase probability of achieving objectives. The Monitoring Subcommittee's demographic report should be available soon. There was a question about the ability to provide reaction/comments to the report.

State Wildlife Grants

As a result of the discussion of metrics and outcomes, the idea of understanding how State Wildlife Grants have contributed to shorebird conservation arose. When we developed the USSCP assessment (JV matrix), Brad collated some information on SWGs. A quick search indicates that information on projects is provided via the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's "Wildlife Tracts", but reporting can be somewhat general (e.g., prescribed burning on State Wildlife Areas). Brad will look further into what information might be available.

Delaware Bay Aquaculture

Remaining time was discussing the letter we sent to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and their response regarding aquaculture leases in Delaware Bay and their effects on Red Knots and other shorebirds. Rather than trading letters on clarifying points, the suggestion was made to recommend the development of a real adaptive management process by starting with an initial engagement of stakeholders in a Structured Decision Making process. There is some interest by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation in funding such an effort. Larry and Stephen will draft a letter that will go to targeted stakeholders for review by the Council. Funding commitment by NFWF will also need to be clarified.

PRISM

Matt Reiter and Brad have discussed a possible PRISM meeting in Denver in March 2017 to address the harmonization of nonbreeding shorebird monitoring protocols.