

# The U.S. Shorebird Conservation Partnership

## *Building Collaborative Action for Shorebird Conservation*

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Dr. Rob Clay, Director  
Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network Executive Office  
Manomet  
P.O. Box 1770  
Manomet, MA 02345

Dear Dr. Clay,

The U.S. Shorebird Conservation Council supports the expansion of the Cape Romain NWR WHSRN site to include adjacent state and private properties. The original designation of International Importance remains. We believe including additional state and private partners will help increase the awareness of shorebirds in the region and lead to increased conservation and management efforts.

As mentioned in the nomination, the shorebird numbers listed are single maximums, which does not take into account effects of length of stay or seasonality. If only a portion of the total number of maximum counts was present during the other migration season, the region would clearly support >100,000 shorebirds, per the WHSRN criterion of supporting “more than 100,000 shorebirds per year.” Similarly, if turnover was considered for passage populations, the expanded nomination region would clearly support >100,000 shorebirds.

All the pertinent landowners are included in the nomination, and it is good to see the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources as a supporting partner. The Dewes Island Conservancy mentions that the area supports 75% of the American Oystercatcher population, which is a typo given the other presented data.

The most obvious justification for nomination at the International level is the number of American Oystercatchers which use the area, clearly exceeding the required threshold of 10% of the population. Given that a single count in a portion of this nominated landscape documented 1,852 oystercatchers, there is no doubt that the total number using the area annually is much higher, if other sites and passage turnover were taken into account. Information on Short-billed Dowitcher (combined *griseus* and *hendersoni* subspecies) use also supports the designation at the International level. Passage dowitchers in South Carolina are most likely to be *griseus*, with a population of 50,000 individuals.

If data were available, for oystercatchers for example, it would have been useful to show the connectivity among the properties in the expanded nomination package, which would have provided additional evidence for their inclusion.

Sincerely,

Robert L. Penner II /s/

Chair, WHSRN-US  
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