



## Waterbird Conservation for the Americas

### Executive Committee of the Waterbird Conservation Council Conference Call April 5, 2005

#### Participants

Executive Committee: Kathy Parsons, Paul Baicich, Ian Davidson, Eric Mellink, Paul Schmidt, Gerald Winegrad. Other: Jennifer Wheeler, Bob Milko, coordinators; Rob Clay, guest.

Unable to participate: Ghisselle Alvarado, Eric Carey, Paul Kluckner, Jim Kushlan, Melanie Steinkamp

**Next Call: May 31, 2005, 2 p.m. Eastern**

#### Discussion and Decisions

- ❖ Regional (Paul Schmidt and Jennifer Wheeler)—conference calls have taken place since January to organize work of committee for 2005 and to discuss endorsement of Intermountain West plan. Plan 95% finished; comments sent to Gary; endorsement implicit with accommodation of comments and completion of plan. Challenge for Regional Committee this year is to expand to include representatives of working groups (including working groups in Latin America and Caribbean). Currently have opened committee membership to all regional leads (the addition of 15-20 people to existing 8-10?). Experimenting with focused meeting agendas meant to attract only a portion of committee to each meeting.

**Action Item for EC:** provide feedback, comments, and ideas on how to incorporate regional interests in committee structure

- ❖ Communications (Paul Baicich and Jennifer Wheeler)—conference calls scheduled for every other month (next one April 18); 8 members (4 on Council); looking for members with website expertise. Have circulated key messages to Council (in second round currently). Discussed Communications Piece—JW has drafted a meaty outline for our consideration. Process proposed and accepted by EC includes having JW as initiator and convenor of information to be contained in piece, Council committee chairs to provide concise, substantive information concerning their areas of activity, JW to whip into shape, run by EC as a draft and then hand over to Communications Committee. Paul believes can be accomplished within 6 mo—our commitment is to have completed by end of calendar year. Questions were raised as to audience for this piece and how to approach Latin American partners (especially in South America) with this information, multiple versus side-by-side translations. EC recommended a small task force (JW, Paul, Ian and perhaps Paul K) to scope out document (purpose, audience, incorporation of key messages, etc) and solicit information from Council committee heads when appropriate.

**Action Item for EC:** provide feedback to Paul (if haven't already done so) on key messages

- ❖ International (Ian Davidson and Rob Clay)—work of committee has focused on administrative tasks of Neotrop grant. Have retained Rob's services as overall coordinator of Range-wide Waterbird Conservation project; in process of securing coordinator for Caribbean; have



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coordination and strong country partners in Central America; Rob will also coordinate South American partners. Rob has been active in four areas of grant since hire—understanding project, administering contracts to 30+ partners, developing strategy for meeting mapping requirements of project, linking to other hemispheric initiatives to leverage broader achievements both for Council and other organizations. Ian reported that Conservation International has offered to help significantly with GIS work which may free some of Neotrop grant for other tasks. Challenge for committee and project is to identify and capitalize on opportunities to work cooperatively with other initiatives. Rob very interested in developing this approach and offered to serve on EC's ad hoc committee on integration—an area of work we committed to in Nassau but which has yet to be launched. Rob's email address is [rob@guyra.org.py](mailto:rob@guyra.org.py)

**Action Item for EC:** nothing specific, but Ian requests EC give thought to how International should transform from Latin American/Caribbean focused work as Neotrop project is implemented (still responsibility of International) to a range-wide focus, perhaps incorporating the work of the ad hoc committee on integration

- ❖ Technical Services (Kathy Parsons for Melanie Steinkamp)—the committee has advanced three areas of interest since Nassau: a) Bruce Peterjohn (committee co-chair) has volunteered and been accepted as Waterbird Initiative's representative to the US NABCI monitoring working group (Paul Schmidt chairs this), b) Melanie and Bruce are leading a task group to complete monitoring strategy (framework document) for the initiative by the end of calendar year; conference call with committee scheduled for later this month, c) Kathy is leading a task group to perform a continental assessment of marshbirds listed in NAWCP (prospectus shared with EC).

**Action Item for EC:** provide feedback on marshbird prospectus; provide contact information for marshbird experts (scientists, managers, etc)

- ❖ Conservation Action (Gerald Winegrad)—committee members have been active in several areas; Gerald provided an update of current waterbird issues involving advocacy. In particular, input from the Council and EC would be helpful regarding the finalized Pacific Seabird Plan and in ensuring the reauthorization (with favorable details) this year of the Neotrop Act. Gerald will provide further information and recommendation concerning support letters to members.

**Action Item for EC:** consider sending a letter that Gerald will draft on behalf of the Initiative urging favorable passage of Neotrop Act; consider individual/institutional support actions as well

- ❖ Membership (Kathy Parsons)—no activity since Nassau meeting; Membership Committee meeting at Nassau was well-attended and productive. Follow-up actions will commence this month including conference call.

**Action Item for EC:** none at this time

- ❖ Resources (vacant)—Resources committee has an up-to-date work plan and members willing to serve but no leader. Immediate need is to secure operational budget for 2006 annual meeting. Kathy asked EC members to consider possible candidates who could be recruited to lead



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committee or perhaps to develop a new model for meeting the resource needs of the council/initiative.

**Action Item for EC:** provide candidate names for recruitment

- ❖ Executive (Kathy Parsons)—important task that Executive must accomplish at next meeting (May 2005) is selecting chair-elect of Council. Discussed various ways this could be done including how was accomplished at Reston. EC agreed that the selection of the chair-elect should be made by the EC and chair-elect should be a member of EC. Kathy voiced opinion that chair-elect should not be from the US in order to keep leadership roles circulating through all Initiative regions. Kathy offered to work with Jennifer Wheeler to draft a couple of scenarios leading to selection of chair-elect and obtain feedback from EC on best way forward. Ad-hoc updates were tabled until next meeting.

**Action Item for EC:** provide feedback on best procedure for identifying and elevating EC member to office of chair-elect