



## Waterbird Conservation for the Americas

### Executive Committee of the Waterbird Conservation Council Conference Call March 23, 2004

#### **Participants**

Executive Committee: Kathy Parsons, Ghisselle Alvarado, Ian Davidson, Frank Gill, Paul Kluckner, Pat Patterson, Paul Schmidt, Gerald Winegrad. Other: Jennifer Wheeler, Bob Milko, coordinators.  
Unable to participate: Eric Carey, Eric Mellink, Jim Kushlan, Melanie Steinkamp

**Next Call: Proposed: May 18, 2004 or May 25, 2004, 3 p.m. Eastern**

#### **Discussion and Decisions**

##### **❖ Follow-up from Key Largo**

The comments and decisions made in Key Largo were used to update the Vision and Workplan documents prepared by the Council Committees. These changes were submitted to Chairs, and a short summary prepared for public dissemination. This summary has already been circulated at an ABC Policy Council meeting and the North American Wildlife Conference.

**Decision:** The Vision and Workplan documents, and the summary of committee tasks (attached) will be made public at meetings and posted on the website ([www.waterbirdconservation.org](http://www.waterbirdconservation.org)).

When the meeting in Key Largo adjourned, the location of the 2005 meeting was undecided (between Miami, Florida, and Nassau, Grand Bahamas.) Jennifer did an analysis of costs, convenience, accessibility and preference, and recommended Nassau as the meeting place.

**Decision:** The 2005 annual meeting of the Waterbird Conservation Council is scheduled January 10-12, 2005 in Nassau, Bahamas. Monday, January 10 will be dedicated to committee meetings, in preparation for the full Council meeting on Tuesday and Wednesday, January 11 and 12. A group field trip will be arranged for the previous weekend, January 8 and 9.

##### **❖ Committee Discussions**

The role of the Executive Committee is facilitating committee work was reaffirmed. Committee chairs outlined developments since January, and discussed their commitment to taking the next steps outlined in the committee workplans.

**Decision for All Committees:** All Chairs are encouraged to schedule a meeting/conference call prior to the next Executive Committee conference call.

**Technical:** (Jennifer Wheeler for Chair Melanie Steinkamp). Committee has not met since Key Largo. Next steps are to examine the state of objective-setting and to continue developing the monitoring framework (and outline for which has been drafted).



## Waterbird Conservation for the Americas

Jennifer reported on the work of an *ad hoc* group formed to identify geographic priorities across the Plan area. This task was initiated in response to revisions in the application questions for U.S. standard grants under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA), but considered to be of general value to the initiative.

**Decision:** Jennifer will distribute to the full Council the recommendations that a small group (Jennifer Wheeler, Kathy Parsons, Jim Kushlan, Eric Mellink, Bob Milko and John Cecil) made regarding priorities in the U.S., and will convene a more representative group to consider the question of geographic priorities across the entire Plan area.

**Regional Planning and Implementation:** (Chair Paul Schmidt). A committee conference call will be scheduled for the week of April 12. In Florida, some new members of the committee were identified, but some regions in the Plan area still lack a liaison on the Council (e.g., a Council member serving specifically as an advocate for the region). Paul suggested that Council members approached individually might accept this role; the potential of recruiting new Council members to fill this need was also mentioned.

The necessary interface between the Regional committee and the International committee was briefly discussed. Currently, the Regional committee is focused on planning in Canada and the U.S., but is ultimately concerned with all regions in the Plan area. The International Committee is currently focused on advancing waterbird work in MesoAmerica and the Caribbean, but is ultimately intended to address all cross-border issues.

**Decision:** The way in which the Regional Committee and International Committee will collaborate to advance regional planning for the Caribbean, Mexico, and Central America will be an agenda topic for the next Executive Committee conference call.

**International:** (Co-Chairs Ian Davidson & Ghisselle Alvarado). The committee awaits a response regarding funding of a proposal submitted under the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation (“Neotrop”) Act. The proposal is comprehensive, covering all of the priority tasks identified by the committee for the next few years. Ian clarified two points: that the work of the committee is to be in concert with efforts already underway (e.g., Partners in Flight), and that funds would be used to contract work at subregional levels. The announcement of awards under the Neotrop Act is expected early May, though grant administrators have requested letters of commitment from organizations potentially contributing matches (a good sign).

**Decision:** Without the assurance of funds under the Neotrop Act, the International Committee should discuss alternative sources of funds as well as the tasks that could be achieved without new funding.

**Communications:** (Chair Frank Gill). The committee recognizes that it has the mandate to proceed with developing a communications strategy, including the two campaigns: “positive” awareness, and “Petrels and People.” A partnership with Bernie Tershey (Island Conservation Group) appears to be one promising component of the latter campaign.

**Resources:** (Chair Pat Patterson). The Chair is still operating without a committee.

**Decisions:** Chair will form a committee and schedule a meeting to discuss strategy and goals for the next 6-12 months.

**Conservation Action:** (Chair Gerald Winegrad). Gerald reported on a number of current and pressing topics relevant to the committee, including introduced predators on Kiska Island, gillnet mortalities in the Southeast, a new educational video for longline fishermen, an international Albatross treaty, and activities of the Bird Funding Group. As a starting point for the Petrels and People campaign, member Francie Cuthbert has arranged for a



## Waterbird Conservation for the Americas

group of undergraduates to prepare an analysis and presentation on the threats to the 11 Highly Imperiled Waterbirds identified in the continental plan.

Nominations: (Chair Kathy Parsons). In accordance with its workplan, the committee has proposed a Spring slate of new Council members. This slate includes federal representatives who were previously identified by SEMARNAT and Canada's National Waterbird Working Group, respectively.

**Decision:** The Nominations Committee will put forth a slate before the entire Council for approval. The slate includes: Manuel Grosselet (Subdirector of SEMARNAT) and Paul Kluckner (Environment Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service Pacific-Yukon Region).

The committee's next steps are to create a Council member directory (a resource for members as well as external audiences) and a statement of membership expectations.