



## Waterbird Conservation for the Americas

### Executive Committee of the Waterbird Conservation Council Conference Call May 24, 2007

#### **Participants**

Executive Committee: Paul Kluckner, Paul Schmidt, Ian Davidson, Paul Baicich, Kathy Parsons, Don Paul, Eric Mellink, Ghisselle Alvarado. Also: Coordinators Garry Donaldson and Jennifer Wheeler, and Jennifer Arnold (to discuss Policy and Critical Issues workplan)

Unable to participate: Lisa Sorenson

**Next Call: Thursday, July 26, 3 p.m. Eastern**

#### **Discussion and Decisions**

**Greeting from new Chair:** Paul Kluckner is now Chair of the Waterbird Conservation Council (term is May-June 2007 to May-June 2009).

#### **Committee Reports/Updates/Issues:**

Policy and Critical Issues -- Jennifer Arnold reviewed a proposed workplan circulated with the March 29 Call Notes. This workplan has a narrow and manageable scope – assisting a small number of in-country contacts to advocate government involvement to address seabird conservation needs. The Executive is currently responsible for overseeing this workplan, as there is not currently a functioning formal Policy and Critical Issues Committee (a chair for a stand-alone committee has not been identified). This workplan is intended to assist the Council in building capacity for a more robust Policy and Critical Issues committee, which would have a broader scope and the ability to prioritize among existing and emerging issues.

***Decision: The Executive supports the workplan. Jennifer Arnold and Jennifer Wheeler will reach out to Council members and affiliates to identify in-country contacts and thus most likely countries to implement the workplan. Panama, Ecuador, and a Caribbean nation were identified as initial targets.***

Communications - Paul Baicich reported that this committee is developing and reviewing a generic factsheet about the Council's 2007 Quito meeting. The Listserv is in use and now has 507 members; a system change requires that recipients cannot view attachments unless they know their password.

Technical Services - Kathy Parsons reports that this committee hopes to convene soon and work on the priority task of a monitoring framework. The Rice and Waterbirds Working Group is hosting a symposium at the 2007 Waterbird Society Meeting (Oct/Nov, Barcelona, Spain) and will oversee production of a proceedings. The committee has approved an MOU with U.S. NABCI to support the report "Opportunities for Improving Avian Monitoring."

Regional Planning and Implementation - Don Paul reported that this committee has a call scheduled for June 20.

Membership - Jennifer Wheeler reported that this committee is delayed on the recruitment time-line because of concerns about Council response level and ability to engage new members. Delay has allowed for expansion of committee to include Rosa Montanez and Alberto Yanosky and to integrate any ideas from the Integration Task Force meeting in Panama (see below). In addition, Jennifer reported that class of 2007 Council members are being contacted as to their interest in staying on Council, so that the Membership committee can begin the process of extending invitations to stay on, as appropriate.

**Other:**

Date of 2008 Annual Meeting – Previously, the Executive stated a preference holding the annual meeting during the week of January 21, 2008. It has since been determined that the San Blas Bird Festival is scheduled for January 19-26. Don Paul and Xico Vega, who interact with the festival organizers, recommend the 2008 Council meeting take place January 15-19, to support and take advantage of the festival.

***Decision: The Executive is in favor of holding the Annual Meeting the week of January 14. Don will work with Festival organizers to coordinate and share information.***

The Integration Task Force – The small group formed at the 2007 Annual Meeting, and charged with examining integration between the Waterbird initiative, WHSRN and other initiatives, is meeting in Panama City, May 29-May 31. Attending will be Carol Lively, Alberto Yanosky, Jim Kushlan, Rosabel Miro, Rosa Montanez, Rob Clay, and Francisco Rilla (by phone). They have a specific charge written in Quito, as well as a new discussion paper put together by Jim Kushlan, around which to organize their discussion.

Seabird Conservation-related Activities - Garry Donaldson reported that several seabird presentations at the Trilateral meeting (wildlife agencies from Canada, US and Mexico) were very well received. The Trilateral participants acknowledged the good work of the Waterbird Conservation Council and the role that the Council could play in moving seabird conservation forward in the three countries. Presentations on the Rice and Waterbirds Working Group and the Integration Task Force also received positive feedback. Jennifer Wheeler updated on the group on the efforts to hold a seabird workshop at the upcoming Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds meeting (July, Puerto Rico). The challenge is to assemble the people necessary to formulate and support actual projects, in addition to general information sharing.

NMBCA Project Concerns Ian Davidson reported that full technical reports from the project are still in development, though several products have already been submitted to USFWS. He expressed concern that the delay (deadline was January 2007) would reflect badly on the project and the Council, and asked for suggestions for addressing this issue. He also raised the need for additional funding to produce best syntheses possible. Finally, he requested input on ideas to best communicate/promote/disseminate the project findings to appropriate audiences.

***Decision: Doug Ryan will be approached by Ian and Jennifer to determine if there is any real need for concern about the delays. The Communications Committee will assist on meeting the communications needs. Individual Council Members –***

*especially those in Latin America -- can provide suggestions and ideas about promotion and distribution.*

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