



Waterbird Conservation for the Americas

Executive Committee of the Waterbird Conservation Council Conference Call May 25, 2004

Participants

Executive Committee: Kathy Parsons, Eric Carey, Gerald Winegrad, Melanie Steinkamp.

Other: Jennifer Wheeler, Bob Milko, coordinators., David Fischer, new Director of Government Relations at ABC, as guest. Unable to participate: Ghisselle Alvarado, Ian Davidson, Frank Gill, Paul Kluckner, Eric Mellink, Jim Kushlan, Pat Patterson, Paul Schmidt.

Next Call: Proposed: Tuesday July 20, 2004, 3 p.m. Eastern

PLEASE RSVP

Committee Chairs will be asked to provide write-ups by Tuesday, July 13 .

Discussion and Decisions

General Decision: While most of the Council's working committees have made progress on agreed-upon tasks for 2004, some committees have remained inactive. Concern was expressed that inactive committees cannot succeed in advancing the objectives of key waterbird conservation activities, nor can they maintain the engagement of Council members. Chairs will continue to be encouraged to schedule meetings/conference calls and the Executive and Nominations committees will problem-solve issues of committee inactivity.

In terms of conference call structure, the Executive Committee feels that it can maximize effectiveness by working strategically with working committee chairs and regional representatives. An effort will be made at future meetings to have brief progress reports available in advance of conference calls with working committee chairs identifying discussion points and soliciting feedback to guide conservation efforts on behalf of the council.

❖ Committee Discussions

Committee developments since March were reviewed by Committee chairs on the call or Jennifer Wheeler.

Regional Planning and Implementation: (Jennifer Wheeler for Chair Paul Schmidt). This committee held a conference call on April 13. Decisions included using the completion of the Northern Prairie and Parkland plan as an opportunity to communicate expectations to other regional planning leads. Each regional lead thus received a packet containing a CD copy of the Northern Prairie and Parkland plan, a one-page description of Council's expectations of regional plans generally, the comments that the Committee provided to the plan authors following review of the plan draft, and the response from the authors to the Committee. It was also resolved that regional liaisons would contact relevant regional leads to encourage progress and determine dates for drafts; including os "subregional" plans (e.g., covering only a subset of species or a portion of a region). It was decided that the committee should review these subregional plans as they are produced, rather than wait until a regional umbrella document is developed. Finally, strategies for advancing waterbird conservation in regions without initiative-based planning efforts were discussed (e.g. Boreal): committee members will examine plans generated under alternative efforts (e.g. Boreal initiative). The next call was not scheduled due to uncertainty regarding when the next regional plan would be available for review.

The Northern Prairie and Parkland Waterbird Conservation Plan is complete and available on line (<http://www.waterbirdconservation.org/regional/> click on the Northern Prairie and Parkland link). Jennifer has



Waterbird Conservation for the Americas

US\$1,000 to provide as an “award” to the Northern Prairie and Parkland region. The suggestion is to use this in a symbolic way such as funding an easement in an area identified by modeling/mapping as being important to waterbirds. The hope would be to use this small award to garner attention for the region.

Communications: (Jennifer Wheeler for Chair Frank Gill). No report.

International: (Jennifer Wheeler for Co-Chairs Ian Davidson & Ghisselle Alvarado). The committee is planning the implementation of the project submitted for funding under the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation (“Neotrop”) Act. The unofficial word is that US\$200,000 will be awarded for this ambitious project, which will bring together over two dozen partners and launch most of the committee’s priority tasks.

An important, unresolved, issue for the project is coordination. The project calls for an international coordinator and two regional (Central America and Caribbean) coordinators, who have not yet been identified. Because of the complexity of the project, it will be essential to have good coordination and communications. There are a variety of other unresolved issues, which will be addressed as the detailed workplans are drawn up for the project over the next three months (a requirement of the grant agreement).

Technical: (Chair Melanie Steinkamp). The committee has not met since Key Largo. Next steps are to examine the state of objective-setting, continue developing the monitoring framework (an outline for which has been drafted), and work on marshbirds. A meeting for the committee will be scheduled at the end of June.

Conservation Action: (Chair Gerald Winegrad). Gerald reported on a recent committee conference call. Items included the near completion of a student project focusing on the Highly Imperiled seabirds (under the oversight of Francie Cuthbert), the state of predator eradication projects, fisheries issues and the upcoming Albatross conference, contaminants issues, and the state of Congressional funding initiatives. The Chair did not feel it was possible to predict the outcome of these latter efforts. Extensive background notes for the call will be circulated to the full Council. A challenge and goal of the committee is to increase its international networks (see Nominations below).

The upcoming Albatross and Petrel conference in Uruguay (August) will be an opportunity for both the International Committee and Conservation Action Committee to network.

Resources: (Jennifer Wheeler for Chair Pat Patterson). The Chair recently met with Jennifer Wheeler and Kathy Parsons to draw up a draft Vision and Workplan. This document will be shared with Council members who have expressed an interest in this committee and a call will be scheduled for June.

Nominations: (Chair Kathy Parsons). The nominees Manuel Grosselet (Subdirector of SEMARNAT) and Paul Kluckner (Environment Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service Pacific-Yukon Region) were approved by the Council and will receive formal invitations and welcome.

The Chair of the committee has drawn up a draft policy document for the committee to guide the growth of the Council. This is being circulated and will be discussed by conference call in June. Kathy emphasized that the successful integration of new members will depend on their ability to find a niche within an active committee.

All Committees:

Kathy reiterated that committees can be made up of Council and non-council members. For a committee addressing disparate subjects, subcommittees or groups devoted to subtasks might be appropriate. Eric Carey commented that in situations where capacity was limited (e.g., Caribbean) it will be easier to draw people in to work on discrete, tangible tasks (as opposed to more nebulous regional endeavors).