



Executive Committee of the Waterbird Conservation Council Conference Call September 17, 2003

Participants

Executive Committee: Kathy Parsons, Ghisselle Alvarado, Jim Kushlan, Pat Patterson (briefly), Ian Davidson.
Other: Jennifer Wheeler, coordinator. Frank Gill joined to call to report on the Communications and Marketing Committee.

Unable to participate: Gerry McKeating, Eric Mellink, Eric Carey, Melanie Steinkamp

Discussion and Decisions

The Executive Committee reaffirmed its position that its primary role was to support the other Council committees, in which most of the work of the Council would be achieved.

Decision: All committee chairs ought to participate in Executive Committee calls/meetings. Currently, this would involve the addition of Frank Gill, Paul Schmidt, and the new Conservation Action chair.

Decision: Written reports from Chairs are still desired, including especially lists of committee objectives for the short and long term. Chairs need to be reminded of this.

Decision: The Executive Committee should communicate to the other committees both a vision of work to be accomplished by the committees and the Executive Committee's role to facilitate that work. This should be done with a mind towards the meeting January and what we hope that meeting will accomplish.

Individual committee reports were verbally presented; with issues/decisions for the committees summarized below.

International Advancement

Chair: Ian Davidson. Regular correspondence with full committee membership: Not yet.

1. An Americas Conservation Waterbird Workshop is still planned for the MesoAmerican Biological Congress Meeting in Chiapas, Mexico in early November. CIPAMEX has helped secure space, but an exact date has not been confirmed. A budget of 12K USD is required to run this meeting. A concept proposal is pending for fundraising purposes.

Decision: Confirm workshop – funding and agreed-upon agenda.

2. Council Members Ian Davidson, Melanie Steinkamp, and Jim Kushlan organized two informal meetings at the BirdLife Americas Partnership Meeting in Paraguay resulting in a draft proposal for a full-Americas Waterbird Plan as a framework for coordinating activities of several groups and engaging representatives from relevant conventions and agencies. A draft concept document has been completed and has been circulated for further comment. Melanie Steinkamp is the focal person on this issue.

Issue: Executive Committee of Waterbird Conservation Council will be requested to review and endorse concept document, essentially agreeing to advance a broader waterbird program in Latin America (primarily Central and South America) that dovetails with current Americas Waterbird Conservation Plan.



Waterbird Conservation for the Americas

3. Upcoming events are opportunities to make strategic interventions to seek input from a broader group of stakeholders in the Americas. Examples:

September 2003, Waterbird Society Meeting, Brazil

October 2003, Neotropical Ornithological Congress and associated Environmental Ministers Meeting (hosted with support from U.S. State Department), Chile

[See attached invitation to a symposium to be hosted at the Neotropical Ornithological Congress]

November 2003, MesoAmerican Biological Congress, Mexico

Issue: Need to complete the draft concept document for broader waterbird program for presentation at these types of events.

Regional Planning and Implementation

Chair: Paul Schmidt. Regular correspondence with full committee membership: Inaugural call held.

1. The committee has proposed recognition of regional working group leaders via a letter from the Council. The purpose of this letter would be to formally identify and thank leads, offer the assistance of the committee and the full Council; and define the committee's vision of successful regional plans, specifically addressing regional plan implementation.

Issue: Letter must be finalized and tailored for the diverse situations across regions.

2. The committee would like to assign Council members to "adopt" regions, and will craft a guidance document outlining a Council member's responsibilities and suggested steps to do this. As a tool for the Council, a diagram to identify the ties and networks that exist in each regional working group should be assembled.

Issue: Council member (drawn from the full Council) will need to be identified for each region.

Communications and Marketing

Chair: Frank Gill. Regular correspondence with full committee membership: Not yet.

With a recent, large grant to National Audubon Society by Monsanto, there is funding available to explore mechanisms for waterbird conservation outreach. The Great Blue Heron is a likely signature species for a continental effort. Regarding the other outreach program focusing on the most imperiled waterbird species (pelagic seabirds, e.g., petrels), the work done on the Pacific Coast by Bernie Tershey and the Island Conservation Group may be a good foundation for an outreach campaign.

Decision: This committee needs to form and develop objectives.

Resources

Not yet organized. Jim Woehr has requested to step down from chairing this committee; the Executive Committee has suggested that Pat Patterson be requested to take on this position.

Decision: Pat Patterson needs to be approached and if agreeable, confirmed as chair.

Conservation Action

Not yet organized. Pat Patterson was originally to serve as chair of this committee, and since it was suggested he switch to resources, it was proposed Gerald Winegrad be requested to take on this position.

Decision: Gerald Winegrad needs to be approached and if agreeable, confirmed as chair.

Nominations

Not yet organized. Pat Patterson was originally to serve as chair of this committee as well, but it was suggested that the Chair of the Council (Kathy Parsons) should serve in this capacity.

Decision: Kathy will consider the process by which nominations are received and decided upon. It would be desirable to have new Council members on board in time for the January full Council meeting in Miami.



Waterbird Conservation for the Americas

Information received earlier from Gerry McKeating on a nomination was shared: he is nominating Kevin Loftus, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. Another member of this working group, a representative of federal government, Canadian Wildlife Service, will be forthcoming.

Other nominations/interests to consider: Gerry McKeating has broached the idea of Mexican federal government representation. Melanie Steinkamp, and others, have pointed a need for representation of the fisheries perspective. (This ties in to a suggestion made at the recent NABCI US meeting to include NOAA or NMFS representatives in NABCI US.)

Next Meetings

Reminder: The next Executive Committee conversation will be scheduled for Tuesday, November 18, 2003 at 3 p.m. East Coast Time (please consider adjustments associated with Daylight Savings Time changes)

Reminder: The next full Council meeting is scheduled for January 13 and 14, 2004 near or in Miami, Florida