**Update on the Status of the PIFV Conservation Business Plans**

**David Younkman, American Bird Conservancy**

**February 2016**

**Overall**

Since the Partners in Flight V Conference and Workshop, there has been significant, if incomplete, progress on all eight of the Conservation Business Plans. In addition, within and around many of the plans there has been significant work (both on planning and on-the-ground conservation action) done for specific species that are targets of various plans (e.g. Wood Thrush Working Group, Golden-winged Warbler Conservation Plan, and many, many others). However, the Conservation Business Planning effort has been undertaken primarily on a volunteer basis, and we seem to be reaching the limits regarding what can be produced under an all-volunteer effort toward producing plans that are as multifaceted, multi-species and as full life cycle as these plans intend to be.

Funding Needed: What is needed now is targeted funding to hire individuals who can complete a workable version one for each of these plans. We have seen that where funding is being made available, such as with the Pacific Americas Shorebird Conservation Strategy, then substantial progress is being made. In addition, where even modest amounts of funding are available ($20-45,000) we find that wintering ground workshops have been or soon will be carried out, for example for the Chihuahua Grassland Plan, the Pine-Oak and Cloud Forests Plan and the Tropical Dry Forests Plan.

Leadership: A plan must meet the needs of those who call for it or who will implement it. There has been some confusion and spinning wheels over the desired format and level of detail of these plans. NABCI, Partners in Flight and/or a significant funder such as the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation could provide a key role in defining the use and format of these plans.

**South and Central America Highlands/ Eastern US Forests Conservation Business Plan**

After completing an initial draft of the Highlands Business Plan in 2014 and working toward a more complete and thorough version, the Highlands Conservation Business Plan has been in need of additional staff support as the primary responsible parties have been intensely involved in other projects (i.e., PIF Landbird Plan Revision and/or State of the Birds; NABCI-JV-BCCP meetings, RCCP projects, etc.).

However, work continues through species-focused working group partnerships on developing conservation plans (Canada Warbler) or implementing existing conservation plans (Golden-winged Warbler, Cerulean Warbler) for the three focal species targeted in this Conservation Business Plan.

For next steps, I am hoping to get an intern for about 3 months this spring/summer through a DOI Fellowship program, with the intent of having that person help re-start the Highlands business planning effort and work toward producing "version 2.0" of our plan. – Randy Dettmer

**Pacific Americas Shorebird Conservation Strategy**

Steering and planning committees have been formed and a part-time coordinator has been hired to oversee development.  Funding is being provided by the Packard Foundation, National Audubon, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.  Geographic scope and shorebird conservation targets have been identified, and two workshops have been held to develop threat, contributing factor, and strategy components of the conceptual model.  All planning steps are being developed in Miradi.  A regional workshop is planned for February in Panama City. - Brad Andres

**Caribbean Conservation Business Plan**

Andrew Rothman led a workshop in Jamaica last July as part of the Birds Caribbean meeting. At that time an updated list of strategies and projects was presented and new projects were discussed and added. These new projects now need to be integrated into the overall plan and a summary of this new portfolio of projects needs to be written up. Reformatting the plan document is under consideration. – Andrew Rothman

**Central American Lowland (aka Caribbean Slope Forests of Central America)/Eastern US Forests Plan**

Randy Wilson reports that the original process has reached the point where it cannot proceed without additional assistance, however,the Wood Thrush working group is planning on finding funds to find help to move this plan forward.

**Southern Cone (”Pampas to Prairies”) Grasslands Conservation Business Plan**

We are just about to start a NMBCA proposal that expands our area of work beyond the Southern Cone (Arg, Bra, Par, Uru) into Bolivia, Colombia and Mexico. We continue to focus on the development of an alliance with ranchers throughout the region to get them to adopt bird-friendly ranching practices and to develop a market for their beef.

During our last Ranchers meeting in November 2015, Santana do Livramento, Brasil we registered over 400 participants and we had the chance to meet with representatives from Bolivia, Colombia, USA and Canada. Also, Colombians (Calidris and Von Humboldt representatives) alerted us to governmental plans for transforming virtually all the Llanos into intensive agriculture and they requested help from us for an international media campaign during 2016 to raise awareness of the value of grasslands to aid conservation.

The NMBCA proposal that is starting now until the end of 2017 (although quite small in terms of budget) has some funds to support the development of the Prairies to Pampas Conservation Business Plan (1 or 2 meetings probably). We are in the process, with the participating partners, of taking into account the big picture in terms of current projects and existing funding gaps within the Alliance Project portfolio. We are also counting on some fresh Bobolink support for our grasslands activities.

At this point, we have some 500 Alliance farm members in the Southern Cone region that corresponds to approx. 500.000 hectares, and around 300 farms are producing Alliance certified beef. This does not mean that this beef is in the market already. Still some work to do to close the circuit in most places. – Nicolas Marchand (and Rob Clay).

“We're continuing to use the Bobolink Conservation Plan as a means to move forward the concept of full life cycle conservation in North and South American grasslands, with Bobolinks as a focal species (as promoted in the initial PIF Business Plan).” - Roz Renfrew

“There is an Eastern Grassland conservation business plan… that address the short distance migrants and resident birds that did not quite fit into the work with the Bobolinks and South American grasslands, as we had hoped… Then there are the Shrike people who are putting together a plan specifically for Loggerhead Shrikes …There has also been an effort with Great Plains JVs led by David Pashley to work together across the Great Plains for grassland birds”. – Jim Giocomo

**Chihuahua Grasslands Conservation Business Plan**

Andrew Rothman reports that Pronatura NE, under Mauricio de la Maza’s direction, hosted a wintering ground workshop in Monterrey, Mexico last February 2015. This two day workshop brought grassland experts together from Mexico and the US. A Miradi diagram was presented and refined and a wintering ground set of strategies and a portfolio of projects were developed. The workshop concluded with an exercise in which three groups ranked the strategies and projects as to their importance, and a consensus document of those priorities resides with Mauricio. Revisions to the overall Plan document were sent to Mary Gustafson, who is no longer with the Rio Grande Joint Venture so it unclear the status of the draft of the plan. – Andrew Rothman

**Sierra Madre Pine-Oak and Cloud Forests/Western Forests Conservation Business Plan**

John Alexander provided a significant re-write for the Western Forests CBP, boiling it down into a “framework” style document. John also provided a simplified Miradi diagram for the plan. Thanks to a grant from WHMSI, the group is now working to hold a two day wintering ground workshop (in conjunction with a sequential Tropical Dry Forest wintering ground workshop) in Mexico in April of this year. The group expects to produce a “version one” of the Western Forests CBP by mid-year and they expect to have updated strategies and a portfolio of projects, and strategic investment areas identified from the workshop. – David Younkman

**Tropical Dry Forests and Mangroves/Western Forests Conservation Business Plan**

Carol Beardmore and her team provided a significant re-write for the Tropical Dry Forest and Mangrove CBP. As noted above, thanks to a grant from WHMSI, the group is now working to hold a two day wintering ground workshop (in conjunction with a sequential Pine-Oak/Western Forests wintering ground workshop) in Mexico in April of this year. It is not clear what the group plans are for producing a version one of their plan but they do expect to have updated strategies and a portfolio of projects, and strategic investment areas identified from the workshop. – David Younkman