



**North American Bird Conservation Initiative- US Committee
7-8 August 2019**

US Forest Service International Programs Office, Fourth Floor, 1 Thomas Circle NW, Washington, DC



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7 August 2019

NABCI Coordinator Overview - *Judith Scarl, NABCI*

[See the Presentation](#)

- New representatives to NABCI include: Dr. Jill Deppe (National Audubon Society), with Nicole Michel as proxy for this meeting; Ryan Orndorff (Department of Defense), with Megan Scanlin as proxy for this meeting; Dr. Brian Smith (US Shorebird Conservation Partnership); Melanie Steinkamp (US Geological Survey); Dr. Karen Waldrop (AFWA Resident Game Bird WG); Dr. Ruth Bennett (Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center- proxy), and Geoff Geupel (Partners in Flight).
- We have several current or upcoming Subcommittee leadership vacancies, including: Communications Subcommittee Co-Chair (and soon Chair), Legislative and Policy Subcommittee Co-Chair, and Private and Working Lands Co-Chair. We encourage Committee members and other partners to consider what leadership roles they might take.
- Some key NABCI accomplishments since our last meeting include: Release of [National Bird Conservation Priorities](#), release of [Relevancy Toolkit](#), Human Dimensions [Success story Map](#), 2018 NABCI Highlights document, and approved 2019 State of the Birds report.
- This meeting will focus on advancing the National Bird Conservation Priorities, rallying around bird science and promoting the State of the Birds, guiding our Subcommittees as the drivers of NABCI's work, and aligning partners and partnerships.
- Meeting theme is **Improving Communication**, and meeting goals include a recommitment to NABCI and its Subcommittees, approval of the 2019-2020 Work Plan, rallying around the State of the Birds report, and honing a strategy for advancing and promoting the National Bird Conservation Priorities.
- Things to Consider throughout the meeting: Are we promoting solutions that can make a difference, and focusing on game changers? Are we pushing ourselves to think outside of the box? How can we best align bird conservation outcomes with other positive human outcomes?

National Bird Conservation Priorities Session

NABCI 2017-2021 Strategic Plan Goal 1, Subgoal 1: Support, develop, integrate, and promote priorities of regional, national, and international bird conservation partnerships.

NABCI 2017-2021 Strategic Plan Goal 3, Subgoal 1: Facilitate coordinated communication with government leadership about highest priority programs, initiatives, and needs of bird conservation.

Associated Materials: National Bird Conservation Priorities Gap Analysis Survey Summary; Compiled Survey Results

[See the Presentation File.](#)

From our last meeting, NABCI Partner Commitments to Elevate Priorities include:

- Take document to leadership
- Cross-walk organizational priorities with bird conservation priorities
- Inform planning/collaboration efforts
- Highlight how organizational projects tie into bigger picture of bird conservation needs.

Partners shared specific examples of how they have used the Priorities including:

- Karen Waldrop (KY Department of Fish and Wildlife) used ideas from the document's setup to set the strategic priorities for her agency.
- US Shorebird Conservation Plan Partnership will organize upcoming Shorebird Plan revision around the Priorities outline, and will use the structure of the Priorities to review Shorebird accomplishments from the last 20 years.
- Document presented to State Directors at the 2018 AFWA Business Meeting
- Article in The Wildlife Professional focused on the Priorities

National Bird Conservation Priorities Gap Analysis Survey

(Judith Scarl, NABCI)

An open question has been, How do we identify and address gaps in implementation of Priority Actions? Also, while NABCI's primary role is to elevate and communicate the Priorities, our Committee may also have a role in implementing specific actions. We conducted a survey of NABCI Committee members to explore: 1) gaps in implementation of Priority Actions, and 2) how the NABCI partnership specifically can play a role in supporting Priority Actions. This survey was distributed to Committee members in December 2018 and 17 (out of 25) members responded.

Part 1: Explore gaps in implementation of Priority Actions

Survey Question: Based on your knowledge of work done in your organization or partnership as well as in the broader bird conservation community, which of these Priority Actions needs the most additional focus across the conservation community to achieve optimal outcomes? (Pick 2)

For these two actions,

- a) what do you see as the primary barriers that impede progress within your organization?
- b) what do you see as the primary barriers that impede progress across the broader conservation field?

Response: Not a lot of agreement in which actions need the most additional focus; the most votes any Action received was six (40%), five Actions received between 4 (27%) and 6 (40%) votes, and all actions received at least one vote.

Takeaway: Individual priorities vary across the NABCI partnership, and there is need for additional work across multiple Actions

Recommendation #1: *When a Priority Action is closely aligned with the goals of a NABCI Subcommittee, Subcommittee will evaluate feedback on barriers to Action Implementation and assess specific Subcommittee role in elevating Priority or reducing barriers.*

Committee supports this recommendation.

Recommendation #2: Identify NABCI's role in overcoming barriers to successful implementation of most commonly selected "Gap" Priority Action, which does not align with a Subcommittee charge; Develop strategy for how NABCI can best elevate this Action

See notes below for continuation of this discussion. (See below.)

Part 2: Explore how NABCI partnership specifically can play a role in supporting Priority Actions

Survey Question: Please indicate up to two of the Priority Actions that you think the NABCI Committee, its Subcommittees, or a new ad hoc group or Subcommittee should work to implement.

What actions or steps do you think NABCI should take to address this Priority Action?

Higher consensus here: 67% (n=10) selected "Increase coordination and cooperation across federal agencies, and among federal and state agencies, to implement conservation policies and actions at broad scales."

What actions or steps should NABCI take to address this option?

- We are already doing this well (x2)
- Focus on mechanisms for communication (x3)
- Emphasize the Importance of Working Together (x2)

Recommendation #3: Evaluate what parts of NABCI's work plan serve to increase coordination and cooperation across federal agencies, and among federal and state agencies, to implement conservation policies and actions at broad scales, and use survey feedback develop recommendations for any additional steps NABCI should prioritize to address this Priority Action.

Team formed to perform this evaluation and develop recommendations by the next NABCI meeting.

Team Members: Tammy VerCauteren, Geoff Geupel, a representative from Jerome Ford's group, a representative from Gordon Myers' agency (perhaps from the Science Applications team)

Return to Recommendation #2: Identify NABCI's role in overcoming barriers to successful implementation of most commonly selected "Gap" Priority Action; Develop strategy for how NABCI can best elevate this Action

Most Commonly Selected Priority Action (n=6): Leverage government dollars with private dollars to multiply conservation impacts through partnerships including Migratory Bird Joint Ventures, the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, and new programs

Barriers to Progress:

- **Lack of relationships or partnerships** (4 people mentioned in the survey) e.g. engaging entities with private dollars to leverage, limited capacity to build partnerships, lack of experience/knowledge re: how to seek private funds
- **Competition for funding** (3 people mentioned in the survey)
- **Communication** (2 people mentioned in the survey) e.g. lack of consistent messaging, information on how to achieve success in \$ leveraging

Other barriers include: political will to tackle issue, restriction on agency's ability to solicit private funds, perception of impinging on private land rights

NABCI Partners brainstormed:

Additional Barriers: Lack of funding (both government and private), changes in agency missions that move agencies away from conservation charges, lack of familiarity with specific beneficiaries (who would also benefit from bird conservation?), and trust building.

What can NABCI do to address barriers?

- Multiple partners mentioned addressing the relationship element (including a focus on partnership incentives, identifying with whom to have relationships)
- Establishing national priorities already indirectly influences competition
- Hold a trust-building workshop
- Consider how we (Committee member agencies) leverage ourselves
 - E.g. how can organizations like Ducks Unlimited, that is successful at leveraging private dollars, help other organizations
 - More/better shared resources between partners
- Consider how NABCI messaging gets incorporated into fundraising; partners can provide feedback on whether and how NABCI information is important to donors

Additional Ideas/Parking Lot:

- Work with NFWF, which specializes in leveraging government dollars with private dollars
- Promote/focus on relevancy, to find partners to whom we aren't currently connected but who we could be relevant to.
- Trace connections
- Give partners an incentive to partner (identify mutual benefits of partnerships)
- Emphasize personal relationships
- Consider both internal and external barriers, as well as short-term and long-term barriers.

A small group was formed to continue to follow up on Recommendation #2: Identify NABCI's role in overcoming barriers to successful implementation of most commonly selected "Gap" Priority Action; Develop strategy for how NABCI can best elevate this Action. Group members include: Jessica Barnes, Geoff Walsh, Karen Waldrop, Brian Smith, Tom Moorman, someone from Audubon.

Priorities Spotlight: 2020 Grassland Conservation Summit

Tammy VerCauteren, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies

[See the Presentation File.](#)

The 2020 Grasslands Conservation Summit builds on AFWA Grassland Working Group efforts to identify gaps in grassland conservation, and uses the National Bird Conservation Priorities document to create a framework to discuss grasslands. The 2020 Central Grasslands Roadmap Summit will include partners from federal and state agencies, NGOs, landowners, foundations, industry, tribal lands, and academia. Many grassland plans exist, and this group will develop a Road Map to develop a unified Plan for the next 10 years, so that we can agree as a community what to invest in. This project supports Priority Actions and identified needs including: increasing collaboration between federal agencies, diversifying partnerships, and working towards broader impacts.

Tom Moorman moves to endorse the 2020 Grasslands Roadmap Summit. Alicia Hardin seconds. The motion carries and NABCI endorses the Summit.

Recovering America's Wildlife Act

Sean Saville, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

NABCI 2017-2021 Strategic Plan Goal 2, Subgoal 1d1: Produce State of the Birds reports that synthesize science and align with key policy programs or initiatives to provide an effective communication tool to encourage science-based conservation policy

NABCI 2017-2021 Strategic Plan Goal 3, Subgoal 1b: NABCI non-federal partners will develop or compile messaging that communicates how emerging legislation or funding could impact bird conservation.

[See presentation.](#)

NABCI's State of the Birds report is meant as a communication tool about the Recovering America's Wildlife Act (HR-3742). This legislation was reintroduced in the House of Representatives on July 12, 2019. Co-sponsors and Actions on this bill can be tracked on [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov). Changes since the last introduction include: the addition of a tribal title, which adds ~\$97.5 million to the price tag; a 10% carve off for competitive innovation grants; a 10% minimum for Threatened and Endangered Species recovery work; and the specification that the funding source comes from the general treasury (not specific to energy revenues). The bill also includes a component to address accountability and reporting and requires a 5-year report out to Congress.

NABCI partners are encouraged to use the #RecoverWildlife hashtag.

Discussion

-Alliance for America's Fish and Wildlife has an individual scientist sign-on letter, and NABCI partners are encouraged to sign on (as appropriate).

-The sign on letter could have a link to the State of the Birds report at the bottom.

-The provision that allows up to 15% of spending for wildlife-associated recreation offers an opportunity to engage with the outdoor recreation industry.

Please distribute the [private sector sign-on letter](#) and the [scientist sign-on letter](#) as appropriate.

State of the Birds Report: Progress, Plans, Promotion

Ken Rosenberg, Cornell Lab of Ornithology/American Bird Conservancy

NABCI 2017-2021 Strategic Plan Goal 2, Subgoal 1d1: Produce State of the Birds reports that synthesize science and align with key policy programs or initiatives to provide an effective communication tool to encourage science-based conservation policy

NABCI 2017-2021 Strategic Plan Goal 3, Subgoal 1b: NABCI non-federal partners will develop or compile messaging that communicates how emerging legislation or funding could impact bird conservation.

This year's State of the Birds report focuses on the role of state agencies in bird conservation; its messages focus on the economic costs of species loss, insufficient state funding, and the broader relevancy of conservation. It focuses on a huge loss of birds since 1970, including losses across the 10 most common bird species, and sets the stage to discuss funding for state-led conservation and will be accompanied by a 1-page insert focused on RAWA, to be included with the report where appropriate.

The report also ties into the National Bird Conservation Priorities and relevancy messaging, and an interior map highlights examples of where states have been successful at recovering bird populations. Cornell is creating a website that highlights each of these success stories, and that can accommodate more stories than we could in the printed report. A release is planned in September or October, to be accompanied by a Congressional briefing and media event.

Discussion

Much discussion focused on how to release and publicize the report. Recommendations included: Drawing connections through the TWS Bulletin focused on private lands conservation/grassland birds; publicizing in conjunction with the AFWA meeting in Minnesota, publicizing at The Wildlife Society meeting in October. Opportunities to provide the report with visibility at the AFWA meeting include: presenting at Committees, publicizing at Monday night RAWA event hosted by Audubon, Kentucky's Private Lands social with Directors. Since there has been so much turnover among state Directors recently, we need to raise their awareness of State of the Birds, possibly through a Resolution at AFWA.

Communicating the Bird Crisis

Ken Rosenberg, Cornell Lab of Ornithology

NABCI partners are planning a major media push surrounding the publication of a paper that highlights the dramatic bird declines the US has seen since 1970, on which the State of the Birds 2019 science is based. There has been a loss of 3 billion birds, across all major bird habitats, since 1970. Partners are developing unified messaging to address this Bird Crisis and have developed Phase 1 and 2 of a communications campaign (either "Bird Crisis" or "One in Four" campaign). Messaging will include "poster birds" that relate to Science paper messaging, short videos that highlight these poster birds, infographics, social media posts, and "7 simple actions to save birds." A Bird Crisis Message Triangle indicates: Birds are in crisis; Birds are the canary in the coal mine; Birds are telling us we must take action now to sustain wildlife and people. NABCI partners interested in participating in the communications campaign can [sign up to receive alerts](#); NABCI partners are asked to provide a contact from their organization to participate.

Discussion

The Communications Subcommittee will organize a call once a release date is set, and the Communications Subcommittee can help with the roll-out (although likely not lead it). We discussed the links to the Relevancy Toolkit. NABCI is at the forefront of social science with our relevancy toolkit and National Bird Conservation Social Science coordinator, so NABCI's role may be to help campaign develop and promote messaging that resonates.

Legislative and Policy Update

Steve Holmer and Jennifer Cipolletti, American Bird Conservancy

NABCI 2017-2021 Strategic Plan Goal III: Inform and support effective policy to advance bird conservation; and **Goal III, Sugboal 1a: Annually compile or develop messaging demonstrating the importance of key bird conservation programs (NAWCA, NMBCA, SWG, Farm Bill, JVs) and promote use of coordinated messaging within the bird community**

[See presentation.](#)

2018 Highlights: Increase in State of the Birds funding for Hawaiian bird conservation work from \$2.5m to \$3.5m, 2018 Farm Bill continues successful conservation programs and saw an increase in RCPP funding from \$100 million/year to \$300 million/year.

2019: \$22m increase over (bird) conservation programs including \$1m increase for Neotropical Migratory Birds Conservation Act, \$3m increase for Migratory Bird Joint Ventures, \$8m increase for

North American Wetlands Conservation Act, \$6m for State Wildlife Grants, \$4m increase for invasive species control.

NABCI's Legislative and Policy Subcommittee produces and/or distributes fact sheets about five key bird conservation programs; these information sheets are up to date and available on the [Legislative and Policy page](#) of NABCI's website and include information about [State Wildlife Grants](#), [Farm Bill](#), [North American Wetlands Conservation Act](#), [Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act](#), and [Joint Ventures](#). Our [Partnerships and Programs for Bird Conservation information sheet](#) demonstrates how these five programs fit together and complement each other.

Human Dimensions Subcommittee

Tammy VerCauteren, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies; Jessica Barnes, Virginia Tech/NABCI

NABCI 2017-2021 Strategic Plan Goal 2, Subgoal 1b: Enable bird conservation partners to integrate human dimensions science and tools into bird conservation efforts.

Associated Materials: [Human Dimensions 2019-2020 Work Plan](#)
[See Presentation.](#)

NABCI's HD Subcommittee's goal is to enable birds conservation partners to integrate human dimensions science and tools into bird conservation efforts; the Subcommittee has more than 40 members. Dr. Jessica Barnes is the new National Bird Conservation Social Science Coordinator; she has a Ph.D. from North Carolina State University where she studied American Chestnut and the social and biological implications of reintroduction.

Jessica provides an overview of the Subcommittee's [Workplan](#). Some upcoming project highlights and recent accomplishments include:

- Working with Columbus Zoo to adopt conservation actions in support of migratory songbirds; the zoo is conducting a survey to explore how much visitors know about birds and how feasible it is for them to take different conservation actions.
- With the Unified Science Team and the USFWS HD Branch, working on a webinar series to explore current HD needs including: differences between eastern and western grasslands; resonance of HD across borders (US to Mexico and S. America); taking findings from national surveys (America's Wildlife Values, etc) to a regional level.
- [Joint Venture Guidance Document](#) to help JVs (and other partnerships) incorporate HD into their implementation plans
- [Human Dimensions Success Stories](#)
- Relevancy Success Stories- collect and present stories where bird conservation organizations have formed partnerships based on goals beyond bird conservation, to generate benefits for both human communities and birds. Stories will focus on three themes: Healthy urban communities, productive working lands, sustainable water resources.
- Human Dimensions Symposium at June 2019 American Ornithological Society meeting
- Translate research on persistence of private lands conservation after funding ends, including [findings from the Conservation Reserve Program project](#).

[Conservation Reserve Program project](#): In many places, many CRP acres are due to expire; what will happen to these areas? Study looked at landowner decision points, including whether or not to enroll in CRP, to re-enroll in or exit CRP when contracts expire, and to continue with conservation practices after payments end.

Key findings include: 1) When contracts end, landowners want to re-enroll in CRP, but many are not able to. 2) When re-enrollment is not an option, substantial expired acreage is left in grass. 3) Persistence of grass on expired fields declines over time, and reversion rates are not the same across

contract years. Follow up focus groups will explore some of these patterns in more details. (See presentation for more information.)

Partners are invited to join Subcommittee calls, which occur on the second Tuesday of every month at 3pm Eastern time.

John Alexander moves to approve the Subcommittee's work plan. EJ Williams seconds, and the motion carries- Work Plan is approved.

The Relevance of Bird Conservation: Uses, Successes, and Updates for Toolkit

Judith Scarl, NABCI

NABCI 2017-2021 Strategic Plan Goal 3, Subgoal 2b: *Demonstrate bird conservation's strong ties to healthy land, water, and people in order to communicate relevance beyond birds; Subgoal 2b2:* *Develop initial talking points supporting bird conservation relevancy for meetings with agency leadership, funding organizations, and non-traditional partners*

Over the last three years, NABCI has been encouraging the bird conservation community to think beyond bird conservation, and to do a better job of linking bird conservation with other human goals. In November 2016, NABCI voted to expand its vision to include a habitat and a human element, to show that bird conservation has relevance beyond birds. *NABCI Vision: Healthy and abundant populations of North American birds are valued by future generations and sustained by habitats that benefit birds and people.* In 2017, we explored how to partner with organizations that are not focused on bird conservation; Mike Carter from Playa Lakes Joint Venture led a session on building broad partnerships, and our Subcommittees worked to identify and pursue other partnerships whose broad goals aligned with our Subcommittees. In 2018, NABCI released a [Relevancy Toolkit](#), a compilation of sourced examples that highlight the overlap between bird conservation outcomes and other human interests and needs. This toolkit aims to help bird conservation professionals identify and connect with potential partners with overlapping goals that may not explicitly include bird conservation. It is meant to help the bird conservation community change our conversation; we don't always need to focus on birds in order to develop successful, mutually beneficial partnerships.

Discussion: How has the Relevancy Toolkit been useful to partners?

Jerome Ford: USFWS can draw from the Toolkit when they provide talking points to the Secretary of the Interior or Margaret Everson.

Chris Deets (USFWS): Good tool for developing web content for social media

Greg Butcher (USFS): For Bicknell's Thrush conservation, this bird winters in Hispaniola, where their water supplies are being depleted. We need to talk to them about water shortages; saving habitat for BITH also helps with water shortages.

Scott Anderson (NC WRC): Used toolkit for social media posts related to their birding trail.

EJ Williams (ABC): Has used Toolkit when talking with forestry companies, using information about property values and what birds do for people. She also promotes the toolkit itself to forestry companies, to show them what kind of information is available.

Discussion: Would it be valuable to update the Toolkit with more examples, and if so, are there specific topics we should focus on?

- A few people brought up needing more regional or local examples; something happening in one state is not necessarily relevant for another state, and the most impactful zoo exhibits are ones visitors can identify with.
- Can use Toolkit examples to help communicate most effectively about RAWA, SOTB, and the Bird Crisis. Can target relevancy examples to areas of communication for this campaign.

- Consider taking pieces from the Toolkit and converting this into usable pieces for media.
- Need partners to look through toolkit and evaluate where they need examples; are partners looking for specific geographies or categories? That will guide us towards searching for local examples.
- Communications Subcommittee can work with Bird Crisis team to help present Toolkit examples in ways they will be most useful.

Conclusion: We should evaluate the needs of the Bird Crisis media campaign and the need for local examples, and continue adding examples to the toolkit, targeting our efforts towards examples that would support this campaign. We will put out a call for additional examples, and we ask Committee members to send in their own examples and distribute the call. Ken will provide a few names from the media team, that can participate in the Relevancy team.

Note that Greg Butcher and Steve Albert presented a webinar for AFWA's Wildlife Viewing Committee and can present that to other audiences, as needed.

Private and Working Lands Subcommittee

Geoff Geupel, Partners in Flight

NABCI 2017-2021 Strategic Plan Goal 2, Subgoal 1e: *Promote and advance bird conservation objectives on both private and public lands.*

Upcoming activities for this Subcommittee include:

- Private Lands symposium on October 1 at The Wildlife Society meeting ("Resources and strategies for partner biologists to implement conservation practices on private lands"). Talks will focus on issues such as retention of private lands biologists, using eBird, building trust with landowners, and developing a community of practice.
- Private Lands Biologist Forum- starting in 2020, the first meeting will focus on the MAFWA region and will enhance the ability of private lands staff to implement Farm Bill program
- Updating the Farm Bill Field Guide to reflect the 2018 Farm Bill programs

Tammy VerCauteren and EJ Williams will review a stewardship ethic document for private lands conservation.

International Subcommittee

Greg Butcher, US Forest Service/Deb Hahn, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

NABCI 2017-2021 Strategic Plan Goal 1, Subgoal 1a. *Work collaboratively across countries to support partnership development that will advance full annual cycle conservation of migratory birds and their habitats.*

[See Presentation.](#)

Greg Butcher and the USFS will provide funding to ABC to work on bringing private money into Latin American conservation as part of the International Subcommittee's work. Amy Upgren, an Alliance for Zero Extinction Program Specialist, and Andres Anchando, a Migratory Bird Specialist, will work on this project. The team recommends starting with an analysis of where bird conservation is already integrated into sustainable initiatives, and then exploring gaps and opportunities. They will use these results to prioritize 2 countries to begin their work, and create advocacy strategies tailored to different constituencies. Over the long term, the team is looking to integrate bird conservation into multilateral environmental agreements and promote the role of bird conservation in sustainable development initiatives in Latin America.

Amy and Andres asked the group to share names of contacts that partners have across different international sectors.

8 August 2019

Communications Subcommittee

EJ Williams, American Bird Conservancy

NABCI 2017-2021 Strategic Plan Goal 1, Subgoal 2: *Strengthen communication within the bird conservation community.*

The Communications Subcommittee is looking for a Co-Chair; please let EJ know if someone in your organization might help. Committee Members renew their commitment to produce one blog per year to the All-Bird Bulletin so that NABCI can produce two blogs per months. In 2019, blogs have a theme of the Priority Actions and highlight projects that promote or support one or more of the Actions. Blogs are ~500 words and non-technical. The Communications Subcommittee also needs a “blogmaster” to keep track of blog submissions, edit submissions, and post blogs, as well as a webmaster to manage NABCI’s website.

NABCI Key Messages

Judith Scarl, NABCI/EJ Williams, American Bird Conservancy

NABCI 2017-2021 Strategic Plan Goal 1, Subgoal 2a: *Facilitate effective development, promotion, distribution, and communication of NABCI products to target audiences.*

Associated Materials: NABCI Key Messages

NABCI needs a set of Key messages to help Committee members provide a unified message about what NABCI is, to help Committee members communicate to their leadership what NABCI is and how it benefits partners, and to provide weight to our products by helping our audience understand where our products come from. We revised our Draft Key Messages based on feedback from the August 2018 NABCI meeting and organized the new document around four themes:

- 1) Why do we need a NABCI (why is NABCI relevant within community)?
- 2) What is NABCI (build on unified voice)?
- 3) How does NABCI connect with broader community
- 4) What has NABCI done- successes?

EJ Williams moves to approve the Key Messages, Tammy VerCauteren seconds, and the motion carries. The Committee agrees that members would use a leave-behind, one-page handout promoting some of these messages about NABCI, including Who is NABCI and What is NABCI, similar to the [one-pager example from the Intermountain West Joint Venture](#). The Communications Subcommittee will work on this one-pager.

Monitoring Subcommittee Report and Discussion

Gray Anderson, Virginia DGIF/Viviana Ruiz Gutierrez, Cornell Lab of Ornithology

NABCI 2017-2021 Strategic Plan Goal 2, Subgoal 1a: *Promote and advance bird monitoring that is integrated into strategic habitat conservation*

Associated Materials: Draft 2019 Work Plan

[See Presentation and Work Plan Overview.](#)

NABCI’s Monitoring Subcommittee Work Plan has four focus areas:

- Focus 1: Promote Demographic Monitoring as a tool for identifying limiting factors and causes of bird species declines

Subcommittee is working to get final edits on the Demographics Monitoring document from chapter leads and aims to have a final document to the Committee by February 2020.

- Focus 2: Help understand and promote the use of citizen-science and associated database management frameworks for bird monitoring.
- Focus 3: Create and promote a vision for hemispheric bird monitoring.
- Focus 4: Provide guidance for the best use of available monitoring data for avian conservation decision-making and management.

Discussion:

-Wetlands International introduced a hemispheric monitoring program ~10 years ago, but not in the US. Is the Monitoring Subcommittee trying to coordinate different efforts internationally?

-Similar shorebird effort throughout the hemisphere is being led by Brad Andres

-Group discussed the importance of recognizing marine birds and including this group in efforts.

Melanie Steinkamp will connect Gray Anderson and Ken Rosenberg with a wetlands person in South America

Discussion about “what is a sensitive species,” and Gray agreed to edit that language out of the final work plan.

-Formal engagement of JVs when talking about taking science and putting it into management is important, since this is a primary focus of JVs. This is also a primary niche of the USGS, and Melanie Steinkamp can connect with the Subcommittee on this.

-Committee emphasizes that the Work Plan is ambitious and encourages the Subcommittee to prioritize.

Greg Butcher moved to approve the Monitoring Subcommittee draft work plan; Melanie Steinkamp seconded, and the motion carried: work plan is approved.

US Fish and Wildlife Service Migratory Bird Strategic Plan/National Bird Conservation Priorities overlap

Brian Smith, USFWS

NABCI 2017-2021 Strategic Plan Goal 1, Subgoal 2b: *Develop and maintain strong communication channels between the NABCI Committee members and the broader NABCI partnership.*

NABCI 2017-2021 Strategic Plan Goal 3, Subgoal 2: *Support partners in the creation and implementation of science-based policies that support bird conservation.*

[See presentation.](#)

USFWS Migratory Bird Program [strategic plan](#) has been approved and rolled out. Partners encouraged updates focused on three areas: creating decision support models for species other than waterfowl, coordinating data acquisition and management, and streamlining permitting and regulatory functions. Many of the actions in the strategic plan are “must do” because of statutory requirements or mandates, or because they are essential for the agency to streamline its processes. To ask a question about the strategic plan, contact migbirdsstrategicplan@fws.gov.

Questions and Discussion

Q: How do others engage in the conversation as to how USFWS addresses species beyond waterfowl?

A: This is a public conversation. For example, for Double-Crested Cormorants, USFWS will be working with and through the Flyways.

Q: How do your partners know what you have to do, so that we can manage our expectations?

A: Many must-dos involve revamping the permitting program, as well as waterfowl regulations and their underlying monitoring. Must-dos often incorporate laws and regulations, such as NAWCA, Neotrop, BGEPA, and Birds of Conservation Concern.

Q: Where do you see the biggest gaps that partners might need to fill?

A: Our role in Land and Water conservation is much reduced; they don't manage a land base, but instead provide information to partners that do. Also, while they spend a lot of time on research and evaluation, they don't have a lot of social science support. Relevancy is also a big issue.

Q: Will the Birds of Conservation Concern list be updated?

A: Hope to have that updated this year; it needs to go through the approval process.

Discussion:

-Partner comments that it is critical to the bird conservation community that USFWS remain a leader in the migratory bird initiatives; how can NABCI encourage USFWS to continue to support a breadth of migratory bird activities?

-Do we want to have consistent language across migratory birds (e.g. the USFWS Mig Birds Plan and the National Bird Conservation Priorities), and might USFWS look to NABCI for some language and messaging, and vice versa? Developing a common language will increase relevancy.

-Can NABCI keep track of what is getting done? Note that one of NABCI Canada's priorities was to track bird conservation, and they struggle to develop a good method to do this. Right now we don't have a good model for how to track US bird conservation. Idea to develop a hashtag to track for each Priority Action.

-At next meeting, we can have a USGS briefing on their research focus as well as challenges they are facing, so NABCI can better support this agency. "Where we've been, where we are now, where we hope to go."

Waterbird Coordinator Updates

Dave Gordon, USFWS

NABCI 2017-2021 Strategic Plan Goal 1, Subgoal 1: *Support, develop, integrate, and promote priorities of regional, national, and international bird conservation partnerships.*

The USFWS historically committed to provide support to the Waterbird Council, which governs the Waterbird Initiative. When Waterbird Coordinator Jennifer Wheeler retired, the Service could no longer provide funding support, and since then, the Waterbird Council has weakened. USFWS has not taken action to fund the position both for funding reasons, and also because of questions about the vitality of the partnership. Dave has reached out to Waterbird Council members (including ABC, USGS, Waterbird Society, Manomet) to convene a meeting to evaluate whether the Council can perpetuate. Goal is to hold a meeting this fall or winter, and use this to decide whether the partnership will persist. Dave asks partners what their interest and desired timeframe is, and he asks NABCI to encourage potential members to help revitalize the Council.

Suggestions for potential members: Atlantic Marine Bird Cooperative, AFWA
Gordon Myers and Judith Scarl will find an AFWA representative.

Partners in Flight 30th Anniversary

Geoff Geupel, Partners in Flight/Point Blue Conservation Science

NABCI 2017-2021 Strategic Plan Goal 1, Subgoal 1: *Support, develop, integrate, and promote priorities of regional, national, and international bird conservation partnerships.*

[See Presentation.](#)

2020 is the 30th anniversary of Partners in Flight. PIF engages a broad audience by focusing on common birds that tell us about the health of the environment. PIF was originally formed by an MOU between agencies within the Departments of Defense, Agriculture, and Interior, with more than 40 NGOs signing on to the agreement. For the 30th anniversary, PIF will table at multiple events and hold several small

events, rather than one big session. Geoff asks partners to provide materials for them to pass out. The purpose of the anniversary celebrations will be to strengthen the PIF network and get people involved.

Partner Suggestion: Engage the National Urban League and the Society of American Foresters.