

2024 U.S. NABCI Winter Meeting (21 – 22 February 2024)

Overview

Day 1 (2/21)

10:30 am – 4:30 pm EST

Day 2 (2/22)

10:30 am – 2:00 pm EST

Theme

Twenty-Five Years of Partnering for Bird Conservation

Attendees

- Alicia Hardin (Nebraska Game and Parks Department)
- Amanda Rodewald (Cornell Lab of Ornithology)
- Andrea Grosse (United States Fish and Wildlife Service)
- Annie Chester (American Bird Conservancy)
- Becca Jones (Ducks Unlimited)
- Becky Stewart (Environment and Climate Change Canada)
- Bradley Wilkinson (Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies)
- Brian Smith (United States Fish and Wildlife Service)
- Danielle Flynn (Natural Resources Conservation Service)
- David Gordon (United States Fish and Wildlife Service)
- David Treviño (National Park Service)
- Eiha Patnaik (Ducks Unlimited)
- Elroy Masters (Bureau of Land Management)
- Elva Manquera (Klamath Bird Observatory)
- Geoffrey Geupel (Point Blue Conservation Science)
- Gus Axelson (Cornell Lab of Ornithology)
- Guy Foulks (United States Fish and Wildlife Service)
- Hardy Kern (American Bird Conservancy)
- Jennifer Cipolletti (American Bird Conservancy)
- Jerome Ford (United States Fish and Wildlife Service)
- Jerry Leonard (United States Fish and Wildlife Service)
- Jesse Walls (National Audubon Society)
- Jill Deppe (National Audubon Society)
- Joanna Eckles (American Bird Conservancy)
- Joelle Gehring (United States Fish and Wildlife Service)
- Judy Camuso (Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife)
- Justyn Foth (United States Fish and Wildlife Service)
- Kalina Vatave (Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies)
- Kari Duncan (United States Fish and Wildlife Service)
- Katie Holland (Virginia Tech)
- Keith Norris (The Wildlife Society)
- Kelly O'Connor (The Wildlife Society)

- Mark Humpert (Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies)
- Mark Wimer (United States Geological Survey)
- Meaghan Gade (Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies)
- Micah Miller (Biodiversity Research Institute)
- Michael Brasher (Ducks Unlimited)
- Michelle Kemner (Idaho Department of Fish and Game)
- Noah Matson (United States Fish and Wildlife Service)
- Orien Richmond (United States Fish and Wildlife Service)
- Paul Schmidt (Road to Recovery)
- Rob Clay (Manomet)
- Russ Lawrence (Department of Defense)
- Samantha Brooke (United States Fish and Wildlife Service)
- Sarah Kendrick (United States Fish and Wildlife Service)
- Shaun Oldenburger (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)
- Steve Albert (Institute for Bird Populations)
- Steve Holmer (American Bird Conservancy)
- Susan Stine (United States Forest Service)
- Tammy VerCauteren (Bird Conservancy of the Rockies)
- Todd Fearer (Appalachian Mountains Joint Venture)
- Valerie Stein (United States Forest Service)
- Viviana Ruiz-Gutierrez (Cornell Lab of Ornithology)

Agenda

Wednesday (2/21)

10:30 am – Welcome and Chair Introductions

Jerome Ford, United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Judy Camuso, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

10:45 am – Coordinator Overview

Bradley Wilkinson, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

- Special thanks to Susan Stine (U.S. Forest Service) for joining the Executive Council as the new Federal Agency Representative
- Five new member organization representatives:
 - Andy Boyce (boycea@si.edu) will be representing the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center
 - Jennifer Cipolletti (jcipolletti@abcbirds.org) will be representing the American Bird Conservancy
 - Micah Miller (micah.miller@briwildlife.org) will be representing the Biodiversity Research Institute
 - Wayne Klockner (wklockner@aba.org) will be representing the American Birding Association

- Jeff Walters (jrwalt@vt.edu) will be representing the American Ornithological Society
- Key Subcommittee vacancies include Co-Chair for Communications and Monitoring, and Chair and Co-Chair for Private and Working Lands

11:00 am – Debut of the U.S. NABCI STORK Grant System

Elva Manquera, Klamath Bird Observatory

- Purpose of this grant is to address systemic barriers of English-language translation for publication in English language peer-reviewed ornithological and other scientific journals
 - Fund professional translation for completed research
 - Increase awareness of barriers to publication
 - Elevate voices
- U.S.-NABCI Committee will select up to 4 authors per year semiannually for translation
- Five-member volunteer review panel will decide grants
 - Panel has already been formed
- **ACTION:** Member organizations and others needed to help effectively advertise the program. Expect to see template materials for distribution.

11:20 am – Bird City Network and NABCI

Joanna Eckles, American Bird Conservancy

- Bird City Network is a hemispheric conservation delivery system based on partnerships
- A designated 'Bird City' is a community that has taken actionable steps to increase bird habitat, reduce threats to birds, engage people in bird conservation, and/or promote sustainability
 - The Network acts a guide for achieving these goals
- The concept was started in 2009 based in Wisconsin and recognized their first community in 2010
- A single Bird City Program works with and designates communities in their area; the Bird City Network works with, convenes, unites, and guides the Programs
- Partners that help run Programs include conservation NGOs, state agencies, and some non-traditional partners
- Communities must create a local Bird City partnership team, pass a resolution supporting participation in local government, hold a World Migratory Bird Day event annually, and fulfill a designated number of conservation actions under approved Categories
- Bird City Network is all about action on the local scale; within the Network each Program has their own customizable website to share information and accomplishments
- NABCI organizations can help by partnering with a Program, designating your local community, or supporting the Network through partnership

11:50 am – The Benefits of Social Science to NABCI Partners

Katie Holland, Virginia Tech University and Tammy VerCauteren, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies

- The Human Dimensions Subcommittee supports and helps implement the NABCI Strategic Plan, advocates for social science work in bird conservation, shares tools, research, and strategies with partners, and facilitates coordination between NABCI and other bird conservation social science efforts
- Social Science integration document highly successful; included in Road to Recovery Engagement Session, presented to multiple groups, additional presentations planned, and a webinar to feature
- Human dimensions topics integrated throughout R2R Workshop in January; significant participation by the NABCI HD Subcommittee in planning and delivery of content
- Sustained goals are to integrate social science expertise across the bird conservation community, support equitable and inclusive social science approaches in conservation, guide incorporation of social science into conservation planning, provide NABCI partners with strategies and resources, and support bird conservation on private lands via human dimensions work
- **ACTION:** Support is needed to continue this work. Coordinator position currently funded by NFWF grant to R2R which expires in the summer of 2025. Need to raise \$30-50k per year to continue allowing the Coordinator to support NABCI needs.

12:05 pm – Discussion: 25th Anniversary Draft Messaging

Bradley Wilkinson, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

- This year marks the 25th Anniversary of NABCI (in the fall specifically)
- A small communications team has been crafting text for a shareable document outlining major themes and accomplishments
 - Focal areas include our mission, what we do and how we do it, how we have changed, why we support social science, and how the bird conservation community can get involved
- Currently in draft form but seeking feedback
- Main audience is intended to be people or organizations currently in the bird conservation space who can bring energy and new ideas to NABCI, not necessarily the general public
- This document may also be useful for Hill visits, talking to legislators, etc.
- After document is complete, focus will shift to distribution
- Possible avenues for messaging include podcasts, booths at conferences, hard copy distribution at other meetings
- Can we hold an event? Could this event be aimed at attracting legislators?
- **ACTION:** Explore the possibility of working with partners to organize a Hill event using the 25th Anniversary messaging to highlight the importance of bird conservation

1:15 pm – LUNCH (on your own)

2:30 pm – Discussion: Draft CIS Clearinghouse and Opportunity for Feedback

Guy Foulks, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

- International Subcommittee team has been working to conceptualize a web-based clearinghouse for Conservation Investment Strategies
- A mockup of the clearinghouse includes a page dedicated to explaining the concept of CIS planning and what it does, with the bulk of the site dedicated to a geographic map of current and developing CIS strategies
 - This approach would by necessary be place-based
 - Is there a way to also be taxonomically-focused? Or at least coordinate what taxon are being targeted by each CIS. This would help conservation practitioners better address whether their plans are already addressing a specific CIS
- The need for a tool such as this is needed; it also fits very well with the mission of NABCI to be a repository of information
- **ACTION:** Convene a meeting of individuals already involved in CIS to gather feedback and make recommendations for improvement; draft a more complete vision for a website

3:00 pm – Results of the USFWS National Survey

John Lord, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and Jerry Leonard, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

- The National Survey is conducted approximately every five years starting in 1955
- Because of changes in methodology, this Survey is not directly comparable to prior Surveys, especially for birdwatching
- Topline results still very useful, however
- Total number of birdwatchers in US: 96.3 million
 - Demographics reveal birding has universal appeal
 - Rate positively correlated with income
 - Native Americans/Native Alaskans have highest rate
 - 55 and over have highest age rate
 - 45% of birdwatchers not working mostly because of retirement
 - 58% of anglers are also birdwatchers; 53% of hunters are also birdwatchers
 - More detail on specific expenditures expected this spring/summer
 - Average bird-related expenditures relatively constant incomes
- Expect full addendum on birdwatching later this year

3:30 pm – State of the Birds Status Report

Amanda Rodewald, Cornell Lab of Ornithology

- Next State of the Birds Report is aimed for a January 2025 release
 - After feedback, it was suggested that this would be most useful for Hill visits, etc., especially during an election year
- The focus will a shorter, more science-based report highlighting spatial patterns of bird population trends

- Themes include hotspots of population changes, conservation action needed, opportunities for co-benefits, the role of partnerships, and the value of citizen science data
- Next steps are to form working groups focused on building the messages and creating vignettes for different habitat guilds
- How will social science be integrated?
- The Subcommittee accepts and is interested in adding on additional products, but they do not currently have the capacity to pursue every avenue. If other Subcommittees would things included, would be best to approach with a concrete and actionable idea and perhaps even semi-finished product

4:00 pm – Bird Conservation Legislative Update

Jesse Walls, National Audubon Society

- 118th Congress so far has been historically inactive
- Farm Bill has been stalled so far and may be unlikely to pass this session
- Neotropical Enhancements saw hearing in Subcommittee but so far has not moved to full Committee
 - Audubon and American Bird Conservancy have been coordinating messaging, sending action alerts, created a organization sign-on letter in support
- Still seeing legislation about exempting certain species (e.g., black vulture, pelicans) from MBTA. Seems to be increasing in frequency these requests for exemption
- Federal bird safe building legislation remains a priority
- Some shifting to Appropriations, although unsure how FY2024 may be finalized with possible partial shutdown looming. Already looking ahead somewhat to FY2025.
- There may be another meeting of the Migratory Bird Funding Steering Committee at the upcoming North American in March

4:30 pm – End of Day 1 Sessions, Additional Flex Time

6:30 pm – Happy Hour and Networking at City Tap House Dupont, *1250 Connecticut Ave NW*

Thursday (2/22)

10:30 am – Recovering America's Wildlife Act and America's Wildlife Habitat Conservation Act

Sean Saville, Alliance for America's Fish and Wildlife

- RAWA got a little boost of momentum in the Senate with the addition of recent bipartisan pair of cosponsors: Sens. Rubio/Casey
 - Important to note that with the new cosponsors, vote count at 60, meaning could invoke cloture as needed
- Heinrich/Tillis working on their Senate outreach strategy and being opportunistic in working with leadership on a floor strategy, and also pursuing some package or other vehicle approaches to getting it passed in the Senate this year
- Some positive conversations around the payfor with Senate Finance leadership—Crapo/Wyden—if you build the political will, the payfor will come

- Still unclear what if anything the passage strategy looks like for this Congress, as there is not a House bill yet, but we think that may change shortly...Rep. Dingell positioning herself to intro her bill likely in the coming weeks—working hard to maintain bipartisan support and hammer home the importance of dedicated funding—partners should support her introduction and cosponsor push once out
- AWHCA introduced by Chairman Westerman last week—press and rollout this week and hearing in WWF subcmte of HNR on Mar.6
- There are a number of differences between the two bills, as such the Association and partners see the bills as distinctly different—the primary differences come down to flexibility on use of the funds and certainty of funding
- While the Chairman’s bill provides important funding for states and tribes, it is not administered in a way that is consistent with the recommendations of The Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish & Wildlife Resources, namely it lacks the certainty and full flexibility that states need to build programs that will deliver trajectory changing results
- RAWA would provide permanent dedicated funding to state fish and wildlife agencies. The AWHCA, while reflecting a number of similar themes as RAWA, makes funding available to states subject to the annual appropriations process, and would need to be reauthorized every 5 years
- Next steps and resources for NABCI partners:
 - Prioritize Senate outreach and strategy to advance RAWA—Senate R target shortlist:
 - Marshall (KS), Britt (AL), Tuberville (AL), Fischer (NE), Hagerty (TN), Romney (UT), Lummis (WY)
 - Continue to elevate the concept of collaborative conservation and the need for dedicated state and tribal fish and wildlife conservation funding
 - Alliance industry partners leaning in, including American Petroleum Institute, National Alliance of Forest Owners, Outdoor Recreation Roundtable partners, Ag/Ranching interests and others
 - AJVMB fly-in Mar. 5th...Hill mtgs and opportunities to continue to elevate the importance of getting RAWA done
 - Thank you to Gus, Amanda, Damien and the rest of the Cornell Lab team for developing some exciting new advocacy materials and for continuing to do valuable outreach to offices, media and other partners. Very much appreciated.
 - Check out the SGCN map with RAWA state apportionments and Tipping Point species that was shown at the mtg
 - And for the policy briefs that Gus and team created that is designed for partners to use for advocacy purposes with interchangeable logos, please reach out to Gus Axelson at the Lab
 - Support Congresswoman Dingell and her intro of RAWA in the House and gathering cosponsors

10:50 am – Discussion: NABCI and Bird Building Collisions
Jennifer Cipolletti, American Bird Conservancy

- The Multi-Sector Summit to Address Light Pollution and Bird Collisions at NCTC was a highly successful meeting of a variety of parties coming together to organize strategies for engaging on these two issues collaboratively
- In addition to continue trying to advance legislation, NABCI can help identify partners outside of bird conservation who have different audiences that share a common goal
- Follow-up meetings are being organized to continue to build on the momentum generated from the Summit
- USFWS continuing to develop MBTA guidance
- Approach to bird collision issue is one of collaboration to highlight successful reforms (i.e., showcasing how to turn an offending building into a positive message) instead of immediate punishment. They want to work with building managers, not alienate them
- **ACTION:** Pursue a potential collaboration with DarkSky to co-create messaging that introduces their lighting recommendations for reducing outdoor light pollution to the bird collisions audience, and vice-versa

11:10 am – Discussion: Defining NABCI and Our Place in Bird Conservation

Bradley Wilkinson, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

- At the next AOS Conference in October, NABCI will participate in a panel discussion alongside AOS Conservation Committee, Partners in Flights, Road to Recovery, and Society of Canadian Ornithologists to highlight how we fit together and also occupy different spaces in the bird conservation community (i.e., how we complement but not duplicate each other)
- To help understand our role, attendees were asked to break into four groups to complete two sentences
 - The role of NABCI in the bird conservation community is to...
 - U.S. NABCI is different than other bird conservation initiatives because...
- After twenty minutes, groups reconvened to share answers
- Full answers compiled in WordCloud

12:00 pm – Concluding Remarks, End of Public Sessions

12:10pm – Convene the Business Session

12:15 pm – New Member Vote

2:00 pm – End of Business Session, Additional Flex Time