

Agenda
Partners in Flight Western Working Group
Whitehorse, Yukon

Westmark Whitehorse Motel (867-393-9722)
6-8 October 2002

Sunday, 6 October:

Field Trips to local (and not-so-local) birding areas for boreal specialties. Will depart and arrive at the meeting venue. Be prepared for seasonal weather (cold and wet, snow likely). There have been three field trips arranged, with various starting times. Each also has an associated cost:

08:00 – 16:00 **Skagway, AK** (\$50 CAN).

08:30 – 11:30 **Shallow Bay** (\$20)

13:00 – 16:00 **Yukon River** (\$20)

16:00 – 18:00 Personal time and Dinner on your own

17:30 – 18:00 Meeting **Registration**

18:00 – 18:30 “Business” Meeting: Convene; Introductions and Announcements

18:30 – 19:45 Updates from Partners (<5 min each on what’s new and exciting)

19:45 – 20:00 Review of Agenda for remainder of Meeting

Discussion of WWG – Chair, Next Meeting

20:00 Adjourn

Monday, 7 October:

08:00 – 08:30 **Registration**

08:30 – 09:00 Convene; **Welcome Address;** Introductions (new) and Announcements

Biological Planning for International BCR’s:

09:00 – 09:30 PIF and NABCI: How we got here, and the need for BCR Objectives:
Carol Beardmore, Western Region Coordinator, and Dan Casey,
WWG Chair/Northern Rockies BCR

09:30 – 09:45 Updates/Intros from U.S. and Canadian Representative for BCR’s 4, 5 and 10

09:45 – 10:15 **Calculating Regional Population Size from BBS:** Peter Blancher, Bird Studies Canada

10:15 – 10:30 Break

10:30 – 11:45 **BCR Breakouts: 4, 5, and 10**

- Discuss existing objectives from bird initiatives
- Discuss calculation and interrelation of habitat and population objectives

- Discuss forums of coordination, partner responsibilities

11:45 – 13:00 Lunch (out in town)

13:00 – 15:00 Continue **Breakouts**

- List existing partners and delivery mechanisms
- Develop *specific* strategy, timeline, and work tasks for unified BCR objectives

15:00 – 15:30 **Report to group:** strategies, timelines, work tasks and distribution of responsibilities.

15:30 – 16:00 **Break**

16:00 – 17:00 **Flagship Opportunities for Tri-national cooperation in the West**

Monitoring/Research with tri-national potential (tentative presenters):

- WAMAP: Westwide All-Bird Monitoring and Assessment Program: Carol Beardmore
- Sonoran JV Activities / Riparian Connection: Carol Beardmore and Dan Casey
- MOSI: Measuring the over-wintering survival of birds in the neotropics: David DeSante, Institute for Bird Populations

15:30 – 19:30 **Reception at the Yukon Beringia Centre (shuttle bus from Westmark)**

Tuesday, 8 October:

7:30 – 8:00 **Registration**

08:00 – 08:15 Convene, Announcements

International Cooperation and Project Development:

Objective: Fully develop a concept plan for at least one specific tri-national project, with identified partners, timeline, strategies, work tasks and assignments.

08:15 – 09:45 **Flagship Opportunities for Tri-national cooperation in the West**
(continued)

- The North American Bird Conservation Initiative and Tri-national Planning through Species Links, AICA's: Art Martell and Humberto Berlanga, national NABCI Coordinators for Canada and Mexico
- Neotropical Migratory Bird Act: Current and Future: Bob Ford
- Bird Conservation Efforts in Sinaloa, Mexico: Xicotencatl Vega Picos, Pronatura Noroeste Mar de Cortes
- Priorities and Challenges for the Conservation of Avifauna Diversity in Chiapas, Mexico: Rosa Ma Vidal, Pronatura Chiapas & El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve

09:45 – 12:00 **Brainstorm** international project cooperation: (with break and brown-bag lunch)

Identify priority tri-national projects to consider, anchored by AICA's **Breakouts** for 2-4 top projects

Develop *specific* timeline, partners, work tasks, assignments for projects.

12:00-12:30 **Wrap-up:** Where from Here?

13:00-17:00 **Boreal PIF Working Group Meeting** (separate agenda)

Western Working Group October 6-8th, 2002, Whitehorse, Yukon.

Administrative Meeting

October 6, 2002

Western Working Group Business

Dan Casey, Chair, and Carol Beardmore, Western PIF Coordinator, presiding
Introductory Remarks

IAFWA sponsored workshops

- Reach out to managers in the states, update people on PIF and NABCI.
- State by state, sometimes done by BCR.

R. Sallabanks

BCR 9 workshop

- March 18-21, —Boise, Idaho.
- 5 states (Idaho, Nevada, Utah, Oregon, Washington) and province of British Columbia.
- Schedule:
 - Day 1: travel day.
 - Day 2: meetings begin, bird orientation involving all groups.
 - Day 3: breakout discussions (e.g. habitat).
 - Day 4: more breakout discussions (e.g. promote OG, habitat management, funding, population and habitat objectives).
 - Further plans?
 - Ilia invited to Boise, expenses paid.

D. Casey

BCR 10 workshop

- Next summer.
- Workshop goals: cover state and provincial goals.
- IAFWA—update agencies.
- NABCI—PIF implement plans in state agencies; coordinate biodiversity plans; state habitat and population objectives.

C. Beardmore

Listserves for WWG: listserv@listserv.uark.edu

- Address change issues: make sure everyone signs up on listserv (send the following message to listserv@listserv.uark.edu -- Subscribe WPART-L yourfirstname yourlastname). Send news out on listserv; redistribute messages out to state groups.

WWG Fund

- Registration fees from meetings have accumulated. \$1500 was used for Mexican travel to Whitehorse--\$500 remaining in fund.

- PRBO covered refreshment bill for Asilomar and Geoff graciously covered the refreshments for this evening meeting.

WAMAP/IBM

- Jon Bart put document together, Carol also worked on this—broaden the meaning of monitoring to include management effectiveness.
- WAMAP needs new name: Integrated Bird Monitoring?
- Meeting in Phoenix Jan 21-23rd to hopefully finalize at least some of the direction of WAMAP.
 - Open to chairs and representatives of major bird monitoring efforts.
 - Those interested in participating in conference calls, email conversations, contact Carol.
 - Jon's document available upon request.
 - Meeting will be at the BLM training center in Phoenix—check the BLM website for logistic-type details (hotels, directions, etc.).

Optics for the Tropics

- We are looking for state working groups that are interested in helping to raise money to send binoculars to their WWG sister countries in Central America.
 - \$130 per pair of binoculars from Eagle Optics (normally \$300-400).
- Program already set up on the internet—check Optics for the Tropics website for more details.
- Every Central American country has its own PIF chair coordinator except for Costa Rica.
- Keep this relationship strong.

Management Steering Committee Notes—Gardiner, MT Sept. 15-16, 2002

C. Beardmore cont'd

Communications Working Group—Merrie Morrison, Chair

- PIF awards—will be expanded to include Canada, Mexico, and Central America. Nominations on listserve. For a few years the Southeastern States took all the awards, so get out and nominate! Look for the forms on the PIF website.
- NABCI Communications WG workshop February 19-21: to develop work plan strategy. Contact Roxanne Bogart, FWS (Arlington) or Carol, for more info. Meeting by invitation, open to all those very interested.
- Bird Conservation Magazine: contact Merrie (mmoor@abcbirds.org) with magazine article ideas. Nov 15th is deadline for “early successional” habitats issue; next issue is another international theme. ABC is a membership organization so they appreciate the donation so you can receive the magazine.

International Working Group

- Link on PIF website for Central and South American email newsletter La Tangara (contains resources, needs, and other cool stuff).
- Mike Parr, ABC, is doing Project Zero Extinction.
- George Wallace, formerly with RMBO, now with ABC will be the PIF International Committee Chair

Research Working Group

- Recently has been moribund. Ellen Paul of the Ornithological Council is taking over as the new chair.

- There is a searchable Research Needs database on the PIF website. It contains needs listed in state plans..
- If there are new research needs, they should be added to the database. If so, ask Carol for password to enter them into website.
- Research needs database was masterminded by Janet Ruth and is getting 100-200 hits per month.

D. Casey

News From Partners

- **NFWF**: don't forget to look up the funding possibilities for the Migratory Bird Conservancy program.
- **NRCS**: at least one state is exploring the possibility of having 3rd party authorization to disseminate Farm Bill money. Especially for WHP.
 - Terry responded to the secretary of the interior, regarding the President's forest thinning policy—provided a list of birds that require large tracts of OG; birds that benefit from burned, not thinned forests; birds that benefit from coniferous openings with shrubs in the understory; etc.
- **USFS**: forest service will be getting from PIF a series of cutting scenarios to comment on, for example—what environments are being created (densities, understory composition, how long it will take for residuals to come back).
- **USGS**: Janet Ruth did a USGS research needs workshop, and continues to be a coordination point for USGS.
- **States**: don't forget to interact with your state agency about State Wildlife Grants (most states are hooked up to this). States don't qualify for \$ if there is no monitoring plan. Each state has x dollars, and they are re-granting x% (state plan for wildlife can use some of the money to actually write the plan, and this can include basic monitoring/inventory work).

C. Beardmore

- **DOD**: Cris Everly is working on bird conservation database of bird projects on DOD land, project directory as well.
- **FWS**: Birds of Conservation Concern List—waiting for Director's signature.
- **NAS**: April IBA meeting in Brownsville, TX; continuing to identify national and lower IBAs. Using the PIF prioritization process Audubon is producing a new watch list, which will be out this fall. It will be in sync with PIF.
- **ABC**: IBA book out this spring, identifies 530 global sites, and the map is out now (available through ABA and National Geographic).

D. Casey

- Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC): money from 120 industry organizations (Exxon, Texaco, and other major petrochemical and mining companies). New program called, "What a Site." Industries act as charter members in this program--\$ goes into building a program that identifies industry owned sites that can become bird conservation areas (priority is to identify these lands before anything else).

C. Beardmore

- David Wesley is with WHC: dwesley@montana.com. We should get a representative from this group to be on the PIF Industry committee, to work on the national level.

Other PIF News

- **Neotropical Ornithological Congress**, October 5-11, 2003, Puerto Varas, Chile: Terry Rich is looking for presenters for a symposium on bird conservation in North America. Contact Carol or Terry, deadline has been extended.
- **Wildlife Management Institute**: hosting a NABCI funding strategy meeting in Washington DC in January.
- **Asilomar Proceedings**: there is enough \$ to provide a “cutback” version. Deadlines will be more meaningful, and those papers that are submitted will get printed, and those not submitted will not be in the proceedings.

Lastly

- **PIF Continental Plan**: champions for PIF at national level have urged us to write a plan with concrete things like population estimates and objectives, a redefined Watch List, nationally and for BCRs—like the NAWMP. The Green book was not what they wanted.
 - The US 4 regional coordinators plus Terry Rich, Pete Blancher, Ricky Dunn, David Pashley, Arvind Panjabi (of the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory) developed a biological basis for this plan—presented at the International meeting in Montana, and was a big success.
 - Internal review on draft Dec. 1st & public review a few months later—will be printed by the summer.
 - Mexico partner for next version; 32 pages is the target length.
- **Strategic Plan**: will be formulated in a retreat this winter-circulated for review.
- **Marketing Plan**: will be a slick version of the Continental Plan.
 - Both Strategic and Marketing plans will be US oriented, and Canada will do their own separate plans.
- **PIF Assessment Database**—RMBO: Arvind raised funding to keep the database going.
 - Major changes to the global database—will be on web soon.
 - Any changes to global or local databases go through the Regional Coordinator at least for the US changes. Any comments, can also contact Carol.
 - Doesn't include ducks, shorebirds, or water birds (in sync though). Also in sync with Canadian plans.
 - In summer, Arvind, Ken and Pete went to Mexico and gave presentations on database—NABCI committee went with this process for species—ranked 200 birds on the spot—another national meeting soon—regional workshops will rank local scores and put in regional databases.

D. Casey

- **Partners In Flight State Working Groups**: talked about committees, cooperation, and plans underway—where do we go from here?
 - Core bird initiatives—responsible for their own plans. PIF must continue to represent the suite of birds we have so far been responsible for. New evolving models: places where plans are done and unfinished; there is a need to update the plans and fill in missing habitats.

- Future of regional PIF coordinators? What should these positions become?

C. Beardmore, Western Region

- Funding proposals out to foundations to fund regional coordinators though the “not NABCI” funding committee. Interest to put it in the Fish and Wildlife Service budget, but for now focus on the FY '05 budget. If I continue past March 31st it will not be in a full time capacity. FY '03 and FY '04 uncertain. Get message out.

D. Casey, Montana

- Identity crisis with PIF, what direction is it going within the states?
 - MT: MT Bird Conservation Partnership started in 2000, and is still evolving—set up 1 infrastructure that covers all partnerships. Will have PIF in MT that revises plans, population objectives, and have an implementation working group.

C. Beidleman, Colorado

- Will be hiring an All bird coordinator at the Division of Wildlife, who may also do PIF coordination.

G. Geupel, California

- PIF birds represented in forest management plans.
- PIF Executive Committee (of 20) is doing “visioning” for PIF’s future, and will re-structure state committees accordingly.
- 5 Joint ventures in California—PIF represented on these committees.
- New data on the website, continuously updated—subcommittee taking care of each plan.
- 5 NGOs meeting on a regular basis.

J. Buchanan, Washington

- Want to get involved with people in private lands.
- Purple martin monitoring project, and high-elevation habitats implemented in 2002 as part of their special spp monitoring plan implementation.

B. Altman, Pacific Coast BCR Coordinator

- Oregon: oak woodland, prairie and riparian areas are priorities.
- Washington: still discussing update of strategic plan.
- California: BCR extended into Northwest CA—draft of plan is entirely waterfowl, no mention of NABCI.
- Alaska: just came on as part of Pacific Joint Venture—first draft is almost exclusively waterfowl, wetland. Mention of NABCI, but no PIF/shorebird objectives yet.
- Western JVs have tremendous diversity—more difficult to develop plans for all of these habitat types.

C. Rustay, New Mexico

- No coordinator for 1 yr. \$28,000 for salary for next 9 months—just started advertising for this position.
- Burrowing owl working group—discovering birds in new places, gathering #s.
- 1st raptor electrocution group meeting held with rural electrical co-ops. They are learning about things like large raptor ID. Participation from TX, CO, AZ, UT.

- Eastern Audubon has contributed \$ to do inventory in central eastern grasslands—work completed over the summer. Also a project on effect of cattle and elk grazing on birds in riparian areas.
- Southern NM: will try submitting a proposal involving West TX and Southern NM. State Parks is a partner (supplying \$ too).
- Northern NM bird monitoring project fell through because of budget restrictions.
- Southwestern NM region lost \$.
- BLM stopped monitoring mountain plovers.

Sharon Hester-Nickolof, Wyoming

- Turn plans into handouts to landowners/managers, e.g. “Birds in green ribbons” for riparian and “Growing birds in grasslands”
- Authoring additional habitat sections to update plan (e.g. Aspen).
- Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory contracted out to do bird monitoring strategy . Established 183 permanent transects for monitoring. Establish more transects next year, and continue baseline monitoring.

S. Matsuoka, Alaska

- Support for PIF is good from federal and state agencies, NGOs, state now has a non game coordinator (for the first time).
- Landbird and shorebirds plans have been completed; waterbird plan is in progress.
- Priority species: not much work done on this because of a lack in funding—people have been doing what they can.
 - BCR 2: Gyrfalcon work over the next few years; BCR 1: Possible work on McKay’s Bunting.
- Many surveys are off road—we are promoting a more random selection of survey locations for the future.
- Working toward evaluating pilot efforts for monitoring (MAPS, Migration Monitoring, Off-road Surveys).
- More work needed for landbirds relative to logging of coastal forests.

R. Sallabanks, Idaho

- Part time job with the idea to go full time in the next year or two. I started in January.
- Project with Sherry: eradication of Russian olive and saltcedar (funded by NRCS); publication was distributed around the western states. Still have some left over if anyone is interested.
- Promotes BCR wide and cross-state implementation of PIF conservation plans.
- Need updates on wetlands.
- Fish and Wildlife, BLM, Ducks Unlimited representatives on steering committee—everyone knows about plans.
- Beginning work on statewide bird monitoring plan—priority.
- Talk about PIF objectives, AOU has asked him to help ensure that BCR objectives have scientific rigor.

I. Hartasanchez

- BCR 5: working on management plans, working with partners in the region.
- BCR 9: personnel training workshops.

G. Geupel

- Integrating ESA with PIF—strategize with the endangered species office and their resources (\$). Innovative ideas: using surrogate species on private land. They have other conservation strategies that would be good to integrate with PIF.

D. Casey

- Lots of progress over the last 5 years with respect to integration (e.g. JVs are more clearly all bird NRCS more involved with PIF groups too).

Other items:

- Elect Chair: is Larry Neel
- Next meeting proposal: Cheyenne, WY the middle of May, 2003
- International Working Group.
 - Any ideas about who to approach for more Latin America AID \$?
 - December Pan American Roundtable.

Monday, October 7th

D. Casey: Introductions and comments regarding meeting goals.

- Glad to finally meet with Boreal partners
- Interaction at international WWG meetings has always borne fruit.
- Our goal here is to build relationships, and identify specific ways to develop unified BCR objectives and trinational projects.

M. Raillard

- We will eventually have a Species at Risk Act, and NABCI is coming along too. This is the time for integration. Landbirds and waterfowl integrated on the landscape level—think broad.

Biological Planning for International BCRs

C. Beardmore

PIF and NABCI

- NAWMP started in 1986; 4 year updates.
- PIF began in 1990: discovered declines in populations through BBS. Now have over 30 years of data to work with. Started out regionally based. Had several committees to organize group. Mantra: keep common birds common. First plan came out in the West in 1999.
- Shorebird Plan started in 1998. Completed regional plans for shorebirds.
- Colonial Waterbird Plan in 1999: just recently finished their national plan, and currently working on regional plans. Resident game birds followed through state agencies.
- More efficient to band together and apply for funding as one entity.
- NABCI formed in 1998 in Mexico. It was not organized from the top down—this does not replace the various bird initiatives, nor the government initiatives.
 - Ecological framework based on BCRs.
- Funding News:
 - NABCI needs more \$.

- Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act was passed in 2000 and has \$3 million.
- Continental Plan: work began over the summer between the US and Canada, and the next phase is to bring Mexico in.
 - Small technical committee is working together: the 4 US Regional Coordinators, Pete Blancher, Erica Dunn, Terry Rich, Arvind Panjabi, David Pashley, Art Martell, Michael Bradstreet and Judith Kennedy are working on this plan.
 - New priorities: working through database, to arrive at population objectives.
 - will also produce a slick marketing plan.
- PIF watch list—vulnerability
 - Working with the National Audubon Society to be in line.
 - US Fish and Wildlife will be a little different.

D. Casey

BCR-level Integration and Planning

- BCR10 examples
- Step-up BCR objectives from individual state plans
- PIF leading in the all-bird approach to planning (NABCI vision).
- Formation of new state committees is one option (e.g. MT Bird Conservation Partnership).
- Integrated all-bird monitoring needed and underway in many areas, should be driven by BCR objectives.
- Project examples (ponderosa pine restoration, Missouri River opportunities).
- Involve other landscape level partners (e.g. Y2Y Initiative, TNC/NCC Ecoregional Planning).

Updates from BCRs

K. DeGroot (BCR 10)

The Canadian Intermountain Joint Venture is a new joint venture of government agencies, non-governmental conservation organizations, universities, and industry (including forestry, hydro, ranching and mining) drawn together by common conservation objectives. This complements the Intermountain West Joint Venture, a large joint venture already in place in the western states and aims to continue biological planning at the BCR-wide level. The diversity of habitat in Alberta and BC is huge:

- Includes desert, grasslands/shrubsteppe, wetlands, riparian, dry woodland (ponderosa pine and interior douglas fir), and moist high elevation and northern coniferous forest.
 - Most of the land is Crown-owned—of the uncultivated land, over 80% is under forest tenure, and the majority of the land is under grazing leases
- Priority species are determined at the BCR-wide level, in conjunction with US partners (e.g. Dan Casey)
 - Population and Habitat objectives are being developed
 - In addition to quantitative habitat objectives, qualitative (habitat condition) objectives are also being developed using the focal species approach

B. Altman (BCR 5)

- Summarize the status of planning in the BCRs, and the approaches that are being used.
- Northern Pacific Rainforest: plans are completed for this entire region except BC—workshop has been carried out, and prioritization has been completed.
 - CA/OR/WA: focal species approach.
 - BC: priority species and focal species.
 - AK: priority species approach.
- Bottom line with priority/focal approach is that we are highlighting species we are interested in.
- Habitat Prioritization:
 - CA: forest type and geographic region—then conservation issues within forest type.
 - OR/WA: successional stages and geographic region.
 - BC: forest type and landscape approach.
 - AK: forest type and geographic approach.
- Objective Setting:
 - CA: habitat condition and species objectives associated with species populations and health.
 - OR/WA: habitat objectives with species population and habitat conditions.
 - BC: habitat objectives and species objectives linked to habitat.
 - AK: no specific habitat objectives—objectives are for monitoring.
- Role of BCR coordinator (to summarize Dan's points):
 - Meeting in July of 8-9 coordinators in North America: exchange information on different management approaches used.
 - Key words in joint venture: self-directed. The model is to respond to what partners need locally.
 - Some coordinators spend majority of time on planning, developing GIS layers, and scientific bases for plans.
 - Others are spending time on putting management plans into effect.

S. Matsuoka (BCR 4)

- Representing the Northwest Interior forest
 - Lowlands: complex mosaic of forest, bogs, typical boreal.
 - North of AK range: fires dominate the landscape.
 - South of AK range: insect outbreaks.
- Human activities don't dominate the landscape.
- There is an emphasis on inventory and monitoring here, and determining what kind of species occur in different habitat types. We are interested in lowland forest of mature white spruce particularly, because it is not widely distributed in interior Alaska. We want to look at how logging affects the species that occur in this habitat type.
- There are species experiencing continental decline in this BCR which probably require further study: OSFL, BLPW.

P. Sinclair (BCR4)

- New group in the Yukon.

- Yukon land bird study: over the last 10 years we have been looking at distributions of birds, and habitat associations.
- Remainder of talk was inaudible.

P. Blancher

Calculating Regional Population Priorities

- Set objectives for all species.
- Rare species are not well sampled by BBS
- Objectives that are absolute numbers are easier to market.
- When establishing population objectives, it is important to recognize that even if population size is known, other, more complex variables must be considered.
- Jon Bart provided a good example of population objectives at Asilomar:
 - Population number estimates do not produce objectives on their own. Population size is how many you have, and objectives are how many you want. Population objectives are used in marketing.
- Characteristics of ideal objectives:
 - Communicable (type of objectives, and how they are implemented).
 - Initially, tendency is to look at small number of birds (priority/focal), and set objectives for that. Goal of PIF is to conserve all species. Some species may come up in the future as priority species—must set up objectives now so that common birds stay common.
 - Spatial scale: some other North American bird objectives started out operating at a very large scale (continental) and then stepping down to regions from there. PIF has this ability to trickle down from one spatial scale to another too. Must use different approaches from scale to scale.
 - For species that are decreasing in numbers, objective should be to increase their numbers back to what they were. You don't need a population estimate to do this—trends can be used.
- When thinking about keeping common birds common, distribution goals are important, even if you have population and habitat goals. Need to know where the habitats are in relation to certain populations.
- I will use a variation on Jon's formula for calculating population estimates: basically it takes the number of birds recorded from the BBS; extrapolates to an area; corrects for sample bias, and for not detecting all the birds.
 - In the past, for BBS routes, we used averages of bird abundance across a route. We really want to get at the detections: where the maximum abundance would be, and then extrapolate this to the rest of the landscape. These will be conservative estimates.
 - For several BCRs, we divided them into smaller scales.
 - There is a large area in Canada with no BBS data. It is difficult to extrapolate from one area to another.
 - Habitat is another potential issue. At the continental level, incorporation of habitat correction to the BBS has not been done. There has been over sampling of mixed forest, and under sampling of coniferous forest types. The area between BCRs can be of concern too.
- Rest of talk inaudible/not recorded.

BCR# 4 Breakout – Pam and Steve facilitators

Carol Beardmore, Ted Murphy-Kelly, Dave Mossup, Tim Walker (ABO), Carol McIntyre, Colleen Handel, Xico Vega, Nancy Dewitt (ABO), John Morton, Merry Maxwell, Rob MacDonald, Wendy Nixon, Pam Sinclair, Judy Muir, Mike Gill, Cameron Eckert, John Wright, Steve Matsuoka, Jim Pojar.

S. Matsuoka

- Objectives: protect species. that are declining elsewhere and for which we have high regional or continental responsibility.
 - Get demographics before they decline.
 - Target certain species for demographics work.
 - Monitor changes in habitat along with changes in population size.
 - Process must include demographics by habitat and threats.

C. Handel

- We should be cautious, because BBS surveys are very biased. Preferable to have off-road surveys—more representative data.
 - P. Sinclair: BBS data may be factored in with a correction factor. How many off-road routes do you have?
 - C. Handel: we've collected data from 240 areas, of those about 125 are off-road.

D. Mossop

- Why use population estimates rather than trends? The public understands trends, and they are the most powerful dataset to use.
 - P. Blancher: can use it across continent.
 - C. Beardmore: The North American Waterfowl Management Plan numbers sold Congress on passing the North American Wetlands Conservation Act with population estimates.
 - C. MacIntyre: could work for some species, but not for others. BBS routes do not accurately capture raptor, swallow, owl, and shorebird numbers. Must use BBS and land use trends synchronously to effect change.
 - C. Beardmore: We do acknowledge those deficiencies, but BBS is the best dataset.

S. Matsuoka

- Is associating species population estimates with management plans a useful tool? Can we come up with estimates we feel comfortable with to push conservation forward in this BCR?
 - D. Mossop: unless we can translate our numbers into something personal, useful, this could go the direction of how waterfowl are managed (i.e. x # harvested).
 - C. Beardmore: we need to be able to make this real to a politician.
 - C. MacIntyre: you must sell this to the Congress. Numbers are one thing, but if we don't stop the trends that are actually affecting these birds, we will be in trouble. It needs to be a hand in hand process.
 - S. Matsuoka: what about using a fisheries model?

- C. MacIntyre: we have to be very careful with that. As an example in AK, a forest manager managed his area based on a target number of bald eagles in the Tongass Forest, and that number is lower than the population today. A manager can harvest an area and still have x amount of eagles.
- C. Beardmore: in the Colorado Plateau area, we were enrolling certain amounts of acreage, and using PIF species plans as management tools.
- S. Matsuoka: habitat loss hasn't been as pronounced here, and population estimates are poor here.
- P. Sinclair: is there an association between the logging of white spruce, and the decline of species?
- S. Matsuoka: white spruce is not widely distributed; much of it is in older stands. Beetle outbreaks are more significant in causing a change in species, over forestry. Salvage logging has been minimal. Not much land conversion, only 6% of AAC taken. Is it useful to tell managers, "if you take this much riparian white spruce habitat, it will affect populations by this magnitude?"
- P. Sinclair: it is easier to get at than working with trends, if you want to tell managers the results of their activities.
- M. Gill: need to use data we have to set landscape objectives, development is imminent in Yukon.
- C. MacIntyre: there is not necessarily a linear relationship between habitat loss and number of species lost.
- P. Sinclair: it gives them meaning to the habitat objectives.
- D. Mossop: to support Carol's point, the oil companies argue that birds are merely displaced.
- C. Eckert: it is compelling to use numbers. For example, 300 Townsend's warblers will be lost, rather than 20% of warbler habitat lost.
- W. Nixon: focusing on logging and getting predictions achieved is one thing, but trying to predict changes through beetle outbreaks is something else. We are getting warmer winters.
- S. Matsuoka: the problem is spreading north.
- W. Nixon: corroborate BBS numbers with other data sets like the migration monitoring data when approaching land managers. There are 3 sites that have been operating for a few years in BCR 4. We should look at this data and see if there are trends, and funnel resources towards what has been started in Watson Lake.
- C. MacIntyre: this is a good idea to try and merge data. We do have some data that show trends already.

S. Matsuoka

- Can we use continental trends and apply it to species we don't have a lot of information for in the BCR, like the olive-sided flycatcher?
 - M. Gill: it could be a wintering ground problem, so it may not matter if we set objectives in BCR 4.
 - C. Beardmore: once we get continental objectives decided, then it will be a refinement process based on BCR.

- S. Matsuoka: it still seems like we can direct conservation on the breeding grounds.
- How does wide scale disturbance factor into population estimates? Can we model this based on fire response data? How often would we update these estimates if we were to use them?
 - D. Mossop: in BCR 4, historically, there is a constant level of disturbance.
 - S. Matsuoka: use models to argue for or against activities like salvage logging. Would it be useful to choose one or 2 habitat types, and do this?
 - C. Eckert: regarding population trends based on global trends (?)—what if trends are based on activities happening elsewhere rather than in BCR 4?
 - D. Mossop: are we managing for global trends or conserving local populations?
 - S. Matsuoka: there is a responsibility on both levels.
 - C. Eckert: can't these numbers be re-crunched for our BCR? How do we effectively increase certain species numbers? Reasonably, in the north, almost nothing is impacted, and land use practices are not having much of an impact either. If tree sparrows are declining, it makes sense to conserve what we have, but it is not clear as to how we would increase that number. We are trying to stem the flow of loss, but to do anything proactive is very difficult.
 - D. Mossop: we tend to focus on species that are decreasing, but what about those that are increasing? No one is really monitoring cowbirds in Canada, as an example.
 - J. Morton: we need to be making predictions on what kind of habitat will be lost.
 - S. Matsuoka: is loss of riparian white spruce a problem in the Yukon too?
 - P. Sinclair: yes.
 - Inaudible
 - C. Eckert: we could use different tools to net out inhospitable habitat, and come up with a better estimate of what habitat certain species are using. There is lots of point count data that can be used too.
 - S. Matsuoka: we are moving towards having much better information in AK.

S. Matsuoka—lets run through an example. I'll run through the summary I prepared.

- In region-wide studies, within AK, through the BBS, certain species were found to be associated with needle-leaf tree habitats. The ones highlighted in the lists were priority species—olive-sided flycatcher is one of them. Mostly landbirds were covered.
- In the Yukon River, and associated tributaries there are 7 studies available in the grey literature. Certain species come up quite a bit: Townsend's warbler; bohemian waxwing. Maybe we can pick some of these species, and find out what process would help conservation plans for these birds—would population estimates help in this process?
 - C. MacIntyre: if we look at TOWA in BCR 4, the population estimate is 1.7 million, and this is the objective too. How would the target change if the habitat changed?

- C. Handel: Peter took the existing population, and compared it to the global population. If you look at what we have currently, and what the objective is—there is an opportunity to put a reality check in there. We can ask how far back we should go.
- S. Matsuoka: look at the short-eared owl. There is a substantial global population decline, and the objective is to double the numbers. The blue grouse situation is similar. In terms of increasing, we probably can't do much for these species up here. If these numbers were good, would some of these objectives be realistic?
- C. Handel: an inherent problem is that these objectives are based on a % decline that is happening elsewhere. We may want to focus our objectives elsewhere.
- P. Sinclair: if it is a priority species, because it is declining elsewhere, we have higher responsibility.
- S. Matsuoka: so that is one objective, but what if we don't meet that and they continue to decline?
- P. Sinclair: have you guys done trend analyses in AK?
- C. Handel: we are working towards it...inaudible...

S. Matsuoka

- In Alaska should we focus on monitoring the population status for birds we have no population trend information for?
 - C. MacIntyre: monitoring populations is important, but so is describing the demographics of species, not just documenting the decline. Look at the reason for decline, and why it might happen in this BCR.
 - C. Beardmore: can find hints about the decline in database.
 - C. Eckert: is monitoring ever achievable with the lack of resources in places like Yukon, BC? BBS has been done in the Yukon for 25 years, and we still can't use those numbers.
 - C. Handel: if it is a species that is declining elsewhere, we can use demographic studies in concert with those being done elsewhere. Comparing the problems would be helpful.
 - P. Sinclair: are you thinking MAPS?
 - C. Handel: I'm thinking of an even more targeted method.

P. Sinclair

- Maybe we should see what could be achieved with this group, in terms of going through the process of setting objectives.

S. Matsuoka (* to * is from notes—rest of talk not captured on tape)

- *For Hammond's Flycatcher in the region lets look at the numbers Peter has: 1.7 million, and the goal is to maintain this number.
 - Monitor habitat using forest cover/landsat—must first define habitat.
 - Goal: maintain population.
 - High responsibility—high proportion of breeding population
 - Small non-breeding range (vulnerable).
 - Actions: assess taxa: is it separate taxa?
 - Global population trend #3: need more data.
 - If global decline, then demographic monitoring.

- BBS may not work well because it is an early arrival bird—need targeted studies.
- Predict the threats:
 - Predictive models (of changes in demographics and habitat change): model rates of habitat loss and how species will be affected.*

BCR# 5 Breakout

I. Hartasanchez: conservation objectives.

B. Altman: BCR wide conservation objectives—focus on the process!

- 4 objectives to discuss: landscape objective; species habitat objectives; species population objectives; monitoring and research objectives.
 - Limiting factors: there is a need to focus on forests (common to all areas is coniferous forests). Focus on species for which there is information.

J. Buchanan

- Focus on landscape level, then habitat.

M. Kissling

- Focus on species of concern first, then habitat needs.

B. Altman

- Birds may respond on a more generic scale.

J. Mason

- Objective needs to be geographic. We need classification that goes beyond species composition for BCRs.

M. Willson

- Some species change their habitats across latitudes (eg. olive-sided flycatcher).

B. Altman

- Simple objective on a coarse scale, then use it locally to represent BCR wide objectives. Late successional forest is usually a limiting factor in coastal forests, because we have lost much of it, and species depend on it. What are the concerns for late successional forest across the BCR? Amount; fragmentation; stratification by geography; climate; forest association; latitude; distribution; disturbance history.

M. Kissling

- Thresholds, where to set them. Look at the goal, and keep common species common, etc. Also look at the range of variability.
- BCR-wide GIS coverage would help tremendously.

B. Altman:

- Species population objectives: look at factors that affect species, such as the happenings in wintering habitat.
- What habitat has been permanently lost, and what has been altered into unsuitable habitat? What is realistic in terms of development in habitat, and creation of habitat, to achieve suitability?
- Formula for population size estimates: current population size - annual rate of decline = population size for any year in the BBS. Also, you can subtract amount of habitat loss = habitat available right now.

J. Buchanan

- What about the relationship between habitat quality/habitat type and objective?

M. Kissling

- Hard to separate habitat objectives from species objectives.

B. Altman

- Currently, we do not have good BBS data. Xmas bird count data??

J. Mason

- We can get a trend cheaply this way.
- What is the specific question we are trying to answer by using habitat quality?
We can use BBS data to come up with population objectives.

B. Altman

- For the Stellar's jay, how would you set up an objective?
- Go back in time.
- Relationship between habitat and populations.
- Think in terms of conflict: you may want to focus on certain qualities from different species—model trajectory.

BCR #10 Breakout

Dan Casey and Krista DeGroot, facilitators. Skip Kowlaski, Christopher Rustay, Joe Buchanan, Sharon Hester-Nickolof, Rex Sallabanks, Bob Ford.

K. DeGroot: Where do you start with population objectives?

- Can start with feasible habitat objective, as Dan suggested, then move on to habitat suitability models with an element of realism (socioeconomic factors). Then you can move to a population objective.
- Or, can start with numerical population objectives, and find out what year is appropriate. Then, maintenance of current populations can take place. Then base it on total ha required to support populations.
- Or can start with condition of habitat/configuration.
- Or can start with trend objectives: an increase coupled with some kind of distribution objective; then put it into a model.

K. DeGroot

- BBS does not sample habitat in relation to its availability in the Canadian portion of this BCR; Dick Cannings has done some adjusted numbers for the CIJV.
- Over sampling of river valleys,
Need habitat corrections possibly to be carried out throughout the BCR.

D. Casey

- I have a summary of the status of species objectives and habitat objectives in the plans. We could look at the summation of each of these species, and see what kind of model we can come up with.
- Krista and I have pre-selected a set of species to consider in today's discussion: Vaux's Swift, Lewis's Woodpecker, Red-naped Sapsucker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Brown Creeper, Veery, Blue Grouse, Northern Goshawk, Long-billed Curlew, Williamson's Sapsucker, Hammond's Flycatcher, Townsend's Warbler.
- Which of the above would the group like to address, or which habitat(s)?

R. Sallabanks

- Long-billed curlew, olive sided flycatcher, veery? Remainder was inaudible.

D. Casey

- We could use aspen, because there has been a big change in this over time.
- Lets just choose a species, look at how it showed up in the plans, what we have today, and how it works out numbers-wise—olive-sided flycatcher.
 - It was identified as a priority species in all plans except the Wyoming Plan.
 - There has been a decline in the BCR—so under Peter’s model, the objective would be to double the current population estimate. OSFL falls into the coniferous type.

R. Sallabanks

- Lets say the habitat hasn’t changed that much in this BCR, but it has in the wintering grounds. Do we then have an obligation to do anything for this bird?

Inaudible discussion.

B. Ford

- It is important to have species, habitat, and population issues come in and out of focus—there is a circular logic in place, but it is designed specifically for that. We’ve selected the species because of the habitat attributes and conditions we desire to have on the landscape. From my perspective, we need to provide the most suitable habitat within this BCR. If the OSFL is the species that will suggest a certain habitat condition and distribution on the landscape, that is important. Then we can work on the wintering ground issues from there.

D. Casey

- Wintering ground issues and a population focus do not necessarily have to be mutually exclusive.

R. Sallabanks

- We could work trinationally to improve the habitat throughout the range.

B. Ford

- We must disseminate this discussion to the people we work with on a daily basis. We cannot focus on only breeding habitat or wintering habitat.

R. Sallabanks

- Population objectives are based on quantitative finds. We don’t need to base all of our conservation plans on population objectives. The only way we will meet our population objectives, is by meeting our habitat objectives

D. Casey

- For OSFL plans in Montana, management objectives were developed without quantitative objectives in place.

Inaudible discussion.

D. Casey

- The prioritization database provides scores of bird lists. Regionally, we want to strengthen the efforts that went into those state plans. There is some concern that the list is always changing. For the birds that span the BCR, we should continue to have a regional approach.

Inaudible discussion.

D. Casey

- In the plans, it is assigned to post fire habitat, primarily, but we have not explicitly said that habitat type will stabilize OSFL populations. Should the process be to break this down into state-by-state objectives? We have a pure model for habitat obligates only. For the OSFL, is it a realistic objective to double the population? How would we do this?

R. Sallabanks

- If we just have population objectives we will not go far. Habitat objectives should be the focus.

B. Ford

- Agencies need to have an overall set of priorities: what are the species we are talking about; and what is the relative importance among species. There is a timeline. I always think about talking to the manager: identifying the birds that require the most attention; and providing the habitat requirements; and going more specific from here (do we want more early seral habitat, late seral habitat?) Ultimately we will need all of this information.

D. Casey

- Another example of how these numbers play out as a marketing tool is in the NAWCA proposal process. It has grown to include other birds now, they can go beyond wetland birds. You can incorporate many birds from the PIF plans, but it might be confusing—which are habitat limited, which are the ones we really need to focus on? Referring to quantified objectives will be much more attractive in raising \$s.

K. DeGroot

- We need to be very specific about the fact that we are managing a matrix. The next step is making these recommendations with a GIS model.

D. Casey

- There are many habitats that are not limited in availability to the birds that live in them. We don't need to make a decision about what proportion of the landscape should be early-successional stage. Birds are just one resource. For example, the Townsend's warbler is a high-responsibility species for which there is lots of habitat right now in the BCR. I don't think we need to make a habitat recommendation for it right now. The concern is: how do we assure perpetuity? We are very high above the minimum viable populations for the majority of these birds.

B. Ford

- I think the critical issue here is: which species do we want to stabilize, and which ones do we want to increase?

D. Casey

- Lets talk about these issues with another species.
- There seem to be three basic models to use in establishing objectives, as outlined in Krista's handout: A) start with a population objective, and then calculate habitat quantity and quality needed; B) start with a trend objective, and calculate habitat conditions and amount needed to meet that trend; and C) start with a

reasonable habitat goal, and determine what that should translate into for a population goal.

K. DeGroot

- Sapsuckers—there is no estimate for aspen/mixedwood and what we have lost.

D. Casey

- Have population objective 10% above current (conservative, because we don't know how much aspen we had before). There is nothing specific in any of the plans. There were prescriptive recommendations in Montana, Oregon, and Washington (provide stands with certain canopy cover, etc.). Idaho had riparian objective.

R. Sallabanks

- The reason we have an uncertain trend, is because sapsuckers were probably not well surveyed.

K. DeGroot

- 1990s estimate: 174,000.
- 1970s estimate: 100,000.
- Habitat correction factor shows that we are over-sampling the aspen habitat type.
- The other issue with aspen, is that it is the critical tree type in grassland systems in BC, and is used by cavity nesters in much greater proportion than its availability (relative to other tree types) in the landscape

Inaudible discussion

R. Sallabanks

- We've lost 50% of our aspen, so it seems logical to me to double the amount of aspen we have.

B. Ford

- We will have to expect a further depression in the red-naped sapsucker population, for the short-term, to restore the aspen (the trees will have to be grown).

D. Casey

- The other point to make is that sapsuckers are not habitat obligates—they are also found in forest stands that contain birch—there is some residual out there.
- Start with habitat objective, and this will trigger a population response (model C). Maybe it is fine to have a population goal of a 10% increase—there will be a need, at some point, to document if a 50% manipulation is enough to yield a 10% increase in a non-obligate species.
- Lets look at another species.

K. DeGroot

- From Pete Blancher's spreadsheet: sapsucker population estimate of 20,000, with an objective of 23,000. Suggestion is for dry woodland habitat in the 1970s. In B.C. this habitat is being permanently lost to conversion—so we may never get back to 1970s levels. Is it lost forever, or is it a condition issue?

Inaudible discussion.

D. Casey

- Do declines that the BBS have shown parallel the loss in habitat type? If so, then it is a linear relationship, and it can then be assumed to be linear in the other direction.
- Can assemble a table with habitat/population objectives with partner states to establish specific goals for each individual state.

K. DeGroot

- What about making more conservative assumptions when designing the objectives?

D. Casey

- Some states are making more conservative estimates. Idaho has identified a 50% restoration goal, rather than the 20% we are discussing.
- Can relate new model with historical % of pine habitat lost, and numbers of woodpeckers lost to test the reality of the model.

Inaudible discussion

R. Sallabanks

- Map distribution from BBS data and map habitat distribution.
- Promote joint ventures as priorities—funding.

K. DeGroot

- Start at BCR level and say how each province/state can contribute to the plan, rather than starting at smaller scale.
- Next meeting in January?

Summary of Breakouts—report to group

BCR#5

B. Altman

- Priority: landscape and habitat objectives, then species objectives (following up on talk Pete gave).
 - Take information needed to develop an objective, then sub-objectives that would make the plan more specific.
 - Consider factors that would impact development of these objectives (e.g. GIS data layers). BCR 5 is mostly forested, and ownership is mainly private forest product industries, and federal.
- 3 species chosen to carry out an example of managing for population objectives: olive-sided flycatcher; American dipper; and Stellar's jay. All 3 species represent different objectives on a continuum.
- OSFL
 - Objective is to double the current population, because the population is significantly declining.
 - When was the species originally at double the current size? Was it 1980? Or prior to BBS surveys in 1968? Would it be better to look at what the population was in 1970 and use that number as an objective? What was the suitable habitat for the OSFC at those times? How much habitat has been lost or altered? Where were the higher densities of OSFC populations historically located?

- There are wintering ground issues: use these to test against population trends.
- Factors to consider for a model: current numbers; historical numbers (BBS); population objective; annual rate of decline; habitat loss; habitat alteration; future habitat loss; implications of habitat management; territory size.
- American Dipper factors to consider for a model:
 - There is no good BBS data, so we may have to supplement xmas bird count data to come up with a population objective.
 - We need to monitor and collect baseline data, and need specific goals for monitoring—habitat associations? Population size? Enhancing BBS?
 - Look at habitat suitability, because we have this information, and produce an objective (can use GIS to predict streams that may be suitable, based on stream flow; invertebrate; substrate levels; and density information). Habitat is not always related to densities of birds.
- Stellar's Jay factors to consider:
 - It has an increasing trend, which is possibly stable.
 - There may be no need for population objectives—just assume that objectives will be met through other coarse-scale objectives (it is a second growth species, so if we increase late successional forest, we may resolve the issue).
 - Determine relationship between habitat and population increase. We can go back in time again and find out population size in 1970: decrease to that level. If nest predation is the concern, we may want an objective of limiting the edge effect near marbled murrelet nests.
 - As we manage the landscape, we change the community dynamic. What does this new landscape mean for all species? There will be conflicts. For example: the orange-crowned warbler may conflict with late successional species. We need to evaluate the dynamics so we understand what may happen. Management should not be driven by one species, but by natural variability. Perhaps we need a combination of top-down and bottom-up processes.
- Partnerships need to be established to obtain missing information links, so that good models can be used for management. Partners can fall under main categories: regulations; stewardship; influencing land management decisions; public education; purchasing habitat. We know the information exists, but it is likely patchy. It is important to use it and get these objectives out to be critiqued and improved upon (adaptive management).
 - Potential partners: Council of Haida Nations; Weyerhaeuser; Ducks Unlimited-Western Boreal Forest Initiative; Department of Fisheries and Oceans; Canadian Wildlife Service-Sensitive Ecosystem Initiative; Universities; Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management.
- 7 people volunteered to form a small working group to go through the scenarios in more detail—conference call in February. The group will begin with the 12 species that are of interest to the entire BCR, as well as the late successional landscape objective. It is important to get information out in public to stimulate

action and criticism. GIS support will be needed for a goal of a BCR 5 multi-layer standard GIS. It would be useful to develop a standard vegetation classification for the BCR to improve communication. Two or three people should work together to combine the existing classification systems and perhaps explore the Nature Conservancy's North American Veg. Classification.

BCR#10

D. Casey

- We chose 3 focal species, already identified as such by state and provincial (BC) plans: Olive-sided flycatcher, Red-naped Sapsucker and Lewis Woodpecker. We then assigned a habitat type to each, looked at the population trends, and began a discussion.
 - Olive-sided flycatcher.
 - A population objective works, and can be used as a marketing tool. There are certain habitat restrictions, such as configuration.
 - Red-naped sapsucker:
 - We don't know the trend for this species, could be of concern in the future.
 - Start with habitat objective, and move towards a population objective. To restore 50% of aspen, active management would have to happen. However, because this species inhabits other forest types, there is no direct 1:1 relationship between aspen acreage and red-naped sapsucker populations. We could attain a 10% increase quite easily.
 - Lewis' woodpecker
 - Declining species. Dry forest ponderosa pine species. Much work went into objectives for state plans: 10 and 30% increases were decided for restoration objectives.
 - Start with habitat, and then work towards population objective. Is this relationship linear? For a habitat obligate, this would be a linear relationship: look at BBS data and habitat loss over the same period.
 - We used a 40% increase rate for this species that is declining. Take habitat and population objectives and work both objectives into congruency. We agreed to do this with other habitats:
 - We looked at riparian and grassland losses over the period of BBS in the BCR. There have been significant wetland habitat losses in this BCR. We don't have any significantly declining riparian birds here. How do we handle these kinds of relationships? This was not resolved.
- How to continue? Intermountain west joint venture in both countries can put concept plans together. Krista and Dan will lead the ideas through both groups, through state chairs to move the process forward beyond this date. We will try to meet again in December, as well as electronically.
- Do population objectives for species with good BBS data.

- Follow WAMAP model: get population objectives that we are more confident in using.
- Bring together GIS products that span the entire BCR to focus on areas where we can begin to work on these objectives.
- Grasslands—habitat is lost, continentally. This is an important concern for this BCR.

BCR#4

S. Matsuoka

- Some concerns were expressed as to the accuracy of the population estimates for the BCR. BBS data could be highly biased in this BCR because most of the region does not have roads.
 - Other data from remote point count surveys could be used to help refine the estimates.
 - BBS may not sample adequately those species whose peak detectability is earlier than the survey window (i.e. residents, shorebirds, short-distance migrants).
 - Many priority species got on the list because of small population size or low abundance wherever they occur. These species are generally not covered well by the BBS.
- Using population objective to meet conservation priorities in BCR#4: virtues and potential problems:
 - The population objectives, if they can become habitat specific, will be useful in helping set landscape objectives.
 - More regional models of landbird habitat selection will be needed to help develop these objectives.
 - Updating estimates of population size and objective over time will be complicated by the frequent large-scale disturbances by fire and insect outbreaks in the region.
 - Concern that relationships between population size and amount of habitat many not be simple or linear.
 - Simulation models of how specific land use scenarios will affect population size of species through changes in the availability and quality of suitable habitat will be most useful in the BCR since comprehensive inventories and monitoring programs are largely lacking in the area.
- These numbers would be useful in showing managers how habitat change will effect a given species (i.e. 300 Townsend's Warblers lost rather than xx% of habitat lost).
 - Care should be taken when setting population objectives because these could be misused by managers (i.e. we can cut 50% of the forest and still maintain xx% of the birds in the area).
 - Human caused changes in habitats has been sparse in the region. Therefore how do we achieve the population target levels included in Peter Blanchers spreadsheets? We may need to set more realistic targets.
- We will be hard pressed to increase numbers for species that have continental declines. Our objectives for these species may need to be focused outside of the BCR (i.e. wintering areas).

- Current population targets for most species are the current population sizes. In the face of more active land management in the future how do we need to modify these objectives as habitats are lost?
 - Information on the status of species is poor in the region. We still need to focus our efforts on getting a better handle on distribution and population trends since much of the information is lacking in the region.
 - The group felt that developing a general approach for addressing conservation needs of priority species in the BCR was lacking. As such it was difficult to relate how setting population objectives could help with species conservation in the BCR. A general process was suggested for priority species in the BCR.
 - Identifying important breeding habitats using existing data.
 - Assessing local and outside threats on breeding populations.
 - Monitor the distribution of important habitats using remote sensing.
 - Monitor changes in population size.
 - Use existing data to model how changes in the amount and distribution of important habitats are likely to influence population size.
 - When population monitoring detects a decline the following steps will be taken:
 - IF a significant decline in the availability of important habitats coincides with the population decline THEN use population estimates to help set and guide habitat conservation goals.
 - IF no significant change in habitat detected THEN examine demography to better understand if decline due to factors within or outside of the BCR.

Flagship opportunities for Tri-national cooperation in the West

C. Beardmore

WAMAP

- Many bird plans are based on monitoring data. Within these plans there are many assumptions that need to be addressed. Must coordinate our monitoring procedures.
- Organize within WWG, and other groups across the US and Canada.
- Meeting in Jan. in Phoenix: finalize the document John Bart has been working on. To coordinate monitoring efforts.
 - If anyone is interested in being a part of this, let Carol know. Conference calls are happening in the future too—can get on email list.
 - Intentions are to become international.

Sonoran Joint Venture

- First binational, all-bird joint venture.
- Started in late 1998, coordinator in 1999, board and technical committee. Strong participation from Mexico.
- Species and area priorities have been considered, and some plans have been written that we will use: nature conservancy plan; PIF plan; IBA for US and Mexico; and wetlands plan.
- 3 short-term priorities(riparian, wetland and outreach). Examples of projects:

- Indian reservation riparian enhancement plan.
- Southwestern willow flycatcher projects.
- Gull-billed terns in Mexico.
- Distribution of rails; yellow-billed cuckoo.
- Workshops planned.

D. DeSante

Measuring the Over-wintering Survival of Birds in the Neotropics

- Examples of goals: reverse species decline; increase populations of rare species; stabilize other populations; decrease some populations.
- Management of vital rates drives population trends.
 - Provides crucial information on stage of life cycle, where changes are happening.
 - Health and viability of populations, which you don't get when looking at trends.
 - Provides clear index of habitat quality, informations about source/sink dynamics.
 - Shows effectiveness of management.
- MAPS
 - Over 500 stations across the country.
 - Organized around monitoring, management, and research objectives.
 - Utilizes standard analytical techniques.
 - Gets estimates using recapture, survival, and population size—try to identify spatial and temporal patterns in demographic parameters. Then one can find relationships between the patterns, and manage around this:
 - Determine proximate demographic cause of population change.
 - Landscape level strategies to reverse decline based on modeling.
 - Evaluate effectiveness of strategies.
 - Can determine which vital rate is deficient, and formulate management strategies, which can come in two forms:
 - Model temporal variation in population trend.
 - Model spatial variation in population trend.
 - Landscape: weather affects vital rate too.
 - Weather in wintering grounds is particularly critical to productivity during the breeding season.
- MOSI
 - Standardized netting/banding data in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean.
 - 40 ha areas (twice as large as MAPS stations): sampled in two pulses; then model survival.
 - Can choose focal species and colour band/mark-recapture them.
 - MOSI is owned and operated by people within each country. Stations are in Mexico, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Nicaragua.
 - Opportunity to find causes of decline and come up with strategies.

Tuesday, October 8th

Flagship Opportunities for Tri-national cooperation in the West (continued)

A. Martell

NABCI and Tri-national Planning Through Species Links, AICAs

- Trinational projects were identified as highest priority: focus attention on what can be done. Emphasize continuity among countries, good marketing. Projects were developed from south to north. Project is for all birds on sites.
- Linkages to focus on common wintering birds in Mexico, and important species in the US and Canada.
- Set of characteristics developed among 3 countries, which act as a guiding point. They are built around important bird areas in Mexico—applied characteristics of NABCI—sites evaluated, and 6 sites chosen.
- Which BCRs are most likely to form partnerships with these 6 sites?

H. Berlanga

- Partners are identified, and key potential partners too.
- MOU: took more than 1 year, and the signing will happen soon.
- Second national workshop soon. Regional workshop too.
 - Idea of workshops is to give context to local partners, and identify concerns and opportunities—develop prospectus.
- Started updating maps and using observation and predictive models.

D. DeSante

- MOSI program was started in Mexico—it seems there could be a link?

H. Berlanga

- Workshops will be about what has been done, what we can do—it would be helpful.

A. Martell

- Have someone familiar with program from the 6 sites come to workshop.

B. Ford

- Field component for workshops is important—get people to understand how systems work: what threats are, limiting factors, etc.

A. Martell

- Focus is to bring people together and see a common vision.

Neotropical Migratory Bird Act

B. Ford

- North American Wetlands Conservation Act, passed in 1989.
 - NAWCA is the funding engine for implementation of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.
 - NAWMP poised to take advantage of NAWCA (rally the idea of joint ventures and the continental approach for migratory birds).
 - Congress appropriating 40M per year for the act. Annually there is 80M to spend on birds.
 - Over 1000 partners.

- Administered by NAWCC (group of 12 important people in management positions).
- Neotropical Act
 - 1998/99 suggestion to establish a migratory bird act to help fund passerines NAWCA wasn't taking care of.
 - NAWCC would be advisory group, expanded the board.
 - March 2001: in a resolution to support all bird conservation, members asked to pursue funding for upland birds in the U.S.
 - 2002: appropriation of 3M dollars
 - Purpose is to perpetuate healthy populations of neotropical migratory birds and support conservation in the U.S., Latin America, and the Caribbean.
 - Over 290 proposals submitted, only 3M to distribute. Critical group of reviewers to chose proposals.
 - 2003: congress has placed a 5M cap on the act.
 - Future of Neotropical Migratory Bird Act
 - U.S. NABCI committee's highest priority is to facilitate funding for upland birds in the U.S.—restricted to U.S. because it is a U.S. committee. Want partnerships.
 - NMBCA funding: mainly went to monitoring and research proposals. Habitat came close, and only 1 or 2 education outreach proposals were funded. No proposals were made for law enforcement.
 - U.S. NABCI: habitat proposals will be well received in the future.

X. Vega

Bird Conservation Efforts in Sinaloa, Mexico

- Threats:
 - Urbanization in coastal areas: least tern colony completely destroyed.
 - Pets.
 - Habitat changes: tree farms.
- 2 workshops developed on shorebirds: monitoring, training, conservation issues.
 - Shorebird monitoring programs in place for 2 years now. Now we have 2 new research site designations: hemispheric and regional site.
 - Papers submitted to Mexican government to establish Santa Maria site as RAMSAR.
 - Environmental education program is very strong—more than 20 programs. All material is related to wetlands.
 - After shorebirds done—look to other projects:
 - Colonial water birds (e.g. Royal Tern eggs used to cure hangover.)
 - Blue footed boobies: chicks used as bait for crab fishermen—education needed.
 - Phase 2 program: restoration projects for stream areas. Goal is to get more than 600 ha restored
- Involvement in other trinational projects—mostly related to shorebirds.
- Conservation television show-600, 000 kids watched.
- Radio telemetry project in Prince William Sound.
- Sustainable development for least tern and snowy plover site. This is a binational project that links shorebird ecology with GIS technology to enhance wetland

conservation—in Western Mexico. This is a joint venture with the University of Montana, Ducks Unlimited and other organizations.

- 2 years ago the Mexican government took 65 military macaques as pets for trade—they have been in a zoo for 2 years. Now we have the funds to reintroduce 20 birds back into the wild.
- NAWCA grants fund these wetland projects. Apply for neotropical funding so that other birds are covered.

R. Vidal

Conservation of Avifauna Diversity in Chiapas, and El Triunfo, Mexico

- Zapatista uprising caused bird researchers/enthusiasts to leave this area, and some later returned to Chiapas.
- Chiapas
 - 60% of Mexican avifauna.
 - 21 IBAs (not enough).
 - Want to protect pine oak corridors on central plateau.
 - Biosphere reserve 120,000 ha: watersheds start here. Environmental services are very important.
 - 392 spp. of birds: 190 spp. of migratory birds in Southern Mexico.
 - 93 spp. wintering here, many endemic birds.
 - 60% of human population is rural.
 - 21% deforestation annually (73,000 ha). Must find creative ways to influence land users.
 - Important area for watersheds.
- El Triunfo
 - 220 human settlements, 315 private properties.
 - 150 migratory birds use coffee plantations. Shade grown coffee produces less coffee/ha than regularly grown coffee.
- Strategies
 - Habitat management focus.
 - Credits to communities that work for programs.
- Opportunities
 - Shade grown coffee—stimulate the market.
 - Sustainable forestry.
- Integrated approach for conservation.
 - Not just birds.
 - Marketing.
 - Work with people and construct a good database for use.
 - NABCI workshop in January: partnerships; collective vision for bird conservation plan.

A. Martell

- Some funds are available now from CEC: \$100,000 US—must be committed and used by February. The money must be used towards building around sites in Mexico, and linked back to logical sites in Canada and US. On the ground action! 2/3 of these dollars are nonfederal US matched. Proposals need to be in hands of NABCI coordinators before the end of October.
- Prove that something useful can be done practically, and quickly.

- Need to have something by May to show the ministers in June.
- Link of the central hardwoods in the east are a project possibility at the moment. Can be habitat oriented, not necessarily bird oriented.

Breakout#1

R. Vidal

- Direction of NABCI.
- Workshop in January (14-16th?). Sit together with other stakeholders from Universities; other institutions that work for biodiversity conservation; local people; forestry management. The goal is to come up with protection plans.
- Agree on issues of interest to both Mexico and N. America.
- List of potential partners.
- How do people feel about workshop?

A. Martell

- 8-10 people from Canada and the U.S. will go.
- Model of Yucatan conference: get conference call link with everyone who is interested—then select who is going, based on what Mexico would like to see.
- Humberto doesn't want too many people coming down.
- For conference call, send list of interested names to Carol, Humberto, or myself.
- People going down must cover all of their own costs.
- Organized over the next month.

B. Altman

- How would you prioritize ideas for workshop?

R. Vidal

- Sustainable forestry (there are no management plans in place); also non-timber products

Art Martell

- Interest from intermountain joint venture in going down and talking about sustainable forestry.

R. Vidal

- Coffee: there is a project already that has money from GIS, and conservation international.
- Environmental education: doesn't have money anymore. We want to continue the campaign that was in place.
- Attraction for tourism, but there is no capacity to use it in a good way. Communities are not ready for it. Propose involvement of communities in ecotourism.
- Current information from research is not enough for planning—need to establish good information base that can be used for the long term.
- Forestry: forest fire management and prevention, equipment.

D. DeSante

- If we are talking about forestry, essentially landscape, we need to decide what kind of landscape we want first.
 - Birds: over wintering survival. Information on the condition of the birds at the end of the winter is vital! This is the weakest information link.

- Get this information in a habitat specific way, with GIS, and then we can look at the needs of the forest and the people after this—put together a long-term strategy.
- MOSI could be done at El Triunfo. Survival can be modeled in terms of habitat.
 - Handling birds is a great educational tool, and information could be gathered on resident birds as well as migrants.
 - Banding could be a great component of ecotourism.
- Mexican MOSI coordinator could go and speak at the workshop.

R. Vidal

- What about a larger monitoring program that gives us other information about habitat, such as finding out what species are using different types of habitat?
- NABCI—how to have a national monitoring program? No monitoring program in place right now.

M. Kissling

- What information do you have on birds and habitat in Chiapas right now? Enough to detect any trends?

R. Vidal

- We have a database right now, and it has many gaps: inventory distribution of birds, and habitat use. There is no information on populations, and we are missing information for some species. There is not enough information for trend detection.

D. DeSante

- The advantage of an effort that isn't time-intensive is that it can continue over the long run (less expensive).
- MAPS do provide trend information. With mark-recapture, we can estimate the number of birds.

C. Eckert

- Any habitat restoration work? After the restoration work is completed, we could use monitoring to test its effectiveness.

Unidentified

- Make linkage tighter—draw blood samples and identify where the birds are coming from. Very inexpensive to do in addition to MAPS.

C. Beidleman

- Focusing on forestry might be the best way to get a grant.

B. Ford

- There is a lack of understanding of the interdependence of nations as far as species are concerned. We need to capitalize on the network that is already in place between forestry communities. Gather more information on biological bases too.

D. DeSante

- We need to know survival of birds in certain habitats before we manage those habitats.

B. Ford

- There isn't a lot of time, so we must share information we have with forestry groups.

B. Altman

- Are there more imminent issues that we should address, such as forest fires?

R. Vidal

- Environmental education should be for both Mexicans and North American counterparts (shade grown coffee, forestry).
- Linkages with universities, build on long-term partnership.

M. Kissling

- Can we use any of immediate money for the upcoming workshop?

A. Martell

- No. Put biological context into proposals, an “on the ground” feature—easier to get funding.

K. DeGroot

- Interior BC: there are sustainable forestry partnerships developing with first nations people linked with universities For example Lignum Ltd. And University of Northern BC and University of British Columbia.

C. Beidleman

- For education: birds beyond borders program.

M. Kissling

- Optics for the tropics could an educational tool as well. They are continuing to expand, so this is an option.

Unidentified

- Forest service has a program called International Program, which helps other nations with forestry and other things including birds. Someone could participate through a conference call.

H. Berlanga

- Use funds for measurable impact on birds. Questions about opportunities?

A. Martell

- We are trying to build a bigger project—show direct long-term actions (not just money for the workshop) to get money for projects.
- Bring Mexican counterparts to Canada or the US to learn management strategies, and then these strategies can be implemented on the ground in Mexico.

D. Casey

- U.S. forestry plans have recently focused on the interface with private property, and preventing forest fires—conditional sale program. Rather than simply clearing land, other options must be thought of because of needs the birds have.

R. Vidal

- We must deliver a project by February. Information for management focus?

D. DeSante

- What information is already available in terms of maps, GIS? Before doing viable rates, we need to know where the pristine areas are, as well as the degraded areas. The evaluation of bird response to forest management can then take place. Fire management cannot happen on a site specific basis

R. Vidal

- Information is not accurate, nor updated.

B. Altman

- We are developing an oak-pine international conservation act right now—happening in 9 sites: 6 in the US and 3 in Central America. Latin American coordinator can seek out contacts in Mexico to further the partnership. Geographically, this is a practical opportunity.

M. Kissling

- Is there a way to census birds on the wintering grounds? Techniques?

Unidentified

- Can use recording system as a survey technique. Might be cheaper to use this than to train someone to learn 335 species of birds.

A. Martell

- Encourage dialogue instead of individual proposals. Proposals will go through the 3 coordinators—who then put priorities in them, and then they are sent in. CEC has funded so much activity over the years, and now they are being more discriminatory with approving projects—they want real “on the ground” action.

D. Casey

- Is anyone holding easements we could convert into preserve-like areas?

R. Vidal

- Owners not ready at the moment.

Unidentified

- Genetic information in breeding range in AK and Canada, direct links to population in Mexico.

X. Vega

- Need to think on a more long-term basis.

R. Vidal

- We now have a list of conference call participants.

Breakout #2**H. Berlanga**

- Marismas Nacionales (Santa Maria Bay) is an important area for birds. Similar to the everglades. Big ecosystem that is not well known.
- Saicha quermoneros (?) is closely tied to MN, so if something happens in SQ, MN will suffer the consequences.
- We want to set up a long-term program for MN, and include other wetland areas. MN has high potential for a project (RAMSAR designation), but there has been no work done thus far.
- Fishermen have built a canal here—water that comes straight from the ocean now flows very slowly—must develop a plan.
- Not limited to wetland birds. Over 60% of US neotropical birds are in MN.

Unidentified

- Canal project seems like good candidate for the short-term money available. But it must be linked to Canada and the US.

H. Berlanga

- May not be as simple as just closing the channel—that sounds more long-term.
- MN is one of 6 IBAs
- Information on landbirds is not well developed.

- Want to do surveys (bird list). Find out what habitat types birds are using, and how to link these birds to the US and Canada.
- Shorebirds: MN is linked to salt lake, UT, and Chapman Lake in Saskatchewan.

K. Hobson

- Any existing habitat mapping data?

H. Berlanga

- Information is old, from 1992.

A. Martell

- Money must be used for “on the ground” work. The emphasis is on linkages between countries.

H. Berlanga

- Can link the Copper River Delta with MN western sandpipers. How do we get into landbirds? Long-term is still the focus. Social issues in MN are huge, could focus on these issues.

P. Sinclair

- Convincing people to change thinking will take longer than a few months.

Unidentified

- 3 projects carried out simultaneously between 3 countries—needs to go this direction in order to increase likelihood of receiving a NAWCA grant.

H. Berlanga

- We have 2 windows here: could be a NAWCA grant or a Neotropical grant.
- Need to build strong conservation initiatives—same way as Santa Maria Bay.

Unidentified

- Is there any habitat mapping data?

H. Berlanga

- There is an old database that needs upgrading.
- How can we link bird information (lists and habitat info.) to the US and Canada?

Unidentified

- Reason for the decline of focal species in the US and Canada, such as the OSFL and WIFL, could be linked to wintering areas in Mexico.

H. Berlanga

- This is the connection between Cordova and Santa Maria Bay already.

Inaudible discussions

F. Doyle

- Who owns the landbase?

H. Berlanga

- Federal government, concessionaries, and private landowners.

M. Phinney

- My background is forestry. We focus on the breeding season for the birds—then they move south. The weak link probably exists in Mexico, so we must find the threats and address them. There may be significant threats in all parts of the range, or perhaps in just a few parts of the range.
- Must be a bottom up landscape plan framework. We have a plan, and it took 5 years to make. Plan may not make everyone happy.

F. Doyle

- Any focal species in mangrove or wetland habitat that we can focus on?
Swainson's thrush is a common species between Canada/US and Chiapas.

H. Berlanga

- I can email a list of birds out to people.

Unidentified

- In BC there are publications listing threats to species, as well as red/yellow/blue lists for species. This is all in a database—spreadsheet format.
- In Costa Rica you can organize volunteers to collect data through Nature Reserve. Could establish link for Chiapas—could be good for community. May alleviate pressures on the reserve.

H. Berlanga

- There are several species that are common to all 3 countries: PSFL; TOWA; BTGW; SWTH; HAFL; WETA; AMRE; BAOR; COYE. We don't know exactly where they go.

M Phinney

- For the short-term, this volunteer idea is impractical. I agree with the plan for the long-term.
- Could look at species lists, and find common ones to all 3 countries—prioritize. This is an essential building link.

Unidentified

- In the north there is the problem of dealing with many government agencies.

Unidentified

- For landbirds in Canada the main government factor is forestry agreements.
- We could spend some money in the north on gathering literature resources. A table that shows how species use habitat could be created, and the rest of the money could be directed at collecting data down south.

H. Berlanga

- We can work on partner proposals. GIS information could be linked to the shorebird biologists, as an example.

Unidentified

- We could broaden this idea into habitat, and how it contributes to bird productivity—which habitats are rare, and being impacted. Then surveys can be done in these areas, and we will have knowledge of habitat use.

Unidentified

- Need a website/listserv for people who want to have partners/ want to apply for NAWCA grants. Are there people in Canada and elsewhere who are interested in forming partnerships?

H. Berlanga

- NABCI wants to see this developed from south the north.

Unidentified

- It seems like the difficulty is in finding the people who are looking for these sorts of grants. It would be a good way to form partnerships.

H. Berlanga

- Some potential trinational projects would be with BCR 11, and BH (?) Joint Venture #3, and for Canada...inaudible.

M. Phinney

- Is that based on the token 4 species? Because he doesn't have the knowledge base to see what kind of landbirds he has. Need to figure this out.

H. Berlanga

- Most of these birds are coastal related birds, in terms of MN. He said he couldn't find any information on landbirds related to MN. This would be my first step.

B. Ford

- What would you do in terms of habitat?

M. Phinney

- Map it out. To alter it at this point, would be far too premature. The canal issue could be addressed, but that would have to be in the context of a land use agreement.

H. Berlanga

- We need to know what we have—this is the first step in making a bird conservation plan.

Inaudible discussion

H. Berlanga

- What I would like to do in my proposal for a NAWCA/Neotropical grant is to link birds that have a high concern the US/Canada to MN. I don't have this information in MN, and that is the problem.

Inaudible discussion

H. Berlanga

- I like this idea of linking habitats to bird inventories, and then developing a long-term conservation plan.

S. Wendt

- In terms of linking specific areas, I was wondering what the potential is for using natural isotope ratios? Illia mentioned that there was a Ph.D. student doing work like this, and at CWS we have that capacity. The other value in this is to look at the trophic levels these birds are feeding in.

H. Berlanga

- Again it must relate to wetlands—NAWCA grant, which doesn't mean we are limited to wetland birds. There is the Neotropical Act to go through as well.

H. Berlanga

- We would like to set up a research program, and give students credits.

D. Casey: Reconvene, Wrap-up

- Thank you to all the participants, for your cooperative spirit and effort.
- Thank you especially to Illia, Pam and the local committee for all the work they did to make these sessions possible.
- Urge you continue the discussions the rest of this week, and well beyond this meeting.
- Reminder that the next WWG meeting will be in Cheyenne, WY in May.