

**New Mexico Avian Conservation Partners
NMACP**

“Putting the Wind Beneath Our Wings”

MEETING AGENDA

8:00 am to 4:30 pm, 30 January 2008

Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge

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8:00 – 10:00 Pre-meeting tour of the refuge - Colin Lee (Bosque del Apache NWR)

10:00 – 10:30 Welcome Facilitator: Janet Ruth (U.S. Geological Survey)

Housekeeping and Announcements

Skills Matrix Introduction

Introduction of Participants (see Appendix 3 for list of participants)

Plea to subscribe to the New Mexico avian conservation list serve to get information and for communication purposes. Instructions are as follows:

To subscribe to the list serve, send an e-mail to listserv@listserv.uark.edu. Then, in the subject live, write **Subscribe NEWMEXALLBIRDCGROUP-L firstname lastname** (eg. Subscribe NEWMEXALLBIRDCGROUP-L dave krueper)

10:30 – 12:00 Bird Conservation in New Mexico

History of NM PIF, and Introduction of NMACP and Steering Committee - Christopher Rustay (Playa Lakes Joint Venture)

Waterfowl biologists initiated the NAWMP due to concerns with declining waterfowl populations. Initiated conservation efforts in 1986. Landbird biologists took notice and initiated Partners in Flight in 1991. Shorebirds and waterbirds also were formed based on successful partnerships.

New Mexico PIF started in 1992. Bird lists based on physiographic areas, and threat scores were started. Bird Plan was drafted, and annual meetings were convened. Several coordinators acted as the state chair from 1992 through 1998. Christopher Rustay became the coordinator from 1998 until 2003. Scott Norris then took over from 2003 through 2005. During this time, the Conservation Plan was drafted and printed out as hard copy. The New Mexico Conservation Plan included all species, not just landbirds. (Note to all: the new revised version is now available on the website). In 2001, proposal to get statewide monitoring started (Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory) but the initiative did not materialize. Plan still exists, but funding and cooperative partnerships are needed.

Started the version 2 of the Plan in 2003. National perspective and state perspective (balance and responsibility at multiple scales). October 2005, IAFWA –sponsored a New Mexico All-Bird Coordination Meeting (Rio Rancho, NM). Activity slowed after that meeting. September 2007 was the next state-wide meeting, but poorly attended. New Steering Committee was formed to include Janet Ruth (USGS), Dave Krueper (USFWS), Hira Walker (NMDGF), Tom Jervis

(Audubon New Mexico), Gail Garber (Hawks Aloft, Inc.), and Christopher Rustay (Playa Lakes Joint Venture)

The new website for New Mexico Avian Conservation Partners:

www.nmpartnersinflight.org

Review of 4 major bird conservation initiatives - Janet Ruth (USGS)

Note: Refer to the handout that is on the website and which was sent out in the announcement

1. North American Waterfowl Management Plan

- Launched in 1986
- “The” model for bird conservation initiatives
- Joint Ventures are the implementation and delivery mechanism. Self-directed partnership of federal and state agencies, NGOs, etc.
- 1998 – Expanding the Vision
- 2004 – Strategic Guidance
- 2007 Continental Progress Assessment Final Report
- Provide duck and goose population estimates, status and trends, population and habitat objectives
- >3 billion dollars and 13 million acres
- Two Joint Ventures: Playa Lakes JV and the Intermountain West JV
- North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) provides authority for funding conservation projects in US, Canada and Mexico. \$600 million invested and \$1.7 billion in partner contributions

2. Partners in Flight

- Formed in 1990. Initial focus was on NTMB
- Now all birds (448 species)
- Mexico species will be added soon (additional 550 species)
- Bird conservation plans were done for states in the west
- Species assessment process
- Physiographic Regions morphed into Bird Conservation Regions
- Landbird Conservation Plan published in 2004
- www.partnersinflight.org
- Population estimates were put forward for all species in North America, which was totally unique in conservation history
- Four regional working groups. West Working Group (12 states in the west)
- Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA) established matching grants program. Research and monitoring questions as well as habitat work. All four of the bird groups are included

3. United States Shorebird Conservation Plan

- Document status and trends in shorebird populations
- Published in 2000
- Address populations at the local level but strive to restore and maintain populations on the regional, national local
- 11 planning regions

4. Waterbird Conservation for the Americas
 - Initiated in 1998
 - Includes seabirds, rails, herons, coastal waterbirds, colonial wading birds
 - Companion assessment in 2006
 - 16 planning regions in the Western Hemisphere

5. North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI)
 - Launched in 1998
 - Forum where existing bird conservation initiatives work together in an efficient manner to achieve shared results
 - “talk a common language”
 - Bird Conservation Regions was an attempt to “talk a common language”

6. Important Bird Areas program
 - State-based
 - Audubon New Mexico is working to identify state-level IBAs
 - New Mexico has 5 Global IBAs (eg. Bosque del Apache and Bitter Lake NWR)

Report from PIF West Working Group - Dave Krueper (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service) Get information from my talk from the laptop (cannot access Power Point on my home computer).

1. History
 - ♦ Created in 1991
 - ♦ Includes 12 western states, 4 Canadian provinces, and 4 Mexican states
 - ♦ Includes 22 Bird Conservation Regions
 - ♦ Meets twice annually
 - ♦ Uses a great number of planning documents to assist in conservation priorities to include:
 - PIF North American Landbird Conservation Plan
 - Shorebird Conservation Plan
 - Colonial Waterbird Plan
 - North American Waterfowl Management Plan
 - State Wildlife Plans
 - The Five Elements document and others which can be found on the Partners in Flight website under “Resources”
 - PLJV Hierarchical All-Bird Strategy (HABS)
 - Coordinated Bird Monitoring
 - Avian Knowledge Alliance
 - Best Management Practices documents (Pinyon-Juniper, Sagebrush, Pacific Northwest Coniferous Forest)

2. Recent Meeting – Boise November 2007. Coordinated meetings included:
 - ♦ Important Bird Areas coordination meeting from throughout the West
 - ♦ Avian Knowledge Alliance
 - ♦ Coordinated Bird Monitoring in West
 - ♦ Avian Knowledge Network

3. PIF WWG 5-Year Action Plan to give guidance 2008-2012
 - ♦ To set work priorities for the PIF WWG in five areas of avian conservation
 - ♦ In final review
 - ♦ Activities initiated and “to do” list with leads identified
 - ♦ Continental plan support by improving BBS population estimates

- ♦ Continue with producing Best Management Practices documents on the following schedule:
 - Ponderosa pine (2009)
 - Energy development (2009)
 - Forest health treatments (2010)
 - Aspen (2010)
 - Human recreational impacts (2011)
- ♦ Species habitat modeling
- ♦ Coordinated bird monitoring throughout the West, and where New Mexico can participate
 - Flammulated Owl regional monitoring (initiate in 2008)
 - Early season breeders and borderlands birds project to be initiated in 2009 with NM assistance
 - High elevation bird monitoring (2010)
 - Black Swift (2010) – note we already have a good idea of population and locations within New Mexico
 - Dusky and Sooty Grouse (2011)

1:00 - 2:00 NMACP Tools and Information

NMACP Website - Gail Garber (Hawks Aloft) (10 min.)

- www.nmpartnersinflight.org
- Input and comments welcomed
- Instructions on how to subscribe to the list serve
- Funding sources and requests for proposals
- Individual species accounts available
- Photos on the site will be available
- Links to other conservation organizations are accepted if it applies to avian conservation in New Mexico

12:00 – 1:00 LUNCH

1:00 - 2:00 NMACP Tools and Information – continued –

NM Bird Conservation Plan - Mike Stake (Hawks Aloft) (20 min.)

- Stalled in the writing and review process. Needed to complete and get the revised plan onto the website
- Latest version on the NMACP website (www.nmpartnersinflight.org)
- Four chapters and four appendices
- Introduction, the Planning Units, Avifaunal and Habitat Analysis, and Species Accounts
- “Species conservation concern” is a slight adaptation from the original general concern
- “Biodiversity conservation concern” addresses the species overall concern within the state but not on the overall species distribution
- Chapter Four are the species accounts for those species that ranked out as the higher priority species. About 100-120 total in alphabetical order
- Still need review on some of the species accounts
- Habitat accounts have not been completed yet, but we have identified this as an important addition to the Plan. Abbreviated list of habitats are in the Plan, but we need to flesh these descriptions out for the Plan

- When is the next round of ranking to be done? What is the frequency of scoring review? Probably every five years, but certainly before a ten year passage of time

Priority Bird Species –management issues and needs - Hira Walker (NM Dept. of Game & Fish) (20 min.)

- Over 520 species recorded in the state
- 134 of these species are listed on one or more of the Federal or state conservation lists
- NMDGF is charged with stewardship and management of these species, but only administers <1% of the land
- Handful of species have received the majority of attention. What about the other 400 species which have not received a similar degree of attention? These three are in the Conservation Plan:
 - Ferruginous Hawk. Largest *Buteo* sp. in the state. Diet specialist. Threats are human disturbance, loss of habitat, poisonings and urbanization. Approx. 100 pair breeding in New Mexico. Farmington population in steep decline. Potential conservation solutions include maintaining large blocks of native grassland, limiting nest site disturbance, etc.
 - Bank Swallow. Only breeds in a few sites in New Mexico and winters in western Mexico south into Central Mexico. Colonial nester in sandy-loam soils where banks are present. Conservation solutions – conserve existing colonies, promote conditions to create new banks for nesting substrate, need to determine statewide distribution.
 - Gray Vireo. Isolated populations throughout the state in P-J woodlands and shrublands. Insectivore and builds nests of hanging cups. Threats include brood parasitism, habitat loss and clearing for fuel wood and biomass fuels. Need to protect existing habitat, limit fire suppression, conduct surveys for species prior to removal of habitat, what are the effects of Brown-headed Cowbird brood-parasitism and the effects of grazing?
- Keys to success is to fill the information gaps and implement effective conservation strategies on a landscape scale and across multiple species

Q & A (10 min.)

Species to review for the Conservation Plan (volunteers requested to review the following species). Contact Mike State if interested.

Snowy Egret
 Plumbeous Vireo
 Cordilleran Flycatcher
 Cassin's Kingbird
 Broad-tailed Hummingbird
 Black-chinned Hummingbird
 Southwestern Willow Flycatcher

2:00 – 3:00 Priorities/Directions for NMACP - Tom Jervis (Audubon New Mexico)

Participation. Who are we missing that should be involved with NMACP? Some suggestions were:

- NRCS specialists
- USFS and BLM by forest and by resource area

- Non-traditional partners such as user groups, Cattlegrower's Association, etc.
- International cooperators such as biologists from Chihuahua
- Other skilled biologists from outside of the state boundaries who have expertise in our habitats or avian conservation issues (state, national, and international where applicable)

NMACP Vision/Mission/Goals (see Appendix 1 of this document). Suggestions and comments follow:

- Do we have too many goals? Should some of the goals be combined?
- There is no strong *grounding on the land*. Where is the link to land management agencies and other landowners?
- Combine #2 and #3 to ensure long-term funding? These are distinct, but might be worded so that they can be combined
- Have contacts on the website who have specific knowledge for grants and funding. If we do not have a state coordinator, do we have someone who can act as a clearing house for funding and grant information?
- Some of the goals listed (10 of them) are actually objectives (eg. #7 is an objective). Thus, the overall number of goals could be decreased with specific objectives

Proposed list of working groups (see Appendix 2 of this document)

Sign-ups for working group participation

1. Funding Opportunities Working Group

Lead: Gail Garber, Hawks Aloft < gail@hawksaloft.org > 505-828-9455

2. Monitoring Working Group

Lead: Dave Krueper, US Fish and Wildlife Service, <Dave_Krueper@fws.gov> 505-248-6877.

Discussion during the breakout of the Monitoring subgroup:

RMBO acted as a single contact for state-wide coordinated avian monitoring in Colorado several years ago. Federal and state agencies all contributed a certain amount of funding to get the project off of the ground. We do not know that that total \$\$ might have been at this time, but we can find out. Is this something that we can do within New Mexico? The federal and state agency folks in the breakout thought that we could do this if we were to make the pitch personally, stress the importance of coordinated, state-wide monitoring, and make it a multi-year effort. This would give the state of New Mexico a baseline for future monitoring efforts for many or most species in the state. Some groups of birds will be easier to inventory (localized or specialized in habitat needs) but for other groups of species it will be more difficult due to wide breeding distribution. For these groups we may need to establish a standardized random sampling protocol. Much can be learned beyond Breeding Bird Surveys, Breeding Bird Atlas, and Christmas Bird Counts.

One of the recommended goals recently established in the PIF West Working Group's Five Year Strategic Plan was to begin West-wide Flammulated Owl surveys in 2008. Two groups of birds are not well sampled by BBS and thus we do not have a good grasp on population size and trend. They are nocturnal species – the owls and the nightjars. Nocturnal bird monitoring efforts are sorely needed through out the west. By doing these surveys, we can also survey for other species at the same time (small owls and other species of night birds). The issue is how to coordinate statewide surveys to complement the goals of WWG? There is strong interest

amongst the group to not only begin a pilot survey in 2008, but to use this as a springboard to gain momentum for other species surveys in this and future years.

Action Item: Coordinate with the WWG point of contact to make sure that the Flammulated Owl survey protocol is available. This must be done soon to coordinate our surveys for 2008, even if that effort is to be a pilot effort.

Action Item: Coordinate with Patuxent Wildlife Center to make sure that our protocol is acceptable. What about survey locations? Can they help make recommendations?

Action Item: Review the nightbird monitoring protocol that was developed by the Canadian Wildlife Service. Their survey protocol was for different species than Flammulated Owl. Can we adapt to it?

3. Research Needs Working Group

Lead: Christopher Rustay, Playa Lakes Joint Venture, <christopher.rustay@pljv.org> 505-243-0737

NMACP - Research Committee – Operational Needs

Folks at the Jan. '07 meeting: (Pete David), Janet Ruth, Leland Pierce, Carol Finley, Dennis Prichard, Val Williams, Marcelle Fiedler, Kathy Nishida, Steve Cox, Lawry Sager, (Kris Johnson)
() = folks who expressed a direct or indirect interest

Ensure that research takes place and then follow the results through to dissemination to managers and placement in the BCP.

Ensure that all birds' needs with respect to any management activity are evaluated so that research on a management activity shows the effects (good or ill) on numerous species at the same time.

Develop a list of all land managers in the state and their needs. While there are the obvious land management agencies such as the USFS, BLM, NMDGF, etc. There are also groups such as PNM that are responsible for managing right-of-ways along power lines.

Need to survey land managers for research needs as related to birds in the BCP and be able to be geographically specific with those needs.

Examine the BCP to determine whether there are additional research needs that should be added from a land managers viewpoint. Add as necessary.

Develop list of those researchers who may be able to help get research we need, done in the state (or outside the state, if necessary).

Be able to present needs of land managers to researchers in appropriate ways, e.g. know how to present a research topic to researchers at UNM versus NMSU.

Examine the Habitat sections of the BCP to determine whether they can be improved in terms of how information is presented to land managers.

Combine list of highest Concern species with highest Research needs affecting conservation to prioritize research needs for the BCP. (Note that for some high concern species i.e. Loggerhead Shrike scores 15 and is a SC2 bird while Gray Vireo scores 18 and is an SC1 bird. However NM

trends show a significantly declining trend for LOSH and an uncertain trend for Gray Vireo. Do we suggest a higher priority for LOSH research specifically on causes for declines?)

When we contact land management agencies about what bird related research topics they may need, we should also ask whether those topics are areas that they would be willing to fund. Locate other funding sources potentially available.

Need to bring together the researchers, land managers, and other potential funding sources to strategize on addressing highest priority research needs.

4. Accomplishments Reporting Working Group

Lead Tom Jervis, Audubon New Mexico, <Jervidae@cybermesa.com> 505-988-1708.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORTING WORKING GROUP

Respondents: Gail Tunberg, USFS (GTunberg@fs.fed.us)

Discussed briefly how this might be done, will start with template from JVs—Christopher, is there such a thing?

Also discussed fact that a consistent reporting protocol would be of great benefit in both publicity and fundraising.

3:00 – 3:30 BREAK

3:30 – 4:30 Funding Opportunities

Implementation/Success Story - Nathan Schroeder (Pueblo of Santa Ana) (15 min.)

- Holistic approach to getting grants and managing the natural resources
- 70,000 acres and 19 miles of major rivers
- Implementation and monitoring is then followed by adaptive management in a loop
- Ten years of data already conducted
- Limited internal funding and internal partnering is critical. Shares skills of professionals already employed. View the projects in a holistic manner. Five Federal Partners and eight State and Local Partners
- 80-90% of the funding for the projects is through grant proposals but partnerships are critical for
- Five key issues to a successful project
 - Planning
 - Equipment identified with the grant proposal as a need
 - Implementation (the nuts and bolts)
 - Monitoring must be bundled with the project itself as an integral part of the grant
 - Education and Outreach must be included in the grant proposal
- Several departments were involved and several grants were required over the course of several years (multiple layers)

North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) - Christopher Rustay (PLJV) (15 min.)

- Used to acquire and protect and restore wetlands
- Federal funding program
- Act passed in 1989
- \$75 million currently authorized
- Two types available: **Standard** (\$75,000 to \$1 Million) and **Small** (up to \$75,000)
- Three standard grants have been funded in New Mexico, but there are 0 small grants that have been funded in NM. Standard grants are tricky, intricate and lengthy. Probably should target the small grants
- Partnerships are absolutely key in the NAWCA process, and a variety of partners are important
- Location, location, location (applicable for priority areas on the bird conservation plans)
- Small NAWCA grants are more flexible and are better for areas with isolated wetlands or small discrete wetlands. \$2.5 million in FY 2008 for small grants program = 33+ grants total. Five pages total, and federal regulatory requirements after grant receipt. Small NAWCA proposals make sense for New Mexico
- Must be at least 1:1 match and more non-federal to federal is better
- Talk to your JV coordinators (Intermountain West and Playa Lands JVs)
- Deadline for small grants will be **November 28, 2008**
- www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/small/index.shtm

State Wildlife Grants - Renae Held (NM Dept. of Game & Fish) (15 min.)

- Annual appropriation from Congress – State and Tribal Wildlife Grants
- Primarily nongame species
- NM has received ca. \$1 million annual
- Ties in with Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS) for NM. This can be viewed at <http://wildlife.state.nm.us/conservation/index.htm>
- Focuses on species of greatest Conservation Concern
- Eight action steps are required (from October to the end of February)
- All types of projects qualify EXCEPT outreach/education
- Projects accepted up to \$500,000 in 2005
- Reimbursement basis only
- 50% non-Federal match required, “in-kind” match is OK (labor, equipment, time, etc.). This must be documented
- Ranking is dependent on Critical Need (50 pts), Sensitivity of Issue (30 pts), Non-Federal Match (10 pts), and Work History & Quality of the applicant (10 pts)
- Renae Held <renae.held@state.nm.us>

Q&A (15 minutes)

4:30 ADJOURN

Appendix 1.

New Mexico Avian Conservation Partners (NMACP) 29 January 2008 version

Vision: Flourishing populations of New Mexico's avifauna and the native habitats that support them.

Mission: To conserve New Mexico's avifauna in concert with national initiatives and through the development of sound biological information and prioritized needs, communication, and collaboration among all entities that affect bird conservation.

Goals:

- Maintain a dynamic New Mexico Bird Conservation Plan (BCP) as a source of sound scientific information and management advice.
- Identify and disseminate information on funding for bird conservation in New Mexico.
- Ensure long-term, sustainable funding for bird coordination in New Mexico.
- Maintain effective communications reaching all potential partners, including: federal and state agencies, Indian Tribes, Joint Ventures, the academic community, conservation and other nongovernmental organizations, industry, and individuals.
- Implement habitat recommendations in the New Mexico BCP by developing and maintaining partnerships.
- Implement research and monitoring to accomplish the goals of the New Mexico BCP.
- Provide decision support tools for effective and efficient ways to implement the recommendations of the New Mexico BCP.
- Implement an effective evaluation of progress in accomplishing the NMACP mission.
- Encourage and support conservation of New Mexico's avifauna beyond state borders.
- Coordinate activities with regional and national bird initiatives.

Appendix 2.

PROPOSED WORKING GROUPS FOR NEW MEXICO AVIAN CONSERVATION PARTNERS Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge January 30, 2007

Skills and Resources Working Group

Lead: Committee of the whole:

In order to provide mechanism for sharing of information among partners, it will be helpful to know what skills and knowledge are represented by the Partners. On the forms provided identify those

areas in which you have knowledge or skills that could be available to other partners. You don't need to be an expert, but if you have some familiarity with any of these areas and are willing to be a resource to others, check the appropriate boxes

Funding Opportunities Working Group

Lead: Gail Garber, Hawks Aloft < gail@hawksaloft.org > 505-828-9455

Identify and disseminate information about funding opportunities to partners. What is available; for what activities; how to apply; how to present this on NMACP web site. Provide a calendar of dates. Requires participation from federal, state, and NGO sources. This is not only for those who have funds to give out, but also needs input from those who know what kinds of opportunities are available.

Monitoring Working Group:

Lead: Dave Krueper, US Fish and Wildlife Service, <Dave_Krueper@fws.gov> 505-248-6877.

The Partners in Flight West Working Group 5-year Strategic Plan identifies various monitoring needs from the year 2008 through 2012. One of these is a need for nocturnal monitoring of owls and caprimulgids in all habitat types throughout the West. The NM Monitoring Working Group would design pilot projects to develop monitoring programs among partners to meet the various needs of the NM Conservation Plan and which will complement the efforts going on within the PIF West Working Group..

Research Needs Working Group:

Lead: Christopher Rustay, Playa Lakes Joint Venture, <christopher.rustay@pljv.org> 505-243-0737

Engage both researchers and managers in identifying "high needs" topics for research to encourage partners, including students, faculty, agency managers, NGOs to get needed research questions addressed. Connect researchers with management agencies to help ensure that research is relevant to management needs. Identify agencies and researchers who can provide resources.

Accomplishments Reporting Working Group:

Lead Tom Jervis, Audubon New Mexico, <Jervidae@cybermesa.com > 505-988-1708.

Develop metrics (e.g. Acres restored, publications, partnerships developed) format—how, what, results—and collect information—in writing—on what people are doing in support of the Bird Conservation Plan. Brief summaries. The Joint Ventures already have reporting requirements and these would be a good starting—and maybe ending—place.

Appendix 3.

Participants and Contact Information

Include all contacts and information from the meeting here