

NABCI - Central Hardwoods All Bird Workshop
Eureka Springs, Arkansas
February 27-28 – March 1, 2002

Wednesday, February 27, 2002

- 8:00 Welcome and Introduction
Donny Harris, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
- 8:30 The North American Bird Conservation Initiative:
What is it and how does it apply to the Ozarks?
Jane Fitzgerald, Central Hardwoods BCR Coordinator
- 9:00 The North American Waterfowl Management Plan:
Using the Joint Venture Model for all-bird conservation
Blaine Elliott, Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture
- 9:30 Questions and discussion
- 9:45 Break
- 10:00 The Partners in Flight Plan for the Ozarks: background and application
Jane Fitzgerald, Central Hardwoods BCR Coordinator
- 10:45 Important Bird Areas
Ken Smith, Arkansas Audubon
- 11:15 Ecology of oak borers and oak decline: Changes facing wildlife
Gene Leeds, Ozark-St. Francois National Forest
- 11:45 Questions and discussion
- 12 – 1 p.m. Lunch
- 1:00 Ecological land types and land type associations:
How do they apply to bird conservation?
Tim Nigh, Missouri Department of Conservation
- 1:45 Geographic Information Systems as a tool for bird conservation:
What products are available?
Diane True, Missouri Resource Assessment Partnership (MoRAP)
- 2:15 Introduction to breakout sessions:
Using maps and participants knowledge to identify bird conservation areas
- 2:45 Questions and discussion
- 3:00 Break
- 3:15 Putting grants and partnerships together:
Success stories from Missouri grassland focus areas
Brad Jacobs, Missouri Department of Conservation
- 4:00 Questions and discussion

Thursday, February 28, 2002

8:00 Breakout Sessions by habitat type:
Upland and riparian forests and woodlands
Upland and riparian grassland and grass/shrubland habitats

Breakout sessions are intended to gain feedback and foster discussion among participants about the ability and accuracy of GIS-based models to identify specific focus areas for priority birds in the Ozarks portion of the Central Hardwoods BCR;

Maps of public lands will be provided in the breakouts and used as core areas for larger bird conservation areas, should managers and local partnerships decide to participate in their development as such. Participants with knowledge of those areas are encouraged to provide input about the current status and uses of those lands; threats to the integrity of the surrounding landscapes; the socio-political realities of the regions they work in; and what kinds of conservation strategies and partnerships might be most effective in maintaining or improving conditions for priority bird species and species suites in those areas.

It is expected that there will be some landscapes with important habitat types that have few public lands or protected areas embedded in them. Participants are encouraged to help identify specific geographies where there may be a need for acquisition or easements programs.

11:30 Breakout Summaries

12 – 1 p.m. Lunch

1 p.m. Breakout Sessions by geography (subject to re-grouping):

Boston Mountains
Lower Ozarks and St. Francois Mtns.
Upper Ozarks and Ozark Border
Springfield Plateau
Elk and White Rivers

These sessions are hoped to encourage participants from the same geographic areas to interact with one another and collectively develop visions for implementing bird conservation strategies in their regions. Identifying other biodiversity or conservation groups with goals that overlap or compliment bird conservation habitat objectives will be useful in developing potential partnerships. Existing or potential conflict among competing interests both within and outside of the conservation community also should be brought to light and ways to mitigate those discussed.

4:30 Breakout Summaries

Friday, March 1, 2002

Putting Projects Together
Funding needs and opportunities
Summary and Wrap-up

Adjourn, noon

Report to IAFWA re: the “all-bird” workshop in Arkansas, 28 February- 1 March 2002

The first day of this two-and-a-half day workshop was comprised of a series of talks designed to inform participants about the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI), the various bird conservation planning initiatives under the NABCI umbrella, and the ecological needs of the various priority bird species and species suites of the Central Hardwoods Bird Conservation Region (CHBCR). A representative from the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture also spoke about how that Joint Venture approached conservation planning, implementation and evaluation of habitat and other projects they have undertaken on behalf of priority birds in the region. At the end of the first day, participants were introduced to the various geospatial data layers that would be available for use in mapping bird conservation focus areas in the Ozarks portion of the Central Hardwoods in the breakout sessions the second day. These layers included landcover, roads, ecological subsections and Land Type Associations, rivers and streams, state and county lines, public lands, The Nature Conservancy’s portfolio sites (i.e. areas of high biodiversity potential) and maps showing landscapes with large percentages of forest and grasslands that have been associated with enhanced densities and reproductive success of grassland and forest birds.

On the second day, participants broke out into two groups charged with delineating and mapping focus areas for grassland and grass-shrub birds (including the Northern Bobwhite) and forest birds. With the exception of the Missouri River Valley, which already has a variety of local agencies and organizations developing habitat objectives that can later be incorporated in the Central Hardwoods plan, very little wetlands habitat exists in the Ozarks other than that associated with the rivers and streams of the region. Priority birds associated with those smaller

riparian systems fit nicely within the upland suites also associated with those landscapes, so wetlands birds were not treated in a breakout different from the grassland and forest sessions.

The ability of public lands that overlapped important grassland, forest and wetland landscapes to serve as core areas of larger, landscape-scale focus areas were discussed first, along with the current conditions of those landscapes, short-and long-term threats to the land's ecological integrity, and the kinds of conservation approaches that would be most useful in those areas given their local socio-political realities. Land Type Associations (the next level down in the hierarchical system used to define ecological associations within larger ecoregions) were employed as a way to define general habitat goals for recovering degraded natural communities important to birds, such as glades, savanna, and oak and pine woodlands. Areas within landscapes deemed suitable for a habitat species suite by the % grass and forest cover models, but without public lands to serve as cores were evaluated as well, with The Nature Conservancy's portfolio sites used as a guide to areas where conservation efforts would serve other biodiversity interests as well as those of priority birds. The results of the discussions and maps of focus areas identified in each breakout were then presented to the group of participants as a whole.

The morning of the third day was devoted to discussion of funding opportunities that could be used for conservation work such as the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, Neotropical Migratory Bird Act, Farm Bill, and Forest Legacy Program. Ideas about other conservation strategies that could be employed by local partners working on behalf of bird conservation in the various focus areas also were discussed. Costs associated with the restoration of glades, savanna

and woodland communities were estimated as well. Maps and results of the meeting will be compiled by the Central Hardwoods BCR Coordinator in the form of a BCR Implementation Plan which will be drafted by mid-summer 2002.