

MN will conduct two follow up workshops in two BCRs (11 and 12). The agendas for these meetings will include the following four items:

1. Draft a charter for the committee
2. Identify a couple priority projects worth supporting in this BCR
3. Identify key partners involved in these projects
4. Identify what is needed from the Steering Committee and others to support these projects

All BCR committee chairs will be reporting to the Steering Committee at its January 6 meeting.

Bird Conservation Minnesota – BCR11 Working Group

Prairie Wetland Learning Center

November 3, 2004

Participants:

Matt Holland, Pheasants Forever

Brian Winter, The Nature Conservancy

Lisa Gelvin-Innvaer, MN DNR

John Schladweiler, MN DNR

Soch Lor, USFWS

Diane Granfors, USFWS-HAPET

Rex Johnson, USFWS-HAPET

Not Present:

John Schneider, Ducks Unlimited

Bob Honeman, USDA-NRCS

Steve Cordts, MN DNR

Mark Oja, USDA-NRCS

Discussion Items:

1. Charter – Diane and Rex reviewed the development and purpose of IAFWA Coordinated Bird Conservation Workshops.

Need to coalesce various spatially-explicit planning efforts that already exist and augment with elements of a comprehensive bird conservation strategy that don't already exist.

State Steering Committee meeting 4 Nov 2004: A proposal is being drafted to hire a statewide planner and coordinator that will be cost shared by MN DNR, PPJV-UMRGLRJV, MN Audubon, U of M Bell Museum, and possibly others and will be hired and housed with MN Audubon (*note: this departs from info at the meeting where we thought they would be a DNR employee*). In part, our challenge is to insure that this effort and JV efforts coalesce into a rational infrastructure.

Revisions to Charter

Purpose (item 3): Charter purpose boils down to 1) share info, 2) identify issues of concern, and 3) develop a plan. – should emphasize these with bullets

Emphasize the translation of the conservation strategy/plan into local-scale implementation.

Under item 4, emphasize the coordination function of/relationship to the JVs and the Minnesota Steering Committee. Add sentence about the coordination of the national bird initiatives and stepping down national and regional planning to the state and local scales.

Additional team representation – need much more FSA outreach.

Contact Mark Oja, Tim Koehler, or others for FSA recommendation(s)

BWSR – Pete Waller, Tabor Hoek, Brian Dwight

Need to get John Munson on BCM Committee. (or other FSA representative)

Need a designated outreach person – consider a journalistic professional? Linder Farm

Most of group expressed discomfort with presence of press at each meeting, but would be good work with someone to work with on a regular basis.

Network? See how the state outreach committee is operating.

Diane will review charter in light of these discussion items, revise and redistribute.

2. BCR 11 project recommendations:

Consult with Wayne Edgerton on CSP

HAPET will meet Mark Oja's info request on CSP guidance and send out to BCR 11 team for comment, refinement/revision, and modification before sending on to Mark.

Possible project ideas to advance to the BCM committee:

Naugle and Quammen's tree effects study -

Support for BBS routes in BCR 11

Public outreach tool on: - video?

Manston Slough

Mud Lake

Agassiz Beach Ridge

****Rock harvesting and CP22 (riparian buffer option) - funding for technicians (3) to explain conservation program options to reduce tree planting on native grasslands. There is an option for grassland enhancement. Also, workshops for FSA, NRCS, and SWCDs. Work with FSA on Continuous CRP targeting. - \$82K/year (2 [techs@\\$36K](#), \$10K for workshops – BCM Biologists with FSA, NRCS, and SWCD county office staff).**

Technicians market a full suite of government and NGO programs for grasslands and wetlands but explain all program options to land owners. (Tie into existing PF network for Farm Bill Technical Assistance (co-located with SWCDs)).

Collateral coordination/communication with NRCS, FSA, and DNR on areas to preclude tree planting (discourage land owners) on designated priority areas (BCM venue)

****BCR 11 recommendation - John Schladweiler and Matt Holland will develop proposal.**

Holland will get this on ESPN Outdoors, in PF magazine, and various other public venues.

3. List of conservation activities in BCR 11

Need to more clearly define the purpose of the list of organizations and what has been done and is currently being done. Need to have someone 1) draft purpose(s) and communicate with BCM; 2) relative to target audience(s) and 3) develop a spreadsheet framework (e.g., Programs? Partners? Tools?) for comment prior to data entry. Lisa Gelvin-Innvaer within next several months (a recommendation to BCM). List should be coordinated by BCM state coordinator and served on DNR website

4. Long range planning

What products do we want to produce? Spatially-explicit conservation strategies based on focal species or hybrid focal concepts (sensitive species * population goal of high profile species).

How do we pick focal species? A list of ecological systems (DNR system as a starting point for evaluation) possibly built into a matrix with management practices. Develop a guild of birds for each cell in consultation with appropriate birding groups. Recommend focal species for each cell (or aggregate cells) and send out for review. Base on Lambeck's model and high profile species.

Begin process of developing a spatially-explicit set of priority areas/habitat objectives for each focal species and eventually build this into a spatially-explicit BCR 11 conservation strategy with programmatic priority areas.

Consider monitoring needs and how coordinated bird monitoring will operate in BCR 11.

Action Items:

Diane – review and revise charter as necessary as per discussion and redistribute to working group for comment. Send to Steering Committee by 3 Dec.

John S./Matt – develop proposal for workshops/technicians and distribute to working group members – pre-December 1. **[distribute to working group by 22 Nov? then we will have some opportunity for review and comments]** Diane will deliver to Steering Committee.

Lisa – reach out to BCM on purposes of organizations/actions data base and recommend structure. Pre – 1 February.

Soch – send Lisa list of survey efforts conducted by refuges, etc.

Diane – continue work on ecological systems matrix, species guilds and focal species – 6 months.

Lisa – send Diane list of BCR 11 priority shorebirds to include in matrix and use as candidate focal species

Soch – same as above for waterbirds. Use Northern Prairie/Parkland Waterbird Conservation Plan as starting point?

Next meeting – Spring 2005 (or sooner as circumstances dictate) with necessary remote communication in interval.

Appendix A. BCR 11 Charter

DRAFT
5 November 2004

Bird Conservation Minnesota BCR 11 - Prairie Pothole Working Group Charter

1. Title – BCR 11 Prairie Pothole Working Group of Bird Conservation Minnesota
2. Charging Authority – The Working Group will report to the Bird Conservation Minnesota (BCM) Steering Committee.
3. Purpose – Working Group members will
 - a. Share information regarding their organization’s conservation activities in the region (e.g., monitoring, education, habitat projects) in order to gain interagency support and avoid duplication of effort.
 - b. Identify conservation issues and information needs regarding birds of the Prairie Pothole Region of Minnesota. Items will include, but not be limited to, species of conservation concern, identification of focal species, decision support tools, habitat degradation and restoration, effects of agricultural practices on bird habitat, communication and outreach.
 - c. Develop a long range action plan to address these items. The plan will be implemented with the support of the BCM Steering Committee and government and non-government agencies.
 - d. Make every effort to ensure on-the-ground implementation of the action plan.
4. Background – Bird Conservation Minnesota was initially formed by a multi-agency design team in January 2003 with support from the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA). BCM will work in concert with the Prairie Pothole and Upper Mississippi/Great Lakes Joint Ventures to step down continental bird conservation plans to the state and local levels. BCM also is developing outreach tools to bring an increased awareness of bird conservation issues to local organizations and the general public. BCM is part of a larger statewide planning effort working toward the development of a Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan for the state of Minnesota. When the first BCM workshop was held in October 2003, it was agreed that the most efficient way to address bird conservation in MN was by working within ecological landscapes as defined by the Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs). The BCR 11 Working Group (which includes a small portion of BCR 22 in the southwest) is one of 3 BCR Working Groups that will address bird conservation issues at the ecosystem level.
5. Working Group Leadership
 - a. Chair – Diane Granfors. Will maintain focus on outcomes, work with facilitator to prepare meeting agendas, maintain communication with the

BCM Steering Committee. Chairs will serve for 2 years after which a new volunteer will chair the Working Group.

- b. Meeting facilitator – will be assigned as needed depending on purpose and location of meetings. Will prepare and send agendas prior to meetings, manage meeting design, group dynamics, and work planning.
 - c. Recorder – will be pre-assigned for each meeting
6. Working Group members - The Working Group may be comprised of state, federal, university, and private non-governmental organization (NGO) representatives with an interest in furthering the objectives of bird habitat conservation in the Prairie Pothole Region of Minnesota under Bird Conservation Minnesota. The Working Group will not exceed 12 members. Participation is voluntary. New members may join by Working Group consensus. Members should have expertise in avian biology, natural resource management, and/or outreach and education.
- Charter members include:
- Steve Cordts, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Bemidji
 - Lisa Gelvin-Innvaer, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, New Ulm
 - Diane Granfors, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Fergus Falls
 - Matt Holland, Pheasants Forever, New London, MN
 - Bob Honeman, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Fergus falls, MN
 - Rex Johnson, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Fergus Falls
 - Soch Lor, US Fish and Wildlife Service, La Crosse, WI
 - Mark Oja, Natural Resource Conservation Service, St. Paul, MN
 - John Schladweiler, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, New Ulm
 - Jon Schneider, Ducks Unlimited, Alexandria
 - Brian Winter, The Nature Conservancy
7. Decision-making within the Working Group rests with the group as a whole except for those decisions deemed appropriate for referral to the BCM Steering Committee. Consensus (all agree) or consent (either agree or can live with the decision and publicly support it) will be sought with each issue. If consent cannot be reached on an issue, it will be brought to the Steering Committee for resolution. The questions will be clearly defined and decisions will be documented, including both minority and majority opinions, or multiple recommendations.
8. Communications Plan - Meeting notes will be distributed to work group members and the Steering Committee by the chair. Connections with other groups and organizations will be made by the chair or facilitator. Decisions will be communicated by chair between the work group and the Steering Committee.
9. Work Plan – will be developed and continually updated by the Working Group.

10. Resources - The regular schedule of Working Group meetings will be two per year, one in spring, and one in late autumn. Members will normally cover their own travel expenses. On-going business and consultation will be conducted via electronic mail and conference calls as needed. Business conducted electronically by the Working Group will carry the same authority as business conducted in person.
11. Basic Meeting Expectations - Establish and honor an agenda. Attend all meetings. Be prepared for meetings. Bring your calendar. Start and end on time. Commit to completing the charge in a timely manner. Be responsible for raising your concerns. Clearly define whether the issue-at-hand requires a decision or if it is for information/discussion only. Leave each meeting with a list of action items, responsible persons, deadlines. Document meeting results. Support team decision outside of the meetings.
12. Expectations for working together - Be respectful and honest. Maintain confidentiality as appropriate. Challenge the idea - not the person. Give yourself and others permission to be less than perfect. Be an active listener. Manage, don't avoid, conflict. Maintain a sense of humor. Support individual team members. Hold team members accountable to team norms. Try to add value with your comments. Bring your experience, but check your rank at the door. Represent our organization and provide the best possible expertise, but make recommendations that are best for Bird Conservation Minnesota.

Workshop Summary
Bird Conservation Region 12 (Boreal Hardwoods Transition) Committee
of Bird Conservation Minnesota

Location: Sawmill Inn, Grand Rapids, MN

Date: December 14, 2004

Attendees: Wayne Bringer, USFWS, Tamarac NWR
Jan Green, Author/Conservationist, Duluth
Jim Lind, NRRI, Duluth
Steve Cordts, MN DNR, Bemidji
Kevin Woizeschke, MN DNR, Brainerd
Peg Robertsen, USFS, Tofte

Agenda:

- Introductions & update on Bird Conservation Minnesota (BCM)
- Develop a draft charter for the BCR12 committee
- Identify one project that the committee would like to initiate immediately on behalf of the BCR12/BCM that would garner immediate public recognition
- Develop a list of other organizations actively working on bird conservation within the BCR12 and summarize what has been done and what is in progress
- Start developing a long range plan for BCR12 projects/products and establish a date by which this plan will be finalized
- Discuss the integration of national/regional initiative objectives (PIF, Shorebird, Waterbird, Waterfowl) into the long range plan

Workshop Results:

Introduction

- Bringer provided the committee an update on the Bird Conservation Minnesota Initiative
- We discussed our introductory BCR12 meeting (March 2004, St. Cloud, MN) and reviewed our list of tasks assigned by the BCM steering committee.
- We discussed setting up a Yahoo group to facilitate committee communication. Documents could be stored at this site and we could read archived messages.

Review of Draft BCR12 Charter

- We reviewed and modified a draft charter prepared by Bringer (see attachment)

Identify a project on behalf of BCR12/BCM

- Bringer shared several examples with the committee and a discussion of potential projects was initiated
- The group came up with a list of possible projects to consider:

1. A traveling display (kiosk) to highlight the BCM program and list priority species that could be used at meetings, MN State Fair, workshops, etc.
2. Staff all the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) routes that are not being run
3. Organizing volunteers to do owl surveys
4. Road signs or billboards along highways to reduce road mortality – ties in with theme for IMBD in 2005
5. An interpretive boardwalk near Grand Marais for patterned fen habitat
6. Workshops for land managers and private citizens in the timber industry in relation to bird conservation
7. A volunteer-based survey for waterfowl using forested wetlands, possibly through MN Lakes Association, since waterfowl populations are not adequately surveyed within BCR12
8. A brochure depicting “hotspots” for finding birds – a driving route guide, similar to Pine to Prairie Trail Guide
9. **A brochure and map listing the birding resources available across the BCR – “Birding Resources for the Boreal Hardwood Region of Minnesota” that could be distributed through chamber of commerces**

- The committee decided the birding resources brochure would be the highest priority project for BCR12. Lots of birding guides already exist for the Boreal Hardwood Transition area, but are not utilized because the general public does not know how or where to obtain them.
- The birding resources brochure would be fairly low in cost especially if it was available on-line and we could avoid printing.
- Brochure would include: websites, nature trails, available checklists, & how to obtain those resources. Brochure could also include a section on BCM.
- Brochure should be sent to the Chambers of Commerce and covered with a DNR press release
- The brochure could also highlight Important Bird Areas.
- There was concern that the brochure would be slanted towards the birding community. One suggestion is to include important areas for gamebirds such as the Superior NF hunter walking trails although these are poorly maintained. Therefore, the brochure will target as large an audience as possible.
- Our efforts in pulling together materials for this brochure will partially accomplish the third task recommended by the BCM steering committee: “Develop a list of other organizations actively working on bird conservation within the BCR and summarize what has been done and what is in progress”.

Start developing a long range plan for BCR projects

- The committee decided that our first task would be to review the existing priority bird lists for BCR12 and create a final list for BCR12
- Bringer shared several papers designed to assist BCR groups with prioritizing species:
 1. “A conceptual approach for translating population objectives into habitat objectives: The five element process”
 2. “Focal species: A multi-species umbrella for nature conservation”

3. "Partners in flight continental priorities and objectives defined at the state and bird conservation region levels – Part I: Users guide: Methods and Assumptions" by Kenneth Rosenberg (March 2004)
 4. "Partners in flight continental priorities and objectives defined at the state and bird conservation region levels – Part II: Minnesota" by Kenneth Rosenberg (June 2004).
- Four handouts from the March 2004 BCM workshop summarizing the prioritizations developed by Partners in Flight and population estimates were also distributed since that was the list the committee originally started working with in March 2004. A list of Minnesota's priority shorebirds organized by BCR was also provided.
 - At the March 2004 BCM workshop the BCR12 committee agreed to generate a list of all bird species that are known to occur in Minnesota within BCR12 and their habitat association. A draft list created by Jan Green that was adapted from the "Checklist of the Birds of Minnesota" with a column for birds in BCR12 that lists status codes was provided. This is the list the committee decided to start with and use all other prioritized lists as cross-references. Many of our priority birds have been addressed in the recently developed Minnesota Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy. We also begin to cross-reference this list against priority lists such as PIF priorities.
 - A matrix of this list is being created to display all the prioritization schemes for all species. From this matrix we would group species that have similar habitat, microhabitat or landscape limitations or needs and reasons why they are on the list.
 - The committee plans to review regional and national plans (such as North American Waterfowl Management Plan, PIF Plan, etc.) for prioritization of waterbirds, shorebirds, landbirds and discuss prioritization/integration at their next meeting.
 - The committee agreed to develop or recommend terrestrial and aquatic habitat matrices and guidelines. Suggestions for forested habitats included MN-WRAP 49 class that is derived from TM data or range of natural variation ecosystem types and successional stages. Suggestions for aquatic habitat could include assessments made by the Comprehensive Wildlife Technical Team.
 - The committee agreed to further develop the details of a long range plan for BCR12 at our next meeting.

The next meeting was scheduled for April 6, 2005 at NRRI in Duluth.