

BIRD CONSERVATION COMMITTEE PART II
Chair: Judy Camuso, ME Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife
Vice-Chair: Tony Wilkinson, NY State Department of Environmental Conservation

11 September 2020
1-3 pm Central Time

110th AFWA Annual Meeting

Grassland Bird Working Group Report

Bill White, Private Land Services Division Chief, MO Department of Conservation

The Grassland Working Group met 10:45 AM on September 11, 2020, with 62 in attendance. Chair Bill White open the meeting with a review of the agenda which consisted primarily of reports from the team addressing our GAP Analysis and assessment of North American Grassland Conservation efforts.

Jim Giocomo, Oaks and Prairie Joint Venture, and Amanda Haverland, ABC, updated the group on the progress made toward addressing the Working Group tasks and the GAP Analysis of grassland conservation efforts. Of concern discovered during the analysis was that around half of states were not addressing grassland SGCN in their SWAP plans.

Tammy VerCauteren, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, discussed the results of the Central Flyway Grassland Road Summit virtually held in August with a long-term look at future efforts in the flyway.

Jane Fitzgerald, Central Hardwoods Joint Venture gave an update on the Mississippi Flyway Grassland Roadmap Summit which is planned to be held virtually in December and will concentrate on 3-5 year objectives for the flyway.

Plans are to have a report ready for the Bird Conservation Committee during the North American with recommended actions to be addressed in the future. Discussion was held on the need to keep the Grassland Working Group active after the assigned tasks are completed to in part help implement action items in our final report and coordinate efforts among the states and partners. A recommendation will be developed for the March 2021 Bird Conservation Committee to consider.

Several attendees expressed hope for the future of grassland conservation because of the working group's progress and the interest indicated from the high attendance during the meeting.

The meeting concluded with reports from partners:

Aviva Glaser- Update on the North American Grasslands Conservation Act proposal

Jef Hodges- An update and membership appeal for the Native Grasslands Alliance

And activities of the North American Grouse Partnership

Harvest Information Program Working Group Report

Karen Waldrop, Chief Conservation Officer, Ducks Unlimited

The Bird Conservation Committee (BCC) of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) established the Harvest Information Program Working Group (HIPWG) to assess challenges with Harvest Information Program (HIP) implementation and propose solutions to improve data collection and better manage North America's migratory game birds. The HIPWG has identified key challenges to successful HIP implementation, established potential solutions to address these issues, and has developed a recommendation for moving forward.

Between March 2016, and July 2017, the HIPWG discussed and evaluated several options to modify HIP and improve harvest and hunter estimates for migratory game birds in the U. S. The options for consideration included:

1. **Simplify data collected from hunters:** An evaluation by Dr. David Otis (USGS, retired), presented at the September 2016 AFWA meeting, suggests HIP data collection could be simplified without losing precision at the necessary scale of data usage (e.g., Management Unit or Flyway-wide). HIP questions may be simplified to improve accuracy of responses.
2. **Charge a fee for HIP registration:** Because HIP is free in many states, many hunters obtain HIP certification, but do not participate in migratory game bird hunting, which complicates estimating hunter activity and harvest.
3. **Eliminate third-party license vendors as part of the HIP certification process:** Many states collect HIP data through various point-of-sale systems (e.g., sporting goods stores). Requiring hunters to respond directly to HIP questions removes the numerous vendor-associated issues (e.g., failure to ask the customer the requisite questions due to time constraints) and would lead to improved accuracy of data.
4. **Increase awareness of importance of HIP:** USFWS and states can promote the importance of HIP to hunters and vendors to motivate these groups to submit accurate, timely data.
5. **Develop a national program to administer HIP through a single standardized source:** A national program could reduce workloads, eliminate unnecessary steps in data collection and submission, ensure a consistent format across states, and eliminate third-party license vendors from data collection. Two potential options to administer a national program include:
 - a. A federal program administered through the USFWS that requires all migratory game bird hunters to register; or
 - b. A national program administered through a reputable third-party vendor, (e.g., Wildlife Management Institute), that remains state-controlled.

The HIPWG has since collaborated with the Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) to work with a number of states, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and automated licensing system providers to improve HIP. Data gathered from migratory bird hunters through HIP will be used to refine estimates of hunter effort and harvest of ducks, geese, doves, and other migratory birds.

With support from a Multi-State Conservation Grant, WMI launched a pilot program, headed by project leader Brand Bortner, in 2019 to modify HIP data entry in several states. WMI invited states in each of the four national flyways to participate in the pilot. Major license system providers like Aspira, Brandt, and S3 have also been engaged.

Louisiana was one of the first states to commit and made changes for the upcoming 2020 hunting season. Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Kansas and Montana are currently planning to modify their systems prior to the 2021 season and Florida, North Carolina, and Nevada are considering joining the pilot project in 2022. Kentucky, Colorado, Indiana, Delaware, Nebraska, New York and Kentucky are currently administering the HIP survey through a single standardized source.

The HIPWG continues to track the progress of the pilot states as they work to eliminate third party entry and continue to work toward harvest survey modernization. Moving forward, the HIPWG will continue to work with WMI to reach out to states regarding eliminating third party entries and provide communication material for states to use explaining the HIP requirements and why these data are important.

Also, the HIPWG intends to include the following tasks in the annual work plan:

- Continue to conduct outreach among the states
- Determine questions the states can collect data on and track issues that arise when building the biweekly report to send to the USFWS
- Survey of “pioneer states” to determine the pitfalls, challenges, and improvements both needed and recognized
- Work with the USFWS to determine if HIP survey questions can be simplified. It will take the Service approximately 1-2 years to implement changes to the questions. The WG will need

to work with the service to determine the exact questions they would like to ask and then take steps towards getting a quote from vendors to see how much it would cost for them to implement those changes in their system. There was discussion that the WG could not prevent states from asking additional questions, but it raised concern in regards to diluting the HIP survey

- Work with the Service to have all data automatically pushed to the Service on a bi-weekly basis
- Consideration of recommendations provided in David Otis' report

Southern Wings Progress Updates

Jim deVos, Assistant Director for Wildlife Management, Arizona Game and Fish Department

[See slides.](#)

Southern Wings is a full life cycle conservation program, with some states participating individually, and others participating in a group. In total, 39 states are participating. Southern Wings was formed in 2009 and in the past 11 years has raised more than \$3million from 39 states, with more than 1 million acres conserved, restored, or managed. These contributions support conservation of 81 shared Species of Greatest Conservation Need in 11 countries through 24 projects. In 2020, Southern Wings is developing project success stories. The program will conduct a survey of state wildlife chiefs and Wildlife Diversity managers to ensure that Southern Wings is supporting implementation of State Wildlife Action Plans.

PIF/Shorebird/Waterbird Working Group Report

Sara Schweitzer, Wildlife Diversity Coordinator, NC Wildlife Resources Commission

Landbird (PIF), Shorebird (USSCP), and Waterbird conservation initiatives updates:

Bob Ford (PIF Coordinator, USFWS) provided an [overview of actions](#) being taken to move **PIF** into the next 30 years –

- PIF is working to establish two Conservation Delivery Specialists to work with PIF's Western and Eastern WGs to support large-scale avian conservation efforts being undertaken and planned by state and federal agencies and NGOs through SWAPs, JVs, and Flyways. The goal is to amplify collaborative efforts for enhanced, strategic conservation outcomes. These efforts are part of NABCI's road to recovery for species most in danger of future listing.
- PIF's Eastern WG will have its first meeting virtually during 2 to 3-hour sessions on October 6, 8, 13, and 15. The meeting's theme is Bringing Birds Back: Restoring our Eastern Avifauna. PIF's Eastern WG recently received a Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Grant to build international partnerships and advance collaborative conservation planning and action in these key areas.
- PIF's Western WG will also hold fall virtual meetings as half-day sessions on Oct. 28, Nov. 10, Nov. 12, and Nov. 19. Discussions and work will focus on the MOTUS network in the west, responses to the "3 billion birds" paper, their 7 Simple Actions challenge, conservation actions under NABCI's 5 game-changers, and a session on grasslands as a follow-up to this summer's grasslands summit. Most of these actions are collaborative efforts with states through the Pacific Flyway NGTC.
- This winter, PIF's Steering Committee will have a virtual visioning session to brainstorm and strategize PIF's role for the next 30 years of international bird conservation.

Sara Schweitzer (NCWRC) of the **USSCP Council** provided a [1-page summary](#) of recent accomplishments, drafted by Brad Andres (USFWS), the Shorebird Coordinator –

- The USSCP is drafting a synopsis of progress achieved since the 2001 Plan was completed, as well as future directions.

- The 2012 paper on shorebird population sizes and trends is being updated and will be published in 2020.
- A universal landing page for the Pacific, Midcontinent, and Atlantic Shorebird Flyway Initiatives will be completed by November, from which each Initiative's web site material can be found.
- The Shorebird Harvest WG of the Atlantic Shorebird Conservation Initiative completed its list of proposed actions for the 2020-2025 period, and they and other WG products are on the Initiative's web page.
- The strategic framework for the new Midcontinent Shorebird Initiative will be developed during 3 workshops this fall in the U.S., and similar workshops are being planned for interior South American partners.
- The Pacific Shorebird Conservation Initiative will implement projects south of the U.S.-Mexico border with a \$750,000 grant from the USAID program.

Dave Gordon (USFWS) and Sara Schweitzer (NCWRC) have been contacting former members of the **Waterbird Council** and recruiting new ones to re-activate the Council.

- So far, 7 NGOs (U.S. and Canadian), 2 Federal agencies, and 5 state agencies are represented. Staff from state agencies are from each of the Flyway Council NGTC/Ss. Four Central American NGOs are represented, and we are waiting for a response from South American partners.
- This fall, Council members will work on the Terms of Reference and the Membership Principles to create a structure from which to begin updating the Waterbirds of the Americas Conservation Initiative.
- The Council will also consider changing its name to include Waterbirds and Seabirds to more clearly reflect inclusion of pelagic seabirds.

Common Threats Analysis

To address **threats** to landbirds, shorebirds, and waterbirds, the WG will begin a **common threats analysis** to identify significant human actions affecting habitats upon which bird species most in danger of future listing depend throughout their full annual cycle. The open standards for the practice of conservation will be used to begin this process that will be led by John Alexander (Klamath Bird Observatory) with Ken Rosenberg, Bob Ford, Bill Uihlein, Geoff Geupel, and Scott Anderson assisting.

Feral and Free-Ranging Cat Work Group Report

Sara Schweitzer, Wildlife Diversity Coordinator, NC Wildlife Resources Commission

Grant Sizemore (American Bird Conservancy) provided a summary of legal and policy issues associated with free-ranging domestic cats, including an overview of six (6) bills introduced at the state level, four (4) of which propose to authorize Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) as the method to use to control free-ranging domestic cat populations. These bills have been introduced in Michigan, New Jersey, Vermont, and Virginia. An introduced bill in California would require micro-chipping of domestic cats in shelters, and a bill introduced in Pennsylvania would create a One Health Task Force, identifying free-ranging domestic cats as a major concern, especially for rabies transmission.

It is important for state agencies to detect and act on bills introduced in state legislatures that would recommend control methods that are contrary to proper, science-based techniques of reducing populations of free-ranging domestic cats.

The remainder of the meeting was used to review and discuss the final draft of the "Toolkit to Address Free-ranging Domestic Cats (*Felis catus*) on Agency Lands Managed for Native Wildlife and Ecosystem Health," which was distributed to members of the Bird Conservation Committee and the Fish and Wildlife Health Committee in August for review, and again in September, after responding to comments and suggestions.

The Toolkit is intended to provide guidance to fish and wildlife agencies as they address free-ranging domestic cats (*Felis catus*) on agency lands managed for native wildlife and ecosystem health.

We discussed next steps, the goals of which are to,

- Disseminate information in the Toolkit to state and federal agencies;
- Evaluate use of the Toolkit by agencies and its value to agencies.

To achieve these goals, participants in the WG will work through AFWA Committees during the next six (6) months and report back at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference during a WG meeting. Actions include:

- Providing presentations and discussion sessions on the Toolkit at Flyway Council Nongame Technical Committees or Sections (Bird Conservation Committee);
- Drafting general, informative language on the issue, using human dimension scientists' suggestions (Science and Research Committee's Human Dimensions & Social Sciences Subcommittee);
- Use suggested general language for education and outreach materials and kiosk designs, and develop webinars for agencies that include suggested actions to form beneficial partnerships (Education, Outreach, and Diversity Committee);
- Examine the possibility of publishing the Toolkit as a monograph, working with the Human-Wildlife Conflict WG of the Wildlife Resources Policy Committee;
- Providing regulatory language suggestions for states using Hawai'i's recent case as an example (Legal Committee); and
- Consider updating the 1997 AFWA Resolution on free-ranging domestic cats (Resolutions Committee).

Ongoing activities in AFWA Committees will include,

- Tracking emerging health issues associated with free-ranging domestic cats (Fish and Wildlife Health Committee); and
- Tracking policies and legal issues associated with free-ranging domestic cats (Invasive Species Committee and Legal Committee).

The WG participants agreed that the Toolkit will need to remain current; therefore, they suggested providing a supplement to it, as needed, in the future. Such a supplement will go through the review and approval process of AFWA before being posted to the AFWA web site with the Toolkit.

Today, we ask that the Bird Conservation Committee approve the Feral and Free-Ranging Cat Toolkit and advance the Toolkit to the Directors for their consideration and approval.

EJ Williams (ABC) moves to approve the Feral and Free-Ranging Cat Toolkit and advance the Toolkit to the Directors for their approval. Karen Waldrop seconds, and the motion carries.

Migratory Shore and Upland Game Bird Working Group Report

Alicia Hardin, Wildlife Division Administrator, NE Game and Parks Commission

The workgroup had between 19-21 participants attend via zoom.

Update from the Dove Task Force-

- Reward Band project- despite covid, it appears the 2nd year of banding has been successfully completed by most states
- Integrated Population Modeling- the preliminary results look promising for determining population estimates (more to come on this), this also has prompted more discussion on

harvest strategies and the potential to update them including objectives, thresholds and how those thresholds are determined

- Priority Needs Document (white wing and mourning doves)- awaiting final approval by the USFWS then the work group can take action (possibly at the North American) . Some of the new needs included: Improving dove information in HIP, Developing an Integrated Population Model, Estimating factors affecting hunter R3, and Assessing the economic impact of dove hunting.

Woodcock Task Force-

- Update on the research by Ashley Huinker from Michigan State University
- An update on the Eastern Woodcock Research Cooperative including information about the crossover of woodcocks from one management unit to the other (east and central) and a great map resource showing the migration of the tagged birds
- A short discussion on the Young Forest Initiative and ways to keep that topic alive in this work group (maybe with some crossover from other AFWA work groups like the Forestry Work Group or other Ag Conservation Committees)

Covid Implications on Surveys-

- Many surveys (especially those run by the USFWS) were put on hold during Covid, fortunately this one year blip will likely not drastically impact anything and the USFWS is more confident in getting the survey work done in the future (at least within the US) with new protocols put into place

USFWS Webless Funding- As soon as possible (hopefully by November), the Webless Research RFP will be out, this is for 2021 funding which will be at least \$100,000, perhaps more if some other savings can be found. It was noted that there has been great support within the Migratory Bird office to continue this funding opportunity.

Marsh Bird Survey- Shaun will be sending out a summary via email within in the next few weeks

HIP Updates- Brad gave an update of the project

NABCI- Highlights of the successful virtual NABCI meeting were given and a quick discussion on how to better tell the need to put together a document that talks about the importance of the BBL with the help of the flyways and other workgroups was discussed, more assistance is needed with this item. The workplan will be drafted and sent out to the larger work group via email after the meeting.

Resident Game Bird Working Group Report

Todd Bishop, Chief, Wildlife Bureau, IA Department of Natural Resources

Considerations for Developing Translocation Guidelines

John Morgan (Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources) provided an update on additional review, comments received, and subsequent edits since the March meeting of the Resident Game Bird Working Group. There was a brief discussion regarding the review, comments, and support from the Fish and Wildlife Health Committee. John also updated the Working Group that the final version had been submitted to the Bird Conservation Committee for approval at the Bird Conservation Committee II Meeting scheduled to be held later in the day and that, if approved, the Guidelines would be forwarded for approval at the AFWA Business Meeting the following week. This document has been the emphasis of the Working Group for more than a year and involved a rather extensive review process. The Guidelines were approved by the Bird Conservation Committee on September 11, 2020 and were approved at the AFWA Business Meeting on September 15, 2020.

AFWA Resolution 2019-05-10 – Small Game R3 Assessment

AFWA Resolution 2019-05-10 calls for the Hunting/Shooting Sports Participation Committee and Bird Conservation Committee Resident Game Bird Working Group to cooperatively identify and prioritize 1.)

a set of key questions and issues, and 2.) a set of recommended actions related to addressing the long-term decline in small game hunter participation and its implications. A list of seven key questions and issues was finalized in May 2020. Scott Taylor (National Wild Pheasant Conservation Plan Coordinator) provided a draft, unprioritized set of five recommended actions for review and comment. Scott stated that he would be providing the same information at the Hunting/Shooting Sports Participation Committee and the Bird Conservation Committee II Meeting. The goal is to get feedback in order to develop a final prioritized set of recommended actions for approval at the next North American Conference in March 2021.

Featured Partner Update: National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative

John Morgan (Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources) provided a presentation on the new business model for this Initiative that spans 25 states laying out future directions and staffing with an emphasis on improvements in handling and tracking funding from State Agencies.

Working Lands for Wildlife Initiative for bobwhite

Lisa Potter (Missouri Department of Conservation) provided a presentation on this new initiative involving States and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Lisa informed the Working Group that there would be a request for support for this proposal at the AFWA Business Meeting.

Featured Partner Update: National Wild Turkey Federation

Mark Hatfield (NWTF National Director of Conservation Services) provided an update on COVID19 impacts to NWTF fund raising, staffing, and major conservation initiatives. This update is very beneficial for the many organizations that partner with NWTF on habitat conservation and R3 efforts.

Eastern Ruffed Grouse Meeting (August 3-6, 2020) Summary

Ken Duren (Pennsylvania Game Commission) provided a report on the first meeting of this multi-state initiative which included nearly 30 biologists from 18 Eastern State Agencies. The initiative includes plans to conduct a regional Population Status Assessment and Recovery Plan. Progress going forward will be reported through NEAFWA and SEAFWA and through the Resident Game Bird Working Group.

John Morgan (KY) moves that the Bird Conservation Committee approve the translocation document and advance it for consideration by the Directors, with the recognition that it has been reviewed by the Resident Game Bird WG, the Bird Conservation Committee, and the Fish and Wildlife Health Committee. Alicia Hardin seconds, and the motion carries.

Update on AFWA Resolution 2019-05-10- Small Game R3 Assessment

Scott Taylor, National Pheasant Plan Coordinator, Pheasants Forever

[See Scott's presentation](#)

Small game (including resident game birds, rabbits, and squirrels) hunter participation has been in steep decline over the last 25 years. The Bird Conservation and Hunting and Shooting Sports Participation Committees advanced a resolution in 2019 (2019-05-10) that called for AFWA to cooperatively identify and prioritize 1) a set of key questions and issues, and 2) a set of recommended actions related to addressing the long-term decline in small game hunter participation and its implications. A set of key questions and issues was developed early in 2020, and a draft set of recommended actions is currently under review. [Draft recommendations](#) include 1) maintaining national hunter participation data sets, 2) sponsoring a forum of industry, NGO, and AFWA stakeholders to discuss potential cooperative actions, 3) compiling and analyzing state-collected data to better understand the causes of participation declines, 4) soliciting feedback from state agency directors regarding their R3 priorities, and 5) convening representatives of relevant AFWA committees to discuss possible policy interventions. BCC

and HSSPC members were asked to provide feedback [on the draft items](#) prior to the final step of prioritization.

Waterfowl Working Group Report

Jeff Ver Steeg, Assistant Director, CO Parks and Wildlife

- The Waterfowl Working Group had a very informative meeting on Thursday morning, with 58 individuals participating at some point during the 3-hour period.
- We had numerous updates, in-line with our Work Plan, to share information about, and to support the implementation of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. The US and Canadian co-chairs reported on the Plan Committees progress to address their strategic priorities and actions and we heard from various NAWMP committee chairs about the Human Dimensions work and the soon to be complete national summary reports from the hunter and birdwatcher surveys. We also learned about all the efforts of the Integration Steering Committee to ensure the pieces of the NAWMP machine are functioning in a coordinated and collaborative fashion.
- We learned about the great work of the North American Waterfowl Professional Education Plan (NAWPEP) that is *“Engaging and assisting universities, colleges and all NAWMP partners with establishing, sustaining, and enhancing academic and experiential programs in waterfowl and wetlands science and management, **in order that sufficient numbers of inclusively diverse professionals with this expertise from across North America are available to sustain the professional capacity** and excellence of future waterfowl science and management.”*
- Daniel Wolfish, Director General of Regional Operations for the Canadian Wildlife Service, provided a report on waterfowl and wetland habitat investments in Canada, noting \$100 million (Canadian) was invested in 2019. The 2020 Habitat Matters report (annual Canadian NAWMP report) is available on the Waterfowl Working Group webpage on AFWA’s website. (<https://www.fishwildlife.org/afwa-acts/afwa-committees/waterfowl-working-group>)
- We had an excellent presentation on the NAWMP Landscape Prioritization Model that is being developed to assist with planning at the “regional scale.” The model uses 29 unique data elements incorporating waterfowl population, habitat, and human dimensions data – all of which can be easily customized by users, such as Joint Ventures.
- **FALL FLIGHTS.** We have a recurring action item, whereby the Association’s Resolution passed in 2011 (through its adoption of the Action Plan Framework) requires the Waterfowl Working Group and the Bird Conservation Committee to report annually to Directors about state contributions to waterfowl habitat in Canada — now referred to as AFWA’s Fall Flights program. It is worth noting that in 2019-20, 43 states invested over \$3.6 million in Canadian waterfowl habitat — this a record number of states and the second highest annual total financial commitment. [The Fall Flights report](#) is available on the Waterfowl Working Group webpage.
- Lastly, incoming AFWA President Sara Parker Pauley is expected to create a President’s Fall Flights Task Force in the coming weeks. The Task Force should:
 - Review the progress made toward implementing the “2016 Action Plan for State Contributions to NAWMP/NAWCA Projects in Canada,”
 - Engage Canadian Joint Ventures.
 - Review and update the allocation of the FALL FLIGHTS program goal for each state,
 - Identify immediate and longer-term actions that could be taken to build the “Fall Flights” brand and to increase state (or other organizations) participation in the program, and
 - Identify an approach to enhance the engagement of state agencies and the Association in the on-going strategic management of the Fall Flights program.

Bird-Fish Conflicts Working Group Report

David Cobb, Research Director, NC Wildlife Resources Commission

Through multiple conference calls and web-conference meetings, members of the Bird- and Fish-Related Conflict Working Group (WG) have been working to fulfill the scheduled list of six activities from our annual Work Plan. All WG activities are derived from direction contained within our draft charge that reads;

“Federal and State Agency members representing the bird and fisheries management disciplines will develop an adaptive approach to identify opportunities for most efficiently addressing the challenges of managing piscivorous birds and affected fishery resources and promote a common understanding of their interactions. The WG reports to the Fisheries and Water Resource Policy Committee and the Bird Conservation Committee. The WG may advance issues to the FWRPC and BCC from which information and requests can be developed and presented to state directors.”

All six scheduled activities for the prior year were either accomplished or progress was made, included:

1. Since the 2019 AFWA meeting, the working group held one in-person meeting (2020 NANRC in Omaha) and four virtual meetings (1/27; 2/18; 6/26; and 9/10).
2. The working group filled a Central Flyway representative vacancy and reassessed working group membership representation more broadly.
3. The working group planned to have an in-person meeting in host state, South Carolina, during summer 2020, but was deferred to focus on USFWS rule proposal and draft EIS commentary, as well as adapt to virtual work environments due to COVID-19.
4. The working group engaged in formal and non-formal commentary on proposed management actions taken by FWS related to double-crested cormorant ANPR, rule proposal, and draft EIS.
5. The working group took action to increase communication with the National Flyway Council with the goal of initiating engagement between fisheries administrators and flyway representatives. Action consisted of collaborating with NFC leadership in drafting a letter to state fish and wildlife agency directors, communicating the existence and value of the BFRCWG and encouraging intra-agency communication among bird and fisheries professionals to more comprehensively inform state representation at NFC meetings.
6. The WG began planning steps and content generation for a briefing paper for State Directors to help them understand when and how they can address avian predation issues – both within their agencies and through the flyways.

To continue progress, the group will work in fall 2020 and into 2021 to:

- Review and discuss final USFWS DCCO rule (expected this fall)
- Continue engagement within WG and after DCCO rule is implemented
 - Capture feedback on how the final rule is working for different states/situations
- Consider shifting WG focus to other avian species that aren't as cosmopolitan.
 - American white pelican
 - Neotropical cormorant
- Participation in USFWS efforts to evaluate and define monitoring protocols for DCCO populations.
- Develop a briefing paper of best practices and case studies
- Hold summer 2021 in-person WG meeting (South Carolina host)
- Initiate plans for future in-person workshop or symposium targeted for 2022

The working group has no actions to bring to the committee at this time.