



## PARTNERS IN FLIGHT NEWSLETTER

<http://www.partnersinflight.org>

October 2006

### **NAOC a Huge Success**

The North American Ornithological Conference in Veracruz turned out to be everything we were hoping for. Nearly 1700 ornithologists attended. The conference was packed with papers, posters, workshops, receptions, and other events, all of which ran smoothly. The conference organizers deserve an enormous amount of credit for pulling this off so well.

PIF shared a day-long symposium with the American Bird Conservancy, and the Meso PIF Working Group held another half-day symposium. The Western Working Group organized a day-long workshop with the Mesoamerican PIF reps who were able to attend the conference thanks to funding support from an anonymous donor, the Missouri Department of Conservation, the PIF WWG, PIF SEWG, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, USFS, and USFWS. There are a number of specific actions to follow up on.

Most conference attendees were able to make it to one of the River of Raptors (Río de Rapaces) monitoring sites – Cardel and Chichicaxtle – to watch tens of thousands of raptors kettling overhead and then setting their wings and sailing south. You can read about this in books and magazines, look at photos, and watch videos. But seeing it in person is a jaw-dropping experience for everyone. If you missed it this year, plan to go next year and consider supporting Pronatura Veracruz in this critical monitoring project.

### **4<sup>th</sup> International PIF Conference – Tundra to Tropics**

Freshly inspired by success of the NAOC, we remind you that the 4<sup>th</sup> International PIF Conference will be held 13-16 February 2008, at the McAllen Convention Center in McAllen, Texas. The conference theme will be Tundra to Tropics and will be shared with IMBD for 2008. The focus of the conference will be international connections of all sorts that further bird and habitat conservation.

Rather than simply having several days of concurrent paper presentations – a standard practice for scientific society meetings – conference planners believe it would be more valuable to structure the conference to have a short series of

presentations on a number of conservation issues, each then followed by a facilitated discussion session. The goal of each of these sessions would be to produce a mini strategic action plan on that issue. These results could then be formatted, packaged, and distributed to all partners within weeks of the conference. We could still produce a proceedings which is valuable for historical documentation of the conference, for communicating content to those who cannot attend, and to provide an incentive for scientists who must publish papers as a part of their job responsibilities. It's also likely that we will put the conference's posters up on the PIF web site so that all interested parties have immediate access to their content.

**We are seeking \$30,000** in contributions to support student and professional participation. A detailed budget and program are being developed. Watch the PIF listservs for details, and contact Terry if you have any funding that might be available. The Gulf Coast Bird Observatory (<http://www.gcbo.org/>) will be handling contributed funds.

We also have produced a display for this conference that we encourage partners to put up during other meetings and conferences this winter. The display is small and light enough (12 lbs.) to carry on a plane. It consists of a 3' x 8' cloth banner that rolls out of a base unit like a window shade. It can be set up and taken down in a couple of minutes and can be easily moved with one hand. Contact Terry Rich ([terry\\_rich@fws.gov](mailto:terry_rich@fws.gov)) to see a digital photo of the display and to reserve it for your meeting.

### **Special Meetings and Workshops at 4<sup>th</sup> International PIF Conference**

We will have access to the McAllen Convention Center on Wednesday, 13 February 2008, and to a number of other venues earlier in the week for those who want to hold a special meeting, a regular meeting, or a workshop in connection with this conference. Many groups took advantage of this type of arrangement at the NAOC, and it worked extremely well. This is a great way to get new people educated or involved in your particular topic. Contact Terry Rich if you want to book space for your meeting.

### **Species Assessment in Mexico and C Plan Update**

The most recent global scores database with scores for the entire Mexican avifauna is now in final review by the Mexican Species Assessment National Committee. We hope to have the last adjustments completed by the end of November. PIF will then decide how to best manage the database and how to best make it available to users. Once the data are finalized, we will begin on the long-anticipated C Plan update that will include all the landbirds in the US, Canada, and Mexico. Of equal interest will be the plan that will be produced by Mexican partners for the all Mexican bird species. Our goal is to have the C Plan update in time for the next PIF conference (see above) in February 2008.— Eduardo E. Iñigo-Elias ([eei2@cornell.edu](mailto:eei2@cornell.edu))

## **PIF Implementation Committee**

The PIF Implementation Committee (IC) met on 17-18 September 2006 in Glenwood Springs, CO, just prior to the AFWA ([www.fishwildlife.org](http://www.fishwildlife.org)) annual conference in Snowmass. Here are a few of the topics we discussed, based on the updated PIF Strategic Plan and other timely issues. Full meeting notes are available from the IC Chair, Dave Mehlman ([dmehlman@tnc.org](mailto:dmehlman@tnc.org)). The next PIF Implementation Committee meetings will be held in Portland, OR on 18-19 March 2007. All are welcome to attend.

## **Conservation Design Workshop – Follow-up**

Abstracts and presentations from the Conservation Design workshop held in St. Louis on 11-13 April 2006 are now available on the PIF web site. The PIF IC is keen on continuing to develop conservation design ideas and tools. This goal lines up nicely with the general interest partners expressed during strategic plan review where one of the top priorities that emerged is to hold more workshops with specific scientific topics and target audiences. Partners believe that this is the most efficient way to broadly achieve landbird objectives while also contributing to the more general advance of bird conservation. The IC is considering another workshop on how to use quantifiable objectives in conservation design for July 2007.

## **Status of Federal Agencies in Landbird Conservation**

PIF has invested a lot of time and energy in working with the states over the last few years during development of their Wildlife Action Plans. We have had a very positive experience in working with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and with the individual states over this period. But IC members agreed that at least some federal agencies may be slightly out of the loop with PIF due to this recent focus on state planning. Thus, PIF will be exploring opportunities to make presentations to, e.g., BLM and USFS national leadership teams, on the status of conservation design, the role of Joint Ventures, and the role of Wildlife Action Plans in bird conservation. Anyone with an interest in this issue or with ideas for how to proceed should contact Terry Rich ([terry\\_rich@fws.gov](mailto:terry_rich@fws.gov)).

## **Stewardship Analysis**

For some time, the PIF Science Committee has been interested in completing an analysis of who “owns” bird habitats. That is, what percentage of the breeding or wintering habitat for a given species is managed by BLM, USFS, USFWS, NPS, states, tribes, provinces, territories, private landowners, or other entities. This analysis would be helpful in clarifying the responsibility that various partners have for conservation. As conservation design moves forward, this analysis will become more important and more possible. The biggest impediment is

apparently the lack of a single land ownership GIS layer that can be overlain with bird ranges to conduct the analysis. We will be exploring the possibility of doing this for at least the U.S. in the near future. An analysis of breeding ranges for species that occur in Canada and/or Mexico, as well as the U.S., may be further down the road.

### **Centers of Spatial Explicitness**

The PIF Implementation Committee also decided that it would be useful to identify and catalogue what we are calling "Centers of Spatial Explicitness." These are existing centers that can conduct sophisticated conservation design activities and would include USGS Science Centers, HAPET offices, certain National Wildlife Refuge offices, some academic labs, and likely some private labs. Criteria for a query will be developed and then distributed through both ornithological and GIS networks. Anyone with ideas for this task should contact Terry Rich.

### **NABCI Monitoring Subcommittee Monitoring Report**

The due date for comments on the subject report has been extended to 15 November 2006. PIF will have an official response which will be drafted by the PIF Monitoring Committee (C.J. Ralph and Jon Bart, Co chairs). This response will be circulated to the IC for further input before finalizing. All partners are encouraged to read the draft report and provide feedback.

### **PIF Strategic Plan – September 2006**

PIF has updated and reformatted its strategic plan - *Partners in Flight Strategic Plan - September 2006* - incorporating numerous comments received over the last 6 months. The plan is now lean and in an Excel format so that objectives and tasks can be sorted in different ways. We've also included a comment field so that partners can see a brief summary of input on various plan elements. Contact Terry Rich if you would like a copy.

### **PIF Strategic Plan – Highest Priority Objectives and Tasks**

Following are the highest priority items in our revised strategic plan that were suitable for further discussion at the recent Implementation Committee meetings (see above). Other high priority items not mentioned here are on track or otherwise did not need discussion at this time. See the *Partners in Flight Strategic Plan - September 2006 - Sorted by Top Priorities* for all details. Items below are either objectives (e.g., O19) or tasks within an objective (O19T9) as referenced in the strategic plan spreadsheet.

### ***Integrating PIF Objectives into Federal Land Use Plans (O19)***

We continue to struggle a bit with the best way to accomplish this objective. Currently, PIF relies heavily on biologists within federal agencies to ensure that landbird objectives are incorporated into appropriate plans and activities. We know that this approach provides uneven results because not every biologist is involved in PIF or even particularly interested in birds. However, revisions in the planning regulations within USFS and BLM have limited the ability of the partnership to influence plan priorities from the national level. Interaction with other federal agencies at the national level varies greatly, depending on the agency. Thus, it continues to be especially important for biologists within agencies to provide landbird conservation information through appropriate internal processes.

See the above item - Status of Federal Agencies in Landbird Conservation – for an additional step that PIF plans to take. Finally, we will make a renewed effort to track Land Use Planning notices in Federal Register and alert the most logical partners, PIF working group, or state bird conservation initiative to engage a particular plan.

### ***Obtaining Feedback on Stepped-down Population Estimates (O13)***

At the AFWA conference in Snowmass in September, the state wildlife agencies decided to take the lead on obtaining feedback on landbird population estimates that PIF has provided. A letter from the AFWA Bird Conservation Committee was sent to all state wildlife agency directors requesting that they each nominate a contact to be the lead for their state.

PIF is not asking for biologists and others to launch into a lot of new work. Rather, we are asking them to review the state BCR polygon estimates that have been distributed and which are still located on the AFWA web site - [http://www.fishwildlife.org/allbird\\_landbird.html](http://www.fishwildlife.org/allbird_landbird.html)) – and to provide independent estimates that may already be available so that we can compare and ultimately refine these estimates. Good estimates are important to proper objective setting and conservation design. We want to complete one round of review and revision, and then move on. We agree that there is little to be gained by trying to make these estimates perfect.

A handout giving a little more background on this task was distributed in Snowmass and is available from Terry Rich.

### ***Ensure PIF Objectives are Integrated into Farm Bill and other Private Lands Programs (O19T9)***

Although PIF at various levels gets information and updates on various Farm Bill programs, we believe that, as a partnership, we are still not very effective in

using the Farm Bill for bird conservation because most of us really don't understand it adequately. We have decided to take two actions: 1) PIF needs to be regularly involved in the AFWA Farm Bill Working Group; we are seeking volunteers to engage in this committee on a regular basis for the long term. 2) We will set up a workshop, with AFWA's help, where members of the PIF IC can gain a much better understanding of Farm Bill opportunities. We hope to do this within the next 6 months.

### ***Revise Bird Conservation Plans (O1T1)***

The general feeling of partners is that bird conservation planning has evolved into other processes at the BCR, JV, and state level and that revising BCPs is not a good use of our time at this point. Fortunately, Bird Conservation Plans contain an enormous amount of information that is not especially time sensitive. Habitat needs and management recommendations certainly are refined over time but they do not change greatly. Thus, we believe that these plans will maintain value for many years as is.

We decided that two actions are needed: 1) Users should be encouraged to continue to consult BCPs for their geographic areas but that they need to ensure they get current priority species lists as the PIF Global Species Assessment Database is updated; and, 2) Authors responsible for BCP Executive Summaries that are out of date will update them with current priority species.

### ***Discover what Products and Services Agencies, NGOs, and other Partners Need (O6)***

The PIF Implementation Committee decided that the best way to approach this is not through a broadcast request to all partners but rather through a focus on segments that are particularly important right now – JVs, states, and federal agencies. PIF distributed a short set of questions to the JVs on how PIF can help them achieve their objectives and received specific, useful feedback on this issue. That will provide the focus for future communication and coordination, some of which can be furthered at the December meeting of JV coordinators. PIF still needs to develop a mechanism for making a similar offer of assistance to the states as they begin to implement their Wildlife Action Plans. Finally, see above - Status of Federal Agencies in Landbird Conservation – for a specific step to further engage federal agencies.

### ***Develop Best Management Practices and Analogous Documents that Provide Bird Conservation Guidance by Habitat for Specific Target Audiences of Land Managers. (O19T13)***

This topic always generates a lot of discussion on species scope, geographic scale, target audiences, basis for habitat delineations, etc. The IC decided on several things:

1) We are not going to produce “best management practices” but rather descriptions of “desired future conditions” as decision support tools. That is, we need to describe what the habitat should look like for, e.g., breeding Cerulean Warblers, rather than to try to describe how to produce such a habitat. The methods should be up to the land manager who should know best how to grow trees, thin shrubs, increase grass, etc. in a particular geographic area. The “how to” part might still be needed, say, for private landowners, but that should be a separate set of suggestions.

2) We need to design a database, really a multi-dimensional matrix with species, scale, and habitat conditions as the axes.

3) We should start with Watch List species and major habitat types within BCRs to see how it goes.

The PIF Science Committee has the lead (Ken Rosenberg, chair). Once this project gets underway, expert advice will be sought from all partners.

### ***Facilitate Site Visits on Bird Conservation Issues and Projects for Key Decision Makers (O2T10)***

The IC felt that this type of action must be carried out by partners at two levels.

1) Those with on-the-ground projects to demonstrate are in the best position to orchestrate a site visit and to determine who the invitees should be, and 2) NABCI, the Bird Conservation Alliance, the Bird Funding Coalition, and perhaps the Ornithological Council are in the best positions nationally (in the US at least) to select sites that may be particularly instructive for visits by key national leadership. This opinion will be conveyed to these partners.

### ***Regularly Organize Regional Meetings, Training, and Conferences Focusing on Specific Scientific Topics and Conservation Issues to Advance Bird Conservation (O2T14).***

The IC clearly felt that this was one of the best ways to continue to communicate PIF priorities, objectives, and goals to the broader conservation community. Two topics for future workshops emerged: 1) Further work on setting population and habitat objectives for conservation design, and 2) using a workshop setting to define and populate the matrix on desired future conditions (aka BMPs – see above).

### **Merging PIF and NABCI Federal Committees**

The PIF Federal Agency Committee and NABCI Federal Agency Subcommittee often have similar agenda items and, on paper at least, have identical membership. Thus, the PIF IC and PIF Council discussed a proposal to merge these committees. Although the IC recommended to not merge these committees, the PIF Council recommended a trial “joint meeting” this winter to see how it works. Anyone interested in the pros and cons of a merger or joint meeting should contact Terry Rich or another PIF Council member.

## **Wildlife Action Opportunities Fund.**

The Wildlife Conservation Society (<http://www.wcs.org/>) is pleased to announce a Request for Proposals (RFP) for grants under its newly created Wildlife Action Opportunities Fund. Made possible through the generosity of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the Wildlife Action Opportunities Fund will distribute \$2 million over the next two years to support 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organizations working to implement State Wildlife Action Plans in any of the 50 states or six U.S. territories. A second RFP for year two of the program will be announced in 2007.

Awards through the Wildlife Action opportunities Fund will be made in the range of \$20,000 to \$200,000. These grants will support projects that advance the implementation of State Wildlife Action Plans such as: projects that integrate State Wildlife Action Plan priorities with other land use planning efforts at the local, regional or national level; promote agency incentive programs that are focused on State Wildlife Action Plan priorities; implement policy changes that advance conservation priorities; involve pilot or demonstration landscape-scale habitat restoration or stewardship projects; publicize and raise the profile of State Wildlife Action Plans to the general public and decision makers; improve the existing Plans so as to better facilitate implementation (e.g., developing maps of focal conservation areas); help direct mitigation funds or environmental damage awards toward State Wildlife Action Plan priorities; or engage citizens in science projects that are linked to State Wildlife Action Plan priorities.

Funding priority will be placed on projects that are feasible and practical in 1-2 year time periods, are closely aligned with goals of State Wildlife Action Plans, involve multiple organizations, and may serve as models for conservation that can be replicated elsewhere. Please note that these funds cannot be used to support land acquisition or conservation easements, political lobbying and advocacy, or capacity building of organizations.

A full outline of the RFP process and the grant making priorities of the Wildlife Action Opportunities Fund is available at the program's web site <http://www.wcs.org/wildlifeopportunity>. A copy of the RFP is attached to this message as an MS Word document, as well. **The deadline for pre-proposals is 17 November 2006 at 5:00 PM Mountain Standard Time.**

All questions regarding this program or the RFP process should be directed to Wildlife Conservation Society Grants Program Officer Darren Long ([dlong@wcs.org](mailto:dlong@wcs.org)) at 406-522-9333 x103 or Craig Groves ([cgroves@wcs.org](mailto:cgroves@wcs.org)) at 406-522-9333 x109.

## **Nominations Open for WMI Awards**

Nominations may be submitted now for the Wildlife Management Institute's 2007 Touchstone and Presidents awards. These awards recognize exceptional professional

creativity, ingenuity and tenacity in developing programs that have advanced sound resource management and conservation in North America. Nominations can be for programs in any natural resource discipline.

The Presidents Award honors the division, department, office or program of a state, federal, provincial or other natural resource agency or institution. The Touchstone Award recognizes the achievement of a natural resource management program, professional or group of professionals in the public or private sector.

Nominations must include a letter that specifies (1) the name and mailing and email addresses of the prospective nominee(s), (2) the name and mailing and email addresses of the nominator(s), (3) a brief synopsis of the accomplishment, including its origin and dates, and (4) the names and phone numbers of three individuals who can give independent testimony about the value, scope and other merits of the achievement. The awards will be announced and presented at the 72nd North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference, which will be held in March 2007, at the Hilton Portland and Executive Towers Hotel in Portland, Oregon.

Nominations should be sent to: WMI Awards, Wildlife Management Institute, 1146 19th Street, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20036, or by email to [bmckown@wildlifemgt.org](mailto:bmckown@wildlifemgt.org) **by 1 December 2006**. For other information about the awards, including other previous awardees, go to <http://www.wildlifemanagementinstitute.org/pages/awards.html>.

### **Wyoming BMP Documents now Online**

We now have Best Management Practices documents up on the Wyoming Game & Fish Department's website <http://gf.state.wy.us/wildlife/nongame/index.asp>. These include: Keeping Birds in the Sagebrush Sea, Birds in Green Ribbons, and Growing Grassland Birds. Others will be added as they are completed in a stand-alone format.—Andrea Cerovski ([Andrea.Cerovski@wgf.state.wy.us](mailto:Andrea.Cerovski@wgf.state.wy.us))

### **NAWMP Assessment Available**

The North American Waterfowl Management Plan Continental Progress Report (<http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/NAWMP/files/DraftContAssess.pdf>) is out for review. This assessment is very well done and very forthcoming. All those interested in bird conservation should read this document to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of NAWMP and its implementation. This is the foundation for all the bird initiatives and deserves to be well understood. Comments are due 17 November. The PIF Council will be providing comments.

### **NABCI Monitoring Subcommittee Draft Interim Report**

The deadline to provide comments on *Opportunities for Improving North American Avian Monitoring* (<http://www.nabci-us.org/aboutnabci/avianmonitoringdraft906.pdf>) has been extended to 15 November. PIF will be providing comments through the PIF Monitoring Committee. As usual, all partners are encouraged to read the report and

comment as appropriate from the perspective of their organization. I think you will see that this report has done a nice job of smoothing over some earlier rough spots, and is moving the discussion down the road.

### **The Southern Wings Program**

In September 2005, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' Bird Conservation Committee (BCC) discussed the concept of conserving migratory bird species throughout their entire migration cycle. This concept forms the heart of the Flyway System—migratory waterfowl are a continental resource. While international partners are vital to migratory waterfowl conservation, they are also vital for other migratory bird species. The BCC asked a group of its members to start discussions with the States and their partners on how mechanism could be developed to facilitate international bird conservation partnerships in Latin America (Mexico, Central America, and South America) and the Caribbean. The partnerships would help conserve the states' priority migratory bird species during the eight months of the year when they have flown south for the winter to Latin America and the Caribbean.

Details on the program, including example projects underway by the American Bird Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, and The National Audubon Society, can be seen at [http://www.iafwa.org/allbird\\_LAC\\_projects.html](http://www.iafwa.org/allbird_LAC_projects.html).—Deb Hahn ([dhahn@fishwildlife.org](mailto:dhahn@fishwildlife.org))

### **Website of English-Spanish Glossary of Technical Terms**

This website site, entitled "English-Spanish Glossary of Technical Terms used in Ecology, Evolution, and Systematics, with Emphasis in Ornithology," has been developed over the past few years by C. Daniel Cadena, Lucio R. Malizia, Cintia Cornelius, and Juan Martínez. The website developers along with other contributors, are developing this glossary to help standardize Spanish translations for technical terms used in English biological literature. The web managers are requesting comments, criticisms, or suggestions, particularly about words you would like to see added to the glossary. Visit the glossary at (<http://biologyglossary.pbwiki.com>).—Chris Eberly ([ceberly@dodpif.org](mailto:ceberly@dodpif.org)).

### **Revised Rule: List of Migratory Birds (50 CFR 10.13)**

A proposed rule revising the list of migratory birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act was published on Thursday, 24 August, in Part III of the Federal Register. You may view the new list on line (<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20061800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2006/06-7001.htm>), or download the list as a pdf from (<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20061800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2006/pdf/06-7001.pdf>). The 60-day public comment period for this revised rule expired on 23 October 2006. Upon publication, the rule will be available for

downloading on the USFWS migratory bird's website.—John Trapp  
([john\\_trapp@fws.gov](mailto:john_trapp@fws.gov))

### **New WHSRN Website**

The Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) is pleased to announce the launch of its newly completed web site, ([www.whsrn.org](http://www.whsrn.org)). The primary goal of the web site is to build communications capacity to protect a vital chain of international ecosystems. A Spanish-language version of the site is under development. In addition to updated information about WHSRN and shorebirds, the site provides new opportunities for WHSRN Sites to tell their stories. Ten sites agreed to serve as pilot-sites for these opportunities. The website also features interactive Google Maps to browse satellite images of the network's 64 sites ([http://www.whsrn.org/google\\_map.php](http://www.whsrn.org/google_map.php)).—Iván Darío Valencia

### **New Important Bird Areas Search Tool**

Comprehensive information about IBAs is now available online through the IBA Search Tool (<http://iba.audubon.org/iba/siteSearch.do>). With this feature users can search for particular IBAs, based on species, state, conservation issues, habitat, land use, ownership, IBA criteria, site status, bird conservation region, area, and site name. This is a powerful new tool that will allow birders to find IBAs in a particular area or find particular species; and even more notably, it allows the conservation community to aggregate IBAs by threat, region, or other IBA characteristics in order to more easily plan conservation activities.—John Cecil ([jcecil@audubon.org](mailto:jcecil@audubon.org))

### **North Carolina Partners in Flight Web Site Revision**

The North Carolina Partners in Flight (NC PIF) web site has been reorganized and updated to provide for easier navigation. The NCPIF State Bird Plan has been refined, the research and monitoring summary document updated, and the NC PIF PowerPoint has been redone and is available for downloading. Click on (<http://faculty.ncwc.edu/mbrooks/pif>) to visit the site.—Mark Johns ([johnsme@mindspring.com](mailto:johnsme@mindspring.com))

### **New Look For Ohio Bird Conservation Initiative Website**

The Ohio Bird Conservation Initiative (OBCI) has a new website ([www.obcinet.org](http://www.obcinet.org)). You will find new information and links, and can browse through our history, goals, mission, as well as information about our committee chairs. You can also learn about bird conservation plans relevant to Ohio by visiting (<http://www.obcinet.org/plans/overview.html>). If you have any upcoming events please submit them with our new online form: (<http://www.obcinet.org/events/submitevent.html>).—Suzanne Cardinal ([coordinator@obcinet.org](mailto:coordinator@obcinet.org))

## **Idaho Birding Trail Complete**

I am pleased to announce that Idaho has now joined the cadre of states that host a state birding trail. Like Alabama, Kansas, Florida, Montana, Texas, Wisconsin and more, Idaho now promotes nature-based tourism opportunities in the form of premier birding spots throughout the state. The Idaho Birding Trail was developed by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game's nongame program with other state, federal, and private partners to promote opportunities for rural economic growth in the form of providing amenities to travelers who are birding, and to promote the conservation of bird and wildlife habitat to maintain the quality of life for Idahoans.

Four years in the making, the statewide trail is a network of sites and side-trips that provide the best viewing opportunities to see birds in Idaho. With 175 sites and about 2,000 miles of trail, the birding trail represents a collection of bird watching hotspots, diverse habitats, and a glimpse of Idaho's rich natural heritage. And 22 sites are designated as Blue Ribbon sites— "the best of the best" bird viewing opportunities in Idaho. The trail is a series of self-guided, auto-driven tours, lasting anywhere from an afternoon outing to a week-long expedition.

We have produced a 135-page guidebook with directions, descriptions and maps of every site on the trail. The guidebook is available for only \$5 by contacting Sara Focht ([sfocht@idfg.idaho.gov](mailto:sfocht@idfg.idaho.gov)). Although still under construction, you can also view the birding trail at [www.IdahoBirdingTrail.org](http://www.IdahoBirdingTrail.org).—Rex Sallabanks ([rsallabanks@idfg.idaho.gov](mailto:rsallabanks@idfg.idaho.gov))

## **Greater Sage-grouse Comprehensive Conservation Strategy**

The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies has released the Draft Greater Sage-grouse Comprehensive Conservation Strategy. The document is available for review on our website at [www.wafwa.org](http://www.wafwa.org). The public comment period will extend through November 17th. The document is 491 pages.—Larry L. Kruckenberg ([larry.kruckenberg@wgf.state.wy.us](mailto:larry.kruckenberg@wgf.state.wy.us))

## **MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES**

### **Southeast PIF Steering Committee**

The SE PIF Steering Committee will meet Saturday, 4 November from 1:00 pm to 5:30 pm at the SEAFWA meeting hotel, the Marriott Norfolk Waterside Hotel (in the James I-III room). A draft agenda and a summary of Southeast PIF highlights that will be presented to the SEAFWA directors at their business meeting on Tuesday, 7 November, are available from me.—Catherine Rideout ([cwrideout@agfc.state.ar.us](mailto:cwrideout@agfc.state.ar.us))

## **National Wind Coordinating Committee Meeting**

The National Wind Coordinating Committee (NWCC), Wildlife Research Meeting VI, will be held on November 14-15, 2006 in San Antonio, TX. The purpose of the workshop is to bring interested stakeholders up to date on research being conducted to understand the interaction of birds, bats, other wildlife, and their habitats with wind energy facilities; to examine what we've learned about ways to minimize and mitigate wind energy's adverse/undesirable impacts on wildlife and their habitats; and to identify gaps in knowledge and research needs. Questions or comments may be directed to Abby Arnold ([aarnold@resolv.org](mailto:aarnold@resolv.org)).—David Inouye ([inouye@umd.edu](mailto:inouye@umd.edu))

## **Fall 2006 NC Partners in Flight Meeting**

The next NC PIF meeting will be on 15 November 2006 at the Weymouth Center in Southern Pines, NC. The focus will be on *Sandhills Bird Conservation Efforts in NC*. Details are available at <http://faculty.ncwc.edu/mbrooks/pif/>.—Mark Johns ([johnsme@mindspring.com](mailto:johnsme@mindspring.com))

## **Wings Over Water Festival**

Now in its tenth year, the Wings Over Water festival has become the premier birding and nature festival of the Outer Banks of North Carolina. This event offers birding, paddling and natural history trips throughout eastern North Carolina. Registration materials and information about the 17-20 November 2006 festival have been posted at [www.wingsoverwater.org](http://www.wingsoverwater.org).

## **2007 National Bird Education Conference**

The location and dates for the 2007 National Bird Education Conference have been finalized. The conference will run from the afternoon of Monday, February 5<sup>th</sup> to the afternoon of Thursday, February 8<sup>th</sup> (note that an earlier version of the conference announcement had incorrect dates). Hosted by Flying WILD (<http://www.flyingwild.org/>), the conference will be held at The Crossings ([www.thecrossingsaustin.com](http://www.thecrossingsaustin.com)), a retreat center in Austin, Texas adjacent to the Balcones Canyon Land Preserve. Once the conference registration fee is determined, the Council for Environmental Education will distribute additional conference registration information.—Marc LeFebre ([marcLcee@aol.com](mailto:marcLcee@aol.com))

## **Bird Monitoring and Detectability Workshop**

The workshop, *Bird Monitoring and Detectability: Understanding and Applying Appropriate Methods*, will be held February 27 - March 1, 2007 in the Lory Student Center at Colorado State University in Fort Collins. Point counts and similar methods are often used for collecting data on presence/absence and abundance of birds. However, basic assumptions about detection probabilities

are often ignored, resulting in biased inference. Techniques exist, some recently developed, that explicitly address the issue of imperfect detectability. We will explore the theoretical basis, field design and application, and analytical considerations for Distance Sampling, Occupancy Models, Double-observer Sampling, and Removal Models in the context of bird monitoring. We will 1) address basic assumptions, problems with implementation, and benefits of the methods for sampling various types of avian species, 2) use examples from existing monitoring programs, and 3) maintain a geographic focus on Colorado, the southern Rocky Mountains and Great Plains for examples, although the general principles are widely applicable. Feel free to contact me with any questions.—David S. Klute ([David.Klute@state.co.us](mailto:David.Klute@state.co.us))

### **Next National PIF Committee Meetings**

The next PIF Implementation Committee meetings will be held in Portland, OR on 18-19 March 2007. As usual, these will occur immediately prior to the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference which will be held at the Hilton Portland and Executive Tower Hotel in Portland (<http://www.wildlifemanagementinstitute.org/pages/main.html>). IC meeting details will be distributed via the IC listserv as they are developed.

### **VIII Neotropical Ornithological Congress, Venezuela**

We are pleased to invite you to attend the VIII Neotropical Ornithological Congress in Maturin, Venezuela, 13-19 May 2007. The congress is being hosted by the Neotropical Ornithological Society (NOS) and the Venezuelan Ornithological Union (UVO). Watch for details on the NOS web site <http://www.neotropicalornithology.org/> and on various PIF listservs.

PIF has had 3 workshop proposals accepted: 1) Better Delineating Winter Ranges of Nearctic-Neotropical Migrants, 2) The Potential Value of the PIF Species Assessment Process in South America, and 3) the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act. We look forward to your participation in this meeting.—Patricia Escalante ([tilmatura@ibiologia.unam.mx](mailto:tilmatura@ibiologia.unam.mx)) and Carlos Bosque ([carlosb@usb.ve](mailto:carlosb@usb.ve)).

### **The Wildlife Society - Tucson 2007**

The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of The Wildlife Society will be held in Tucson, AZ on 22-26 September 2007 (<http://www.wildlife.org/conference/index.cfm>). With the support of the TWS Biological Diversity Working Group, PIF has submitted a proposal for a symposium on how the conservation of priority bird species contributes to the conservation of biodiversity. If accepted, we will rely on a series of fairly species case-study presentations to support the premise. If you have not already been contacted to present in this symposium but believe you

have a strong presentation on this topic, please contact Terry Rich ([terry\\_rich@fws.gov](mailto:terry_rich@fws.gov))

#### **4<sup>th</sup> International Partners in Flight Conference**

The 4<sup>th</sup> International PIF Conference will be held 13-16 February 2008, at the McAllen Convention Center in McAllen, Texas with the theme – Tundra to Tropics. See more above and watch the PIF listservs for more details as they develop.–Terry rich ([terry\\_rich@fws.gov](mailto:terry_rich@fws.gov))

#### **NEWS OF PEOPLE**

##### **Kim Kreitinger Moves to America's Dairyland**

Kim Kreitinger, after serving as the California PIF Coordinator for 3 years, has moved back to her Midwestern homeland. Kim is now working for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources as the Monitoring Coordinator for avian flu surveillance. She plans to continue to be active within the PIF scene in the Midwest region.

Kim's new contact information is as follows:

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Science Operations Center  
2801 Progress Rd.  
Madison, WI 53716-3339  
([kimberly.kreitinger@dnr.state.wi.us](mailto:kimberly.kreitinger@dnr.state.wi.us))

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The next newsletter will be issued on 1 January 2007. Items are due 15 December 2006 to Terry Rich ([terry\\_rich@fws.gov](mailto:terry_rich@fws.gov)). The PIF Newsletter is assembled by Jina Mariani and Terry Rich.