

**Introduction of Business plan, discussion of process and plan.**

- To be used for fundraising purposes, mainly to cover ongoing operational costs.
- Activities pulled up from sub-committee work plans.
- Research included, but not future research needs. Ask for approval, with acknowledgment there will be need for future revisions.
- Katie Koch moves to approve, Shawn Graff seconds.
- Steering Committee votes unanimously to approve.

**Keith Kintigh – Breeding Range sub-committee update**

***Manage habitat for minimum 1300 breeding pairs.***

- Trend of ten-year acreage management. Total acres are decreasing for MI-DNR and Huron-Manistee NF.
- On the DNR side, this is a reflection of challenges with the chip market. Natural gas is cheap, co-gen plants are declining.
  - DNR has 5,637 acres in some stage of treatment – sales wrapping up or ready for planting. Low for several years, but 2019 will be a big planting year.
- Kim Piccolo, HMNF – big trend with HMNF is that big fire in 2010 caused reduction in active acres. That's starting to ramp back up.
  - Inclusion of wildfire acres gets the HMNF close to goal, but reliant on wildfire acres.
  - Goal of 1600 acres, but don't have the capacity to do that. Bird density suggests they don't really need to do that many acres.
  - Looked at occupancy/duration and come up with a new proposed objective of 1211 acres, with 25% at non-traditional/experimental habitat. Goal of 630 singing males won't change on HMNF.
  - 10-year average is 15.7 acres per singing male and a 10.2-year occupancy. Calculating that anything managed experimentally will need twice as much acreage per singing male.
  - HMNF did one Rx fire a few years ago. One small wildfire on DNR lands (120 acres)
- Chris Mensing, USFWS: Bird density is giving the green light to reduce acreage. What happens if the numbers start to decline, can we reaccelerate in time before a population impact hits?
  - Phil Huber, HMNF: We project there will be a drop off after those fire acres age out. We expect that we'll be down to around 630 pairs, the minimum is 420 pairs.
  - White paper suggests we need 33,000 acres of available habitat. We built these goals, but a lot of the conditions have changed since then.
- Dan Eklund, Chaumegon NF in Wisconsin: We have the luxury of ramping up if we start to get more birds.
  - The state and counties have been quickly producing acres.
  - Price of timber is the structural challenge. We're still waiting for the birds to make decisions about where they want to live long term, beyond Adams County and Marinette County.

- Davin Lopez, WI-DNR: Marinette County has done some good work on county forest land.
- Paul Thompson – Hiawatha NF: Numbers of acres are down, which is reflected of the NF managing more hardwood forests.
  - Signing some agreements on new outwash plain sites.

### ***Jack Pine management for marketability***

- Experimenting primarily with:
  - Rotation Length
  - Red pine interplanting
  - Natural regen
  - Tree spacing
- Dr. David Rothstein at MSU has been doing some research on rotation lengths.
  - Nutrient limitation not an issue, but whole tree harvesting may not be sustainable over multiple rotations.
- 20 year for biomass or 30 for pulpwood is the maximization of value.
- DNR working with Dr. Rothstein on two experimental projects:
  - Pre-commercial thinning could assist in the marketability/growth rates.
  - Stocking density project – in the short term, look at variability of density on existing plots. Work with Cooper to compare nest productivity against these results.

### ***Restoring and maintaining other rare natural features within the KW Management Areas.***

- Sara Siekierski: FWS does manage sites that are no longer active KW habitat for other species.

### ***Evaluating and implementing management goals outside the core breeding range***

- New recommended goal of 200 pairs, up from 100 pairs. This will be reflected in the update to the conservation plan.
  - Next step is figuring out where the habitat management potential is across the landscape. Looking at sites in MI, WI, and MN – jack pine-dominated outwash sites.
  - Will be using Landfire dataset from the USFS to look for these sites.
  - This will produce a dataset that, along with the ON version, will help catalogue lands, ownership, state of lands, etc.
  - Will look to develop comprehensive set of lands and BMPs to use on these sites.

### ***Cowbird control and evaluation***

- Nathan Cooper, Smithsonian MBC – KW fledgling production was increased with institution of cowbird control program.
- Currently parasitism is down to below 1%, from above 70%.
- Program placed 50 traps on the landscape, which costs \$110,000. Research initiated to explore if necessary to continue trapping.
- USFWS funded evaluation of reducing trapping. How do changes affect populations of KW?
  - 2015-2016 = closed 12 traps

- 2017 = closed 7 more traps
- 2018 = closed all traps in anticipation of delisting
- 2015-2018 results: Found 514 nests, only 4 parasitized.
- Detected just 20 cowbirds in 234 point counts on the landscape in this 3-year-span.
- Cowbird populations are declining in Michigan, regionally and nationwide. Concluded that for now, it's safe to suspend trapping.
- Paper summarizing this has been accepted by Wildlife Management with a few minor revisions.
- Monitoring plan needed to make sure we're on top of cowbird trends.
  - 2019-2020 = GLFWRA funding to do monitoring
  - 2021 and beyond = Uncertain funding
  - 2018-2020 cowbird monitoring (every 10 days in May and June)
- Also exploring use of automated audio recording devices to record cowbird presence.
- Key Questions:
  - How can we achieve these same survey results with fewer people and resources?
  - How best to monitor the situation?
  - How much parasitism can be withstood?
  - How do we know when to turn control activities "back on"?
  - How are cowbird abundance and parasitism related? Don't know, because parasitism rates have been so low. So it's unclear how much monitoring is necessary.
- KW Monitoring – FWS staff are also monitoring KWs while they're out looking for cowbirds.
  - Use point counts to get estimates using density relative to overall habitat size.
  - Compare results of Point Counts, ARUs (recording devices) and a traditional census to see if it's possible to get an estimate at minimal cost.
  - Need to develop a better understanding of current costs to determine efficiency.
- Carol Bocetti: May run into some issues doing point counts in high-density stands.
  - Wisconsin may have some interesting data on cowbirds in their warbler stands because their cowbird abundance is higher.

### ***Maintaining a list of research priorities for the breeding range***

- Kintigh: Put this up here as an invitation to discuss this.
- Bocetti: The existing overall list of research needs will need to be parsed and farmed out to the sub-committee to be prioritized. Seems to make sense to subcommittees. Will need to update every two years.
- Literature database – Dept. of Defense built a literature database related to KW that was on a site no longer available.
  - Plan was to link it to the KWCT website, but that's up in the air.
  - Mike Petrucha has the actual literature files, Rich at DOD may be working to migrate that old site to a new url.
  - Follow up:
    - 1) Ensure the archive that holds the materials
    - 2) Check in with Rich that we know what's up with this

### ***PIF/Timber Industry partnership discussion in October***

- Henning Stebbins: Connection to both PIF and National Alliance of Forest Owners (NAFO)

- Possible follow up steps: share the business plan with the Partners in Flight steering community
- NAFO and SFI partnership – want to test SFI management concept on private lands. Money and interest in managing forests on private lands. Bill Rapai is also talking to NAFO about the KW video.
- Other collaborations discussed:
  - 1) Develop approaches to lower re-gen costs
  - 2) Improve marketability of timber through interplanting, adjacency planting, extending rotation length, pre-commercial thinning, etc.
  - 3) Biomass/co-gen boiler sustainability
  - 4) USFS/DNR planning efficiency from a mill procurement standpoint
  - 5) Endowment contributions and communication
  - 6) KIWA conservation success story – integrate forest industries on public education, the role of timber, working forests, small private landowner education
- Dan Kennedy: How do we go to the forest industry instead of asking them to come to us?
- Keith Kintigh: I think the real opportunity is for industry to get some positive PR and be seen as a conservation partner.

### **Non-breeding Update:**

Winter habitat management – Dave Ewert

- Maintain utility rights of ways; Ewert spoke to BEC supervisor for Eleuthera, Cat, Long and San Salvador in 2018.
  - BEC is maintaining rights of way without pesticides and will continue to manage in a way that likely benefits KWs.
- Habitat management on goat farms –
  - Local farmer Symonette relayed that he’s working on spreading ungulate farming in south Eleuthera.
  - Eight new pastures in the last few years.
  - Bradley Watson and Scott Johnson will be able to monitor that work and determine expansion potential
- Bradley Watson – Funded for one year by ABC donor with potential for more.
  - Already working on following projects:
    - Participated in survey finding 2 KWs on Andros.
    - Will be on Cat Island in a few days to work with Smithsonian research project.
- Nathan Cooper shared results from *Endangered Species Research* paper:
  - 27 tracked geolocator males
  - 471 hours of winter surveys
  - 86 eBird detections
- Range stretches throughout the Bahamas, includes Cuba, Turks and Caicos, but Central Bahamian islands are most critical and most often used.
- 82 of 84 eBird detections were in scrub vegetation.
- Eight detections on “Pine” islands, with just one found in actual pine forest.

- Research confirms focus efforts on central Bahamian scrub islands and continue to examine these questions:
  - How much scrub habitat is available?
  - Is wintering habitat limiting?
  - Could it become limiting in the future due to climate change?

### **Human Dimensions Sub-committee presentation**

Work plan aligned around:

- 1) Awareness – Why?
  - 2) Engagement – How to participate? Build skills.
  - 3) Action – Go and do (i.e. advocacy, volunteer, etc.)
- Need to leave people with a message of what they can do – get to Action stage. Subcommittee is developing a framework for what people can begin to do.
  - KW Video, Bill Rapai: To be played at Hartwick Pine, elsewhere, for tours, educational programs. Last version from 1990s.
    - \$10,000 from Morley, \$5,000 from Alliance board, hoping for another grant to come through.
  - Forestry for Michigan Birds, Katie Koch – Coalition working on platform to tie silviculture practices to bird outcomes. ABC involved with others.
    - ID top 20-25 species in Michigan in need of conservation action, OR birds where we hold 25% of the breeding population. Aiming to bring together conservations and silviculturists. Three main goals:
      - 1) Identify conservation needs
      - 2) Identify priority birds
      - 3) Identify most common forest community types and BMPs applied
    - Integrate forestry and conservation at the individual stand scale. Toolkits, videos, workshops. Will be a way to plug the information from this group into a broader resource/audience.
    - Looking at Vermont toolkit for loggers, landowners, contract foresters, etc.
    - Scheduled to have a second meeting on April 10 to vet forestry needs and plans with loggers, landowners and silviculturists.
  - School Forests update, Emily Vogelsang, Huron Pines:
    - 300 acres of school-held forests within Michigan KW breeding range.
    - Working to engage students in management of forests for KW at their schools. Grayling will be first school forest engagement within the KW core range. Huron Pines will lead this.

- Americorps School outreach program, Kim Piccolo:
  - We're getting more buy-in from teachers as we adjust program to meet school standards. Interest in Americorps outreach program has been increasing as a result. IE, 300 more students this year than last year.
- Emily Pomerantz with DNR, handles social science research needs and has been in conversation with the KWCT sub-committee for about 6 months.
  - Identify changes, outcomes, assumptions to develop research needs to explore within the work of the other two subcommittees.

Guest presenter, Diane Doberneck – Associate Director of National Collaborative on University Engagement at MSU

- Conducted Outreach and engagement training with DNR wildlife division. Getting drawn more into engagement work if you're working in natural resources and conservation.
- Presentation on reciprocity, "Adaptive co-management" with community partners and stakeholders.
- Some stakeholders are closer to the work than others. Develop project/program with these degrees of partnership in mind.
  - Collaboration: Bi-directional flow of information and influence. Knowledge is shared. Not involving the public or community partners. (i.e., Conservation team, peer organizations work on mutual outcomes)
  - Outreach: Knowledge and information shared out to other individuals and groups (IE, school groups, tours, legislator outreach, etc.)
  - Engagement: Two-way exchange, identify goals and share ideas and information with community partners. More time intensive, more likely to occur with long-term partners. Need different techniques. (i.e., bringing community members in to work on a project, actually listening)
- Discussion followed about how to move communication from a position of outreach to engagement.
  - This process goes awry when you are working at cross purposes from the people you are trying to engage.
  - Don't promise one thing and deliver something else.
  - There is a carryover effect where people walk into engagement already mad.
  - Outcomes and value increase as you move closer to the "Engage" side of the continuum. Sustained behavior changes are more likely to be tied to engagement.
  - Techniques need to fit more closely with specific target audience.

## Day 2 – Monitoring Update

- Dan Kennedy to bring statistician together to meet with KW monitoring ad hoc committee in the next 2-4 weeks.
- Post delisting monitoring plan
  - Delisting working through USFWS process; no date set for decision yet

- No threats determined to lead to extinction
- Goal of post delisting monitoring plan
  - Not less than 5 years for post delisting monitoring
  - Must be able to determine that threats won't lead to extinction
  - Will be 12 years of post delisting monitoring with KW because of time to create habitat
  - Specific monitoring purposefully vague
  - Every 4 yrs full population census; partial census every 2 yrs
  - Need to use techniques that allow direct comparison between pre- and post-delisting
  - No formal report required from monitoring efforts; Conservation Team is mechanism to report results
  - Carol would like stronger language implying longer-term monitoring (beyond 12 years) so that the KW delisting effort, a model for other potential delisting for other conservation reliant spp, is stated strongly enough to ensure there is sufficient monitoring.

#### **KW Conservation Team coordinator**

- Shawn will cover for immediate future
- Need Conservation Coordinator based on ad-hoc committee meeting
- Covered key points for next steps to hire coordinator
- Group at large generally agreeable with outline described by Shawn
- Need to consider alternative if no money can't be raised – what is fall-back if no or partial funding (Phil Huber)?

#### **Web site (Katie Koch)**

- New leader: Dan Trudeau, Davin Lopez, WI USFWS staff member (Trina)
- Early July make minor modifications.
- Broader changes could be made thereafter
- \$150 fee to maintain site –annually.
- 220+ hits in 1 week to the site; few donations; 1063 hits in 1 month.

#### **Funding update**

DNR endowment summary from Dan Kennedy

- To be used for cowbirds first, may be applied to other management if not needed for cowbirds
- Waiting on decisions from us to decide whether cowbirds will continue. If not, endowment investments can be made more aggressively. It's been a little while, but if cowbirds aren't needed, it can be placed toward other priorities.
  - Some funds may be able to be invested more aggressively while another portion can be used to generate revenue for spending.
  - We may also be able to use Section 6 funding from the FWS to fund cowbird program and keep the endowment growing over time.

- Can still spend Section 6 on a delisted species because it has a post-delisting monitoring plan.

#### **KW Alliance endowment update (Bill Rapai)**

- Approximately \$5000-6000 balance. Invested in a CD.
- A few new funds incoming will be added when CD matures. Exploring investment of those funds at NEMCF.

#### **KW Partners Fund/Endowment (Shawn Graff)**

- Business plan lays out \$7m goal for endowment
- Goal to build a board made up of high capacity donors, planned gifts and connections.
  - Good donors from the past, can open doors to other funders.
- Advisory board would take recommendations from the KWCT about what the largest needs are and make allocations based on those recommendations.
- Approval from steering committee for concept – next step to engage partner organizations.
- Discussion of supporting organization vs. contract/agreement/trust model.
- Development staff would need to keep the advisory board apprised of what funds are available, how they are earmarked, and -which priorities need to be addressed.
  - Carol: How do the KWCT recommendations get included into the expenditures?
  - Shawn: We'd put some language into the charter for the organization that includes that language.
  - Provide regular reports to the steering committee – hopefully at the fall 2019 meeting we can give you a report on what the other partners are saying and what specifically is available.
  - Abby: The other thing to note is that we have a Business Plan to guide this, and the KWCT have already put a lot of work in developing that structure.

#### **KW Alliance fund raising**

- Meeting with Rewild Michigan; DTE Energy Foundation; potential donors in Traverse City. Presentation to be made to Audubon Society in Tawas.

#### **ABC fund raising (Dan Trudeau)**

- Successful requests
  - Funding Avian ecologist for BNT
  - USFS International Program – Bahamas work
  - NFWF – UP forester to work on jack pine private land management
  - Kalamazoo Audubon - \$1000
- Not successful
  - Betty Peterson fund (Birds Caribbean)
  - NFWF – ID private parcels for KW in WI, UP
  - Caribbean Biodiversity Fund
    - Climate change focus

- Pending proposals listed
  - ZEISS, INC., GLFWRA Motus project, Southern Wings
- Projected proposals listed
  - NMBCA, Betty Peterson, NRCS-RCPP for jack pine in UP, WI

#### **Delisting plans (Dan Kennedy)**

- Celebration event
  - MI governor, US senators, heads of USFWS, USFS targeted to attend; in northern MI; get high-level recognition of delisting to get state, national, global recognition. DNR director likes “run of show” – outline of event. DNR director takes to governor. Time period somewhere in 2-week time period from end of May through end of June. Media blast. Invite members of KW Conservation Team.
  - Tie separate KW Conservation Team event with high-level event **or** at some other time (e.g., KW Festival – Home Opener). Piggy back this event with major event. Dan suggested that ABC, KW Alliance take lead on organizing the second event.
  - Consider dinner, funding raising event, poster
  - Keith: Hard to design second event in time frame required. May need a separate event at a later date.
  - Dan K. DNR staff member, Vicki Brown, organizes large events. Perhaps fall meeting. Perhaps associated with fall KW Conservation Team meeting.
  - KW Conservation Team celebration – time and format to be decided.
  - By April 9. Sub-group to decide when KW Conservation Team celebration to be held. Discussion to follow at Steering Committee level.

#### **KW Alliance updates (Bill Rapai)**

- Most important, strategic planning process
- Raising money for video, executive director
- Build relationships with higher level agency officials
- Tour KW nesting grounds with VIPs

#### **Recovering America’s Wildlife Act update (Dan Kennedy)**

- Allocate \$1.3 billion/yr to rare species to support State Wildlife Action Plans
- Dingell is co-sponsor.
- Will be national campaign – target specific strategies for each congressman to support the proposed legislation; members of national resources committee; members of other committees; grass roots efforts at state-level. MI DNR can convey information through brochures for distribution to partners who can advocate for this act.
- Would bring \$31 million to MI annually. Requires 25% match from state.
- Working to get support from governors, state legislatures (e.g., Resolution of support from natural resource committee of MI Senate, letters of support from scientists)

- Oil and gas extraction lease income would be source of funds (from federal lands); currently funds are not dedicated to a particular budget item but are discretionary.
  - Some environmental groups don't like connection to oil and gas source of revenue.
  - No language specifying that \$ spent on federally listed species.
  - Focus on species listed in state wildlife action plans.
  - State match can come from some federal funds (not DOI or one other federal source); or match from others receiving funds through the state grants.
- MI DNR developing fact sheet. KW would be a focus of fact sheet along with sturgeon.
- Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies is a major supporter of this effort.
- Act would need to be renewed, perhaps in 10 yrs
- Consumers Energy is among those asking how they can help.
- Reversing the Wildlife Crisis – publication that provides background information in support of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act – available online.

#### **KW Festival**

- May 31 is Home Opener at local nature center
- June 1 is KW Festival
- 400-500 people attend

#### **Huron Pines**

- May 4 jack pine planting day; some corporate participants
- Commended KW Alliance