

## Partners in Flight Eastern Working Group

### Science Delivery Team Framework

June 23, 2020

#### *Purpose:*

The Science Delivery Team (SDT) aims to promote bird conservation in eastern North America by facilitating a coordinated and science-based approach to management on both private and public lands. At present, attaining this goal is complicated by a profusion of best management practices (BMPs) and similar guidelines, varying public perception of habitat management, and limited capacity to implement management on the ground. Thus, to ensure that the best scientific information speaks to and is used by the people actively trying to improve bird habitat, we need a structure that serves two disparate but linked main purposes: **a synthesis of available science that is easy to understand and an efficient mechanism for conveying this science to managers and landowners.**

Stakeholders targeted by this effort include a) land managers, b) landowners, c) policy makers, and d) the scientific community. Examples include entities working at multiple scales, from single landowners and local land trusts to state, provincial, regional (e.g., Joint Ventures), and federal agencies (e.g., NRCS, USGS, USFS), NGOs, and certification groups. Any combination of these is meant when the term “stakeholders” is used later in this document.

#### *Team Members:*

Shawn Graff (ABC) (Team Chair), Natalie Savioe (CWS), Amy Tegeler (SC DNR), Angie Larsen-Gray (NCASI), Amber Roth (GWWA Working Group), Rich Bailey (WV DNR), Amanda Duren (AMJV), Ron Rohrbaugh (Audubon PA), Sara Barker (CLO), Pam Hunt (NH Audubon), Becky Stewart (CWS), John Cornutt (USFS), Ian Fife (Birds Canada)

#### *Products and Results*

There are two somewhat parallel tracks that need to be developed concurrently for the SDT’s overarching goal to be met:

1) Create a compilation of relevant research, guidelines, BMPs, and other documents that provide information on management practices that benefit birds and their habitats. Beyond serving as simply a “clearinghouse,” this compilation will need additional attention to ensure it can be easily used and accessed by those desiring or implementing management activities.

Specifically:

- a. Identify commonalities among prescriptions for disparate species or species groups

- b. Identify gaps in current prescriptions (e.g., do they account for geographic variation or were they created for a specific state/province or region)
  - c. To help managers reconcile potentially conflicting recommendations, identify research needs for adaptive management (this in conjunction with manager input)
  - d. Make sure there is a common management language used throughout (e.g., that any forester could understand)
  - e. Cross-reference materials with geography (e.g., so GWWA management doesn't happen where the species doesn't occur)
  - f. Put all the above, plus underlying habitat groups (e.g., forest, shrubland, grassland) into some sort of matrix that allows for "one-stop shopping"
- 2) Develop an outreach and engagement strategy for key target audiences of land managers that impact migratory birds and bird habitat. This strategy should incorporate the following more specific objectives:
- a. Make landowners and managers aware of the important role that healthy bird populations can play in maintaining a healthy working landscape (e.g., birds as pollinators, as indicators of forest health, birds as pest control from various insect outbreaks) and the economic benefits of maintaining bird diversity that supports this health.
  - b. Make landowners aware of potential tools to assist in managing the working landscape and in helping them comply with regulations, guidelines, and certification standards. Work directly with industry (forestry, agriculture) to address their needs and questions related to competing priorities, multi-species approaches, different management scales etc.
  - c. Introduce the "BMP" compilation (Item 1, above) and explain how to use it
  - d. Include a mechanism to incorporate recognition of additional landowner objectives (e.g., timber or hay income) if birds are not their only concern
  - e. Acknowledge the need for outreach to non-target audiences (general public) and make the team's products available to partners working more directly with those audiences.
- 3) Identify financial and technical assistance programs to support landowners and managers when making smart decisions about their management practices with birds in mind.
- a. Identify technical assistance resources, programs, and networks for managers and landowners (e.g., NRCS, USGS, Joint Ventures, easements, etc.)
  - b. Summarize potential sources of funds (e.g., NRCS) that might facilitate management actions.
  - c. Make connections with federal assistance programs like the Farm Bill
  - d. Summarize certification programs that may provide further incentives to bird-friendly habitat management (e.g., SFI, FSC, Tree Farm program)

***Process:***

*Task List:*

- 1) Identify resource needs and resource gaps
  - a. Identify stakeholder and partner constituencies not currently at the table and invite representatives to join the team
  - b. Get input from planners and practitioners before going too far in creating products (e.g., use an Open Standards process)
- 2) Identify resources to help with implementation:
- 3) Develop communication strategy to disseminate information to stakeholders
- 3) Develop information delivery system to disseminate information
- 4) Develop action plan for 2020

**Timeframes:**

The Team will complete the Framework and action plan by May 1, 2020.

Action on other objectives will begin during this time as capacity allows, and begin in earnest once the Framework is finalized.

**Supporting Resources:**

To be determined

**Communication:**

The SDT chair will attend Leadership Team conference calls and meetings to provide updates and receive input from the group. The SDT chair will convene monthly team meeting for the first six months of 2020 and then bi-monthly (or as needed) thereafter.

***Approval:** All Team Frameworks will be reviewed and endorsed by the Leadership Team of the Eastern Working Group.*

Endorsed by EWG Leadership Team on: \_\_\_\_\_