



California Partners in Flight
Working Together for the Conservation of California's Landbird Habitats

EXECUTIVE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

November 15, 2004

Location: Sacramento Radisson Hotel

ATTENDEES:

John Alexander (Klamath Bird Observatory), Bob Altman (American Bird Conservancy), Jon Bart (U.S. Geological Survey), Lyann Comrack (California Department of Fish and Game), Dan Cooper (Audubon California), Cali Crampton (UN-Reno), Geoffrey Geupel (PRBO Conservation Science), Jessica Griffiths (Ventana Wilderness Society), Aaron Holmes (PRBO Conservation Science), Sherry Hudson (San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory), Kim Kreitinger (PRBO Conservation Science), Barbara Kus (U.S. Geological Survey), Ed Lorentzon (U.S. Bureau of Land Management), Bill Merkel (Golden Gate National Recreation Area), Sherri Miller (U.S. Forest Service), C.J. Ralph (U.S. Forest Service), John C. Robinson (U.S. Forest Service), Debra Schlafmann (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), Bob Stafford (California Department of Fish and Game), Dan Strait (U.S. Fish and Wildlife), Steve Zack (Wildlife Conservation Society)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Thanks to Bob Shaffer and the Bureau of Reclamation, 1,000 copies of Version 2.0 of the **Riparian Bird Conservation Plan** are being printed. Hardcopies are now available. Please contact Kim Kreitinger for copies.
- Reviewers are still needed for the Sagebrush Bird Conservation Plan. If you are interested in being a reviewer, contact Kim Kreitinger or Aaron Holmes (aholmes@prbo.org).
- The fall edition of **Flight Log**, the semiannual newsletter of Partners in Flight, is now available for downloading on the CalPIF web site. This version contains articles from several presenters at the Starr Ranch meeting in August 2004 with a focus on coastal scrub and chaparral conservation and management. Thanks to funding from California Department of Fish and Game and U.S. Forest Service, hardcopies of Flight Log will now be distributed to every major land management agency in the state. Contact Kim Kreitinger if you would like to be on the mailing list.
- Kim Kreitinger reminded the Steering Committee about the fact sheet idea from the Starr Ranch meetings. These fact sheets define how each of the agencies and organizations within the Executive Steering Committee has contributed to CalPIF and identify what still needs to be accomplished. To date, NRCS, Ventana Wilderness Society, and Audubon California have contributed to this effort. Their fact sheets can be viewed on the web site at:
<http://www.prbo.org/calpif/committees.html>



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- Dan Cooper announced that a new biologist, Becky Stewart, has been hired for the Starr Ranch Sanctuary.

Western Working Group Meeting Update

John Robinson, John Alexander, Myrnie Mayville, and Geoff Geupel from the CalPIF Steering Committee attended the October 2004 PIF Western Working Group (WWG) meeting in Pacific City, OR. This was a joint meeting with the shorebird and waterbird initiatives. For the PIF sessions, several presentations were given on local landbird conservation projects. The majority of the meeting focused on establishing population and habitat objectives. Contact Kim Kreitinger if you wish to receive a copy of the notes from this meeting.

Agency Integration Committee Update

Dan Strait had one item to report to the Steering Committee. He reported on a meeting organized by the Agency Integration Committee that was held in September in Sacramento. Members of CalPIF met with a group of Forest Service biologists representing several Sierra Nevada Forests who were seeking input from CalPIF on their current effort to review and revise their list of Management Indicator Species. CalPIF members reviewed the list of species and made recommendations on what bird species should be added or removed from the list to better represent the various biological communities in the Forests. Meeting attendees also talked about how CalPIF and the Forests could better coordinate on bird habitat management, improved monitoring and other issues, and how CalPIF can provide further technical assistance to the Forests.

IAFWA Coordinated Bird Monitoring Report

Jon Bart gave an update on the national Comprehensive Bird Monitoring plan that he has been developing. The Plan is intended to improve coordination among bird monitoring programs and insure that results can be combined across regions. Preparation of the Plan has been endorsed by the US NABCI Committee, the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the US Partners in Flight Council, and the Shorebird Council. A NABCI Steering Committee comprised of representatives from state and federal agencies recently evaluated this process and approach to coordinated bird monitoring in a report titled "Monitoring Avian Conservation: Rationale, Design, and Coordination." In their evaluation, the Steering Committee strongly supported management-driven monitoring, but was more critical of "surveillance" or trend monitoring.

Many in the bird conservation community feel that management-driven and surveillance monitoring are of equal importance. Therefore, many of the bird conservation initiatives, including national PIF, along with NGOs in the bird conservation community are drafting response letters to the NABCI report. Geoff Geupel and John Alexander agreed to draft letters on behalf of their organizations, PRBO Conservation Science and Klamath Bird Observatory respectively. Additionally, California Department of Fish and Game will be writing a response letter on behalf of California. Comments are due by December 1, 2004.



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California Partners in Flight Decision-making Document

The CalPIF Decision-making Document outlines situations where CalPIF can participate in advocacy for legislation, funding bills, or other potentially political issues and is intended to be used by the Executive Steering Committee. Three categories were outlined in the original version of this document: 1) providing scientific, technical, or other expert assistance; 2) advocating for, supporting, opposing, or otherwise taking formal positions on legislation; 3) lobbying.

Kim Kreitinger summarized her discussion with the national PIF Implementation Committee about this document. The general consensus was that the committee strongly supported our desire to provide technical information/assistance to agencies and organizations and they were impressed with the work that we have already done in this regard. Regarding Category 2, there was a general fear that advocating would jeopardize the foundation of Partners in Flight (the partnerships) and that our past avoidance of advocacy is part of our success as an initiative. Even by designating the NGO members as the advocates, and explicitly stating this in any letters, the committee felt that this was still too risky. The same fear carried over to Category 3. They were unanimously unsupportive of CalPIF or any PIF groups lobbying under the umbrella of PIF. They suggested that we leave the lobbying up to other groups.

The outcome of the Implementation Committee meeting does not preclude CalPIF from providing technical advice as we have done in the past, or from touting the successes/accomplishments of certain funding measures, inferring that we are supportive of that particular measure. Dan Strait, the author of this document and Chair of the Agency Integration Committee, suggested removing the lobbying section from the document and rewording the second category, so that it is not “advocating,” but informing legislators about issues important to CalPIF. Dan will incorporate these suggested changes and send to the Executive Steering Committee for one final review.

OR/WA/CA Joint Statewide PIF meeting

The Steering Committee discussed the topic and venue of the next statewide CalPIF meeting, which will be a joint meeting with OR/WA PIF and CalPIF. This will likely be a two day meeting in Ashland, OR in early April. The focus of the meeting will be coniferous forest conservation, concentrating on the Klamath bioregion. The first day will provide an overview of coniferous forest planning documents, the need to establish quantifiable habitat and population objectives, and the applicability of these objectives for biologists and land managers. The second day will provide a more in-depth discussion on the process of setting quantitative objectives.