

Integrated Wildlife Management: Western Working Group

Moderated by **Beaumont C. McClure¹**

This session, attended by 90-100 people, focused on current wildlife management practices in the West, how they conflict with neotropical migratory bird conservation, and possible solutions for resolving these conflicts.

About 20 minutes were devoted to "brainstorming", where the audience identified 17 reasons why conflicts were occurring. They then voted on their two top priorities; the following four conflicts, listed in order of concern, received the most votes.

- **Lack of commitment by agencies to incorporate neotropical migratory birds in current wildlife management practices.** Game species receive most attention even though neotropical migratory birds may be better indicators of whether ecosystem goals are being met. Several people pointed out that this concern is a generalization, and that even though this is a problem, there are specific instances where neotropical migratory birds are being given due consideration.
- **Lack of time and money to do the work that needs to be done.** There is a great interest and enthusiasm in neotropical migratory bird conservation, but actions are limited by lack of time and money.
- **Continuing emphasis on single-species management, and a failure by agencies to recognize the need to manage functions and processes of entire ecosystems.**
- **Lack of data on neotropical migratory birds and their habitats in the West.** Managers must continue to make resource management decisions on a daily basis, and the severe lack of data in the West means these decisions do not have the benefit of information that would indicate population trends, habitat needs, or other relevant facts.

The audience then identified three possible solutions for resolving these four highest concerns. **First**, top concerns should be provided as feedback to *signatory agencies and organizations* in Partners in Flight. **Second**, more public support for Partners in Flight needs to be recruited. The informed public would then be expected to help generate funding source momentum and increased consideration for the program. **Third**, all Partners in Flight need to sell the benefits of neotropical migratory birds to management so priorities will change toward ecosystem management.

All concerns identified at the brainstorming session are listed below, along with a tally of votes.

- 43 Lack of agency commitment.
 - 28 Species management instead of ecosystem management.
 - 37 Time and funding limits.
 - 25 Lack of data.
 - 8 Political and economic conflicts.
 - 3 Need to include industry and private groups at earliest stages of process/plan.
 - 1 Public misperception that all wildlife are being managed.
- Lack of understanding of structure and function of NTMB communities.
- Failure to understand human demographics and impacts of NTMB needs.
- Need better tools to synthesize data for management.
- Lack of consistency among agencies.
- Failure of agencies to recognize relationships and information beyond their own boundaries when they are planning.
- Lack of training.
- Failure to determine whether a conflict exists between wildlife programs and NTMBs.
- Lack of implementation on the ground.
- Failure to have adequate data before planning.

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