

## **RWWG meeting – 26th July 2007, 2 pm (US) EST**

Participants: Chris Elphick, Catherine Hickey, Sammy King, Katharine Parsons, Jennifer Wheeler

Minutes from the last meeting are posted here:

<http://www.fws.gov/birds/waterbirds/rice/rice-wg.html>

### **1. Web presence**

Jennifer reported that the Spanish language version of the web site is now up and running, thanks to the help of Daniel and Victoria de la Balze.

Currently ~45 people have joined the list-serve. Traffic is still quite slow, and it was suggested that RWWG members use it to post any recent publications on rice/waterbird research. Jennifer will send Chris a list of who is on the list, so that we can notify anyone we know of who might be interested but has still not joined.

### **2. Symposium updates**

All 11 speaker slots have now been filled for the symposium in Barcelona. Chris has abstracts for almost all of the talks and will circulate a complete set of abstracts as soon as he has the last ones

Kathy continues to work on funding for travel in conjunction with fund-raising for the publication. Our hope is to raise enough money to cover the publication costs and also to be able to cover expenses for a small number of people to attend the symposium who would not otherwise be able to. Covering the costs of the publication, however, will take precedence. Securing funds fairly soon is therefore important so that we know what money we will have available for travel costs. Kathy is maintaining a list of who is contacting which organizations; anyone with ideas about potential funding sources should consult with her first.

Chris noted that the abstract deadline for Barcelona has been extended until late August and that one of the field trips will go to the Ebro delta, which is one of the largest rice growing area in the Mediterranean.

### **3. Publication updates**

Many of the authors who have committed to writing chapters report that they are making good progress. Lead authors have been found for a couple of the remaining chapters (e.g., China) and Chris now has some additional leads for others (e.g., Africa), so he is working on trying to complete the author list. A couple of chapters are proving difficult, and may have to be dropped from the publication, or merged with other chapters.

### **4. Workshops**

Not much additional news on workshops. There is still no date for a California workshop and busy schedules have made it hard for all the potential participants to get together to discuss the options.

Daniel and Charles were not on the call, but it is understood that planning for the workshop in Buenos Aires is moving ahead.

### **5. Farm Bill**

No new information.

## **6. Developing links to industry**

Jennifer expects to hear something within the next month about our proposal to engage the services of students in the University of Maryland Program in Sustainable Development and Conservation Biology. If selected, we would use this relationship to help identify ways in which our group could interact more effectively with the rice industry, both in the US and globally.

Kathy reported that Charles might be interested in taking the lead on working with students to trying to engage stakeholders. Once we have an initial plan we might want to solicit input from outside the steering committee, via the list-serve.

[Update – the day after the conference call, we received confirmation that our proposal had been selected as one of five for the upcoming year.]

## **7. Any other business**

Jennifer reported that Lourdes has a new paper that was published in *J. Carib. Ornithol.* recently. She will distribute the citation via the list-serve.

Catherine raised the question of improving information about rice/waterbird publications on the web site. She volunteered to look into setting up a web interface that would allow us to convert the existing bibliography into a searchable database, and to add new citations on-line.