The NAWMP Science Support Team met in Sacramento CA, on November 4&5, 2003. The agenda and an attendance list are attached. The following notes are not intended as meeting minutes but to serve as documentation of the major topics discussed and agreements or decisions.

1. Pintail Action Group(PAG) ----- Draft Terms of Reference(TOR) for the PAG were circulated prior to the meeting and briefly discussed. There was agreement that the NSST will serve as both a filter and a conduit between the PAG and the Plan Committee. Reports, recommendations, requests, etc. emanating from the PAG will come through the NSST. The PAG revised the TOR at their breakout meeting in Sacramento to incorporate a few suggestions from NSST members to more clearly define how the PAG will deal with issues associated with harvest regulation without usurping roles of Federal agencies, Flyways Councils, and states. The revised TOR were accepted by the NSST and are attached to these notes. PAG membership will be open to any who wish to participate. Each of the 3 countries will have representatives of the Plan Co-Chairs to reflect "official" views of the FWS, CWS, DGVS and Mexican Subcommittee. For the U.S. that person will be Bob Trost(Ken Richkus, alternate) from the FWS; for Canada, Dale Caswell from CWS, and for Mexico, Alberto Lafon of the Mexican Subcommittee on Waterfowl. Each of the 4 Flyway Councils will be asked to consider designating official PAG members, but that will be at their option. (NSST Flyway reps will take this request to the Councils) The PAG needs to remain action oriented and not become a large unwieldy group, but communicate widely with the waterfowl community on their activities.

2. Monitoring ------ Mark Koneff presented an overview of his recent assessments of waterfowl monitoring needs (prepared for the 2003 NAWMP and NABCI Monitoring Committee), news of a proposal for "coordinated bird monitoring", and news of the creation of a monitoring task force by the FWS Division of Migratory Bird Management. Mark asked for input from the NSST, as all these issues need vetting by a larger group of waterfowl experts to fully represent the NAWMP and waterfowl community. Aside from the need of greater involvement from waterfowl interests, the main discussion issue was: How does the waterfowl community define its approach to developing future monitoring activities while maintaining existing operational programs? More directly, how do we address unmet waterfowl needs and not be swept by the tide of non-waterfowl priorities or "coordinated bird monitoring"? The NSST needs to clearly articulate what NAWMP needs and plans are, link that with the Flyway comprehensive surveys list and results of the DMBM monitoring task force. The NSST should prepare an overview document describing these waterfowl needs, priorities, and proposed approaches as a medium for communicating with state and Federal agencies and other bird initiatives on issues related to monitoring.

This overview could be a vision document describing an over-arching strategy for meeting waterfowl monitoring needs. This strategy would include both habitat and population (demographic) monitoring efforts. It may not be smart to totally disengage from NABCI monitoring efforts and this document will help communicate a waterfowl approach for considering any proposals for new monitoring efforts. Any proposed

monitoring activities should first answer 3 questions; what populations? At what scales? With what precision? Further issues for the monitoring strategy are how do you link habitats with populations? What are the objectives ? This document will initially NOT be in great detail but this becomes how NAWMP communicates with others on the monitoring issue. Seth will draft a short letter/memo to Plan Committee outlining the intent of NSST to produce the vision document, circulating first with NSST, the final for the PC to endorse and forward to agencies/orgs for support. Mark Koneff will lead in preparing the document but will ask individual NSST members for input and support.

3. Regional Planning Objectives.------Mark Koneff has distributed his work on derivation of county-level mid-winter abundances and distribution. This product has been used as a planning baseline by some of the wintering joint ventures and may be used by others in the future. The maps associated with Marks's work were provided for illustrative purposes only and do not represent a new information product of the NSST. The question discussed by the group was: Do we want an "official" set of regional planning targets, produced by the NSST, to be the basis for all joint venture planning efforts. Answer- no, individual joint ventures may elect to use these data but there is no requirement that any joint venture use this approach, they may develop their own basis for planning if they have other information that provides a better biological foundation in that joint venture. Mark will re-label, caveat, and provide this information for future use on request by individual JVs. A sub group (those joint ventures using this approach) will continue to explore further work to improve this product and its application.

4. NAWMP Progress Assessment-------Mike Anderson gave a presentation describing the current draft framework for a comprehensive NAWMP assessment effort, providing background on the Plan Committee's thinking to date on desired outcomes and logistics. Significant discussion followed. Clearly, there is a need to limit the scope and sharply define framework in order for the effort to be feasible. Biological outcomes seem to be readily addressed, institutional outcomes are a lot less defined and more difficult to engage productively. The NSST believes the assessment should include an institutional component (PC, NSST, JVs, etc.) and should result in critical examination of the value and role of the PC itself. Is there a need to strengthen linkages between Flwway Councils and the JVs?

How exactly will we do this with the JVs? We believe the process should include some combination of reporting by JVs and meetings/interviews with key JV people. We need to think about who from JVs should be involved. This needs further thought and scoping to make sure that the right range of expertise is involved. The assessment should stimulate critical thinking, and self assessment by JVs, not be a "rating" exercise by some outside group. The outcome is not a grade; but help ensure regional conservation efforts are appropriately connected to the overall NAWMP, so no key opportunities are falling through the cracks. Evaluations should be done in context of JV implementation plans, and the imperative of revising and improving on those plans, based on external factors as well as learning about the effectiveness about what the JV's and partners have been doing. The assessment should be a way to help JVs critically review where they are and want to go. The results should be built upon with revised JV plans.

The PC/NSST should look at the continental picture; seek synergy among JVs and/or between continental and regional scales. JVs provide information that may allow a roll-up assessment. We need to discover together where we stand, any deficiencies, and the work that remains to be done.

The Assessment Steering Committee needs to think about how NAWCA Councils and field-level managers can participate. A disconnect with field-level managers (both public and private) must be avoided.

OUTCOMES

Where are we in relation to where we need to be?…… (landscape conditions)…. KNOWING this is really the outcome we need in number 1 – not simply an accounting of accomplishments.

Biological vs. programmatic. This is a pivotal point of focus. Should not be a programmatic assessment.

A plan-wide consensus about expectations of JVs, and the institutional barriers to the fulfillment of those expectations. (wildlife / agr, among partners).

We envision an assessment framework consisting of outcomes, with more specific sub-ordinate outcomes and questions, with a set of measures and data sources to help answer those questions. The logic flow is purpose, to outcomes, to questions, to measures (and associated data).

Stakeholder Meeting discussion:

There should be a meeting of the PC, NSST, and JVs to discuss the desired outcomes of the assessment and finalize the scope and approach. Kickoff to the assessment itself, ….a major event…. We need broad turnout.

•Outcomes of Stakeholder meeting

Consensus of the Assessment framework
Consensus on the Assessment process and schedule
Consensus on leadership, and involvement
Commitment in principle of resources and staff to do this
Commitment to communicate plans back to regional partnerships
Initial discussion of the institutional issues?

•Participants?

Plan Committee, NSST, JV Board and technical leaders (numbers?), NAWCA members/staff, some key researchers

•Structure / organization?

Opening presentations (PC, NSST, others?)
Facilitated discussion of assessment framework, process, schedule,

•Preparations?

Work ahead of time with management board participants
Distribution of prospectus and draft framework ahead of time.
Joint PC / NSST meeting needed first

•Logistics?

1st or 2nd quarter?

Consensus was that we need to meet again with the PC to frame this and decide on next steps.

Jim D, Seth, Rex, Al, Tina,……work to revise this, Rex draft the letter to the PC. Both pieces reviewed, revised and sent to full NSST for review within one month….. first week of December.

Elements of the Waterfowl Assessment:

The assessment should address at least the following questions:

1. Are regional JV waterfowl goals and objectives clear, biologically well founded, and linked to continental NAWMP goals and objectives?

2. What progress has been made toward achieving those biological goals and objectives?

3. Assess the validity and strength of JV biological foundations.
   3.1. Having factors limiting important target populations been identified?
   3.2. Are JV partners examining their key planning assumptions?
   3.3. Is needed monitoring in place?
   3.4. Are biological models and planning tools being developed, used, and refined through adaptive processes?

4. Are effective feedback and re-planning processes in place and working?

5. Are JV partners communicating what they are learning to one another and to other JVs who might put the information to work? Are the JVs and national partners acting on new information as it emerges?

6. Are regional partners actively identifying key knowledge gaps and acting to address them?
   6.1. Is there adequate scientific support in place to address knowledge gaps? If not, what additional support is needed from the Plan Committee and NAWMP community?

7. Continentally, is there adequate integration of the regional parts?

8. Are there outstanding population or habitat monitoring issues over-arching the individual JVs that are not being addressed? If so, what needs to be done?

Outcomes	**Questions**	**Measures**	**Data**
A continent-wide estimate of where are we in relation to where we need to be re landscape conditions	1, 2	Empirical or model based estimates of status & needs	JV reports & interviews
PIE processes in place	3.1 – 3.4, 4, 5	PIE in place	Interviews
Updated regional goals	4	Done (<2 yr) or underway	JV reports
Recommendations to Plan partners r.e. outstanding needs	4, 6	Needs assessment completed	Renewed goals & cost estimates; science needs ID
Renewed working relationships	5, 6, 7, 8	Monitoring & assessment plans; NSST engagement	Interviews, expert opinion?

This Table comprises the outcomes and questions settled on for outcomes 1 and 2:

Outcomes	**Questions**	**Measures**	**Data**
1. Regional and continent-wide estimates of landscape conditions today, and the future	Does the partnership have a long-term vision of landscape conditions that are predicted to sustain waterfowl population at goal levels?	Empirical or model based estimates of status & needs	JV reports & interviews

conditions necessary to achieve Plan population objectives, given the recent historical range of environmental conditions and harvest rates.	Does the partnership have a recent estimate of current landscape conditions and the difference between those conditions and their long-term vision? What are the major threats / uncertainties to the attainment of this regional vision? Are these being evaluated and addressed? Has the partnership explicitly accounted for uncontrolled environmental variation in assessing progress toward population objectives? Elaborate the meaning of, and implications for Plan goals of "average environmental conditions". Are the resulting regional JV waterfowl goals and objectives clear, biologically well founded, and linked to continental NAWMP goals and objectives? What resources are needed to achieve these goals? Will the sum of the JV parts equal success for the Plan? Are there important gaps? Are the species JVs providing the information necessary to estimate habitat conservation needs, and understanding the sources of variation in population growth, for their species of concern?		

2. Adaptive processes of planning, implementation and evaluation are working at regional and continental scales	a) What limiting factors affecting target populations been identified? b) Identify how JV partners are examining key planning assumptions c)Asses the adequacy of monitoring in place to support adaptive processes. d) What biological models and planning tools being developed, used, and refined through adaptive processes? 4. What feedback and re-planning processes are in place? 5.Are partners acting on new information as it emerges? How are implementation plans updated? 6.Are Plan partners identifying key knowledge gaps and acting to address them? 7.Is there adequate science support (people, funding) in place? If not, what additional support is needed?		
4. Recommendations are made to Plan partners r.e. outstanding needs for both habitat conservation and monitoring and assessment needs [this will flow from 1 & 2 above]			

Below is scoping table on Institutional Issues:

Outcomes	**Questions**	**Measures**	**Data**
5. Relationships among the key institutional structures are strengthened and clarified relative to roles, responsibilities, and relationships to renew the vitality of the NAWMP within the conservation community.	Key institutional components of the Plan include the PC, the NSST, JVs and NAWCA Councils. Does the composition of the PC, JV management boards, and NAWCA Councils adequately represent the breadth of the key NAWMP institutional structures and implementation partners and their interests? (Does your form follow function?) Do the PC and JVMB and NAWCA Councils adequately influence key implementation partners and programs? Is the current NAWMP infrastructure adequate for achieving NAWMP goals and objectives? Are the JV partnerships able to allocate adequate resources for waterfowl, i.e., in a climate of numerous competing agendas (e.g., in an “all bird world)? What limitations are there and how might these be addressed? …..Does the PC do this? ……Do NAWCA Councils do this? Is NAWCA functioning		

	adequately to achieve NAWMP objectives? Is the relationship between JVs and field-level habitat managers adequate to ensure strategic implementation of the NAWMP at local scales? Are JVs adequately articulating research and monitoring needs and are they engaging the research community? Is the research community responsive? If not, why not? How do the PC and JV adequately communicate their goals, objectives, and strategies to partners and the larger community of habitat managers including other federal and state agencies, and private land owners? Is the lack of PC influence over resources (i.e., money and staff) an impediment to strong relationships with JVs, Flyway Councils, and others? What is or should be the value added of the PC to Joint Ventures? How can the PC provide greater value to JVs, Flyway Councils, and others? Is a more rigorous JV and PC reporting system needed to strengthen their relationship?		

NAWMP Science Support Team
Fresno Room, Capital Plaza Holiday Inn
Sacramento, California
November 4 - 5, 2003

Tuesday - November 4

8:00 Introductions and Agenda Review

8:20 Pintail Action Group (Attachments A & B)

New approach to NAWMP conservation issues
Draft Terms of Reference
Links to the NSST and others
PAG membership and priorities

Actions: Finalize TOR and membership

9:30 Break

10:00 Monitoring Issues (Attachments C, D & E)

Comprehensive Monitoring Review
"Coordinated Bird Monitoring"

Actions: Identify appropriate NSST involvement in development and review of emerging monitoring initiatives

11:00 Regional Planning Objectives - Status Report (Attachment F, Tables 1-4)

12:00 Lunch (on your own)

1:30 NAWMP Progress Assessment (Attachments G & H)

Charge from Plan Committee
Scoping document from Halifax
Discussion on Assessments scope and content

3:00 Break

3:30 Development of recommendations for Plan Committee

Actions: Address items raised in memo from Plan Committee and scoping document

5:00 Adjourn

Wednesday- November 5

8:00 Draft NSST Business Plan and Operational Approach (Attachment I & J)

Is the NSST fulfilling its mission?
What are our expectations?
How can we be more effective?
What are long term and short term priorities?

Actions: Recommendations for Plan Committee/Others

9:30 Break

10:00 Old Business/Status reports from Joint Ventures and NSST Work groups

10:30 Status of 2003 NAWMP

Overview of 2nd Draft Consultation; Technical Issues including population delineation, objectives, and prioritization

12:00 Lunch (on your own)

1:30 Status Report from Mexican Advisory Subcommittee on waterfowl and their habitats

2:30 Report from PAG breakout (if needed)
3:00 Break

3:30 Parking Lot issues/ other items identified during meeting

4:00 Review of action items and commitments

4:30 Adjourn

Meeting Attendees

Seth Mott	USFWS
Mark Koneff	USFWS
Mike Anderson	PHJV
Alberto Lafon	Univ Chihuahua
Julio Carrera	Mexico
Jim Dubovsky	USFWS
Al Hanson	CWS
Mike Johnson	ND Game&Fish
Ron Reynolds	USFWS
Barry Wilson	GCJV
Tim Jones	ACJV
Brian Sullivan	PLJV
Robert Mesta	Sonoran JV
Eduardo Gomez	Sonoran JV
Kathy Dickson	CWS
Andre Breault	PC
Eduardo Carrera	DUMAC
Peter Perrie	CA DFG
Fred Johnson	USFWS
Bob Trost	USFWS
Tom Aldrich	UT DFW
Kristen Chodachek	IN DFW
Dale Caswell	CWS
Red Hunt	NAWMP
Ron Holbrook	CVHJV
Michael Miller	USGS
Bobby Cox	USGS
Ken Richkus	USFWS
Bill Uihlein	LMVJV
Tina Yerkes	UMGLJV
Dave Duncan	CWS
Bob Clark	CWS
Karla Guyn	DUC
Jim Devries	DUC
Rex Johnson	USFWS