



# Conserving Today's Birds for Tomorrow



The year 2016 marks the centennial of the Convention between the United States and Great Britain (for Canada) for the Protection of Migratory Birds which laid the groundwork for the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918. This Migratory Bird Treaty and three other treaties form the cornerstone of our nation's efforts to conserve birds that migrate across international borders.



## Why Did/Do We Need A Treaty to Protect Migratory Birds?

In the early 1900s, migratory bird hunting in North America was not effectively regulated among the states and commercial market hunting of birds for meat and feathers took its toll on bird populations.

The 1916 Migratory Bird Treaty with Canada sought to stem the rapid

declines noted in some bird species. The treaty prevented market hunting, opened regulated sport hunting only of designated "game" species (primarily waterfowl), and protected birds during the nesting season. The Treaty also pledged cooperation to protect internationally important habitat areas that are vital to migrating birds. Similar treaties were formed in later years between the U.S. and Mexico, Japan, and Russia.

## Migratory Bird Treaty Protocol Amendment of 1997

Migratory birds are culturally, spiritually, and nutritionally significant to many tribes and indigenous peoples across the globe including Alaska Natives. Though the Migratory Bird Treaty had set the foundation for bird conservation, the traditional harvest of migratory birds by northern peoples during the spring and summer months was not fully taken into account during the negotiations for the Canada and Mexico treaties. This harvest, which had occurred for centuries, was necessary to the subsistence way of life in the north and thus continued despite the closed season.

To remedy this situation, the United States negotiated Protocols amending both the Canada and Mexico treaties to authorize regulated spring/summer subsistence harvest of migratory birds by indigenous inhabitants of Alaska and to more fully include subsistence hunters in the national management system. The U.S. Senate approved the amendments to both treaties in 1997.

## Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council

In 2000, the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council (AMBCC) was formed as a statewide body to develop, implement, and promote a co-management program between Alaska Native, Federal, and State governments in recognition of the subsistence use and conservation of migratory birds in Alaska. The Council, in partnership with the larger system of national and international migratory bird management, provides approvals, advice, regulatory recommendations, and information regarding subsistence use and the conservation of migratory birds in Alaska.



# How You Can Help Birds!

- Support and purchase environmentally and bird friendly products like shade-grown coffee and fair trade certified chocolate or cocoa.
- Make your backyard bird-friendly by using native plants during landscaping, keeping cats indoors, and using organic methods to control pests.
- Buy a Duck Stamp or Jr. Duck Stamp and help conserve bird habitat.



- Go on a bird walk, engage in a citizen science program like the Christmas Bird Count, learn about local bird life, and encourage youth to do the same.
- Volunteer or attend bird festivals, events, and organizations that support bird conservation.



- Use alternative non-toxic shot and sinkers to reduce lead-related mortalities in birds.
- Recycle fishing line and pick up litter to reduce entanglements and injuries to birds.
- Reduce collisions of birds at your windows by putting up UV-reflecting decals or other deterrents on the outside surface of the window.

