



NAWMP Joint Venture and NSST Species Action Group Progress Report Guidance

17 August 2018

Introduction

In response to recommendation A.1 of the 2005-06 North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) Continental Progress Assessment Final Report (Assessment)¹, the NAWMP Committee (Plan Committee or PC) and NAWMP Science Support Team (NSST) identified a need to repeat the Assessment on a regular basis and develop a process by which Joint Ventures (JV) and action groups would periodically update the PC on their progress toward achieving objectives of the NAWMP. Specifically, the NSST Accountability Framework Committee recommended that the PC, NSST, and JVs adopt the following procedures:

- The Plan community should repeat comprehensive assessments of the NAWMP at approximately 10-year intervals. Between those assessments, JVs and action groups should meet triennially with the PC to provide updates to reporting elements addressed below.

Concurrent with these discussions was recognition that emerging Joint Ventures (i.e., those not currently endorsed by the PC) may also play an important role in habitat conservation to achieve the goals of the NAWMP. Thus, the PC bears a responsibility to review emerging JV Implementation Plans for their expected benefits to waterfowl and observance of the principles, objectives, and priorities of the NAWMP. A process was thus developed by which emerging JVs could have their Implementation Plans reviewed by the NSST Implementation Plan Review Committee and considered for endorsement by the PC (**See Appendix A**). Following PC endorsement of an Implementation Plan, a JV would join the schedule of progress reporting to the PC (Table 1) and be officially considered “NAWMP JVs.”

The January 2013 meeting of the PC in Sacramento, California marked the completion of the first round of formal NAWMP JV and NSST Species Action Group (Scaup Action Team) progress reporting that began in 2008. Formal JV and SAT progress reports represent an essential piece of accountability for the PC Co-chairs, in terms of responsibility to the JVs in providing guidance and communication. At the Sacramento meeting the PC expressed a desire to begin a new round of progress reports as soon as possible. At the same time the PC agreed that the next round of reports should be less technical and higher level presentations while enhancing opportunities for the PC to provide effective recommendations. Reporting should shift from the concept of JVs

¹ A.1. “The Plan Committee should ensure development of a clearer and more robust accountability framework for the achievement of NAWMP biological objectives involving all organizational levels in the Plan community.”

progress towards meeting a “comprehensive content” (see Endorsement of Implementation Plan section below) in all areas to a more focused discussion of key issues relevant to planning and implementation for each JV, including integration efforts.

Subsequently, the PC has adopted a “risk-based” approach whereby those JVs and NSST species action groups most critical to waterfowl provide longer reports. JVs not considered priority waterfowl regions will report at the same frequency, but will produce shorter reports.

Progress Reporting Schedule

This document provides a schedule for quadrennial reporting of NAWMP JVs and NSST species action groups (Table 1) and issues guidance for JVs wishing to submit Implementation Plans for endorsement by the NAWMP Committee.

Table 1. Schedule of NAWMP Joint Venture (JV) and NSST species action group progress reports to the NAWMP Committee (PC) over three complete reporting rounds.	
Joint Venture/NSST species action group	Reporting period
Arctic Goose JV Eastern Habitat JV	Winter PC Meeting (2019)
Pacific Coast JV San Francisco Bay JV	Summer PC Meeting (2019)
Intermountain West JV Prairie Pothole JV Prairie Habitat JV	Winter PC Meeting (2020)
Playa Lakes JV ^c Rainwater Basin JV Northern Great Plains JV	Summer PC Meeting (2020)
Canadian Intermountain JV Pintail Action Group ^b Scaup Action Team ^b	Winter PC Meeting (2021)
Lower Mississippi Valley JV Gulf Coast JV Upper Mississippi River/Great Lakes Region JV	Summer PC meeting (2021)
Sonoran JV ^c Central Hardwoods JVs ^c Central Valley JV	Winter PC Meeting (2022)
Black Duck JV ^a Sea Duck JV ^a Atlantic Coast JV	Summer PC Meeting (2022)
Arctic Goose JV ^a Eastern Habitat JV	Winter PC Meeting (2023)
Pacific Coast JV San Francisco Bay JV	Summer PC Meeting (2023)
Intermountain West JV Prairie Pothole JV Prairie Habitat JV	Winter PC Meeting (2024)
Playa Lakes JV ^c Rainwater Basin JV Northern Great Plains JV	Summer PC Meeting (2024)

Canadian Intermountain JV Pintail Action Group ^b Scaup Action Team ^b	Winter PC Meeting (2025)
Lower Mississippi Valley JV Gulf Coast JV Upper Mississippi River/Great Lakes Region JV	Summer PC Meeting (2025)
^a Species JVs will report progress in achieving priority actions under their Implementation Plans and progress in providing assistance to habitat JVs. ^b NSST species action groups will report on progress in achieving priority actions contained in their respective prospectus. ^c JVs not considered priority waterfowl regions will report at the same frequency but will produce shorter reports.	

The PC will allot 120 minutes for high priority NAWMP JVs and NSST species action group reports. Those JVs not considered priority for NAWMP will be allotted 90 minutes to report. Oral presentations should be delivered to the PC in a format and manner that permits interactive discussion and feedback from the PC. Pre-circulating JV presentation information (following the structure of the reporting elements) to the PC is strongly recommended and viewed as helpful to the PC to improve the ensuing dialogue and may provide the PC the opportunity to think about questions that might be asked of the PC. The PC reserves the option to provide additional comments in writing to JVs at a later date, but comments shall be delivered **within 90 days** following the report date.

Progress Reporting Format

Recommendations under the 2012 NAWMP to revisit and update continental waterfowl population objectives and to develop new, explicit people objectives resulted in new JV work regarding waterfowl habitat planning and delivery. Building on progress in the aforementioned since then, the 2018 NAWMP Update is carefully clarifying specific roles for NAWMP JVs going forward and JVs should report progress towards meeting the new objectives. As JVs develop planning to meet the eight 2018 NAWMP Update recommendations, a new set of reporting elements may be established over the next 5 years. However, these need to be clearly defined in terms of planning and implementation first. The NAWMP’s liaisons to JVs need to establish a path for the JVs to act - and therefore to report back on to the PC before the JVs can move forward with reporting on any new elements. However, JVs are encouraged to address progress on this front if and when reporting opportunities arise.

Over the next 5 years, this new reporting framework will include the following elements (not listed in any particular order):

- General updates of JV/NSST species action group planning and implementation
- Updates to specific issues raised in the last first round of reports (i.e., updates to PC recommendations previously provided to each JV/NSST species action group – See Appendix B)
- Specific key issues where the JVs/NSST species action groups desire PC assistance to enhance progress

- Actions in relation to recommendations of the 2012 Revision and 2018 NAWMP Update where progress has been made

It is recommended that JV Coordinators and their staff review these reporting format recommendations to provide input to better meet their needs. Additionally, the “Guidance for JV Discussions with NAWMP Plan Committee” (<https://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/pdf/management/NAWMP/NAWMPJVReportingTemplate.pptx>) should be used to augment this progress report guidance to better structure presentations. Desired modifications to existing reporting elements by each JV can be included in future PC meeting agendas.

Finally, the PC has articulated their commitment to continue hosting progress reports in a helpful, conversational dialogue that results in improved NAWMP JV/NSST species action group performance. Encouraging more dialogue among JVs to develop synergistic relationships to improve efficiency and effectiveness, especially in establishing links to continental bird initiative goals is recommended as well.

Plan Committee Endorsement of Implementation Plans of Emerging JVs:

Emerging JVs desiring to have their Implementation Plans considered for endorsement by the PC will be required to meet the minimal content of *NAWMP Desired Characteristics for Habitat Joint Venture Partnerships* (Table 2). These criteria should be useful to JVs in developing or revising Implementation Plans, and the NSST expects they ultimately will result in more effective and efficient delivery of the NAWMP. NSST review and PC endorsement will be restricted to the waterfowl sections of Implementation Plans and specifically address the extent to which Implementation Plans are expected to benefit waterfowl populations and observe the principles, objectives, and priorities of the NAWMP.

Emerging JVs may request endorsement consideration at any time, and shall direct initial correspondence in this regard to the NAWMP Coordinator. The NSST Implementation Plan Review Committee will conduct at least three technical reviews of subject Implementation Plans to determine if minimal criteria are satisfied. Following their completion and summary, comments generated from NSST technical reviews will be offered for additional consideration by the full membership of the NSST over a two week review period. From these reviews, the NSST will develop a recommendation for or against PC endorsement of the subject JV Implementation Plan. This recommendation and all NSST reviewer comments will be submitted to the PC **at least 25 days prior** to the scheduled PC meeting during which an endorsement decision is to be made. Upon receiving PC endorsement, the subject JV will be incorporated into the schedule of NAWMP JV quadrennial progress reporting to the PC (Table 1).

Joint Ventures who have not yet requested Implementation Plan endorsement by the NAWMP Committee are listed below. The NAWMP PC welcomes such requests.

- Appalachian Mountains JV

- East Gulf Coastal Plain JV
- Oaks and Prairies JV
- Rio Grande JV

TABLE 2. NAWMP DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS FOR HABITAT JOINT VENTURE PARTNERSHIPS

<i>Element</i>	Sub Element/ Product	TECHNICAL EXPECTATIONS	
		Minimal Content- Expected characteristics and level of performance for newly established and/or minimally-funded Joint Ventures*.	Comprehensive Content- Joint Ventures* should move toward this content as a Joint Venture matures and funding levels increase.
ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE	Coordination/ Partnerships	Joint Venture* develops a vision for the Joint Venture's future; establishes and implements strategies to achieve that vision. Joint Venture develops and maintains strategic regional alliances, consistent with the Joint Venture's mission. Joint venture office provides leadership to develop, with the Management Board**, a strategic implementation plan to define and achieve the goals of the partnership.	Joint venture office and Management Board actively work to broaden the external partnership with relevant individuals and organizations. Joint Venture maintains strong professional contacts and connections, networking to keep the Joint Venture abreast of current conservation issues, techniques, etc. Joint venture office identifies partner capabilities to address the Joint Venture mission and works with partners to address any missing capabilities through additional staff, partners, contracts or training appropriate to the size and complexity of the Joint Venture region. The Joint Venture participates in development of common joint venture messages to Congress and other relevant national entities and cultivates informational relationships with its Congressional delegation and staff. Management Board coordinates on congressional outreach with other Joint Ventures.
	Management Board	Joint venture office supports operations and administration of Management Board by advising and informing Board members. Management Board has broad representation within the Joint Venture geographic region (Fed, State, Non-Profit, Private) and members regularly participate in meetings. Member organizations commit energy and resources to developing a shared vision of bird conservation for the Joint Venture and coordinate their otherwise independent actions in the cooperative pursuit and refinement of that vision.	Management Board members bring significant resources to the Joint Venture, engage in current issues facing the Joint Venture, share responsibilities for Joint Venture progress, follow through on commitments and responsibly use their influence for the betterment of the Joint Venture. Management Board develops and adopts a process for periodic self assessment that includes relevant goals and metrics for both programmatic and organizational performance.
	Budgeting/ Granting/ Administration/ Funding	A financial management system is in place. Administrative support is available to the joint venture office/staff either directly or through joint venture partners. Mechanisms exist to receive and expend federal funding in compliance with OMB Circular A-133. Joint venture office keeps the Management Board fully informed on the status of the joint venture office's operations and finances. Joint venture office maintains working knowledge of pertinent funding opportunities. Joint venture office works with partner organizations to obtain grants and other funds to implement priority conservation actions.	Joint Venture financial system is sophisticated enough to manage grant/contract funds as appropriate. Administrative personnel are on or available to Joint Venture staff. Joint Venture has grant-writing capacity available in staff and or partner organizations. Joint Venture seeks and attracts funds from a broad range of traditional and non-traditional conservation programs and other funding sources to implement priority bird conservation actions. Joint Venture develops and implements fundraising strategies for approaching and cultivating new sources of major support, including foundation and corporate grant programs, and partner contributions. Working with the Management Board, joint venture office directs the preparation of annual and long-range development planning.

<i>Element</i>	Sub Element/ Product	TECHNICAL EXPECTATIONS	
		Minimal Content- Expected characteristics and level of performance for newly established and/or minimally-funded Joint Ventures*.	Comprehensive Content- Joint Ventures* should move toward this content as a Joint Venture matures and funding levels increase.
	Technical Community	Technical expertise needs are identified. Joint Venture has access to technical staff either directly or through partnership.	Joint Venture has science coordinator(s), geospatial technician(s), and other science expertise on staff or available through partners as appropriate to the size and complexity of the Joint Venture region. Technical committees for specific bird conservation science needs are in place as needed with full participation from partnership organizations. Technical committees are improving the science of the Joint Venture.
BIOLOGICAL PLANNING	Coordination/ Partnerships	Joint Venture leads a collaborative effort, often through a technical committee appointed by the Management Board, to build a biological foundation of bird conservation needs that is both based on, and informs international, national, or regional bird conservation initiatives.	Joint venture partners seek opportunities and venues to integrate Joint Venture biological planning with relevant work of their agency/organization and with the relevant work of other agencies and organizations active within the Joint Venture area. Priority examples include state wildlife action plans, National Wildlife Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plans, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Ecoregional Plans, US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Migratory Bird Focal Species plans, and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Keystone initiatives.
	Biological Planning Unit (Spatial and Temporal Scales)	Biological planning unit(s) is(are) defined. Identify temporal importance (breeding, staging, wintering) of the Joint Venture region to migratory birds. Explain and justify when planning scale deviates from bird plan conservation ecoregions.	Biological planning units identified at Bird Conservation Region (BCR) or sub-BCR scales. Explicit treatment of overlapping planning units within multiple Joint Venture administrative boundaries (if any).
	Priority Species	A preliminary list of priority bird species or suites of species are identified and justified.	Complete list of priority bird species/populations, considering all relevant FWS Birds of Management Concern. Explanation if priority species/populations deviate from priorities in latest bird plan updates. A subset of species may be identified that represent the larger set of priority species for detailed biological planning and conservation design.
	Population Objectives	Anticipated population objective variables (abundance, vital rates, etc.) identified. General description of the process that will likely be used to develop population objectives. Description of how those objectives will link to bird plans' continental objectives.	Explicit population objectives are identified. Flexible population objectives identified as appropriate to account for environmental or seasonal variability. Documentation of the process for deriving population objectives and identification of major sources of uncertainty.
	Limiting Factors	A list of potential factors thought to limit birds in the biological planning unit(s) used.	Demographic parameters for target species (e.g., survival rate, recruitment rate) thought to be most limiting to population objectives are targeted by habitat management actions.

<i>Element</i>	Sub Element/ Product	TECHNICAL EXPECTATIONS	
		Minimal Content-	Comprehensive Content-
	Species/Habitat Relationships	Expected characteristics and level of performance for newly established and/or minimally-funded Joint Ventures*. Discussion of population-habitat model(s) expected to be developed to relate population response to known or suspected limiting factors (e.g. empirical, conceptual).	Joint Ventures* should move toward this content as a Joint Venture matures and funding levels increase. Explicitly stated population-habitat models. Assumptions documented as testable hypotheses.
CONSERVATION DESIGN	Coordination/ Partnerships	Commitment of Joint Venture to develop technical capabilities and planning tools for conservation design.	Joint Venture develops and implements strategies to utilize science products to better target and enhance conservation programs at the ecoregional level to benefit migratory birds. Joint venture office and/or Management Board members build strong relations with decision makers in state and federal institutions, private industry, and partner organizations to strengthen their understanding of the Joint Venture's conservation activities and capabilities.
	Landscape/ Habitat Characterization and Assessment	General description of Joint Venture's ecological setting relative to bird habitat. List of major drivers impacting bird habitat with links to assumed limiting factors and population-habitat relationships. Set of implications to bird population in the absence of partnership intervention.	A rigorous analysis of landscape/habitat carrying capacity based on explicit population-habitat models. Where possible, conduct retrospective analysis of carrying capacity (e.g., prior to 1986). Where possible, forecast expected carrying capacity with and without partnership intervention and predicts impacts of expected major changes (e.g., urban growth, climate change).
	Assessment of the Conservation Estate	Preliminary summary of bird habitat (acres) protected, managed, and restored in the planning unit. This includes an assessment of all conservation lands that will benefit birds.	Thorough analysis of existing bird habitat under protection, management, or enhancement throughout the biological planning unit. Information should be presented by ownership, state, etc. where applicable. Assessment of the net change in the conservation landscape since the inception of the Joint Venture conducted at <5 year intervals.
	Decision Support Tools	Description of how the Joint Venture might develop decision support models/tools to guide specific management actions suitable to overcome limiting factors. If deemed appropriate, develop a set of spatially-explicit focus areas to guide interim conservation delivery activities.	Spatially-explicit decision support tools for specific management actions suitable to overcome limiting factors are available. Tools distributed to partnership based on population-habitat models where appropriate. Documented analytical processes and model assumptions.

<i>Element</i>	Sub Element/ Product	TECHNICAL EXPECTATIONS	
		Minimal Content-	Comprehensive Content-
		Expected characteristics and level of performance for newly established and/or minimally-funded Joint Ventures*.	Joint Ventures* should move toward this content as a Joint Venture matures and funding levels increase.
	Habitat Objectives	General estimation of the magnitude of habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement that might be expected of the Joint Venture.	Explicit set of habitat objectives linked to population objectives and based on population-habitat models, carrying capacity, assessment of conservation estate, and decision support models as available. Habitat objectives should be partitioned among sources of habitat (ownership, state) where appropriate.
	Integration of avian decision-support tools	Articulate anticipated approach for integrating habitat objectives among species-groups, habitat types and management treatments for priority avian species/groups.	Develop tools for integrating habitat objectives and spatial priorities for all priority species/groups and management treatments. Describe decision-rules for conflict resolution. Describe extent of spatial/temporal overlap in conservation activities.

<i>Element</i>	Sub Element/ Product	TECHNICAL EXPECTATIONS	
		Minimal Content- Expected characteristics and level of performance for newly established and/or minimally-funded Joint Ventures.	Comprehensive Content- Joint Ventures should move toward this content as a Joint Venture matures and funding levels increase.
HABITAT DELIVERY	Coordination/ Partnerships	Joint Venture informs, assists, and influences partner organizations implementing habitat conservation programs.	Joint Venture provides a structure and process that, attracts partners; guides existing funds and programs to priority conservation actions, leverages and generates new funding; and coordinates and implements habitat conservation actions in support of JV-established objectives at appropriate scales.
	Program Objectives	Description of how conservation programs (e.g., Farm Bill, land acquisition and restoration programs, etc.) will be linked to biologically-derived bird habitat objectives.	Translate bird habitat objectives into spatially-explicit program-specific objectives (e.g., North American Wetlands Conservation Act, Conservation Reserve Program, Wetland Reserve Program, National Wildlife Refuges, Wildlife Management Areas, etc.). If appropriate, describe ranking systems developed to inform prioritization and decision-making.
	Conservation Actions	General description of anticipated habitat conservation actions, tools, and management treatments the partnership expects to deliver to meet the needs of birds.	Comprehensive list and documented description of habitat conservation actions, tools, and management treatments being deployed by partnership, including quantification of how specific conservation actions are expected to affect bird abundance and/or vital rates and to what degree.
	Delivery Capacity	Individual joint venture partners develop projects to deliver on-the-ground habitat conservation through existing programs with joint venture office assistance as appropriate.	Fully developed partnership delivering on-the-ground bird conservation explicitly linked to Joint Venture biological planning/conservation design. Delivery partnerships are developed and coordinated by the joint venture office at appropriate scales (including BCR, state, focus area and local).

<i>Element</i>	Sub Element/ Product	TECHNICAL EXPECTATIONS	
		Minimal Content- Expected characteristics and level of performance for newly established and/or minimally-funded Joint Ventures.	Comprehensive Content- Joint Ventures should move toward this content as a Joint Venture matures and funding levels increase.
MONITORING	Coordination/ Partnerships	Joint Venture informs and influences partner organizations implementing monitoring programs.	Joint Venture provides a structure and process that generates, attracts, leverages, and implements outcome-based monitoring activities in support of Joint Venture established biological targets.
	Conservation Tracking System	General description of anticipated need for tracking partnership activities (gross partnership accomplishments). A vision for creating that capability among partners. The joint venture office solicits information on accomplishments from joint venture partners, organizes and submits the information to appropriate managers of national databases and Management Board.	Conservation tracking and spatial database system in place. Explicit description of how information will be used to inform decisions (e.g., increasing performance for Program X). Explanation of linkage between tracking system and biological models so that biological accomplishments can be assessed and reported.
	Habitat Inventory & Monitoring Programs	General description of anticipated process that will be employed to inventory and monitor landscape conditions and net habitat change over time and net progress toward habitat objectives (gains and losses).	Documentation of habitat monitoring objectives and habitat parameters that will be inventoried and monitored over time. Expected process (e.g., remote sensing) and time interval for data collection. Explicit description of how information will be used to inform decisions (e.g., refining habitat or population objectives). Assessment of the net change in Joint Venture landscape conditions conducted at <5 year intervals.
	Population Monitoring Program	Description of anticipated process for prioritizing and coordinating monitoring of bird population responses over time.	Documentation of demographic parameters monitored specific to each objective. Expected process (e.g., aerial surveys, nest survival) and time interval for data collection, storage, and management. Explicit description of how new information collected from monitoring programs will be used to inform future planning decisions (i.e., identify the feedback loop).
RESEARCH	Coordination/ Partnerships	Priority research needs are identified and distributed to joint venture partners and regional research institutions.	Joint Venture provides a structure and process that generates, attracts, leverages, and implements assumption-driven research activities in support of Joint Venture established biological targets. Strong relationship with US Geological Survey and universities.
	Species/Habitat Model Assumptions	A list of assumptions for population and habitat parameters used in models (e.g., priority species' limiting factors, predicted densities, habitat quality).	Prioritized, targeted research needed to address key uncertainties within models used in biological planning (prioritized based on value of better information).
	Conservation Treatment Assumptions	A list of assumptions inherent to the conservation actions/treatments being implemented by joint venture partners.	Prioritized, targeted research needed to address key uncertainties about the impacts of conservation treatments on Joint Venture population objectives (bird abundance/vital rates).

<i>Element</i>	TECHNICAL EXPECTATIONS		
	Sub Element/ Product	Minimal Content-	Comprehensive Content-
	Sensitivity Analyses	Expected characteristics and level of performance for newly established and/or minimally-funded Joint Ventures. A list of key parameters most likely to influence 1) population response variables or 2) habitat objectives.	Joint Ventures should move toward this content as a Joint Venture matures and funding levels increase. Statistical analysis of key parameters to examine their influence on population or habitat model results based on a range (e.g., confidence intervals) of assumed values (e.g., distance to edge).
	Spatial Data Analyses	A list of concerns relating to the limitations of current spatial databases as they may affect conservation planning.	Rigorous statistical analyses, and associated refinement, of key uncertainties related to spatial data used for planning or monitoring.
COMMUNICATION, EDUCATION AND OUTREACH	Coordination/ Partnerships	Appropriate joint venture partners or staff represents the Joint Venture mission to the local, regional, national, and international conservation community.	The Joint Venture has identified optimal roles for the Management Board, joint venture office, and the joint venture partners in furthering its biological objectives through communications, education, and outreach activities and products. As deemed appropriate, the Joint Venture has identified gaps in capabilities and fortified those gaps to raise awareness, change attitudes, and change behaviors to support bird habitat conservation.
	Priority audiences and objectives	Joint venture partners have evaluated the efficacy and applicability of communications, education and outreach activities in achieving Joint Venture conservation objectives. Joint Venture Management Board has identified priority internal and external audiences and key messages.	A Joint Venture Communications Plan, guided by information from biological planning, conservation design, habitat delivery, monitoring and research, is developed to set communication, education, and outreach objectives and target activities and products geographically, programmatically and to the highest priority conservation needs. The Joint Venture has identified and prioritized all relevant audiences and correlates audience objectives with bird habitat conservation goals and objectives to determine how much and where increases in audience awareness and what changes in attitudes/behaviors are necessary to reach bird conservation objectives. The Joint Venture has established appropriate means of engaging priority audiences.
	Tactics and products	Mechanisms exist to facilitate communication between Management Board, joint venture office, and the joint venture partners. The Joint Venture maintains an up-to-date website.	Each tactic and/or product (Examples include, but are not limited to: partner newsletters, public website, news releases, project tours, meetings, presentations and workshops) is evaluated to assess effectiveness and guide development of future communications products and activities.
	Audience Assessment	Joint venture partners conduct informal assessment of priority audiences to determine their baseline level of awareness, attitudes, and behaviors affecting bird conservation in the Joint Venture region.	Joint Venture conducts regular, formal assessments of priority audiences to measure change in awareness, attitudes and behaviors over time. Assessments may be in the form of focus groups, surveys, interviews or other systematic means of gathering audience data. The results are used to improve future Joint Venture activities in support of bird conservation objectives.

* Joint Venture in this document refers to the specific joint venture partnership including all members and facets of the partnership.

** Management Board refers to the specific Joint Venture's Management Board.

APPENDIX A

NAWMP Committee Endorsement of Joint Ventures Adopted February 10, 2010

PREAMBLE

The 2004 update of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP or Plan) reaffirmed the Plan Committee's (PC) role in reviewing and endorsing Joint Venture (JV) Implementation Plans. Plan Committee endorsement of a JV includes a technical review conducted by the NAWMP Science Support Team (NSST) that assesses the extent to which a JV's Implementation Plan supports the objectives, principles, and priorities of the NAWMP. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) will coordinate the review of emerging U.S. JVs implementation plans with appropriate Flyway Councils and with the national and international councils that oversee the various bird conservation initiatives (i.e. NAWMP PC) (FWS policy manual chapter 721 FW-6 approved 8/24/05). FWS recognition and financial support to a JV is contingent upon the FWS Director approving the Implementation Plan submitted by the management board on behalf of the JV. This approval is a result of the review and recommendations solicited by FWS.

Emerging JVs may request PC review and endorsement of the waterfowl component of their Implementation Plan at any time. However, the Plan Committee and NSST will allocate review and endorsement efforts relative to the apparent importance of a given JV to continental waterfowl populations and success of the NAWMP.

The 2007 NAWMP Continental Progress Assessment recommended that the PC reestablish its leadership role by providing greater input and strategic guidance to JVs and the broader NAWMP community. Specifically, it was suggested that the PC should work with JVs and others to strengthen regular two-way communication about accomplishments, priorities, biological foundations, and other strategic matters that may aid achievement of NAWMP goals and objectives. These recommendations led to development of a process by which PC-endorsed JVs shall periodically deliver progress reports to the PC. Joint Venture reports are intended to inform the PC of progress made by JVs in achieving NAWMP objectives within their boundaries, and is not meant to suggest a need for re-endorsement of individual JVs having already received PC endorsement.

STATEMENT OF PLAN COMMITTEE ENDORSEMENT

Once the PC has completed their review of an emerging JV, and upon receiving corresponding technical reviews and recommendations from the NSST, the PC has several options. The PC can endorse the JV, they can request that the JV revise their organizational structure or Implementation Plan with specific recommendations; or they may decline to endorse the JV.

The endorsement of a JV by the PC engenders a commitment by the PC to communicate to the Plan's primary stakeholders (e.g., NAWCC, CWS, USFWS, SEMARNAT-DGVs, U.S. Geological Survey [USGS], Flyway Councils, and other sponsoring agencies and organizations) their concurrence that the JV:

- (1) Has provided an adequate framework for how it will direct their efforts to aid in achievement of NAWMP population and habitat goals and objectives.

(2) Affirmed that they embrace and will use an adaptive process of planning, implementation, and evaluation to guide their waterfowl habitat conservation activities as advocated in the 1998 and 2004 Updates.

(3) Will be responsive to guidance provided by the PC and the NSST regarding waterfowl conservation priorities and needs on a continental scale.

(4) Will continue to develop and strengthen their relationships with relevant partners and key institutional components of the NAWMP (e.g. PC, NSST, JVs, NAWCC, USFWS, CWS, SEMARNAT-DGVS, flyway councils) to help achieve NAWMP goals and objectives.

Alternatively, the PC may choose to conditionally endorse a JV pending changes to address identified deficiencies in their organizational or waterfowl planning elements (i.e., specific issues, discrepancies, or missing plan elements). Such recommendations will be provided by the PC with input from the NSST.

Finally, the PC may decline to endorse a JV. If this option is chosen, the PC will clearly articulate in writing to the JV Coordinator and Management Board Chair the specific reasons for this decision. This information will also be provided to the Plan's stakeholders.

Upon receiving full or conditional endorsement, the JV will be incorporated into the schedule of PC-endorsed JV quadrennial progress reporting to the PC. Similar to considerations given to Implementation Plan reviews, the PC and NSST will allocate time for quadrennial JV progress report reviews and presentations relative to the apparent importance of a JV to continental waterfowl populations and success of the NAWMP.

APPENDIX B

The following represent the more common highlights of PC feedback back to those NAWMP habitat JVs and species JVs that reported in the first round of JV progress reports. These PC recommendations are included here for use by individual JVs to help them structure the content of future reports, beyond a review of those recommendations laid out in the letters received by each respective JV Management Board.

Habitat JVs

- 1) Increased efforts to pursue NAWCA grants to fund conservation delivery in priority wetland areas (i.e., set a goal to secure some minimum number of NAWCA grants each year).
- 2) Continue a strong emphasis on conservation efforts on private lands by building upon efforts of the USFWS's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program to expand conservation easement opportunities.
- 3) Continue growth in local conservation partnerships perhaps supported by capacity grants to develop permanent capacity on the landscape for conservation delivery.
- 4) Strive for cost-effective improvements in monitoring and research functions. We recommend efforts to strengthen monitoring and research to include pertinent threats: 1) Land use changes; 2) Adaptation to climate change impacts; 2) Strategies to offset wind energy development impacts to migratory birds, etc.
- 5) Strive to build stronger landscape-wide spatial planning foundations. Increase efforts to aggregate spatial habitat datasets that vary in scale, purpose, source, currency, repeatability, and extent in an effort to improve consistency for monitoring habitat and land use trends for priority delivery areas. We advise further that this effort needs to be put in a "risk" context to apportion out future conservation planning & delivery.
- 6) The PC believes that landscape change assessments will require an umbrella of support across JV boundaries. Hence, we acknowledge that progress in this area will likely occur through JV support for those efforts via the NAWMP Science Support Team.
- 7) Work for efficient technical improvements in tracking landscape changes collectively across partner efforts.
- 8) We recognize that a comprehensive assessment is needed across JVs in considering their roles in the policy advocacy arena; we recommend that JVs embrace policy efforts early, and consider developing feedback tools to measure effectiveness in addressing key threats (land use change, water supply issues, climate change, sea level rise, etc.).
- 9) Continued growth in local conservation partnerships supported by capacity grants to develop permanent capacity on the landscape for conservation delivery.

- 10) Consider developing a system flexible enough to decide on the appropriate scale for the work that remains to be conducted, especially given challenges to adapt large-scale strategies down to smaller scales.
- 11) Clarify the future capacity of landscapes to develop approaches for generating waterfowl habitat conservation objectives that account for spatio-temporal variation in environmental and habitat conditions.
- 12) Continue working with LCC committees and their technical teams to keep the JV well positioned to strategically plan and deliver bird habitat conservation.
- 13) Continue to improve coordinator with existing and new partners in the realms of habitat conservation communication, education and outreach program development.
- 14) For JVs building waterfowl habitat conservation objectives, this effort should include identifying and incorporating key habitat uncertainties and key habitat planning assumptions.

Species JVs

With respect to species JVs, smaller contributions from the PC might materialize since the species JVs and their partners are most knowledgeable of the needs of those JVs. However, generally, the following PC recommendations could frame reporting elements:

- 1) Further develop opportunities to engage with the flyway councils
- 2) Make the case for added value to potential partners.
- 3) Make an effort to upgrade conservation efforts to address habitat degradation caused by overabundant waterfowl populations in key areas.
- 4) Form greater alliances with the Sea Duck JV to combine survey efforts.
- 5) Develop strategies to engage local partners on critical conservation issues.
- 6) Seek opportunities to enhance outreach to key non-breeding areas.
- 7) Develop stronger partnerships in relation to climate change issues to better inform the spatial analyses to support wildlife and habitat communities.
- 8) Consider opportunities to incorporate monitoring infrastructures used by Canadian territories that monitor respective goose colonies into AGJV efforts.
- 9) Brainstorm opportunities to promote Mexican participation in species JV business.
- 10) Focus on demonstrating added conservation value of the species JVs to LCCs with an eye toward building opportunities to secure funding.

- 11) Explicitly recognize that, with respect to sustaining waterfowl hunting traditions, specific regional issues must be considered in formulating strategies for the overall human dimensions effort.
- 12) Continue to make progress in development of the structure of annual cycle models, focusing on the interactions among key parameters, the identification of high value data for model parameters, and improved understanding of the form of functional relationships.
- 13) Make progress to link local- and regional scale decision-making tools to population scale decision frameworks
- 14) Pursue rigorous analyses of those utilities informing the decision-making process to ensure transparent, efficient and effective decision-making.
- 15) Continue work with pertinent habitat JVs and other partners to develop and promote planning for species-specific research needs and conservation actions, and foster rigorous evaluation of the effectiveness of those actions.
- 16) Strive to better identify and clarify potential drivers in observed breeding population changes (e.g., wetland conditions improvements, change in migration route) and how they impact conservation decision-making.