



721 FW 2

North American Waterfowl Management Plan

FWM#: 461
Supersedes 661 FW 1, 2, and 4,
FWM #280, 12/16/96
Date: August 24, 2005
Series: Migratory Birds
Part 721: Migratory Bird Conservation
Originating Office: Division of Bird Habitat
Conservation

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2.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter provides a description of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan and outlines the roles of the Service and other conservation partners in its implementation.

2.2 What is the North American Waterfowl Management Plan? [The North American Waterfowl Management Plan \(Plan\)](#) was signed in 1986 by government officials from Canada and the United States and in 1994 by Mexico. It seeks to recover waterfowl populations to levels observed in the 1970s by protecting, restoring, and enhancing wetlands and associated ecosystems upon which they depend throughout North America. The Plan is an international strategy that sets forth population and habitat objectives that are implemented through public/private partnerships called joint ventures (see [721 FW 6](#)).

2.3 What Federal Agencies are responsible for the Plan?

A. United States. The Fish and Wildlife Service, Migratory Bird Program is responsible for coordination and implementation of the Plan in the United States. We coordinate efforts with the governments of Canada and Mexico through interactions with the North American Waterfowl Management Plan Committee, other Service program areas, joint ventures, and a variety of public and private conservation agencies and organizations.

B. Canada. The Canadian Wildlife Service is responsible for coordination and implementation of the Plan in Canada. The Canadian Wildlife Service coordinates efforts with the United States and Mexico through interactions on the Plan Committee and routine coordination between the Canadian North American Waterfowl Management Plan Implementation Office and the Service's Division of Bird Habitat Conservation.

C. Mexico. The Mexican General Directorate of Wildlife of the Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) is responsible for coordination and implementation of the Plan in Mexico. Mexico coordinates efforts with the United States and Canada through interactions on the Plan Committee.

2.4 How is the Plan administered? The North American Waterfowl Management Plan Committee has broad oversight responsibility for the Plan, including monitoring progress and updating the Plan, coordinating current work, and reviewing new proposals and initiatives. The Plan Committee makes recommendations for actions within the scope of the Plan. They direct these recommendations to the Canadian Wildlife Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the General Directorate of Wildlife of the Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources in Mexico. The Committee does not have regulatory authority.

A. Membership. The Plan Committee consists of 18 members selected from agencies responsible for waterfowl management.

(1) The U.S. Section consists of six members appointed by the Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, four of whom represent Plan partners within each of four administrative flyways in the United States, and two of whom represent the Service. The U.S. Section is headed by the Chief of the Division of Bird Habitat Conservation, who serves as the U.S. Co-Chair. The U.S. Section works with the Canadian and Mexican Sections to monitor the Plan's progress, update the Plan, coordinate current work, review new proposals and joint ventures, and recommend actions.

(2) The Canadian Section consists of six members appointed by the Director General of the Canadian Wildlife Service. Two of the six members are Canadian Wildlife Service Regional Directors, three represent the Canadian joint ventures, and one is the Director of the Migratory Bird Branch of the Canadian Wildlife Service and serves as the

Canadian Co-Chair. The Canadian Section works with the U.S. and Mexican Sections to monitor the Plan's progress, update the Plan, coordinate current work, review new proposals and joint ventures, and recommend actions.

(3) The Mexican Section consists of six members appointed by the Mexican Dirección General De Vida Silvestre (DGVS) from within the Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources. The Mexican Section is headed by the Director General of Wildlife, who serves as the Mexican Co-Chair. The Mexican Section works with the Canadian and U.S. Sections to monitor the Plan's progress, update the Plan, coordinate current work, review new proposals and joint ventures, and recommend actions.

B. Procedures. One Federal agency member from each country serves as Co-Chair of the Committee, as designated by the respective appointing authority. Members of the Committee serve staggered terms of 3 years. Appointments are effective on January 1 of each year. The Committee meets at least twice annually, rotating meetings among the three countries. The Committee can arrange additional meetings as needed. The Committee also determines the locations and dates of the meetings.

C. Functions. The Plan Committee takes advice from all plan partners and the National Science Support Team (NSST), the Plan Committee's scientific arm, and provides continuous leadership to promote synergies within the North American waterfowl community, across relevant sectors, and internationally. The Plan Committee has oversight responsibility for assuring the quality for the Plan interventions and the overall effectiveness of the Plan. To meet this end, the Committee will:

- (1) Review and monitor progress toward achieving the Plan's population goals and related habitat objectives.
- (2) Update the Plan approximately every 5 years in response to new or changing circumstances, policy developments, or opportunities.
- (3) Foster an adaptive management approach among joint ventures in conservation implementation.
- (4) Promote quality assurance within the Plan management units by:
 - (a) Reviewing and endorsing waterfowl conservation components of joint venture plans;
 - (b) Reviewing evaluation strategies developed by joint venture or other regional partnerships;
 - (c) Reviewing periodic joint venture reports to ensure joint venture activities effectively further the Plan's purposes; and
 - (d) Conducting periodic waterfowl programmatic reviews of joint venture operations.
- (5) Encourage coordination and consensus among joint ventures and other organizations concerning waterfowl conservation needs, biological planning, monitoring, and assessment.
- (6) Maintain and promote strong relationships with flyway councils, wetland councils, the Trilateral Committee, and other bird initiatives.
- (7) Host periodic conferences for the NSST, joint ventures, and Plan partners to discuss improvements to the Plan's biological foundation.
- (8) Annually solicit joint ventures and other Plan partners for input on the status of Plan implementation and issues that the Plan Committee will address.
- (9) Prepare periodic reports on the status of Plan implementation for the three federal wildlife agencies, using input from the joint ventures and the NSST.
- (10) Periodically review the Plan Committee's own effectiveness and consider structural, relational, and management approaches to enhance Committee impact.

2.5 What is the purpose of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan Science Support Team (NSST)?

The NSST helps to strengthen the biological foundations of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan and to facilitate continuous improvement of Plan conservation programs.

2.6 What does the NSST do? The NSST will:

- A. Foster continuous improvement in the effectiveness of Plan actions by establishing iterative cycles of planning and implementing and evaluating conservation programs at both the continental and joint venture levels.
- B. Conduct large-scale studies of landscape variation and waterfowl demography.
- C. Report annually to the Plan Committee and the Plan partners generally on the status of the biological effectiveness of Plan activities.

2.7 Who are the members of the NSST? The NSST will consist of:

- A. Three National Team Leaders appointed by the Plan Committee.
- B. One member from each of the federal wildlife agencies.
- C. One member from each Plan joint venture, appointed by the joint ventures.
- D. One member from each of the four flyways, appointed by Flyway Councils.
- E. The NSST may recruit additional ad hoc members for special purposes at the discretion of the team and Plan co-chairs.

2.8 What procedures does the NSST follow?

- A. The three National Team Leaders will sit as ex officio members of the Plan Committee in order to facilitate communication between the key technical and management bodies of the Plan and to contribute to the Plan Committee's efforts to improve communication with the joint ventures.
- B. NSST members will elect their own Chair and, with the aid of the Plan National co-chairs, draft more detailed Terms of Reference for the Team. Team members should be appointed to renewable multi-year staggered terms to ensure a healthy turnover of members yet maintain sufficient continuity so the Team can function efficiently.
- C. The NSST will produce annual consensus reports on status of Plan biological foundations and will report to the Plan Committee when it is in session. Otherwise, the NSST will report to the Plan National Chairs in each country.

2.9 Who is responsible for implementing the provisions of this chapter?

- A. **The Director** is responsible for providing overall guidance and direction to the Service for implementing the Plan and ensuring Service-wide coordination. The Director is responsible for providing the Federal leadership and direction in promoting the habitat priorities as identified in the Plan. The Director receives recommendations from the Plan Committee.
- B. **The Assistant Director, Migratory Birds** assists with the implementation of the Plan by developing policy guidance, supervising the Chief, Division of Bird Habitat Conservation, and serving as a member of the Plan Committee.
- C. **The Assistant Director, External Affairs** provides support for communications in the form of news releases and other services to promote the mission of the Plan.
- D. **Regional Directors** ensure that the goals and objectives of Plan joint ventures are included in administrative support by coordinating and planning joint venture activities within their Regions. Regional Directors also ensure that Regional programs encompass Plan goals and objectives when appropriate. Regional Directors or their staff represent the

Service on Joint Venture Management Boards and provide support to the Joint Venture Coordinators. Regional Directors support database input and quality control for a national habitat accomplishment database that documents accomplishments under the Plan.

E. The Chief, Division of Bird Habitat Conservation, serves as the U.S. co-chair of the Plan Committee. The Chief supervises all activities of the Division of Bird Habitat Conservation, which performs a variety of activities directly associated with the Plan, including:

- (1) Providing guidance on Plan implementation, through the Assistant Director, Migratory Birds and the Director, to the Regional Directors.
- (2) Providing coordination between Joint Venture Coordinators in the United States.
- (3) Coordinating Service activities and involvement with other Federal agencies implementing the Plan.
- (4) Providing a liaison with the Plan Committee.
- (5) Providing a liaison with Canada and Mexico.
- (6) Evaluating the Plan objectives and success in meeting the objectives.
- (7) Maintaining and supporting a system to track and report the accomplishments of all Plan partners.
- (8) Promoting and striving to fulfill the habitat priorities identified in the Plan.
- (9) Cooperating with Service offices and other Plan partners to develop new strategies to increase partnership funding for the Plan with subsequent distribution to top priority areas.

F. The Chief, Division of Migratory Bird Management, or his or her designee, serves as an advisor to the U.S. Section of the Plan Committee.

2.10 How often is the Plan updated? The Plan is a comprehensive document that needs constant review and periodic updating to remain viable and effectively deal with international problems. Changes in agricultural policy, related Federal actions, and negotiations on international trade agreements directly affect the implementation of the Plan. These changes and the continuing evolution of joint ventures demand that the Plan remain responsive to changing political and fiscal environments while pursuing a conservation goal. It is the responsibility of the Plan Committee to coordinate the monitoring and updating of the Plan every 5 years, as required by the [North American Wetlands Conservation Act of 1989, Public Law 101-233, 16 U.S.C. 4401-4412](#).

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