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***U.S. Shorebird
Conservation Plan***

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4.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter describes the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan (Plan) and the general strategy for its implementation.

4.2 What is the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan?

A. The Plan is a document that provides a scientific framework to determine species, sites, and habitats that most urgently need conservation action. The plan was last published in May 2001.

B. The Plan addresses 74 populations of 50 shorebird species (plovers, oystercatchers, stilts/avocets, and sandpipers). The partners developed the Plan in the United States in parallel with efforts in Canada and, more recently, Mexico.

C. The Plan has three major goals at different scales.

(1) At a regional scale, the goal of the Plan is to ensure that the respective Shorebird Regional Working group identifies and maintains adequate quantity and quality of habitat to support the different shorebirds that breed in, winter in, and migrate through each region.

(2) At a national scale, the goal is to stabilize populations of all shorebird species known or suspected of being in decline due to limiting factors occurring within the U.S., while ensuring that common species are also protected from future threats.

(3) At a hemispheric scale, the goal is to restore and maintain the populations of all shorebird species in the Western Hemisphere through cooperative international efforts.

D. Natural landscapes in North America have been altered significantly, and the wetlands, shoreline habitats, and grasslands that shorebirds use have been particularly disturbed. For many shorebird species, existing information is insufficient to determine how these alterations have affected populations. The Plan identifies broad strategies to meet these major goals and to address these limiting factors.

4.3 What are the authorities for this chapter?

A. Migratory Bird Treaty Act, as amended ([16 U.S.C. 703-712](#); Ch. 128; 40 Stat. 755).

B. Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, as amended ([16 U.S.C. 2901-2911](#), 94 Stat. 1322).

4.4 Who in the Service is responsible for the U. S. Shorebird Conservation Plan?

A. The Director provides:

(1) Overall guidance and direction to the Service for implementing the Plan and ensuring Servicewide coordination.

(2) The Federal leadership and direction in promoting the priorities identified in the Plan.

B. The Assistant Director – Migratory Birds assists with the implementation of the Plan by:

(1) Developing policy guidance.

(2) Ensuring Plan goals and objectives are built into the Migratory Bird Program strategic plan.

C. Regional Directors:

(1) Ensure that our Migratory Bird and other staff are aware of the goals and objectives of the Plan and are permitted to participate in regional working groups, national technical committees, joint venture science committees, and focal species working groups. Staff of Regional Directors represent the Service on the Plan Council and regional working groups.

(2) Ensure that Regional programs encompass Plan goals and objectives when appropriate.

(3) Encourage development of all migratory bird species planning implementation and evaluation capacity within joint ventures.

D. The Chief, Division of Migratory Bird Management:

(1) Represents the Service on the Plan Council,

(2) Provides one half-time position to serve as national coordinator of the Plan, and

(3) Coordinates development of projects to implement goals and objectives of the Plan.

E. The Chief, Division of Bird Habitat Conservation, encourages other Service programs to include the goals and objectives of the Plan within their joint venture implementation plans.

4.5 What other agencies and organizations are involved in the U. S. Shorebird Conservation Plan?

A. A wide array of State and Federal agencies, nongovernmental conservation organizations, and individual researchers throughout the country developed the Plan. They designed the Plan to complement the existing landscape-scale conservation efforts of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP), Partners in Flight, and the North American Waterbird Conservation Plan. We coordinate efforts with:

(1) The provincial and national governments of Canada,

(2) Joint ventures,

(3) The Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN),

(4) State wildlife agencies,

(5) Other Federal agencies, and

(6) A variety of public and private conservation agencies and organizations.

B. Partners have developed 11 regional conservation plans and regional migratory bird programs and joint ventures to implement goals and objectives of these regional-scale plans.

4.6 How is the U. S. Shorebird Conservation Plan administered? Each partner organization involved in the Plan implements the parts best suited to its focus and skills.

A. The U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan Council. The Plan Council oversees implementation and primarily relies on joint ventures to deliver habitat conservation objectives for shorebirds. The Council formed four technical committees to provide guidance on research, monitoring, education, and WHSRN aspects of the Plan. The Council operates by terms of reference or guidance adopted by the Council, and it does not have regulatory authority.

(1) The Council's members come from a wide variety of public and private organizations, including industry representatives who support the conservation of shorebirds. Participation on the Council is open to any organization committed to implementing objectives of the Plan. The Council can add new members officially at any regular meeting of the Council, and the current members approve them. Each participating organization determines who should represent them on the Council and the term of appointment. The Council votes on members to participate, for two-year terms, on the 11-member Executive Committee. The Executive Committee includes a Chair and Vice-Chair and makes decisions on Council business outside of annual meetings.

(2) The purpose of the Council is to provide guidance and support, with input from all partners and technical committees, for the implementation of all aspects of the Plan. The Council:

(a) Provides coordination among the partner organizations who are implementing the Plan;

(b) Supports regional working groups and technical committees;

(c) Monitors the progress toward implementing objectives of the Plan and evaluates achievement of goals at 5-year intervals;

(d) Helps support shorebird conservation work of individual partner organizations by guiding development of coordinated programs, sharing information on opportunities for funding, and coordinating fund-raising efforts where appropriate;

(e) Provides input to the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Landbird/Shorebird/Waterbird Working Group on shorebird conservation issues and needs; and

(f) Selects and provides guidance to the Plan representative on the U.S. North American Bird Conservation Initiative Committee.

B. Regional Working Groups. Regional shorebird working groups review actions needed to meet the Plan's goals and objectives.

4.7 How often is the U. S. Shorebird Conservation Plan updated? The Plan is a comprehensive document that needs constant review and periodic updating to remain viable and effectively deal with national problems. The Council posts revisions of some Plan components and changes to regional plans on the [Plan's Web site](#). The Council will make a full revision of the Plan available at appropriate intervals (e.g., every 5 years).

For information on the content of this chapter, contact the Division of Migratory Bird Management. For additional information about this Web page, contact [Krista Holloway](#) in the Division of Policy and Directives Management (PDM).

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