**Seabird Colonies and Adjacent Waters Working Group (SCAW-WG) Committee Meeting**

September 27, 2018, Plymouth, MA

Meeting Notes

**Attendees**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NAME** | **AFFILIATION** | **SCAW-WG REGIONAL SUB-GROUP**  | **EMAIL** |
| Laurel Barnhill | USFWS - Southeast Region | N/A | laurel\_barnhill@fws.gov |
| Ruth Boettcher | VA Dept. of Game & Inland Fisheries  | Mid-Atlantic | ruth.boettcher@dgif.virginia.gov |
| Gwen Brewer (proxy) | MD Dept. of Natural Resources | Mid-Atlantic | gwenda.brewer@maryland.gov |
| Liz Craig | Univ. of New Hampshire | Gulf of Maine | elizabeth.craig@UNH.edu |
| Audrey DeRose-Wilson | DE Dept. of Fish and Wildlife | Mid-Atlantic | audrey.derose-wilson@state.de.us |
| Susan Elbin | New York City Audubon | Lower Northeast | selbin@nycaudubon.org |
| Craig Faulhaber (proxy) | FL Fish & Wildlife Commission | Southeast and Gulf of Mexico | Craig.faulhaber@myfwc.com |
| Lisa Ferguson | Wetlands Institute  | Mid-Atlantic | lferguson@wetlandsinstitute.org |
| Amanda Hackney | Black Cat GIS | Gulf of Mexico | a.hackney@blackcatgis.com |
| Tim Keyes | GA Dept. of Natural Resources | Southeast | Tim.keyes@dnr.ga.gov |
| Zac Loman (via phone)  | University of Maine | N/A | zachary.loman@maine.edu |
| Carolyn Mostello | MA Div. of Fisheries & Wildlife | Gulf of Maine | carolyn.mostello@state.ma.us |
| Kathy Parsons | Mass Audubon | Gulf of Maine | kparsons@massaudubon.org |
| Kevin Powers | Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary | Gulf of Maine | Kdpowers24@gmail.com |
| Yvan Satge | USGS SC Coop Research Unit | Southeast | ysatge@clemson.edu |
| Caleb Spiegel | USFWS Northeast Region | SCAW-WG Advisor | Caleb\_spiegel@fws.gov |
| John Stanton | USFWS - Southeast Region | N/A | John\_stanton@fws.gov |
| Amy Tegeler (proxy) | SC Dept. of Natural Resources | Southeast | tegelera@dnr.sc.gov |
| Pam Toschik | USFWS - Northeast Region | N/A | pamela\_toschik@fws.gov |
| Andrew Vitz | MA Div. of Fisheries & Wildlife | Gulf of Maine | andrew.vitz@state.ma.us |
| Linda Welch | Maine Coastal Islands NWR | Gulf of Maine | Linda\_welch@fws.gov |

**Purpose of SCAW-WG Committee Meeting**:

1. Identify actions that need to be taken to increase effectiveness and efficacy of the SCAW-WG.
2. Establish a plan for regional subgroups to identify, obtain and/or compile information that will help solidify and provide direction for regional sub-groups.
3. Identify immediate actions necessary for planning and coordinating a 2023 SCAW-wide breeding survey.

**State or regional updates that address any of the short-term or long-term goals in the SCAW-WG’s Structure/Goals/Mission document:**

VA (Ruth Boettcher) - Completed surveys this summer; all species covered except GBHEs. Tested phone app (Survey 123) to collect CWB survey data in the field. Used phone app for productivity monitoring of American oystercatchers and piping and Wilson’s plovers too.

GA (Tim Keyes) - Current seabird work in GA: habitat creation/maintenance on dredge islands; breeding season closures on some islands; active habitat management that includes fire & herbicide treatments and posting signs and roping off areas on islands open to the public during the breeding season; and deploying education-beach stewards. Use electric fencing and symbolic fencing to keep predators and people out of nesting areas. Monitoring frequency based on FL Shorebird Alliance approach (10-12 seabird colonies monitored annually, 3-week return interval). Seabird surveys are conducted on foot, by boat, by plane and drone - coverage is high state-wide. Tested drones at an altitude of 200 ft. - did not disturb terns. Royal terns (10,000+) in one colony. Threats: SLR, contaminants, novel predators. Most successful colonies are on more elevated dredge islands, natural islands have flooding problems. Bobcats and coyotes fairly recent predators on islands. Active coyote control on some islands. GA has two roof-top least tern colonies. The laughing gull breeding population is increasing - control efforts (egg oiling) occurring around airfields. Royal terns breeding population is increasing whereas the brown pelican breeding population is declining. Only opportunistic counts of long-legged waders conducted in conjunction with wood stork surveys -- would require more resources. Dark-bodied long-legged waders are hard to survey from the air. See attached file entitled “2018 SCAW MEETING\_Keyes\_GA.pdf” for details.

ME & NH (Linda Welch & Liz Craig) – Linda provided 2018 breeding survey results for portions of the Gulf of Maine region (see second slide in attached presentation entitled 2018 SCAW MEETING\_Welch\_GoME.pdf). DCCO surveys were completed in 2008 and 2013, but not in 2018. River otter documented preying on eiders/gulls and causing total island breeding failures. Not all of the Maine Coastal Islands NWR is surveyed each year due to lack of staffing. Research: Arctic tern meta-population analysis; Razorbill movements; Puffin overwinter distribution; Tern diets; Co-drafted seabird section in Herring Fisheries Management Plan Amendment 8 (NE Fisheries Management Council); Symposium with publication in prep -- ecological role of the sand lance in NW Atlantic; Great shearwater tracking study examining annual variation in spatial use of the Gulf of Maine, bycatch hotspots identified. Satellite tracking common terns with experimental backpack style attachment revealed that the birds were able to fly through Hurricane Maria without any apparent difficulty while heading from the Gulf of Maine to South America; Next-Gen sequencing of seabird fecal samples to assess diet of adult seabirds; University of New Hampshire Genome Center sequencing may be cheaper than other option. These diet data could be incorporated into fisheries management plans as justification for protecting prey resources. Additional diet studies are being conducted using stable isotope analysis on terns and alcids. Liz Craig mentioned a study that examined ingestion of plastics by seabirds via examining fecal pellets (3 spp of terns, 2 spp. of gulls) - Herring Gulls had greatest exposure; little to no plastic exposure among terns. Future study (chemical analysis) needed to detect ingestion of smaller plastics. Caleb Spiegel suggested NOAA Marine Debris Program funding may be helpful in continuing these studies. See attached file entitled “2018 SCAW MEETING\_Welch\_GoME.pdf” for details.

NJ (Lisa Ferguson) - Numbers of breeding islands/sites declining in NJ; exploring the use of dredge material to increase suitable habitat in the state; state is actively protecting all known colonies; color-banding Black skimmers (chicks/adults).

SC (Yvan Satge) - SCDNR surveys each year, testing drone technology as a potential survey method; brown pelican breeding population increasing; on-going satellite tracking study of brown pelicans (PhD student) to inform wind farm development, this study also includes a diet analysis component - association w/ shrimp trawlers.

Gulf of Mexico (Amanda Hackney) - TX has conducted annual colonial surveys since 1973 (maintained in Excel spreadsheet). LA surveys are more sporadic, but increasing efforts. MS/AL have small coastlines and are able to survey most colonial nesters more easily. FL - Florida Shorebird Alliance - good data. TX habitat is mostly dredge spoil islands and some breeding sites are industrial (e.g., black skimmers nesting in oil refineries). Rooftop nesting noted in TX and FL. Black skimmer have declined by 50% from historical records (w/in 30 yrs); Biggest colony at Dow Chemical site. SLR concerns: Flooding can be serious in some years. Brown pelicans are overabundant in TX (menhaden diet) & possibly displacing other species at colonies. Laughing gulls very abundant in TX. Black-backed gull egg addling occurring to reduce populations. Avian/mammalian predators abundant. All islands owned by the State of TX, many have fish camps on islands causing disturbance to skimmer colonies. Some problems with photographers entering colonies, fencing often destroyed. Campaigns are underway encouraging the public stay back 50 feet from colonies. Drone techniques being tested by researchers (Clay Green). Reddish egret tracking studies. Central Gulf Coast Shorebird Alliance being stood up - modelled after FL Shorebird Alliance. GOMANN group: (To be discussed later).

NY/CT (Susan Elbin) – Susan announced next year’s Waterbird Society meeting will be held on the Eastern Shore of *MD*, Nov 6-9, 2019. *Plans for a full Atlantic Marine Bird Cooperative meeting to be held in conjunction. This may be a great venue for a 2019 SCAW-WG meeting.* Harbor Herons meeting Dec 10-11, Staten Island, NY. NYC surveys summarized annually at meetings (2018 meeting scheduled for December). PIPL surveyed by agencies. Beach/nest Stewards. Conduct Am. Oystercatcher productivity surveys on NPS/State parks. Western Long Island colonies have trouble w/ flooding and ghost crab predation. Common tern colony monitoring/marking (Governor’s island). Long-legged wader monitoring since the 1980s following the same protocols throughout this span of time. Black skimmer satellite tracking (Kate Goodenough). Some roof-top nesting gull colonies (~130 pr). Despite herring gull control (egg addling) at Laguardia Airport, the gulls keep returning.

MA (Kathy Parsons, Mass Audubon) – Mass Audubon works closely with MA Div. of Fisheries & Wildlife (MassWildlife) in the management and monitoring of colonial nesters. There have been significant drops in black-crowned night heron & snowy egret breeding numbers in MA. Survey phone apps tested for colonial nesters (some concerns, staying in colonies too long). NestStory (data collection app) worked very well for plovers. Seabird colony protection at ~20 sites. Restoration of colonies in Boston Harbor. Roseate Terns analysis of staging on Cape and prey items.

MA (Carolyn Mostello & Andrew Vitz, MassWildlife) – Survey and monitoring effort is completed by a network of NGOs, that help coordinate and conduct annual tern, skimmer and laughing gull censuses. All major colonies surveyed. Roseate terns are increasing regionally overcoming past fluctuations. All MA data reported here are very preliminary. Skimmers are few (~13 pairs). Common terns, ~19,800 pairs, roseate terns ~2,200 pairs, Least terns ~3,500 pairs, laughing gulls ~3,300 pairs, arctic tern 1 individual. Began pit-tagging common terns for a study on effects of bands. Colonial waterbird (gull, cormorant,wading bird) survey effort was undertaken in 2018 in support of the AF Council support for coordinated waterbird surveys by 2023. 2018 survey effort detected declines in herring (~6,200 pairs) and great black-backed gulls (~3,600 pairs). Roof-top gull nesting unknown. Increasing species include Great egret i (~450 pairs), Laughing Gull (~3,300 pairs), and double-crested cormorant increasing (~8,000 pairs). Declines over the last 20 years have been documented for Snowy Egret (~750 to ~300 pairs) and Black-crowned Night Heron (746 to 308 pairs, black crowned ~1500 to ~550 pairs, based on four surveys periods), and glossy ibis has declined to about 60 pairs.

MD (Gwen Brewer sitting in for David Brinker) – MD tested Survey 123 phone app as a means for recording CWB survey data, will be looking at creating floating artificial islands using pontoon boats; did not survey GBHEs in 2018. A total of 1,100 brown pelicans were banded in 2018. Mixed heron/egret colonies declining, natural bay islands disappearing. Laughing gull population appears to be stable. Terns and black skimmers down. Drones used for roof-top Least Tern surveys. USACoE built three islands (two lost already to erosion) - now starting to use ‘oyster castles’ to stabilize dredge islands. Study on Common terns: stressors, island change mapping, i-buttons in nests. Completed a 1985-2017 CWB regression analysis on seabird breeding populations in MD using data collected between 1985 and 2017. Preliminary results show royal terns are stable, but most others are down, including common terns, Forster’s terns and black skimmers. Likely cause - disappearance of island nesting habitat. Mitigation measures are being considered (e.g., floating islands).

FL (Craig Faulhaber) - CWB surveys done by partners in FL. 2018 summaries not completed yet. FL Shorebird Database primary data management tool/resource. Colony management include signage, beach stewards and other measures coordinated with permitting. Received a NFWF oil spill grant which resulted in the hiring of more Fish and Wildlife Commission personnel. Research: Least tern >50% on roof tops surveys done in FL. Full coverage of beach nesting birds. Statewide Wilson’s plover survey planned for next year. Long legged wading birds very challenging to survey (e.g. 3 million acres of water bodies). Tested aerial transects many years ago – too expensive. State-wide Reddish egret surveyed completed in 2016. South FL has >40,000 wading birds, interior is not surveyed. Note: FL has some colonies with long-term surveys that might provide an index. No surveys for DCCOs. Wading bird data is collected by partners-access to data can be challenging. Only feasible way to monitor long-legged wader numbers in the state would likely be to sub-sample and extrapolate.

DE (Audrey DeRose-Wilson) – DE has approximately 30 pairs of least terns, state survey effort focuses mainly on piping plovers. In 2018, piping plovers moved from Cape Henlopen State Park to Bombay Hook NWR drawn to the refuge by a habitat restoration project whose benefit to plovers may be short-lived because of vegetation. Least tern productivity is very low. Gulls and long-legged waders are not monitored because there is no staff to conduct surveys. Some colonial waterbirds have been counted opportunistically during piping plover counts, but not well-covered. State has a contract for pilot/plane for next four years, but no observer. If observers were available from elsewhere, this plane time could be dedicated to waterbird surveys *if* clear management objectives are expressed to for DE Fish and Wildlife. Audrey is looking for aerial survey protocols (examples). She needs to explain to her upper management the purpose and uses of survey data (meeting audience gave several examples e.g., State Wildlife Action Plan, take permits for gulls).

**Maximizing the effectiveness/efficiency of the SCAW-WG**

(1) Coordinate With Other Related Efforts:

*Example:* Gulf of Mexico Avian Monitoring Network (GOMAMN). TX to FL Gulf Coasts. Started after oil spill using Restore Act funding to fill knowledge & data gaps. Strategic Monitoring Plan for seabirds & shorebirds (Randy Wilson, Jeff Gleason, Lower MS JV) -- Development of BMPs for breeding islands, communications/outreach, atlas of priority breeding areas, and GoMMAPPS (Gulf of Mexico Marine Assessment Program for Protected Species) which has a strict offshore focus. Kacy Ray from FL is participating in GOMANN planning. Pat Jodice is also involved with both SCAW & GOMAMN. Other GOMAMN contacts to pursue: Janell Brush, Peter Frederick (FL). May want to explore data-sharing, breeding survey coordination and other commonalities between SCAW-WG and GOMAMN to increase efficiency and minimize duplication of effort. Could also help with broader population trend analysis & conservation/management assessments across geographies for some species (e.g., black skimmer).

**ACTION:** Establish liaisons in SCAW-WG and GOMAMN to facilitate frequent communication/collaboration between these two groups.**Amanda Hackney and Ruth Boettcher**

(2) Internal Coordination: Website, frequent meetings, common project(s).

**ACTION:** Create “WIX” (open source design) webpage for the group to enhance internal SCAW-WG communication. **Amanda Hackey and Ruth Boettcher**, with input from SCAW-WG members **by December 1, 2018**.

**ACTION:** Meet twice a year - once via Web-ex and once face-to-face. Ruth Boettcher suggested : 1) Hold a SCAW-WG webinar in mid-March 2019 to review and discuss the results of action items developed during this meeting; 2) Hold a face-to-face meeting in conjunction with the 2019 Waterbirds Meeting, November 6 - 9 on the Eastern Shore of MD. **Ruth Boettcher**

**ACTION:** SCAW-WG committee **i**dentified the 2023 SCAW-wide coordinated survey is a project that should be adopted by the SCAW-WG as a means of establishing greater cohesion among the SCAW-WG regional sub-group membership and one that would benefit states, provinces, regions and the Atlantic (and MS) Flyway. **SCAW-WG**

(3) Regional Sub-group Planning: How can regional subgroups identify/obtain/compile information needed to:

1. Establish regional cohesion, direction and purpose
2. Prioritize regional management actions
3. Identify regional data and management gaps

**ACTION:** Regional subgroup leads work with subgroup members to compile a list of focal species for their region **by March 1, 2019.**

**ACTION:** Regional sub-group leads are also encouraged to work with subgroup members to identify/obtain/compile one or more of the following topics for their region *in addition to compiling the list of focal species* **by March 1, 2019:**

- Threats to breeding success;

- Research & mgmt. priorities;

- Inventory of existing data;

- Data needs;

- Conservation, management & outreach efforts currently undertaken within the region;

- Identification of regional data and management gaps

**Update on the coordination and implementation of colonial waterbird breeding surveys and data compilation and management:**

Powerpoint Presentation #1 (see attached file entitled “2018 SCAW-WG Updates.pdf”):

Ruth Boettcher and Caleb Spiegel presented a powerpoint which summarized progress made towards some of the SCAW-WG goals since the 2017 SCAW-WG webinar.

The Atlantic Flyway Council adopted two recommendations stating that states and provinces will1) support/participate in a 2018 survey to the greatest extent resources allow; 2) establish regular coordinated CWB surveys by 2023*;* 3) develop shared CWB data management system with mapping capabilities; and 4) Contribute historical, recent, future data.

In the winter of 2018, phone interviews were conducted with CWB biologists from 13 Atlantic Flyway states to assess scope and scale of 2018 surveys; determine whether SCAW focal species would be covered in 2018 surveys; and ascertain whether states are willing to contribute past & current CWB survey data for entry into shared database. All 13 states were willing to contribute past and current date, three states were planning on conducting complete seabird surveys, fours states were planning on conducting complete wading bird surveys (exception: VA and MD did not plan on covering GBHEs), and all states were planning on doing complete surveys of one or more SCAW-WG focal species (LETE, COTE, BLSK, LAGU, DCCO).

Three related projects are currently underway that, in combination, will have the potential to make great strides towards developing a shared CWB data management system. Project details are provided in the attached file entitled “2018 SCAW-WG Updates.pdf”.

Powerpoint Presentation #2 (see attached file entitled “2018 Ferguson et al.\_SE Seabird Colony Registry and Atlas\_pres.pdf”):

Lisa Ferguson and Yvan Satge presented an overview of the completed Southeast Seabird Breeding Atlas. The rationale behind the colony registry/atlas project was to compile and summarize data across multiple states, in this case the coastal counties of SC, GA and FL for conservation and management purposes and reduce demand for data inquiries. States provided survey data from 2003 through 2017 on average. Because colony naming and descriptions varied widely, each colony was assigned a unique number and name. Colonies <1 km apart were combined. Colony parameters include site ownership, site type (barrier island, saltmarsh island, shell rake, etc.), colony type (ground, roof, shrub, etc.). Survey parameters included survey type (aerial, ground, photo, etc.), duration (single day or multiple visits), units counted (breeding adults, nests, chicks), estimate type and accuracy based on survey type and duration. Limitations include missing years, states and colonies, summaries maximum (or highest counts) only, does not include non-breeding information, and data are spatially, but not necessarily temporally discrete. Details on the breeding atlas can be found in the attached presentation. The Registry and Atlas is temporarily being stored on Clemson University’s server, but looking for longer-term host site. Important discussions still needed: some states have concerns about putting these data on-line. How are the data going to be accessed? This project provides a great example for the future development of a shared database and some of the difficulties that need to be overcome such as colony naming conventions (e.g., place names, year, unique ID based on GPS coordinates). Survey windows are variable, as well. Lisa raised the question of how to deal with these differences. The sharing of these data among the wildlife management/research community is currently approved by the contributing states.

Powerpoint Presentation #3 (see attached file entitled “2018 DatamgmtConsiderations\_SCAW\_Spiegel.pdf”):

Caleb Spiegel presented a powerpoint on the use of coordinated CWB breeding survey data for informing management decisions and actions. North American Waterbird Plan (2002) listed monitoring recommendations 16 years ago that remain the same today indicating minimal progress has been made in meeting these monitoring objectives. The monitoring goal stated in the Waterbird Plan is to detect 50% change over 10 years/or 3 generations.

Caleb stated several considerations for designing coordinated CWB surveys that include the purpose, scope, geographic scale, timeframe and frequency of surveys.

Caleb used the example of data needs surrounding regulated take permits. The top 10 species for which take permits are requested include the following CWBs: DCCO, RBGU, HEGU, GBHE, LAGU and GREG. USFWS Conflict Species Framework uses survey data to make a biologically defensible case regarding the issuance of take permits, help with establishing cumulative take, create a foundation for NEPA review, and evaluate actions the Service took and if expected objectives were met.

Perfect data is not always needed. How much data is really needed? Other parameters that are equally important such as stakeholder input and the process itself (i.e., USFWS Conflict Management Framework).

Discussion following Caleb’s presentation:

What group management decisions require coordinated data? This will influence how we coordinate collection of waterbird data & associated methodologies.

- Ruth: Coordinated surveys will better describe population structure (for example, the level of interchange among colonies throughout each species range), and the impact of management actions (e.g., control) on a species at different scales.

- Carolyn: indicated some spp. get a bad rap (gulls) over rare species (terns). Need to manage for a balance/species diversity.

- Laurel: Asked the group: What data need to be collected and at what frequency to balance predator management/control with desired conservation outcomes?

 -- Carolyn: Data going into EAs are outdated.

-- GROUP: Ideal to survey annually if possible to get an idea of interannual variability, but not feasible due to resource constraints. National Waterbird Plan/Monitoring/CWB database development has recommended a 5-year or 3 generations survey interval.

- Status info is important - how many are there? What’s the trend? What is the effect on other species? Productivity is important if trends are decreasing.

- Laurel stated the USFWS is responsible for managing take and evaluating management actions. What decisions are state’s making about waterbirds and at what scales (local, regional, SCAW-wide, national)?

**Planning for a coordinated 2023 SCAW-WG wide breeding survey:**

**Decisions at different scales:**

Population level

- Rangewide status & trends and distribution, by species

- Population structure across the range

- Decisions that need to made based on the data collected (e.g., take permits, siting energy development projects, listing decisions)

State (and local) level

- Within state status & trends and distribution, by species

- Productivity

- Banding for assessing survival and other demographic parameters (banding can also inform management at the rangewide scale)

- Decisions that can be made based on the data collected (e.g., habitat protection, restoration or creation, predator management)

- Tim Keyes: another management decision that need to be considered are con-specific impacts (e.g. gulls eating tern chicks) at the local scale. How to effectively manage for both?

**E-Bird:**

The use of e-Bird data; consensus among the attendees was that it was not very useful for developing breeding estimates, but make have some merit for estimating nonbreeding population distribution.

**Frequency of coordinated surveys:**

-Coordinated survey frequency: Every five years for SCAW-wide surveys. Amanda noted that TX may need annual surveys because of drought/flood impacts.

*-Research question that needs to be explored:* Can surveys from a variety of years be combined to provide the same information as one survey every 5 years?

**Develop a framework for planning coordinated surveys that yield meaningful, defensible data:**

At each scale (e.g., SCAW, State, Local) identify:

1)What **decision(s)** need to be made(e.g.,amount of sustainable takeallowed) →

2) What **information** is needed to make each decision (e.g., abundance, population trends) →

3) What **methods** are needed for collecting the necessary information at the correct scale and timeframe?

SCAW-WG CHALLENGE: *At the SCAW scale, what decisions are being made at this scale? What data required? How should the data be collected?*

**ACTION:** Complete a contemporary trend analysis of SCAW focal species to enhance awareness and justification for 2023 coordinated survey project. Zach Loman (University of ME USGS Coop Res Unit) is working on this using survey data in the CWB database at USGS Patuxent.

**ACTION:** Ruth will build a draft survey (on-line or static) for each regional subgroup to complete that will identify regional (and state) management decisions; data needs, and to a lesser extent, data collection methods (these can be better identified once we have strong sense of key management decisions and data needs). Deadline for Ruth to circulate a draft to this group: **December 1, 2018.** Deadline for comments: **January 15, 2019.** Deadline for final list of survey questions **January 31, 2019.** Survey will be sent out to participants in early February 2019 and results will be shared at the mid-March 2019 webinar.

**ACTION:** Linda Welch suggested revisiting the BRI report on survey methodology available from 2012 Linda will distribute to the group ASAP.

**Suggested next meeting (not discussed by attendees):**

Web-ex in mid-March 2019

**Other topics:**

**Funding coordinated surveys and shared data system:**

A few suggestions were made regarding the funding of future coordinated surveys and a shared data management system. 1) use the Atlantic Flyway Council to get states to contribute to both endeavors. 2) leverage state funds to induce the USFWS to contribute additional funds 3) prepare a multi-state SWG proposal to fund the 2023 survey while still pursuing more permanent funding sources. 4) “All hands on deck strategy”: Tap into networks of professionals (agencies, NGOs, universities) that can team up to survey multiple states during coordinated survey years -- pool resources. *Topic will need to be revisited at the next SCAW-WG webinar.*

**National Waterbird Coordinator Update:**

No funding currently available from USFWS, though position is still on the books (“vacant”). There are plans in the works to promote the position and temporarily house it with an appropriate NGO. It was suggested that a request be forwarded to the Atlantic Flyway Council that states support the filling of the Waterbird Coordinator position.

**Current Regional Subgroups Leads:**

Gulf of ME – Linda Welch, Liz Craig, Kathy Parsons, Sabina Wilhelm (Canadian Wildlife Service)

Lower NE – Susan Elbin

Mid-Atlantic – Ruth Boettcher, Lisa Ferguson, Dave Brinker (MD DNR)

Southeast – Tim Keyes, Walker Golder (National Audubon), Felicia Sanders (SC DNR)

Gulf of Mexico – Amanda Hackney, Owen Fitzsimmons and David Newstead (Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program), Jeff Gleason (USFWS – Gulf Restoration Program), Kacy Ray (American Bird Conservancy)

|  |
| --- |
| **Action Items (with Deadlines) Summary** |
| **Task** | **Lead(s)** | **Deadline** |
| Establish liaisons in SCAW-WG and GOMAMN to facilitate frequent communication/collaboration between these two groups. | Amanda Hackey & Ruth Boettcher | Immediate & on-going |
| Create “WIX” (open source design) webpage for the group to enhance internal SCAW-WG communication.  | Amanda Hackey & Ruth Boettcher, with SCAW-WG membership input | Dec. 1, 2018 |
| Regional subgroups compile a list of focal species for their region. | Sub-group co-leaders | Mar. 1, 2019 |
| Regional subgroup members to identify/obtain/compile one or more of the following topics for their region: - Threats to breeding success;- Research & mgmt. priorities;- Inventory of existing data;- Data needs; - Conservation, management & outreach efforts currently undertaken within the region; - Identification of regional data and management gaps | Sub-group co-leaders | Mar. 1, 2019 |
| Complete a contemporary trend analysis of SCAW focal species to enhance awareness and justification for 2023 coordinated survey project.  | Zach Loman | *By 2020?* |
| Build a draft survey (on-line or static) for each regional subgroup to complete that will identify regional (and state) management decisions; data needs, and to a lesser extent, data collection methods.  | Ruth Boettcher | Dec. 1, 2018 |
| Send the BRI report on survey methodology. | Linda Welch | ASAP |