

# FBCI Meeting Notes

## January 29-30, 2008

### Gainesville, FL

#### Todd's objectives for meeting:

Agree on some basics – Mission, Goals, Objectives  
Fashion a structure  
Identify some projects  
Plan for congress  
Develop a system to manage website

#### **Goals and Objectives – Dean**

Concepts omitted?

**Capacity building?** Group of experts to pose questions, obtain advice

1. bird conservation experts 2. cadre of trained volunteers to help w/ specific projects

Work into mission statement or create another bullet

**Policy aspect** – in mission statement, little in goals/obj.

Ex. Energy policy, water flow policy

This group will hopefully advise policy-makers/provide info. (not be creating policy)

FBCI may take a position on some issues

Julie will draft another bullet regarding policy

Karl liked 1-7, 12 a lot; 9&10 redundant with other initiatives (potentially omit)

But can get a lot of people to support monitoring projects

Perhaps action verbs are the problem; coordinate and support 9&10

Dean will relook at 9&10

Caroline suggested 9&10 be combined

Charlie, 12, how relate to Joint Venture? Is FBCI a JV initiative?

Under **umbrella** of Atlantic Coast JV. Originally FL was entirely under Atlantic Coast.

Now there is also the East Gulf Coast JV (Panhandle region).

Look at other statewide initiatives, see what their structure is

Pros and cons of being under vs. being partner

Craig Not much difference

As long as working together...

JV is here for support

Need to work w/ both JV's and use JV's resources

Elena How much independence will FBCI have if under

Craig background present, NABCI...

Don't need to say under

Dean w/in JV's are BCR Partnerships (are under JV's)

Pro – Strength in formalizing; obtaining resources  
Con – dilution of FL issues b/c 13(?) states involved  
Pros & cons equalize  
We can focus on FL

Stefani Independence good if want to become not-for-profit later  
If under Atlantic, separates Panhandle

Robin can have strong relationship w/, w/o being subsidiary of JV

**Decided → partnership, not under**

Charlie: Need to be explicit about area covered → all of FL. Logo should have picture of FL or ‘Statewide’ somewhere.

Al, 2., (couldn’t understand concern)

Can mention T&E, make sure not implying specific agencies, legal issues?

How about ‘Most in need of conservation’

Stefani 3. state action plan already did this

FBCI focus on/Initiative function to help implement

Dean Assessment vs. prioritization; FBCI not spend a lot of time on

Sonny plans get changed, updated – need to keep in goals/obj.

Robin true of many objectives listed – products already exist

Mark Priority species but not have same priority; those that aren’t being paid attention to

Heather was working on a prioritization list – came up w/ FWC product

Craig could help; BCRs have done this

Dean issue is that BCR’s don’t cut off at state line

Everyone will see list before finalized

Al – Scope of goals HUGE (Robin agrees, but comfortable with including all if narrow down to what can start on)

Stefani Focus on couple can achieve in short term

Entire list is long-term view – comprehensive

Dean Reflects a process – there is not a disjunct nature

Don’t have to be done statewide for all birds in all habitats at the same time

Todd Primary function – cooperation, coordination, help fill gaps

Dean (earlier) Pooling existing resources and identifying gaps

(now) if mission and objectives too small...

Benefit to showing whole suite of needs when go to people who can help with those needs

Sonny Building framework for mission, diverse membership – need to appeal to broad array

Robin let’s make sure FBCI is worth your while, that something is coming out of this

Ensure FBCI is a strong and vital organization that is fulfilling some need

Dean Need to accomplish 6,7,&8; everything else helps meet those obj

Concepts reworded, deleted, etc.?

Outreach and communication component weak

### **What Will FBCI Do? (goals used to achieve objectives)**

If we do these, we will accomplish our mission

Stefani break bullets into short & long-term goals

Dean perpetually; but may be objectives

Monica goals, objectives, strategy

Already reorganized goals/obj/what will FBCI do

Goal is Value-based (can't measure)

Objectives can be measured

Strategies are actions

So Monica will get w/ the others who are editing over lunch and we will see revised after lunch.

### **How Define a FBCU Partner?**

Robin Partner helps us accomplish our goals and objectives

Not a good idea for brochure to list different categories of partners

Julie For recruitment of partners – determine expectations for that category/level; what funding will be used for; level of involvement in decision-making process; does everyone who writes a check steer FBCI?

Stefani Should be composed of persons that represent the state geographically, represent the different organizations involved, represent staff time involved

Craig Management board member = Coordinating Council member, but mentioned monetary contributions?

Dean Difficult task of balancing exclusivity and inclusivity – need clear obj & goals to determine feel good partner vs. one to actually help achieve

Caution against overinclusive, but want to encourage those to hang around see what they have to offer

determine later whether need mgmt entity; thought process, no hard and fast rule for now

Julie continue to engage partners regularly, communicate w/

Elena other state BCIs have a quarterly newsletter and listserv, for ex.

Robin membership vs. partners

Dean a lot of people can play a role, encourage people to contact us, see where areas overlap, in time we'll formalize roles, don't want to prematurely pigeonhole someone

Elena Who is target audience for Congress?

Robin trying to build partnership

Stefani people who can commit resources – funding staff technical GIS, etc.

Send/email an introductory/hello letter to partners

Indicate that there will be opportunities to participate

Inform them that they may bring issues to our attention

Robin Set up listserv now – convince people to join listserv now

Initially information out; can expand later  
Dean Relate to Congress  
Say that we envision that they may play a role so please put date on calendar  
Can then follow up later with a more detailed letter  
Stefani Create brochure after website is online so the address is listed on the brochure  
Can then take brochure to various meetings that we are all involved in.

**Summarize morning session** – action items per Todd:

Craig priority species  
Dean and monica goals, objectives, strategies  
Katie mission  
Stefani and Elena update list of potential partners  
Establish 2-3 year budget  
Letter to FOS board 1. possible function as treasurer 2.  
Stefani concise letter to potential funders

**Potential Funding Strategies**

Elena Some BCI's have whole fundraising committee  
Katy What would funds be used for? Who would they go to?  
Elena Answer: fund projects  
Todd Fund Congress  
Stefani Fund Coordinator position  
Elena If not a common bank, then project specific contribution, not membership fee  
Any other ways to raise funds?  
Annual membership fee for supporters; voluntary donations  
Charitable foundation grants – capacity bldg, organizational, maintenance (of position)  
Caroline Endowment; short-term vs. long-term funding strategies  
Ex. Birdathon – yearly event  
Dean Agrees; need to go beyond a single year  
Need to secure funding for 2-3 years  
Where overarching management board can help  
Need to have matching funds to go to NFWF, for ex.

Elena has 2 more years for her funding  
What would we want for a 2-3 year budget?  
Organize a Congress – cost based on how big Congress is  
Easy to get sponsors for  
FOS meeting costs: not good comparison because small, not a lot of overhead  
Somewhere between FOS and Audubon meeting costs  
Conference Coordinator, Partial subsidization  
300-400 people (if joint meeting), 3 days, 2 nights  
Room rental, food, marketing, printing, honoraria, travel, overhead, coordinator

What are objectives for 1<sup>st</sup> meeting? Try to reach everybody in state? Probably not.

Julie: \$30,000 as a placeholder; Todd \$25,000

Find 3<sup>rd</sup> year of funding for Elena (Coordinator position) \$55,000/year w/o benefits

Can provide benefits to Coordinator through a contract which would cost more money but may achieve long-term continuity of position \$70,000 + expenses, travel \$8,000-10,000/yr

Todd: \$55,000-65,000/yr (2010)

Brochure/Publicity Todd: publicity \$2000(-3000)/yr, 2008-2010

\$10,000-20,000-30,000 (Todd: \$10,000 2008, \$25,000/yr, 2009, 2010) for seed

projects/discretionary funds – include brochure

Todd: \$30-40,000 for this year for Congress, publicity, seed projects

Looking for \$5000-\$10,000 from state agencies. Don't ask for specific amount. Ask what they can do. Ecological Services could perhaps come up with 1<sup>st</sup>-year commitment \$10,000, see about 3 years

Craig could bring up at next JV board meeting

JV has outreach person (Deb Reynolds) happy to help out with publicity

Stefani could hit up waterbird council \$2000-\$3000/yr

Will talk to Tim Jones (Science Coordinator for Atlantic JV), who is always looking for ways to work together on projects; ex. monitoring

Foundation setting up involves lawyer and fees to set up

Typically \$ resides with one of the partners – most flexibility, least overhead, most comfortable with other partners

Elena Co-op unit at university

Julie FOS only meets twice a year, so working out something that wouldn't require board approval.

Name to apply for grants under and to get money into account – what name looks best to grantors; how to most expediently get the money to be held/where it needs to go.

Robin Wildlife Foundation of FL

Todd make strong case that it won't take up a lot of their Treasurer's time (Peter Maron); no abuse of relationship; it will look good for FOS; could be temporary – just for 1<sup>st</sup> year

Todd will draft letter to FOS board to inform where stand on Congress and ask about functioning as a bank for FBCI

Dean crudely outline budget in letter to partners and what objectives it would help achieve; \$2,000-\$3,000 or even \$5,000 ; needs to be generic and not specify b/c different orgs on different fiscal calendars; resources ASAP helpful but also need long-term; by **March** for agencies before year-end

Stefani will draft; to steering committee and out by March for agencies

Charlie agencies want recognition

Proper credit will be given

Suggested levels of funding, specific amount for logo on brochure for example.

Dean blanket more broadly at lower levels for Congress

Craig will need to know specifics for board meeting – what and how much?

Dean Specific support for Congress or general support?

Craig some level of funding for Congress; and then future support of position

**Stefani will send out draft letter to everyone to see if fits organization**

**Need figures by March 1<sup>st</sup>. And know what money will be used for.**

**1. Pitch to FOS board (no/low overhead)**

Possibly

2. Archbold

3. Tall Timbers

4. Audubon – waive overhead and use as partner

**Draft MOA**

Heisted from another state

A way for people to agree in concept to what we're doing

Maybe not polish too much right now; send out 6 months before Congress

To go out to all partners as a way of formalizing and gets a better understanding of who/what  
FBCI is

NP's sign on individually or Regional Director? Sonny says to all managers individually

Send MOA and brochure along with letter

Julie no flaw with vehicle, but it doesn't say much w/o accompanying information

Brochure isn't going to be ready to go out with financial request letter

So include some information to accompany MOA that explicitly states benefits to signing on  
(invitation to Congress, access to listserv, member)

Stefani will include in financial request letter

Include expanded steering committee list – actual names and organizations

Or tailor to each organization – who involved in each org

Not last chance to comment on MOA

**Organizational structure**

Working group

Steering committee

Coordinating council

Dean Articulate that all is interim because form follows function; want to portray to partners  
that everyone can have input

Stefani But have interim structure so will seem more solid

Dean Description, not title, is important

Robin How determine who has status on Coordinating Council? Who are voting members?

What is advantage to calling interim if we're going to be the Coordinating Council?

Todd Keep calling interim. Envision one goal of Congress would be to formally vote for  
Coordinating Council.

Robin So some portion of Congress will be a business meeting?

Todd Yes. We would feed them ideas.

Stefani WI structure

Steering committee is who comes to the meetings

Do all of those people get a vote? Whoever is at meeting? Do we have a quorum?

A minimum number of agencies present?

Todd these are bylaws

Dean agree on at Congress; get by on informal and revisit formal

### **Current Structure:**

Interim Coordinating Council

Todd and Stefani are co-chairs

Elena is Coordinator

Congress organizational committee – Julie chairs/co-chairs

Congress program committee – Caroline chairs

Right now, everything will be run by entire steering committee – whether present at all meeting or not; so will have to do by email

Will have to do this until the Congress, about a year from now

Stefani How often will this group need to meet?

Got a lot of work done by email and conference calls

Get more participation that way

Determining next steps will determine when need to meet next

## **Website Design, Slogan, Logo**

### **Website**

Free to use FWC web design, but has to conform to FWC style guide

Stuck w/ header, footer, and left column

MyFWC.com → Wildlife and Habitats → Florida All-Bird Conservation Initiative

→ About

Mission statement

History – prior meetings; minutes

Pdf of brochure

Goals/obj/strategies

***Who we are; identify names; perhaps pictures***

→ Species

Priority species?

Every bird of special concern in FL?

Other BCI websites:

Introduction – what working on

Priority list – linked to species account and projects; link to breeding bird atlas, etc.; not necessarily original material

Julie Who is website for?

Answers: Partners

Robin Clearinghouse for people who want to know about bird conservation

Julie what do our partners want and place it front and center

Need to make commitment b/c need to keep updating

Websites become everything to everyone and then nothing to no one

Todd make a simple list right now; list of priority species in FL

Robin Millsap, SGCN, ... prioritization schemes

Julie ask what resources would be valuable to partners

Acknowledge all different ways of ranking species; FBCI took all into account and here is FBCI's short list and here are links to other lists

Caroline short, brief table of high priority species 20-30 species and links to where found

Julie species account, couple sentences, link to others to find info needed

Dean a lot of ideas need to be reconciled

→ Habitat

Dean overview of major general framework; ID 10 important habitats and birds associated with; executive summary and threats to habitats and birds; plan to develop conservation objectives; FNAI is updating Natural Communities Classification – can have link to that; Which is good starting point but don't need to break it down so much for birds; ex, 10 of these taken together represent open-pine systems, for ex. but FNAI good foundation.

→ Partners

List of partners

Link to MOA

Link for each of partners (name will be link)

If interested in becoming a partner/supporting FBCI financially or otherwise...

→ Funding Opportunities

Searchable database – Possible? Y&N. Too much work; info changes daily

Can put dates there of annual

Julie \*\*\*Granting orgs and others can email Elena to post on website

Good way to get people exposed to website and FBCI

Elena good selling point for FBCI too, to partners – this is what we provide

FWC internal grant website

Has to be better than a google search – compiled list from 7 pages for example

→ Conservation Plans

Maybe call 'conservation initiatives' b/c some initiatives have plans

National waterbird plan

Shorebird plan

More comprehensive in terms of initiatives

→ General Birding info

Birding events

Great FL birding trail

Festivals listed

Birding links

Bird-watching forums

Upcoming bird meetings

Citizen science and volunteer opportunities

Band sightings, bird banding lab; ex. oystercatchers, red knots → links

Julie IBA's under conservation initiatives

Elena send email to group for website content, what you need lists of grants & deadlines, festivals, etc.

→ Projects

Current

Todd Subset of partners will be involved in a project

Didn't envision FBCI to handle grant \$ for projects

Robin Not a grant directly to FBCI, at least not now

Dean Contracting agency would be responsible for submitting reports, etc., granting details are administered appropriately

Wish list – FBCI list? More inclusive? FOS? Audubon?

→ Contact Us

Elena's address

## Logo

Spoonbill

Caracara to snail kite → more obvious

Have owl face forward

3 landbirds & 1 waterbird

Godwit

Scrub jay should stay

Snowy or piping plover

Oystercatcher – good profile

Should have game bird – quail

Monochromatic

Geographic range

Taxonomic range

Endemism vs. those we share

Distinctive profile

Wording needs to not be as overpowering, classier

## Revisit goals/obj/strategies

Dean will reconcile editorial changes

Modification to mission re: endangered sp., and not making policy; just guide and influence

Used promote a lot → get some more word choice

Why what how

Goals obj strategy

Dean matched goals to objectives and strategies;

But have same objectives and strategies under common and priority species?

1. have sub-goals – common, priority

split research and monitoring objectives

goal or strategy – develop and foster voluntary partnerships

goal – build public support

object – promote interest and enthusiasm

strategy – website

goal – should be able to do for the sake of the goal  
ex. we don't build public support for the sake of bldg public support  
when you can't keep answering the question 'why'?  
so, Why do we want to build public support?  
Goals in sum total should get you to the mission, but not in a measurable way

Public involvement is important strategy for keeping common birds common; vulnerable birds too; and for strategic approach

Dean But, achieving all goals by same objectives and strategies  
Theoretically should be working on habitats  
So commonalities in objectives and strategies

Robin agrees

Caroline Perhaps not integrate; simpler

Todd Perhaps a committee is forming...

Nothing in mission about partnerships  
Combine mission statement w/ first goal?  
Or have partnerships as 3<sup>rd</sup> goal?  
4<sup>th</sup> goal: have people value birds/bird conservation?

Perhaps revisit tomorrow.

**End of meeting 01/29/08**

**Wednesday January 30**

**8:00 – Report from Congress Organization Committee – Julie Wraithmell & Todd Engstrom**

Julie We had discussed having a joint meeting (congress) that would help us share with FL what we are. We had talked about meeting with FOS and Audubon. Had organizing and program committee to discuss this. Organizing committee was working on logistics of conference. Needed to move quickly for Audubon. Audubon always meets in fall. There may have been conflict with TWS mtg in Miami. Logistics were difficult and required significant investments. Ultimate decision was joint meeting would have been too rushed. We're hoping for separate initiative event with some FOS and Audubon participation.

**8:30 – Discuss alternatives for FBCI Congress – Julie Wraithmell & Todd Engstrom**

Julie (continued from above): alternatives may be joint mtg with TWS, partner with another event such as Space Coast Festival or FOS for annual meeting (fall 08 or spring 09). We need to discuss what we want to accomplish with this meeting. Was in position to chair organizing committee if it was joint meeting b/c had to commit that time anyway, but could not chair if not meeting with Audubon.

Todd Caroline and Reed Bowman are co-chairs of organizational committee.

- Caroline We started coming up with draft agenda. Had about a two-day time frame mapped out – ½ day Friday, full day Saturday, 1/2 day Saturday, not including FOS meeting part. Included two field trips, speakers, outreach, what initiative is all about, past initiatives, other groups that are involved. Initially went in thinking we could do something small and build on it next year, but now looks like it would be something large in order to get all ideas across. Would recommend a minimum of two days. Wanted to involve all groups and have good foundation. Would recommend going for it.
- Todd We did try hard to make this work. TWS meeting in November in Miami, but then we have elections and Thanksgiving so November is difficult. We're frustrated we put so much time in it, but it's also liberating. We can have a stand along meeting that will work. Spring 09 will work – not tied to FOS and complicating things. What do we want to accomplish. We want to emerge with a board and organizational structure. Also workshops on main things that affect bird conservation in FL such as fire and water. It would be along lines of academic meeting but not so rigorous – from science to management. Need to involve managers. Think interesting program will happen.
- Dean I think it's good.
- Todd It will give us time to organize speakers and workshops, etc. Elena will do lots of the organization. We may start having money that can be applied to this. Can hire consultant to help with meeting.
- Dean I think that timing is good. Could see two days easy or more. Field trips may be extra. Need to go in with core nugget or partnership values and what we want to accomplish. Would envision conference that's more of a working meeting and less of science session. Need an end outcome.
- Todd We need to have clear idea of outcome. Who votes, who's on committee, etc. Our job in next year is lay groundwork for that. Caroline and Reed B can talk about that.
- Dean We'll all help. We don't need to accomplish everything at conference or congress. Want to explain what we're about and expand core before meeting.
- Julie I'm concerned we don't make this the same kind of meeting we've had in past that's a lot of preaching to the choir. The fruitful payoff will be mix of grassroots, land management and others. Include programmatic elements that speak to various groups and don't let them self segregate. Gotta start a year in advance. Good to recognize we have money – we may need to work quickly.
- Todd Two committees need to be real active.
- Julie Can't chair but happy to serve on program committee. FWC has resources available to put time into it. Wouldn't be uncomfortable in Elena was chair.
- Dean Whole expertise of committee will help chair. Chair will do lots of legwork. Could work with chamber of commerce that would help. Don't let inexperience sway you, it's more a matter of time.
- Todd Julie, if it's alright with you, we'll take the lead on running the next conference call for the organizing committee. Julie will have other priorities (session and baby).
- Stefani I'd be happy to be on that committee and has some experience organizing conferences. Chambers of commerce are happy to help.
- Julie We're all here because our organizations care about this, but don't have much time dedicated to this.
- Dean it's more a matter of divide and conquer.

Robin Meeting organization can turn into a full time job itself. We want the initiative to move forward. If Elena is in charge, don't want her to spend all her time on meeting organization. I'd like to get back to What's the point of having a congress. We want NGOs, land managers, etc., not just us planners and agency folks. To make it a strong partnership, other states have involved more folks. We can we do at meeting to get these folks to table.

Dean We need nontraditional partners to engage. If we don't give them a clear shoebox to engage, over time they'll go away. Traditional partners are always there. We eventually want to get to point where all partners are engaged, but unless we have pre-congress and have some nuts and bolts discussions before congress, we'll lose some people.

Todd We identified fire at Ocala meeting. If we had a workshop on birds and fire and targeted land managers, biologists, etc to talk about it and ended with joint panel discussion and people see that someone they know is on program, that shows we want them to participate. If people start thinking of state as a whole, you may have a number of partners coming in and trying to do something about fire in FL

Sonny Challenge is to get people engaged. Lots of big landowners have biologists and land managers. Try to find those people: Babcock, Lykes, etc. Need to bring those people in. We don't need a lot of agency biologists telling other people what to do.

Phil I agree

Todd All burners have to deal with smoke issues. We need unified voice to find solutions.

Dean Getting engagement and buy-in is goal. That's what we need. Need to identify time frame and venue. Coordinating committee needs to identify goals.

Sonny What have some other groups done? How did they get buy in?

Elena Missouri doesn't have coordinator. It depends on partnerships. Different with everyone.

Sonny Someone went out and contacted everyone. We're looking at the people we always look at. You want to look at others – how do you get them?

Stefani Get a core groups of people like us, take a long time, starts with small group of folks, have congress, give out informational materials, long process, had been many years for some states.

Dean That may be dissatisfying to some who want to move fast. All started with core of people with common interest who wanted to involve others. Congress is one step in well-thought-out progression that has to happen to be successful. Congress will be big step.

Stefani Identifying people we want to talk to – at fist we may not get much of a response.

Sonny Issue people an invitation to come to meetin and tell what they're doing

Phil Private landowners will have to know why, what's in it for them.

Todd That's right. I think of forest owners and farmers. To think about opportunities that birds can provide for ecotourism is good.

Phil Todd, you mentioned prescribed fire council. At first it was hard to involve private landowners who had different objectives on their land. Didn't get involvement until discussed issues important for private landowners.

Todd Insurance, smoke management are problems these days.

Katie could involve sheriffs office and DOT

Dean Involve and engage are overused terms. Some sectors, we don't want their involvement, just cooperation. To identify what people can do for bird conservation and get people to buy into notion that it's important. Anything more is probably overkill. Other groups such as DOT with more influence may want to be involved in discussions. It's not just

about identifying partners, we need to think about what we want from them and how to keep them listening.

Mark What do we want to focus on for bird conservation. Hydrological effects, migration, coastal issues, development are all important issues. Key, before we get to that stage, is define what we want to focus on.

Todd Maybe you have one overview where you discuss myriad issues and pick one area than have workshop that deals with it in depth.

Dean You couldn't go into congress with everything, need to focus.

Julie Some of that may come out of fire congress that we haven't considered here.

Dean one of best things to come out of this is find some partners that represent other sectors. We won't solve smoke management, it's really about broadening partnership.

Todd any other thoughts? We've got two active committees that need to get going. Caroline, you and Reed need to organize. Would like to involve Reed Noss also.

Dean Two things need to happen now: program committee and organization. Program recommends some goals and objectives. That has to be solid pretty soon so you can organize content. Do in next two months.

Robin Could we talk about date and location now?

Julie On whole group conference call didn't we talk about central FL and proximity to major airport.

Dean As far as timing, would April be better than March?

Julie FOS doesn't have spring date set but would coordinate, as would Audubon to promote event. How many people would we attract? Venue has to fit groups size.

Dean Dates more important.

Julie Trick is parking in Gainesville.

Robin Unless we have it during spring break.

Todd I'd love to have it in Gainesville in early spring and have about 300 people.

Dean We know there's conference facility here.

Robin Katie Sieving and Rob Fletcher are both on committee and could help as faculty sponsor.

Todd UF may have good meeting planner.

Sonny We've used her, will find her name. She worked through IFAS.

Todd Need to decide when two committees are going to do what.

Caroline We need to start with what is our goal and our main topic. We didn't do that initially and were batting around ideas b/c we didn't have clear idea of our goals.

Dean By first week of April we should have some goals and some objective and a solid lead on venues and dates.

Julie Organizing committee had representatives from each group but that may change now since it's not FOS and Audubon.

Dean You'd want 6 or 8 people to help.

Robin It could start small.

Stefani Could use grad students and give them free registration.

Todd We have the four of us and Julie.

Dean I'll help with one of them after PIF.

Caroline Late March, early April good?

Dean Make sure there are not other meeting conflicts.

Julie What about FWC climate meeting conflict?

Dean By end of first week in April we should have had several conferences among ourselves and be ready.

Julie I'll have hard time attending in spring. Mark Cook will also have conflict. More people may also have conflicts. Summer is slow. What about first week in June?

Charlie You might not be able to get the union b/c of freshmen preview.

Dean See what's available for March/April and early June.

Todd Organization committee will work on that. Let's push ourselves to, by April 4, both committee will have made plan for congress.

\*Break\*

### **10:30 – Potential FBCI Project: Breeding Snowy Plover Survey – Stefani Melvin**

This would be excellent opportunity for FBCI to get involved in project that's already funded.

Cooperative project with USFWS Panama City and FWC.

FWC surveys in 89, 02,06. Looked at all Panhandle and SW FL habitat.

113 sites, 42 breeding pairs.

2005 SNPL identified as focal species for FWS

2006 SMA \$ obtained by Region 1 for feasibility of rangewide survey inc. Bahamas and Mexico

007 more SMA money awarded to USRS to design and coordinate survey.

Looking at Great Basin, NW TX, and Gulf Coast. FL folks said it's a different situation – habitat is along linear section of beach so FL should be a complete census, not just subsets. TX and FL and Mexico will be done this year.

Mark Are they actually separate populations?

Stephani They don't go across Rockies. Sue has done genetic work that says mainland population are the same but Caribbean populations are genetically different (Cuba and Bahamas).

Dean W/in the Gulf we're not even sure where birds go.

Stephani That's why we want to do TX, Mex. and FL at same time.

Has been talking with Nancy Douglass and John Himes to make it happen.

Survey objectives: provide index of population size; baseline data for dist. And abundance in MX; assist partners with conservation priorities at local and national scales; inform USFWS action plan.

Plans for 2008: FWC and FWS working with landowners in Panhandle and SW FL to coordinate annual breeding bird survey.; can be incorporated into international survey; need to also include detection probability by using double observer method to get at annual trends.

Mark Detection probability is becoming more key.

Stephani Double observer recommends two people walking beach ½ hour apart.

Mark General detectability, not observer bias.

Al Last year we counted Piping and Snowy Plovers. How does this fit in?

Stephani This effort is attempt to do whole range at one time to get overall picture of whole population. If all one at one time have better idea than if done during different surveys b/c of movements. Previous attempt for overall survey didn't work. When doing PIPL, also counting SNPLs, but this is different survey. Not trying to look at nests, just adults. Trying to time it before juveniles are around so don't count them. Trying to get landowners to do survey every year. Main place FWS can help is tapping into getting volunteers to be double observer. Also some SW FL sites. Has \$15,000 to help fund travel, boat, etc.

Most Panhandle sites covered by at least one person.

FBCI can help by organizing volunteers for double count.

Some sites in SW FL will need to be surveyed completely by volunteers.

Our first FBCI 'project': surveys take place week of May 5 with week of May 12 as backup; 2 observers walk same stretch of beach at slightly different time; all SNPLs counted and GPS location taken; training given.

Next steps: solicit volunteers for survey; coordinate with FWC and FWS to determine needs, match people to sites; ID potential resources such as boats/vehicles/GPS units.

Todd Where will 15,000\$ go?

Stephani I can handle it easily; whatever is left over will go in general fund.

Dean Partners are already aligned.

Julie Just let us know how we can help. Can handpick people. Will fledges be out in early May? Will observers be able to distinguish these?

Stefani No, just adults.

Julie In Panhandle they start in early February.

Stefani Working hard with landowners to get meaningful date to compare with what we already have.

Julie We can find volunteers who can help.

Mark You might want to key into Universities for help.

Todd Can you write this up so we can put it on website

Julie Let's figure out the need first so we can pick best people for each site. Chris Burney will put people on it.

Stephanie Planning on making same presentation at FL shorebird meeting in March.

### **11:00 –Current FBCI Project: Snail Kite HSI – Mark Cook**

More details of this are in report. Kite is useful bird to start with b/c is FL native not found elsewhere in US, charismatic, endangered but not enough focus on it. Struggling at moment, situation is dire. Recent estimate, particularly with recent drought is expected to drop from 3,000 to 800 individuals. People are beginning to realize things are dire. How do we use a project like this to get our name (FBCI) out? We'll eventually get a group of people to work on this and get the word out, particularly within SFWMD and also outside. How is FBCI associated with kite project? In terms of scientific or outreach support – think about this during presentation.

The issue: kites in trouble!; 20 years of research (lots Wiley Kitchens) show hydrology is key to reproductive success; no comprehensive water mgmt guideline to support successful kite reproduction – in a few places they do attempt to manage for kites.

Aim of Project: develop habitat suitability index that can evaluate suitability of hydrologic conditions for kite. Needs to be easily explained to managers but involved lots of complexity. Spatially and temporally driven responses different in different areas. On a short time frame water depth affects ability to get snails. On long term, depth affects habitat. Interplay between how long we keep water in areas. Needs to be made simple for managers to understand – best way is with habitat suitability index (HSI). Take key environmental component and assign suitability score (0=worse to 1=optimal). Also need to consider change in water depth b/c wading birds require falling water to concentrate prey. Priority now is to get simple individual measure for different water conservation areas. Will have one or two measures for ecological factors that affect birds. Looking to guide operations now. And want to know how kites will

respond in future. But now it is urgent and need to guide managers quickly. Different ways to develop models – go through literature...

Outline of Habitat Suitability Modeling Process: Step 1: Lit review of kite reproductive biology, HSIs and hydrologic modeling tools (ex. EDEN, SFWMM). Step 2: develop conceptual model of kite reproduction. Get help from others. Step 3. ID key hydrologic variables to use used in HSI. Step 4. define habitat suitability functions of hydrologic variables. Step 5. ID appropriate temporal and spatial scales (ex. WCAs, Okeechobee). Step 6: Verify HIS using appropriate hydrologic model and historic kite nest site info. Step 7: Improve model using current data and new modeling approaches.

We could have some issue, scientific issue and political ones. Might be objection to HSI from some people who don't want to put numbers to this, but now we're doing nothing. Simple work with wading birds have done wonders – 5-20,000 birds in 90s to 20-60,000 in Everglades now, may be result of this work. Something as simple as water depth is useful. That is how managers will listen. We are guiding operations now. We will pay more attention now. Intention is to figure out water depths now, see handout that reviews literature. Models will be developed in 6-8 months.

Al How does district integrate?

Mark Completely – we're completely integrated. As far as CERP and restoration goes, these models can be used to figure out hydrological models for restoration. Has a dual purpose, for CERP and day-to-day operations.

Todd might this evolve into experimental manipulations?

Mark I'm hoping it will. Will have to see how this integrates with Wile Kitchens and other key players. We've got a pretty good understanding of demography, but don't have enough of mechanistic understanding of why. Need to figure out where research needs to be going.

Sonny Why the decline?

Mark Mismanagement. Also survival of fledging is very low. No mechanistic of why.

Katie What about exotic snail?

Mark I think birds will learn quickly that if something is too big they won't pick it up. I think lack of native snail is problem. We're not managing fringe areas.

Julie Paper in Naturalist said it's mostly exotic snail

Mark My feeling is it's not all the exotic snail. It could be an issue, but there isn't enough habitat with native apple snail.

Katie He was saying that in Toho Lakes there are no native apple snails.

Stefani What is potential of snail kites of come into conflict with water birds?

Mark They'll do fine, they did historically. Priorities maybe should go to kites given situation. Kites usually found in deeper areas where wading birds don't forage.

Todd Brought up issue of experiments b/c if you want to get partners involved on large scale that would be good role for us.

Mark Yes, we'll be trying to understand where we need to focus research and how to fund it. It's obvious that we're still unclear of reasons behind decline.

Al That's pretty much the case for every species

Mark Yes, but for wading species we know they need food, we just don't know some of the fine detail. For certain groups of species we have better knowledge.

Al This can help us focus research. Ex. for Scrub-jays we don't even understand fire b/c different habitats burn differently.

Robin I'm thinking about role for us. Want to promote science behind these political issues. Need someone to represent science at political table.

Mark Next stage is getting them to implement science. Sometime things delayed for long time. Maybe this group can say, 'yes, this needs to be done.' Just me telling district we need to do this isn't always enough.

Todd This project is next 6-8 months?

Mark Yes. We should initiate this meeting then. We'll let you know and have write-up and send it out to everyone. Elena will put it on website and people will contact Mark directly with questions.

Al What was lowest number of kites in FL

Sonny 57 in 1964. That's why Loxahatchee is Loxahatchee.

Stefani We have water conservation areas that are critical habitat, but maybe that's not natural.

Mark It's a soft water system, the only one in the area. Water chemistry has hardened b/c of influence of canals.

End of Mark's presentation.

Todd Table of priority species.

Craig Will work with Elena and Katie and some others on that.

Todd Objective to get something for webpage.

Julie Larger groups will look at that also.

Todd Dean, whatever you and others come up with as a draft can be circulated among groups for comments. Maybe just list goals and have objective and strategies linked to them? Stefani and Elena will update list of potential partners.

Dean Made of note of some elements that may be better incorporated in mission but may need to incorporate notion of partnerships.

Todd We want to establish 2-3 year budget. Elena will help with this. We have draft budget on computer now. I will work on letter for FOS board and we have Archbold and Tall Timbers as backups to house money. Stefani is working on letter to potential funders. Elena is working on website: history, objective, priority species, habitats, partners, funding, etc We also mentioned we might want to have meeting minutes, band sightings, etc.

Dean Craig or outreach person or other Joint Venture people are dealing with this and have cleared bushes for this.

Todd Organizing program committees for congress. All these things are connected. I'll find place to park money. What else are we missing?

Robin Brochure?

Stefani We may be able to help with design. Deb Reynolds with JV can maybe help.

Craig Andrea said she can help with that.

Stefani We do have contracts with production. Relatively inexpensive, maybe 500\$ for 1000 copies: an 11 X 17 folded in half.

Robin Will letter go to all partners to try to get people to sign up and write check?

Stefani We might have different letter for different organizations. Will make general letter and unique ones.

Todd Stefani and I will be gatekeeper so you're not hit from all sides.

Dean Are congress committees on list of things?

Todd Yes. Last thing, do we need to talk about date again or see what's available.

Dean Will be some things to talk about by April, maybe teleconference then. Maybe half day meeting.

Todd Teleconference early April.

Mark Need to look at what we're going to focus on for conference.

**10:38 - Adjourn**