

# Developing a Kirtland's Warbler Memorandum of Agreement

## *September 24, 2010 Briefing Document*

The following was developed during the September 23-24, 2010 meeting of the Kirtland's Warbler Implementation Team in Grayling, Michigan.

### ***Desired Outcome***

Based on agency Leadership review and comment on this document, the Implementation Team will draft a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for Leadership signatures.

### ***Need for Action***

Management of the federally endangered Kirtland's Warbler and the jack pine forests on which it depends has been hailed as a conservation success story. Collaboration among state and federal agencies and NGOs has been a hallmark of this management.

The Kirtland's Warbler conservation community is now on the threshold of a legacy moment—the Kirtland's Warbler is the first conservation reliant vertebrate to be considered for delisting.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is in the formative stages of "The Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Initiative"—an innovative collaboration to leverage private sector interest into perpetual conservation support by establishing a trust fund.

Although Kirtland's Warbler numbers have increased, continued habitat management, cowbird control, monitoring, education and research will be necessary. To consider delisting, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) must show that funding and commitments to continued management are in place.

An MOA, signed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DNRE) Director, U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Regional Forester, and USFWS Regional Director, would provide commitment to continued management and collaboration.

### ***Milestones for Conservation Action***

- Develop and sign the Kirtland's Warbler MOA by December 2010.
- Develop the Kirtland's Warbler Conservation Plan by September 2011.
- NFWF establishes a Kirtland's Warbler "Friends Group" by 2011.
- NFWF initiates Kirtland's Warbler Trust Fund by 2011. Trust Fund fully funded by 2020.
- USFWS and DNRE anticipate delisting process to begin once threats have been addressed by the MOA and secure funding mechanisms.
- Kirtland's Warbler Advisory Committee is established as delisting is completed.
- Post-delisting monitoring program is initiated.
- Begin comprehensive jack pine ecosystem conservation initiative.

### ***KW Implementation Team Meeting Participants***

KW Recovery Team—Carol Bocetti

DNRE—Chris Hoving, Jim Bielecki

USFS—Phil Huber, Steve Sjogren

USFWS—Christie Deloria, Mark Vaniman, Jack Dingedine, Katie Koch

***DRAFT MOA Outline***

Whereas:

[to be developed]

Therefore:

1. We commit to continue Kirtland's Warbler management on the breeding grounds (habitat, cowbird control, monitoring, education and research):
  - a. At current levels.
  - b. As detailed in guiding documents such as USFWS Comprehensive Conservation Plans and USFS and DNRE Forest Plans.
  - c. Before and after delisting.
2. We commit to work with the NFWF and other partners in seeking long-term, permanent funding for Kirtland's Warbler management.
3. We commit to collaboratively develop a Conservation Plan that will guide post-delisting management of Kirtland's Warbler.
4. We commit to continue coordination through a Kirtland's Warbler Advisory Committee, which will replace the Recovery Team.
5. We commit to build partnerships to address Kirtland's Warbler migration and wintering.
6. We commit to expand the Kirtland's Warbler Conservation Plan as a cornerstone to a comprehensive jack pine ecosystem conservation initiative to include other featured species and landscape dynamics.