



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
East Lansing Field Office (ES)
2651 Coolidge Road, Suite 101
East Lansing, Michigan 48823-6316

IN REPLY REFER TO:

May 3, 2011

Re: Memorandum of Understanding signing ceremony at Kirtland's Warbler Wildlife Festival in Roscommon, Michigan

Dear Kirtland's warbler partner:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and the U.S. Forest Service are preparing to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that represents a significant milestone in the conservation of the endangered Kirtland's warbler. We invite you to attend this historic event at the 2011 Kirtland's Warbler Wildlife Festival on May 21, 2011, at Kirtland Community College in Roscommon, Michigan. The signing ceremony will take place at 12:15 pm ET in the Kirtland Community College Auditorium.

Your work, along with that of many others, has been instrumental in bringing the Kirtland's warbler back from the brink of extinction. The MOU memorializes these past efforts and ensures future collaborative management for Kirtland's warbler. A new chapter in Kirtland's warbler conservation is unfolding that will continue this species toward removal from the list of federally endangered and threatened species.

I hope you will be available to be part of conservation history on May 21 as we take this important and positive step. If you need additional information need additional information about the signing ceremony, please contact Christie Deloria 906-226-1240, christie_deloria@fws.gov or Georgia Parham 812-334-4261 x1203, georgia_parham@fws.gov.

Sincerely,

Scott Hicks
Field Supervisor

Carol Bocetti – remarks at MOU signing May 2011, Kirtland Community College, Roscommon, MI

As we celebrate this legacy moment that forges the path to a secure future for the Kirtland's warblers and its unique jack pine associates, we must remember the wisdom and dedicated efforts of those who brought us to this point... would Recovery Team members and associates rise for recognition.

I began my professional career as a graduate student who was welcomed into the decision-making process of this amazing group of people. I often say that, as a young conservation biologist, "I was trained by the best"... and I'll tell you why...

The original Recovery Team was made up of members from these very 3 agencies plus an amateur ornithologist. Recognizing their role as a recommending committee, their first gem of wisdom was to form the team with the right people from the right levels in each agency with the right diversity of expertise. They included an ecologist, an ornithologist, a silviculturalist, a pest control specialist, and policy experts.

Their second gem of wisdom was to think broader than a single species. From the beginning, they planned the habitat management for Kirtland's warbler with the sensitivity for the economic viability of the harvests and for the ecological integrity of the jack pine ecosystem – thus the 50-year rotation even though the Kirtland's warbler is gone after 20 years or so. They planned habitat management to serve all their constituents from the hunters seeking rabbit, hare, deer, and turkey, to recreationists seeking hiking trails and ATV trails, to extraction industry seeking oil and gas rights of way. The team attempted to be accommodating and cooperative as much as possible. There were some conflicts (ask MI Dept. of Military Affairs), but ultimately compromise was reached.

Their third gem of wisdom was to continue to meet, and communicate, and adjust to shifting timber markets, to climate issues, to public concerns, and to needs of new species (plant and animal) who needed consideration in the jack pine landscape.

As time went on, new members replaced old, but always members provided important expertise and important agency perspectives. Through productive dialogue between research and management, the Recovery Team always remained responsive to the dynamic economic, ecological, social, and political environment in which they diligently worked to recover Kirtland's warblers and to protect Michigan's other jack pine-dependent natural heritage.

The Recovery Team grew to include members from the Bahamas National Trust, Environment Canada, and Wisconsin.

Many partnerships were built over the years to accomplish Kirtland's warbler recovery. The agencies worked with the Nature Conservancy, Michigan and Detroit Audubon, Arbor Day Foundation, Trout Unlimited, Kirtland Community College, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and many others over the years.

The wisdom of these folks pre-dated the Endangered Species Act, and their lessons must live beyond the Kirtland's warbler protection under the ESA. To those of you who are here, and to those who are no longer here, I say, "Thank you, lessons learned, and I promise to do you proud as we move forward."