



Florida  
Game  
and  
Fresh  
Water  
Fish  
Commission

# Participation Schedule

For the Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Plan

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Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission

PARTICIPATION SCHEDULE FOR THE  
KIRTLAND'S WARBLER RECOVERY PLAN

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Date: November 4, 1980

### Preface

This Participation Schedule represents the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission's commitment to the implementation of the Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Plan. It is intended for the joint benefit of and use by the Commission and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Commission will use this Schedule as a planning document and it is provided to the Fish and Wildlife Service for use in the organized, effective and efficient implementation of the Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Plan, and for referencing in any future amendments or revisions to that Plan. This Schedule will be reviewed at least semi-annually for potential revision.

Preparation of this Schedule was partially financed with federal grant-in-aid funds administered through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (PL 93-205). Anne E. Shapiro, Endangered Species Biologist, Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, was principally responsible for preparing the schedule. Persons consulted in connection with its preparation included Dr. Herbert Kale of the Florida Audubon Society, John Byelich, Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Team Leader, and James Engel, Region 3 Endangered Species Specialist for the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

## Contents

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
Preface	3
Introduction	4
Commission Participation Summary	6
Commission Participation Schedule	7

## Introduction

The Kirtland's warbler (*Dendroica kirtlandii*) was included as endangered on the U. S. Department of the Interior's list of endangered and threatened wildlife on 11 March 1967 (FR/32:4001). A Recovery Plan for the species was approved in 1976, with the primary objective being to reestablish a wild Kirtland's warbler population throughout its former range at a minimum level of 1,000 pairs, which is the population level estimated to exist at the times of censuses conducted in 1951 and 1961. Five goals are identified as necessary to accomplish that primary objective:

1. Maintain and develop suitable nesting habitat throughout the warbler's former known range.
2. Protect the warbler on its wintering grounds and along migration routes.
3. Reduce key factors adversely affecting reproduction and survival.
4. Monitor breeding populations to evaluate responses to management practices and environmental changes.
5. Reintroduce the birds into areas in the upper peninsula of Michigan or in other states to reestablish independent, self-sufficient populations.

Federal and state agencies, conservation groups, university researchers and private individuals have already participated or are currently participating in activities identified in the Recovery Plan as tasks necessary to successfully reach those five goals.

Relative to Goal 1, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) have been the lead agencies responsible for locating, maintaining, and/or developing nesting habitat on public lands (Plan tasks 1.11, 1.1, 1.21-1.23, 1.331, 1.51, 1.521). Jack pine management plans have been prepared for selected state and federal lands by the MDNR and USFS to provide potential nesting habitat for up to 1,000 pairs (Plan task 1.3). The purchase of key tracts has been pursued by the USFWS (Plan task 1.41).

The organized implementation of tasks relative to Goal 2 has not been effected; no formal system for reporting and verifying sightings of Kirtland's warblers during migration or on the wintering grounds has been established. However, sightings are noted in the National Audubon Society's (NAS) periodical *American Birds*, and/or are relayed to Recovery Team members by interested individuals. In addition, preliminary data contributing to the eventual accomplishment of Goal 2 were collected when the NAS issued a contract for a researcher to go to the Bahamas in 1972 and 1973 to survey and assess habitat changes, locate Kirtland's warblers, and attempt to determine the warbler's requirements in winter

and correlate them with land use changes in the Bahamas. In 800 hours of field work associated with that effort, however, only one Kirtland's warbler was observed. In 1977 certain Recovery Team members, private individuals, and USFWS personnel met with Bahaman officials to discuss implementing tasks needed to accomplish Goal 2 but no action has been taken to date.

Limiting factors are being addressed by the USFWS, MDNR, and USFS with assistance from the NAS, local Michigan Audubon Society chapters, state and private universities in Michigan and private individuals, through habitat protection, modification and maintenance, brown-headed cowbird and other nest predator control, information/education programs and tours, and popular and technical publications (Plan task 1.23 and all Plan tasks identified for Goal 3).

Annual breeding population censuses are conducted in Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Canada by USFWS, USFS, MDNR, Wisconsin DNR and Minnesota DNR personnel, researchers from the University of Toronto and Central Michigan University, local Audubon Society Chapters and private individuals (Plan tasks 4.11, 4.111).

Southwestern Michigan University has initiated a cross-fostering feasibility study using yellow warblers as surrogate Kirtland's warbler young and chipping sparrows as foster parents (Plan task 5.1). Implementation efforts in all other tasks pertaining to a reintroduction program (Goal 5) will depend upon the results of this study.

Because the Kirtland's warbler is apparently only an occasional migrant in Florida, this Schedule will address only those recovery efforts associated with Plan task 2.211-1 of Step 2 (establish system for reporting and verifying sightings of Kirtland's warbler during migration).

## Commission Participation Summary

This section documents the extent and degree to which the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission will participate in the implementation of the Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Plan.

Under Section I, Objective 2, of Florida's Endangered Wildlife Project (E-1), the Commission maintains a single contact and representative for all endangered species matters in Florida. Kirtland's warbler sightings in Florida could be most effectively and efficiently collected and compiled through this single contact. Consequently, although not specifically assigned responsibility for any tasks in the Recovery Plan, the Commission shall participate in implementing Task 2.211-1 in the manner described below.

Task 2.211-1 Establish system for reporting and verifying sightings of Kirtland's warbler during migration.

Participation Description: The Commission will solicit systematic reports from personnel in appropriate state and federal agencies, the Florida Audubon Society, Florida Ornithological Society, and all other appropriate conservation organizations, and members of the "Rare Bird Hotline" (a Florida Ornithological Society-approved activity comprised of knowledgeable "birders" in the State) of all Kirtland's warbler sightings in Florida. Those reports will be compiled and relayed to the Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Team Leader and to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Information transmitted, if possible, will include date, time and locations of sightings, habitat descriptions and numbers of birds sighted. The Commission will seek the opinions of acknowledged experts on the reliability of each sighting and will include summaries of such opinions as parts of those reports.

Status of Task Completion: Participation in this task will begin in 1980 as part of Objective I-C-2, Section I (Coordination) of the Endangered Wildlife Project (E-1) (Appendix A), and will continue indefinitely.

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## COMMISSION PARTICIPATION SCHEDULE FOR THE KIRTLAND'S WARBLER RECOVERY PLAN

Task Description	Task #	Target Dates		Estimated Costs
		Start	End	
Establish system for reporting and verifying sightings of Kirtland's warbler during migration	2.211-1	1980	Continue	None <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> No cost to the Commission because of minimal effort required to implement this task.