

View From the Eyrie

Natural Selections Newsletter, Spring 2013

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Avian Resources and Tools for DoD

The DoD Partners in Flight (PIF) program is always looking for resources and tools that will help DoD natural resource managers and biologists perform their jobs more efficiently and effectively. Our web site, <http://www.dodpif.org/>, houses this information. I invite you to explore the web site, even if you have done so before, as new information is continually added. If you know about a resource, tool, or other item that is beneficial to migratory bird conservation on DoD lands that is not yet on the web site, please contact us. This web site is for your benefit, so help us make it so. A few of the key sections of the web site for resources and tools include:

Resources & Materials

- Species of Concern
- Fact Sheets
- Bird Conservation Map
- Birds of N. America Online
- Migration Poster
- Species Profiles
- Project Funding
- Annual Report
- Logos

Publications

- Steppingstones Newsletter
- Shorebird Guidebook
- Articles

Plans & Projects

- Strategic Plan
- Monitoring
- Avian Protection Plans
- Bird Conservation Plans
- Important Bird Areas
- Legacy-funded Projects
- Migratory Birds & MBTA

Another section documents an incredible success story – the Kirtland's Warbler Information Inventory Archive (Legacy Resource Management Program project #10-119). The Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Team was one of the first recovery teams, and included the three managing agencies (Michigan Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service [USFWS]) involved in the recovery activities for the species. The work of the Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Team over the last 25 years successfully brought an endangered species back from the brink of extinction despite impossible odds. The partnerships, techniques and process have been documented here for future generations to use as a model for future successes. As an accompaniment to a forthcoming Monograph detailing the history and process of the recovery effort, this remarkable inventory of information contains nearly 1400 items, including articles, book chapters, cooperative agreements, correspondence, interviews, meeting minutes, maps, outreach, photos, and policy, press releases, recovery and habitat management plans, reports, papers, sighting and banding records, theses and dissertations.

We also have a section devoted to bird conservation successes on installations. If you have such a story, we will post it here and advertise additions as they are received and posted. The DoD PIF email listserve serves as a notification and distribution vehicle for breaking news and information. To sign up, visit <http://www.dodpif.org>, fill in the requested information in the lower left of any page (first and last name, email address, and the displayed security code), then click on the orange “Sign Up Today” arrow.

An excellent resource for bird conservation projects and partnerships are the migratory bird Joint Ventures (JVs). In the 1970s and early 1980s, the loss of wetland habitat seriously threatened waterfowl populations in North America. By 1985, waterfowl populations had plummeted to record lows. In 1986, the U.S. and Canada created the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (Plan) to encourage governments, private organizations, and individuals to work together through regional JVs to preserve and enhance waterfowl habitat. By 1994, 14 JVs had appeared on the landscape, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the prairie potholes of the Dakotas to the rolling grasslands and playa lakes of the southern Great Plains. The year 1994 also marked Mexico’s signing of the Plan, completing the continental partnership for waterfowl conservation. Today, 18 JVs conserve bird habitat in the U.S. for all birds; these include two U.S.–Mexico and one U.S.–Canada bi-national JVs. Over the past 25 years, JVs have involved thousands of partners to restore, protect, and improve 18.5 million acres of habitat for migratory birds, amphibians, fish, mammals, and plants. And JVs have become an international model for diverse partners working together to help conserve birds and habitat. Visit <http://www.nabci-us.org/jvmap.html> for a map of all North America JVs, with links to each JV. View a breathtaking five-minute video celebrating 25 years of the Migratory Bird Joint Ventures, produced by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, with an introduction by U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar at <http://tinyurl.com/JV-Cornell>.

As all of you are (hopefully) aware, the 1997 amendments to the Sikes Act require DoD to develop and implement an INRMP for each installation with significant natural resources. The Tripartite Sikes MOU further states, “The INMRP must be prepared in cooperation with the FWS and the State fish and wildlife agency and reflect the mutual agreement of the parties concerning conservation, protection, and management of fish and wildlife resources on military lands.” But did you know that in order to receive funds through the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program and the State Wildlife Grants Program, Congress charged each state and territory with developing a wildlife action plan? These plans, known technically as “comprehensive wildlife conservation strategies,” assess the health of each state’s wildlife and habitats, identify the problems they face, and outline the actions that are needed to conserve them over the long term. State wildlife agencies worked together through the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and USFWS to develop the action plans. If you have ever prepared, read, or implemented an INRMP, this should ring some bells. What better way to maximize efficiency (and reduce redundancy) than to partner with your state wildlife agency? Since DoD and each state are required to work in cooperation with the USFWS, it just makes sense that you take advantage of what these key partners have to offer, as well as what we have to offer them. For more on these state plans, see <http://www.wildlifeactionplan.org/>.