

BIRD CONSERVATION NETWORK

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www.bcnbirds.org

January 2005 Meeting January 15, 2005 Northerly Island - Chicago

Attendees:

Leslie Borns At Large	Glenn Gabanski CBO	Joe Lukascyk Ft. Dearborn	Terry Shilling At Large
Joan Bruckman CBCM	Jerry Garden CAS	Walter Marcisz COS	George Sullivan Ft. Sullivan
Suzanne Checchia ENSBC	Donna Gonzalez Save the Dunes	Judy Pollock NAS-CW	Wayne Svoboda Ft. Dearborn
Donnie Dann TNC	Charles Habecker Thorn Creek	Lee Ramsey NAS-CW	Geoff Williamson IOS
Don Darnell CAS	Mary Anne Harrison IAS	Dick Riner Thorn Crrek	
Randi Doeker COS	John Hockman Lake-Cook	Jeffrey Sanders ENSBC	

President Donald Dann called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm. A quorum was present. The minutes of the November 2004 meeting were accepted without changes.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Glenn Gabanski distributed the current financial statement along with a list of BCN member clubs and their payment status. All members have paid for 2004, the account balance is \$8737 (reflecting the receipt of the ChiWild grant). A dues renewal packet was distributed to each club, along with an invoice for those that have not paid for 2005.

Nominating Committee

On behalf of the committee chair, Libby Hill, Jerry Garden submitted the recommendations of the nominating committee for the 2005 officers. No additional nominations had been submitted. The final nominees are:

- President – Donald Dann
- V.P. – Lee Ramsey
- Treasurer – Glenn Gabanski
- Secretary – Randi Doeker

The slate was unanimously elected.

PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

Bird Monitoring – Lee Ramsey and Judy Pollock

Lee is continuing to make contact with the land managers and setting up liaisons with the bird clubs. The land managers

are helping identify the most important sites for monitoring.

The main tasks of the club liaisons are to submit notices to newsletters and make announcements at meetings. Liaisons are still needed in Lake, McHenry, Will and Kane Counties.

Judy is working with a volunteer from Prairie Woods on a database for the monitors. She also applied for a grant to do the scientific analysis of the data and is seeking a second grant for same.

Birding Trail Map - Randi Doeker

Randi explained that the Chicago Dept of the Environment now expects to have maps printed by the spring of 2005 initially using a \$15,000 grant from Chicago Wilderness.

Important Bird Areas - Judy Pollock

A second round of nominations of IBAs is being sought. There are plans for more public events, especially in conjunction with International Migratory Bird Day.

Wild Things Conference - Judy Pollock

Registration will be available online. Brochures are available for distribution at club meetings. There will be 15 concurrent tracks and many bird-related sessions. Authors will be signing books.

IL Bird Conservation Initiative – Donnie Dann and Bob Fisher

Report by Bob:

On December 15 2004, I met on behalf of BCN with a group including 3 people from the Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources:

Leslie Sgro, Deputy Director

Tom Flattery, Director, Office of Realty and Environmental Planning

Dr. Geoffrey Levin, Director, Center for Biodiversity, IL Natural History Survey

Also present were:

John Rogner, US Fish & Wildlife Service

Judy Pollock, representing Audubon of the Chicago Region

The purpose of the meeting was to brainstorm the feasibility of creating a statewide bird conservation initiative, modeled after similar initiatives now up and running in Missouri (MOBCI) and Wisconsin (WIBCI). These initiatives represent the combined commitment of various groups who have an interest in birds and bird conservation. Quoting from the MOBCI by laws "The Initiative is an "organization of organizations". It includes non-governmental groups (NGOs)-with game and non-game interests, hunters and non-hunters, birders and non-birders, as well as others. It includes government agencies with interests and, in some cases, legal responsibilities for bird conservation."

Our Dec. 15 discussions focused on a central need for successful start up of an ILBCI coalition: A person or persons who can focus on lining up the key NGOs and governmental agencies who have both the interest and ability to participate in the creation and management of the initiative. In Missouri, their DNR provided needed staff support; In Wisconsin both the DNR and the state Audubon group took the lead in bringing a coalition together. Our BCN coalition is made up entirely of volunteers so we are not in position to provide that staff, nor is the Illinois Audubon Society, a BCN member, as they are fully committed to sanctuary management and not able to provide staff support for starting up ILBCI. In response to my request for staff help, the IDNR personnel present at this meeting said IDNR is unable at present to provide staff support because of serious budget constraints within the department.

What IDNR did offer in support of the start up was a meeting venue in Springfield and help with names of key people from other NGOs who could be invited to that meeting. No specific date was set for that meeting; early spring was suggested as a possibility. John Rogner offered his personal support for the initiative, but is also unable to provide any significant staff support.

It's clear from the Missouri and Wisconsin models that a full time individual, committed to getting the initiative up and running, is crucial to its success. Our Illinois DNR cannot/will not provide that person at this time due to a lack of funds and personnel. Nonetheless, it would be appropriate to proceed with the proposed meeting to at least get the idea out to other potentially interested NGOs.

Dick Riner will attend the next meeting.

Migrant Bird Habitat Study - Judy Pollock

Judy discussed the results of the 3-year study which identified which trees were used during migration.

The University of IL is looking for volunteers to help do route studies to determine how WNV is spread.

CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES

Lake Calumet – Walter Marcisz

The proposed expansion of the landfill near Lake Calumet is on hold: The city council renewed the moratorium through 2007. Walter believes that Waste Management will pursue the expansion again at that time.

Lights Out - Judy Pollock

A website is about to be launched to be an online toolkit for other cities. National Audubon will be doing a PR push for the program.

Northerly Island - Randi Doeker

The Chicago Park District started its public hearing process; hearings are being held around the city through March. So far the participants are split between proponents of a nature park and an airport.

The park district has sent out an RPF for some activity that will generate \$800,000 to pay for the planning process in 2005; the most likely events will be some music concerts.

Grassland Birds Audit - Judy Pollock

This is the third and final year of the grassland birding blitz. This is a ChiWild program; their concern is that birds are an excellent indicator of the health of an area. This year vegetation monitors are being added. There is also a selective research study to look at restored areas for its success of attracting birds.

The first draft of the IDNR wildlife conservation plan is posted on their website. Data is missing. It is important birders submit their own data because the conservation plan ultimately impacts the amount of federal money IL will get and where it will be spent. Judy will post this information on BCNnet.

OTHER BUSINESS

IDNR Budget Cuts - Donnie Dann

Donnie explained that IDNR budget cuts were 3 times the amount of other departments. The Partners for Parks and Wildlife, which BCN belongs to, is working this issue. It appears the Governor is taking conservation as well as the conservation community for granted.

The meeting adjourned at 2:57 pm. The next meeting will be at Camp Sagawau on April 9, 2005.

Respectfully submitted,
Randi Doeker
Secretary