



*Bird
Conservation
Network*

BCN Quarterly Meeting—Minutes
Northerly Island, Chicago, IL
Saturday, July 19, 2008

Attendees: Chris Van Wassenhove, CAS; Annette Prince, CBCM; Mary Lou Mellon, CBCM; Teri Radke, CBCM; Sigrid Schmidt, COS; Glenn Gabanski, DBC; Bob Fisher, DBC; Eric Secker, DBC; Suzanne Checchia, ENSBC; Dawn Keller, FC; Mary Anne Harrison, IAS; Nancy Greenlee, Lake-Cook; Jean Sodemann, Lake-Cook; Diane Rosenberg, Lake County Aud.; Jenny Vogt, NAS-CW; Judy Pollock, NAS-CW; Donnie Dann, TNC; Jill Niland, COS, guest; Ryan White,.

President Bob Fisher called the meeting to order at 1:20pm.

Administrative:

1. The minutes of the April 19, 2008, meeting at Camp Sagawau were approved.
2. Treasurer's Report—Glenn Gabanski. As of May 24th, all the BCN members that were expected to renew had done so. BCN has \$1,478.62 in its checking account and \$3,000 in a CD. After taking into account expected expenditures on BCN memberships in other organizations, the annual BCN website hosting fee, and the annual BCN database maintenance fee, there is an estimated \$177.87 to spend to avoid paying any income taxes this year.
3. Appointment of Nominating Committee—Bob. Judy Pollock and Donnie Dann expressed willingness to serve. Bob will re-appoint or appoint one additional person.
4. Application for Membership—Bob. Ryan White, new field rep for Audubon Chicago Region has applied for individual membership. His application was accepted by acclamation. Welcome, Ryan!
5. Restructuring of Executive Committee—Bob. Four new committees are to be created to help BCN get more people from the member organizations involved and active in bird conservation. Existing standing committees are Finance, Membership, and Monitoring & Research (formerly Census/Oversight). The new committees will be Advocacy (to be chaired by Donnie), Meetings and Events, Editorial (to be chaired by Bob), and Publicity. Advocacy will evaluate and act on sign-on opportunities for national bird conservation

issues; will pay careful attention to local issues where BCN might be able to make a difference; will attend meetings, write letters and speak on behalf of BCN where appropriate. Meetings and Events will plan BCN “give back to the birds” work days (two events annually) and participation in conservation venues such as Wild Things. The Editorial Committee will write position papers and evaluate former positions and rewrite if necessary. Publicity will get the word out about BCN’s activities and bird-census research.

Projects and Initiatives:

1. Bird Monitoring

- Website Status—Eric Secker. Summary data on Breeding Birds of Concern—Chicago Wilderness Area and Species Trends 99-07 Breeding Birds Trends Analysis were distributed. Statistics are now complete and the website is in its review phase. Reps are encouraged to check out the information on the BCN website at <http://bcnbirds.org/trends07/index.html> and determine if everything is clear and understandable.

Please report areas of concern to Eric or Judy via email. Please do not forward the above-named link, as the website is still under review.

- Future funding—Judy. The first 10 years of BCN bird censusing has produced great results. BCN may need a new partner going forward as it is unclear if Chicago Wilderness will be willing or able to continue to fund future data analysis. BCN needs to consider where to find data analysis partners or alternative funding. Two possible partners are Mike Ward, who is involved in the Critical Trends Assessment Program (CTAP) for the Illinois Natural History Survey, and Eric Lonsdorf of Lincoln Park Zoo.
- Bird monitors’ meeting—Bob. A hoped-for occasion to share the results of the year’s monitoring with the 180-plus monitors will probably have to be deferred to 2009.

2. Shrubland Bird Blitz—Judy for Karen Glennemeier. Data has been received from 192 participants at 104 sites. It is presently being entered into the data base and has yet to be analyzed. Woodland Bird Blitz will start in 2009 for 3 years, followed by a Wetland Bird Blitz for 3 years.

3. Wild Things—Bob. Reps are to contact Bob if interested in helping to develop the “Good News about Birds” track for this conference, which will probably be held on February 7, 2009, at UIC.

4. Bridge Maintenance—Annette Prince. City painting of the Diversey Harbor Bridge was destroying the nests and young of swallows. Annette contacted the DNR and DOE

and was able to get the project stopped till the end of the nesting season. Bob and newly formed Editorial Committee will draft a “best practice” position paper for bridge maintenance.

5. BTK Spraying in Lake Forest—Nancy Greenlee. Following a letter from Prof. Caleb Gordon, formerly of Lake Forest College, regarding the aerial spraying of BtK in Lake Forest for the control of gypsy moths, the Lake Forest City Forester office was contacted and the following was learned: A community hearing had already been held on the subject. Spraying was planned for five areas totaling 40 acres. Spraying was justified to manage "heavily infested" areas. Further research found that numerous communities in Illinois practice aerial spraying. There exists much controversy about the effects of such spraying on wildlife and humans. Development of a "best practices" paper for gypsy moth control was set aside for the future.

6. Quentin Road Widening Project—tabled.

7. Future BCN Field Trips/Work Days—Judy. Two ideas were presented: planting seeds at Bartel Grasslands and Elsen’s Hill, a migratory hotspot in West Dupage Woods. Elsen’s Hill was selected.

8. Stewards and Volunteers at Chicago Parks—Sigrid Schmidt. Several of the stewards at Chicago parks are concerned about the lack of coordination, lack of inclusion and support from the Chicago Park District. In addition, they believe funds are being diverted from habitat restoration to other uses. Sigrid proposed that a letter from BCN to the head of the Chicago Park District expressing support for the stewards and volunteers be written. Sigrid and Jill Niland will write the letter, forward it to Donnie and then to Bob Fisher for signature and mailing.

9. Lake Calumet—Bob for Walter Marcisz. Walter is extremely concerned that bird diversity in this area is declining. Keystone species are disappearing. The efforts of the DOE over the past 10 years are not working. A meeting with the DOE is recommended.

Campaign Activities

1. Cats Indoors—Donnie. Judy and Donnie have drawn up a statement that they submitted to Mike Quigley’s office. They hope to amend the new ordinance that permits feral cat colonies in Chicago. The statement would prohibit feral cat colony locations from being within a certain distance from natural areas and add independent monitoring of the colonies.

2. Lights Out Program—tabled due to time constraints.

Other Business

1. Mayor Daley was presented with the ABA’s Chandler Robbins Education and Conservation award at the ABA Convention in Snowbird, Utah. Suzanne Malec’s first

deputy Karen Hobbs received the award from Donnie on Mayor Daley's behalf. Donnie is attempting to find a local venue at which this award can be publicized. He is waiting to hear from the mayor's office.

2. State of Illinois budget cuts. IDNR has been cut from over 2000 employees to 1600. The governor has cut another 14% in his latest round of budget cuts.

3. Wind turbines. There is an upcoming meeting in Washington D.C. that will discuss the ways wind turbines impact wildlife.

4. The next BCN quarterly meeting will be at the home of Donnie Dann, in Highland Park on Saturday, November 1, 2008, from 1-4pm. Donnie has invited attendees to come in the morning to observe migrating waterfowl from the bluff overlooking Lake Michigan. At 12:30 Donnie will give a tour of his home's environmentally green "subtraction."

The meeting was adjourned at 4pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Lou Mellon
Secretary