



# BIRD CONSERVATION NETWORK

[www.bcnbirds.org](http://www.bcnbirds.org)

## BCN Quarterly Meeting Minutes

Saturday, November 12, 2011, 1:00pm-4:00PM  
Donnie Dann's Residence, Highland Park, IL.

Attendees: Chris VanWassenhove, Carolyn Marsh, CAS; Mary Lou Mellon, Annette Prince, CBCM; Bob Fisher, Linda Padera, DBC; Suzanne Checchia, Lloyd Davidson, ENSBC; Joan Bruchman, Matthew Cvetas, IOS; Diane Rosenberg, LCAS; Judy Pollock, Lee Ramsey, NAS-CR; Bob Harrison, TC; Donnie Dann, TNC; Lee Witkowski, WCA; Dale Crusoe, Guest.

President Joan Bruchman called the meeting to order at 1:04pm. A quorum was established with 17 representatives from 10 member organizations and one guest.

### Administrative:

1. The minutes of the July 16, 2011 meeting were approved.

Suzanne Checchia felt the statement, "Suzanne and Annette will try to go back to Ryerson using the information and data from Camp Sagawa," in the section, *Camp Sagawa Window Collision Meeting Follow-up Report*, of the July 16 minutes was not an accurate representation of the situation. Joan Bruchman agreed that the minutes should be altered and suggested this revision. Joan offered to send the changes to Eric Secker.

- Add – "No action by BCN is to be taken at this time."
- Delete – "Suzanne and Annette will try to go back to Ryerson using the information and data from Camp Sagawa."

The minutes are posted on the BCN website at [www.BCNbirds.org](http://www.BCNbirds.org), as are the minutes of the October 10, 2011 Executive Committee conference call meeting.

2. PayPal addition to BCN Web site for donations – Eric Secker

Eric reported that he has completed testing of the addition of PayPal to the Web site. Soon, BCN will be able to accept donations. There are 30 cent and 2.2% fees per transaction.

3. Treasurer's report: Joan Bruchman on behalf of Glenn Gabanski

For 2011 BCN has an income of \$1,550.25, paid expenses totaling \$1,761.05 with additional expenses not yet paid of \$120 giving total expenses of \$1,761.05. Expected loss this year will be about \$330. Much of this loss is due to the \$400 fee paid to apply for 501(c)(3) status that was not anticipated in the 2011 budget.

Current checkbook balance is \$3,744.25.

BCN is sales tax exempt in Illinois. Earlier this year Glenn filed documents with the Illinois Department of Revenue requesting BCN be exempt from paying sales tax and on August 26, 2011 we received the letter with the Tax Exemption ID Number: E9927-5368-01. When purchasing anything for BCN use, one needs to provide this number to the seller. Glenn made an electronic copy of the letter and sent it to ExCom members. It might be useful to present a copy of the letter when purchasing any supplies.

The report was approved.

4. Update on BCN charitable organization status – Joan Bruchman on behalf of Glenn Gabanski

Last June Glenn applied to the Illinois Attorney General's office for BCN to be registered as a Charitable Organization (CO) in Illinois. He did this because he believed our new 501(c)(3) qualified us for this status. In September the Illinois Attorney General's office sent us a letter telling us BCN was late in applying to be a CO and fined us \$200 and required us to file Federal Forms 990 and Illinois AG 990 IL for 2008 and 2009. (See the minutes of the 10 October 2011 Executive Committee meeting for details on how Glenn successfully resolved this issue).

On 10/11, Glenn received a phone message and our office in Evanston received a letter from the Attorney General's office confirming that BCN is now registered as a CO. Our CO# is 01061135. In the future BCN must file form AG990-IL within six months of the end of our fiscal year.

## **Advocacy**

1. Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act – Donnie Dann

The House of Representatives has voted to eliminate funding of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act. If passed by the Senate, these destructive cuts will harm birds and wildlife as well as undo a decade of successful conservation efforts for migratory birds. Donnie plans to meet with a key assistant to Illinois Senator Dick Durbin to express BCN's concern and to ensure that this critical bird conservation program continues to be funded.

## 2. Lake Michigan Offshore Wind Energy Advisory Council – Donnie Dann

The state of Illinois has created the Lake Michigan Offshore Wind Energy Advisory Council in order to assist in the evaluation and consideration of offshore wind energy projects in Illinois waters of Lake Michigan and report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly by June 30. Donnie Dann has been appointed to serve on this council. The first meeting of the council took place on October 17. Mary Lou asked if there was much research for the council to draw upon. Donnie said that yes there is much research from wind farms in the North Sea. He also said that if wind farms were placed within three miles of shore, they would be state controlled.

## 3. Advocacy Letters – Donnie Dann

Donnie reported that he had written nine letters on behalf of BCN for various advocacy issues.

## 4. Chicago Department of the Environment (DOE) Meeting – Judy Pollock

Judy contacted Karen Weigert, Chief Sustainability Officer for the City of Chicago and asked for a meeting to understand the status of the DOE and share BCN's concerns for its conservation programs. Prior to the meeting, the DOE was dissolved and several of its functions were spread across multiple city departments. Despite this, the meeting occurred on October 26 and included Judy, Donnie, Doug Stotz and representatives from several Chicago birding clubs and conservation organizations.

Carolyn Marsh expressed some concern over not being invited to the meeting as she is the conservation chair for the Chicago Audubon Society and is very familiar with issue concerning the Calumet region. Joan mentioned that primarily Chicago residents were invited to the meeting as BCN felt that it would make more of an impact to have voting constituents at the meeting.

Judy felt as though the outcome was positive as Karen asked for some ideas on which they could work together. Some suggestions were made during the BCN meeting including adopting the Bird Safe Building Standards of the San Francisco Planning Commission and developing bird friendly design plans for land adjacent to the Chicago River.

Eric Secker asked if the BCN could link to the Chicago Birding Trail Guide from the BCN Web site. He was concerned that the guide would get lost in the shuffle. Donnie mentioned that he would seek permission with the appropriate city contact.

In an email to the Secretary on November 21, Donnie reported that permission was granted by the city for BCN to link to the Chicago Birding Trail Guide from its Web site.

## 5. Cook County Cat Legislation Update and TNR Status – Donnie Dann

Donnie reported that he was trying to get a meeting with the head of animal control. He mentioned that the goal was to get current Trap, Neuter, and Release (TNR) legislation to restrict cat colonies from being placed anywhere near natural areas. The American Bird Conservancy sent out a plea to the mayors of 50 U.S. cities to support anti-Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) policies and feeding bans for feral cats. Bob Fisher stated the new Chicago Wilderness policy was excellent, but that access to it was difficult. He suggested that BCN links to and publicizes the policy from its own Web site. Diane Rosenberg also suggested that BCN do some talks with local organizations about TNR and the threat it poses to birds. Judy said Vicky Sroczynski was developing a presentation that could be used for this purpose and would send it out for review.

## 6. Army Core of Engineers Mitigation Wetland Banking – Carolyn Marsh

This is an informational report to BCN affiliates. Information was discovered after researching the Army Corps of Engineers, Chicago District, permit for the 130th and Torrence Avenue Grade Separation project (Hegewisch-Lake Calumet neighborhood in SE Chicago). The Chicago Department of Environment transferred land to the Chicago Department of Transportation in 2007 for the project, which included a Ford access road inside the Hegewisch Marsh boundary.

Since Torrence Avenue will be closed until approximately 2015 under the project, the Ford assembly plant would need another route to transfer its cars off the assembly line to parking lots and railroad cars located east of Torrence Avenue and opposite of Hegewisch Marsh. The Chicago DOT decided a new access road should be built west of Torrence Avenue and in the marsh to accommodate the Ford Assembly Plant. After Torrence Avenue is reconfigured at 130th, Brainard and Torrence Avenue, Ford would resume using Torrence Avenue. The permanent access road would then be used exclusively as a South Shore Railroad access road that would go to a maintenance facility on 130th.

The resulting wetland loss in Hegewisch Marsh was mitigated by purchasing credits to create new wetlands in Kane County's V3 Blackberry Wetland Bank. The Chicago DOE approved the mitigation plan and the City of Chicago paid \$574,940.00 to purchase credits in the Kane County wetland bank. The Chicago DOE and Chicago DOT decided there was no local land in the Calumet Region to mitigate the loss.

This plan could be accomplished because the ACOE-Chicago had changed its jurisdiction and had developed a new Interagency Coordination Agreement (ICA) on Wetland Mitigation Banking in 2008. According to the ICA, the watershed service area boundaries have changed since 2008, and Hegewisch Marsh is no longer located within the Lake Michigan watershed. According to the updated ICA map, the Hegewisch Marsh and Blackberry Creek Wetland Mitigation Bank are both located within the Upper Mississippi Watershed area. Therefore, mitigation in the Upper Mississippi watershed meets the intent of the mitigation rule.

Meetings have been and more will be held by conservation-environmental organizations to gather more information about the Ford access road and the future of Hegewisch Marsh and the future Ford Calumet Environmental Center.

7. BCN Wind Policy Paper to Web site – Judy Pollock

Judy stated that the BCN Wind Paper Policy had been posted to the BCN Web site.

8. Camp Sagawau Window Netting Update – Joan Bruchman

Although fall migration is over, the project to reduce the bird window collisions is going forward. This is a little slower than BCN would have liked. But it will be done by spring.

I have been in touch with Jim Havlit who is Superintendent Randall's assistant assigned to this project. Jim said that the measuring of the windows was completed about 3 weeks ago.

The job to apply the netting was put out for bid on Friday, 11/11.

BCN has asked for a permanent solution rather than something that would be put up just during spring and fall migration.

I was told that I will be kept informed of the progression and timing of the project.

Bob Fisher expressed concern that CCFPD might find it too expensive to complete the job. He suggested someone speak at the next CCFPD Board Meeting so that the intent was entered into the public record. This might help to get the job accomplished.

9. Ryerson Woods Visitor's Center Window Collisions Update – Suzanne Checchia and Annette Prince

Annette reported that Ryerson did not express interest in doing anything about preventing window collisions. Diane Rosenberg suggested that Lake County Audubon would send a representative to the next Lake County Forest Preserve District meeting to make the issue public. Donnie Dann said that he would speak to Nan Buckhardt about the window collisions.

## **Fund Raising**

1. Guatemala Project – Judy Pollock

Judy reported on her travels to Guatemala to see Rob Cahill's work, Community Cloud Forest Conservation ([Cloudforestconservation.org](http://Cloudforestconservation.org)), which strives to alleviate poverty and protect cloud forests in Guatemala through education and reforestation.

Judy suggested that BCN begin a joint fund raising campaign with this group and set a goal to raise \$7500, which would be split between the reforestation project and BCN. Raised funds would be used to reforest 5 acres in Guatemala and analyze BCN's monitoring results or perform local habitat improvement work.

Donnie Dann again emphasized that supporting the American Bird Conservancy, who focuses its efforts in many countries in Central and South America, makes more sense than supporting an individual effort in one country.

Carolyn Marsh pointed out that BCN's 501(c)(3) application to the IRS (Notice 1382) included two items in Section VII that may prevent BCN from undertaking this effort. BCN stated that it (1) would not operate in a foreign country and (2) would not raise funds on behalf of another organization. Judy stated that she would further investigate this with the IRS.

In an email to the BCN Executive Committee on November 14 2011, Judy reported she had called the IRS help line to ask about Carolyn's points regarding our application.

The IRS stated that if we are just sending a check to an organization and recruiting people to go on a trip, we are not operating in a foreign country.

In addition, there's absolutely nothing wrong with us undertaking this effort. The only issue is that we checked that we would not raise funds for another organization on the application. It was recommended that we can just amend our bylaws and send the IRS a copy to let them know that we have changed our practices. Judy suggested we might want to check with a lawyer about this situation prior to proceeding.

## 2. Fundraising Committee – Joan Bruchman

Joan reported that the fundraising committee did not meet, but suggested that someone should be identified to chair the committee. A volunteer was not identified during the meeting.

## **Projects & Initiatives**

### 1. Red-headed Woodpecker Blitz – Judy Pollock and Dale Crusoe

Dale Crusoe, an experienced field researcher, is doing a study for BCN on the historical and current distribution of Red-headed Woodpeckers in the Chicago area. Dale mentioned that this involved first accessing historical studies. Lloyd Davidson offered his help in accessing any Northwestern University databases that may be of assistance in this effort. In June 2012, BCN will also undertake a birding blitz focused on reporting Red-headed Woodpecker and their nest locations, and describing the habitat in which they are found. BCN hopes to use the collected data to communicate to land managers what can be done to further promote this species.

## 2. Inland Trout Season Project – Mary Lou Mellon

An article in Springfield's *State-Journal-Register* by Chris Young in March 2011 featured BCN's fishing line container project, on which we have reported for the past several meetings. Mary Lou Mellon was quoted in the article about how the special containers with covers were provided by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County to the lake areas for the fishermen to use to dispose of their tangled line and hooks so that they would not be dangerous to birds and other wildlife. The article can be found at <http://www.sj-r.com/top-stories/x1161120036/Anglers-asked-to-retrieve-discarded-fishing-line> or see Appendix A.

The fishing line container project was successfully completed by early August. Steve Silic, fisheries biologist with the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, contacted BCN in September to get some assistance with their blockbuster Inland Trout Season. Cook County stocks 3 lakes with rainbow trout and the opening of the season brings in thousands of fishermen. The program has been criticized for causing a considerable mess at the lakes involved. Steve wondered if any of the monitors who were active in our fishing line container project would be available to go to the lakes and talk to the fishermen and hand out flyers about how to safely dispose of tangled line and other fishing leftovers.

Joan Bruchman and Diane Fieri volunteered to cover Axehead and Belleau Lakes and Steve himself covered the third lake. Joan picked up several hundred flyers (Appendix B) for her and Diane to distribute. She reported a very successful 3 hours of walking around and talking to the fishermen on Saturday, Oct. 15, which was opening day.

We received a very nice thank you in appreciation of Joan's and Diane's efforts from Steve.

## 3. Fall 2011 Give Back to Birds Day (GBBD) Recap – Joan Bruchman

The 10/22 GBBD was co-sponsored by BCN, COS and the Sierra Club.

The weather was perfect as 26 volunteers met at 7:00am for the bird walk around Jarvis Sanctuary led by Chris and Geoff Williamson. After the bird walk, and before the workday, the group was treated to juice, coffee, cinnamon rolls and muffins from Ann Sather compliments of the Jarvis land stewards. Charlotte Newfeld and Terry Schilling gave the group the history of Jarvis while all were enjoying the morning break and treats.

The group then went to work harvesting seeds, lopping off tall goldenrod and snakeroot and working inside the fenced area of the sanctuary.

After the morning restoration work, many volunteers stayed to socialize during a picnic lunch.

4. 2012 Give Back to Birds Day – Judy Pollock

Judy asked for ideas on locations for 2012 Give Back to Birds Days in spring and fall. Some potential locations discussed were Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, Rollins Savanna Forest Preserve, and Glacial Park Conservation Area. Matthew Cvetas mentioned that he would like to get the Young Illinois Birders involved in one of the events.

5. 2012 Bird Monitor's Brunch – Joan Bruchman

The Monitors Brunch will be held on a Saturday in May. The date will be announced when the location of the brunch is confirmed.

The day will begin with a bird walk at Waterfall Glen. We are working on reserving a private room at the Argonne National Laboratory restaurant/cafeteria which is located close to Waterfall Glen.

More details to follow.

6. Kane County Birds of Concern Report Review – Judy Pollock

Judy stated that she had sent the report to the review team and incorporated their comments in the finished report. She placed a copy on the Habitat Project Web site (<http://www.habitatproject.org/webdocs/birds/KanePlan2011.pdf>). She would work with Eric to also get a link to it placed on the BCN Web site.

7. Bird Treaty Grant – Judy Pollock

Judy mentioned that the Bird Treaty Grant has provided \$20K that can be spent on up to 10 sites. She asked for suggestions of places in the Calumet region that could use a "migratory makeover." Carolyn Marsh suggested the proposed firing range and Dead Stick Pond. Judy felt since it is a small amount of money, it would better to target smaller sites like a park or campus.

**Administrative (continued):**

5. Officer Nominating Committee – Judy Pollock

Judy stated there will be a few openings in the BCN Executive Committee and could use some help on the nominating committee. Donnie Dann and Bob Fisher offered their assistance.



6. Grant for BCN Data Analysis – Judy Pollock

Bob Fisher found a grant that supports grass roots monitoring and is a possible funding source to complete BCN's data analysis. Judy estimated that it would take approximately \$3750 to complete the data analysis. Judy asked for someone who would volunteer to complete the application. Mary Lou Mellon and Eric Secker both offered their assistance.

7. Update of BCN Brochure – Eric Secker

Eric printed labels to update the BCN brochure so it accurately reflected its 501(c)(3) status, but felt that it did not look good. He suggested that we simply use a green marker to adjust the wording. After reviewing the results, everyone agreed. Suzanne Checchia offered to assist with this.

8. Review and Vote on Bylaw Update, 501(c)(3) Articles – Joan Bruchman

After discussion, prompted by Carolyn Marsh, of the description of the organization, specifically "religious" in Article I, and the subsequent confirmation that the wording was directed by the IRS, both articles were unanimously approved as written by Glenn Gabanski. The revised articles (Articles I and X) can be found in the minutes of the October 10, 2011 Executive Committee, posted to the BCN Web site. The revised bylaws can be downloaded from the BCN website at <http://www.bcnbirds.org/BCNdocuments.html>.

9. Review and Vote on Bylaw Update, Electronic Voting Articles – Mary Lou Mellon

After some discussion prompted by Eric Secker regarding how much time is "a reasonably defined time period" (Amendment 4--New Article IIIa), Amendments 3 and 4 to the bylaws written by Nancy Tikalsky were approved unanimously as written. The revised and new articles (Articles III and IIIA) can be found in the minutes of the October 10, 2011 Executive Committee, posted to the BCN Web site. The revised bylaws can be downloaded from the BCN website at <http://www.bcnbirds.org/BCNdocuments.html>.

**Other**

1. Next BCN Quarterly Meeting

The next BCN Quarterly Meeting is scheduled for January 14, 2012, location to be determined.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:41pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Cvetas  
Secretary, BCN



## Anglers asked to retrieve discarded fishing line

By **CHRIS YOUNG** ([chris.young@sj-r.com](mailto:chris.young@sj-r.com))  
**THE STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER**

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Recommended

Mary Lou Mellon and 9 others recommended this.



Fishing tackle sometimes makes an unintended catch.

And as temperatures warm and good fishing weather looms, anglers are reminded to properly dispose of unused fishing line and other tackle.

All kinds of birds and other wildlife can be tangled in discarded line or hung up in surplus hooks.

The monofilament line can cut into a bird's skin or keep it from flying or feeding. But fishing line apparently is irresistible to some birds, which incorporate it into their nests.

"Crises like long strands of anything," says Steve Bailey, an ornithologist in Lake County with the Illinois Natural History Survey. "They mistake it for a long strand of grass."

Bailey says birds that mistake fishing line for nest materials take the chance of becoming snared.

As any angler can attest, knots form easily in fishing line, making it hard to untangle.

Jane Seitz, executive director of the Illinois Raptor Center in Decatur, says baby birds are at risk when fishing line is used to construct nests. Birds can be injured when line wraps around their legs and feet, cutting off blood circulation.

The Raptor Center sees one or two birds injured by fishing line each year, she said, but those are only a fraction of the birds affected.

"If a goose has line wrapped around its leg and can still fly, there is no catching it," she says. "There are a lot more than what we realize."

Seitz tells the story of a barred owl caught in fishing line in a tree that would not have been rescued if a boater had not happened upon the owl and recognized its predicament.

In an effort to protect birds and other wildlife from discarded monofilament fishing line, the Forest Preserve District of Cook County placed special receptacles at parks where it could be safely thrown away.

The receptacles are PVC pipes mounted vertically with the entrance covered.

But sometimes, honorable intentions aren't quite enough.

The birds can't help being attracted to the stuff, and some have become tangled trying to remove the discarded line from the receptacles, especially if the tubes are vandalized and covers are missing.

"The concept is the right thing to do because we want fishermen to put their line someplace, not in an open barrel," says Mary Lou Mellon of the Chicago-area Bird Conservation Network.

Mellon and a small group of volunteers monitor the receptacles to be sure they have lids that close and they also watch for birds that might get caught.

Mellon says she is disappointed that anglers often leave messes for others to clean up.

"They leave their tackle and little containers they bring their bait in, and they can walk right past a garbage can and still leave it on the ground," Mellon said.

Anglers can help by cutting old fishing line into shorter lengths -- no longer than 10 inches -- before throwing it away, she said.

"I have to believe they care about nature," she said. "I just don't think they know how dangerous fishing line is to birds and wildlife."

Chris Young can be reached at 788-1528.

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# Monofilament (FISHING LINE) Can KILL Wildlife

Thousands of birds and mammals are maimed or killed every year by the improper use and disposal of monofilament fishing line. Mammals, waterfowl, shorebirds, and wading birds get entangled in fishing line that is left on the ground or in the water. Birds starve to death when line gets wrapped around their bills. Others are killed because line gets tangled in their wings or legs preventing them from escaping predators.

## WHAT CAN BE DONE

To reduce the amount of dangerous and unsightly monofilament line in the environment, the Forest Preserve District of Cook County has placed monofilament recycling bins around its lakes. Monofilament collected will be recycled and made into fish habitat.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

Place used fishing line in recycling bins. Remove all hooks, swivels, sinkers and other trash and place in a trash can. To reduce the chance of line breaking use the appropriate test line for the fish you are trying to catch, and replace your line yearly. Place only fishing line in the recycling bins. Help protect wildlife and keep your Forest Preserve lakes clean by picking-up discarded line for recycling. Together we can make our lakes cleaner and safer for both wildlife and fishermen.

