

Bird Conservation Network Quarterly Meeting
Saturday, July 16, 2016
Sagawau Environmental Learning Center, Lemont IL

Present: Bobbi Asher (CAS), Mary Bernat (Thorn Creek Aud), Suzanne Checchia (ENSBC), Donnie Dann (TNC), Dean Engel (Lake-Cook Aud), Glenn Gabanski (DBC), Mary Lou Mellon (CBCM), Steve Mitten (Loyola IES), Tom Mulcahy (DBC), Luis Munoz (COS), Judy Pollock (IOS), Lee Ramsey (NAS-CR), Rita Renwick (Will Cty Aud), Terry Schilling (at-large), Eric Secker (Kane Cty Aud), Dave Taliaferro (Lake-Cook Aud), Jenny Vogt (NAS-CR), Dave Willard (CAS).

The meeting was called to order and a quorum was established with 18 members from 13 organizations plus one at-large.

INTRODUCTIONS

ADMINISTRATION

Minutes

Motion: The Bird Conservation Network approves the minutes of the April 16, 2016 meeting at Donnie Dann's home.

Moved: Dann

Second: Pollock

Action: Passed

Treasurer's Report—Gabanski

2016 Income & Expenses 2016

Income YTD: \$2,070 (All from dues)

Expenses YTD: \$5,273.00 (BCN: \$474.65; NFWF Grant: \$4,798.35)

Net Income: \$3,203.00 Loss due to grant expenses paid in 2016 with money received in 2015.

Account Balances as of 7/16/16:

Checkbook: \$18,357.12 Balance high due to grant expenses yet to be paid in 2016.

Funds Balance: \$4,949.97 Balance after adjusting for expected amounts receivable and payable.

Trends Analysis Reserve Fund: \$1,000

Motion: Accept Treasurer's Report as presented.

Moved: Asher

Second: Renwick

Action: Passed

Notes: BCN thanks Dave Willard for donating the costs of the Monitors Brunch.

BCN's sales tax exemption letter will expire on September 1 of this year. We received a notice of renewal and on June 27 the treasurer mailed in the required documents for renewing the exemption.

Membership Report—Gabanski

All 21 member organizations and 2 individual members have paid their 2016 dues.

CONSERVATION ISSUES

- **BCN Position on Free-roaming Cats—Willard**

The position statement, drawn up by Dave, Terry Schilling, Dean Engel, Chris Williamson and Donnie Dann, with input from ExCom, was discussed and adopted as presented at the meeting. *See attached document.*

Motion: The Bird Conservation Network adopts the BCN Position of Free-roaming Cats presented by Dave Willard.

Moved: Dann

Second: Engel

Action: Passed

It is strongly recommended that at the next meeting we add the following statement at the end of paragraph four: “In an outdoor setting, there is no scientific evidence that free-roaming cats control rat populations”. Appropriate supporting footnotes will also be added.

- **Advocacy Report—Dann**

- 4-26-16 Support of bill introduced by Representative Mike Quigley, H.R. 2280, the Federal Bird Safe Building Act.
- 5-10-16 Sign-on to the letter to EPA on Incident reporting for wildlife poisoning by pesticides.
- 6-8-16 Asked Senator Kirk to support bill to protect imperiled seabirds.
- 6-13-16 Joined effort by Openlands to oppose the proposed rail line from Indiana to Wisconsin.
- 6-16-16 Supported the USACE proposal to establish “Living Shorelines”.
- 6-18-16 Wrote opposing BLM’s plan to change the Clinton ’95 deal and permit more logging in the Pacific Northwest.
- 6-21-16 Received a thank you from a local resident for our opposition for the coal refuse slurry impoundment disposal facility in Elkhart, IL to protect Elkhart Hill, a migratory hotspot.
- 7-2016 Opposed the granting of 30-year take permits for eagles.

Ongoing - Opposing public funds for establishing TNR colonies in Illinois.

Ongoing - Bird-Friendly Buildings in Highland Park

Donnie encourages all reps and members of their organizations to call their state representatives to oppose SJR53, which would allow public funds to be used to manage feral cat colonies.

- **Longmeadow Toll Bridge—Eric Secker**

Details on the proposed Longmeadow Parkway road and toll bridge, portions of which are already under construction:

The Longmeadow Parkway is a proposed \$135 Million dollar four-lane highway that will connect the east end of Algonquin and Rt. 62 to areas along Rt. 31 and Randall Rd. The major controversial component is a four lane bridge that will bisect one of the longest remaining undeveloped stretches of the Fox River and also bisect through the middle of the 750 acre Brunner F.P. Also controversial and setting a dangerous precedent is the fact that the bridge would collect tolls using Illinois’ existing I-PASS system, opening the door for other counties to set up toll roads as well as develop natural areas and protected stretches along rivers that are too costly to traverse. Opposition groups are continuing to protest the bridge and have gained wide support. One lawsuit has been initiated and another is currently in process. Current angles are attacking the outdated EIS survey, changing traffic patterns and development since the initial studies, and questionable practices with selling forest preserve land for the project that was purchased using referendum funds. A nonbinding April referendum in Dundee

Township that saw more than 8,000 people vote against the project and opponents claim over 70% of residents are against it.

- **Montrose Lakefront Coalition—Luis Munoz**

Three coalitions have formed, supported by Friends of the Park (Montrose, Douglas Park and Jackson Park) supported by business people, yacht owners, bird advocates (represented by COS), fisher people, Lincoln Park Advisory Council, volleyball and soccer players, to encourage the Chicago Park District to face up to problems with security, maintenance and traffic flow at the three venues. The coalitions have established goals and a mission statement. They will meet every two weeks and will invite the public to attend community meetings and comment. The 3 Montrose stewards are committed to the effort.

- **Lake Calumet Region—Mary Bernat**

Bernat presented concerns re the development of Lake Calumet Bike Park on the unrestorable slag land at Big Marsh, owned by the Chicago Park District. Judy Pollock suggested that we ask someone from the Chicago Park District to give a presentation on Calumet and other area projects to BCN at its next meeting. We last had CPD speak to BCN at the Oct. 19, 2013, meeting.

PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

- **Chicago Wilderness Priority Animal Species—Judy Pollock**

Chicago Wilderness has formed teams to address their 12 priority species. Three birds have been named as priority species: Henslow's sparrow, bobolink and red-headed woodpecker. NAS-CR is heading the Henslow's sparrow and bobolink teams. John Legge of TNC is heading the red-headed woodpecker team, and Judy Pollock and Bob Fisher are representing BCN and sharing results from the BCN Red-headed Woodpecker Blitz. The teams are developing a work plan to develop goals, research the needs of the birds, publicize the results and then try to influence stewards and land managers to manage for the species.

CW will come up with funding. BCN will identify and appoint some people for the grassland team and will help with the monitoring. Perhaps we will conduct another red-headed woodpecker blitz next year.

- **Chicago Bird-Friendly Building Update—Pollock**

Earlier this year Chicago Audubon Society and Chicago Ornithological Society formed a working group to discuss ways to reduce building hazards that contribute to bird mortality. These hazards primarily relate to reflective and transparent glass, lighting, landscaping and structural design. Carl Giometti, an architect and COS member, is working with Mike Berkshire, from Chicago's Planning Department, Sustainable Development Division. A result is that bird-friendly recommendations now have a plank in the Chicago Sustainable Development Policy standards and incentives to builders.

OTHER

- **2016 Bird Monitors Outing and Brunch—Mellon**

The event was the best-attended ever, with approximately 35 people at the walk at Orland Grassland (led by Wes Serafin and Mike McNamee) and/or at the lavish brunch at beautiful Tampier Lake West, produced by BCN President Dave Willard with help from Mary Hennen. Award certificates were given out to long-term monitors Conrad Fialkowski, Marlys Oosting, Penny Kneisler and Dave Schwegler, and a service recognition certificate was given to Lee Ramsey for his many years of coordinating the BCN Survey with Pollock.

- **Rainbow Beach Give Back to Birds Day—Willard and Checchia**

A flyer for this event on Saturday, August 27, sponsored by BCN and COS, was provided. A bird walk will be led by Geoff and Christine Williamson to be followed by a couple of hours of seed collection and pre-winter trash collection. BCN reps were asked to publicize and promote this event with their groups *See attached flyer.*

- **Jarvis Bird Sanctuary Give Back to Birds Day—Willard**

This BCN-sponsored event will be held Saturday, Oct. 8. It will start with a bird walk to enjoy fall migrants stopping over at this site (leader to be determined). Terry Schilling will direct the workday following the bird walk. We'll help with seed collecting and planting 6 oak trees to replace maples that came down in the area visible from the viewing platform. Refreshments will be provided. Reps are asked to promote the event to their organizations to get some good participation. A flyer will be sent to BCN reps at a later time.

- **Wild Things—Pollock**

The 2017 Wild Things will be held Saturday, February 18, 2017, at a new location: UIC Forum at Halsted & Roosevelt Roads. Cecil Hynds-Riddle has been hired to co-ordinate the event and is recruiting track shepherds. Volunteers are welcome, as are speaker and topic suggestions.

Topics suggested: A BCN program along the lines of what Bob Fisher presented two years ago; the impact of bison on birds; the impact of coyotes on birds; Scott Loss.

- **NFWF Urban Treaty Grant Update—Pollock**

There were three facets to this project:

One was a 2016 International Migratory Bird Day celebration, held at 47th St. in the Burnham Corridor in May. Many interesting exhibits were planned, but the weather didn't cooperate and attendance was poor. Next year we need to publicize it better. All of the same exhibits will be included for the 2017 IMB event at LaBagh Woods.

The second was habitat restoration at LaBagh Woods FP, which is about 50% completed. Three workdays were held in the spring; eleven more are planned for this fall and next year. Seed-collecting workdays will take place this fall.

Thirdly, a Migration Monitoring Point Count Protocol was developed and put into effect with four monitors at both LaBagh and Montrose. The protocol includes a 5-minute point count and a 5-minute foraging component to identify what trees or shrubs the birds are using. The protocol will be updated with the results from this pilot year and ready for implementation in spring of 2017. This fall the protocol will pilot a way for less experienced birders to contribute to the project.

- **First Illinois Young Birders Symposium—Willard** To be held at the Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods on August 27th. Josh Engel advised that they are very close to having reached their financial goal. A flyer for the event was distributed. If any groups would like to sponsor the event with a donation, go to the ILYB page on the IOS website for more information.

Next Meeting—Willard

Saturday, October 29, 2016 at a location to be determined.

Adjourn

Motion: The Bird Conservation Network approved meeting adjournment, at 3:35 p.m.

Moved: Dann

Second: Gabanski

Action: Passed

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Checchia
BCN Secretary