

### *Joint Venture Coordinator comments on the IIC Work Plan (August 13, 2013)*

On the regularly scheduled Joint Venture call (with 15 JVs participating), and via e-mailed solicitations, input was received on the IIC work plan and associated questions. In summary, there was a high degree of 'esprit de corps' about the IIC work plan, very creative thinking by JVs, and an appreciation of each other's situation in how JVs answered questions. The questions that related to waterfowl populations and ecological goods and services had a high degree of interest, with interest in human dimensions (HD) questions also high but more of a cataloguing of what JVs already do in relation to HD.

#### ***Key questions related to waterfowl populations:***

1. Should objectives more explicitly address populations with increasing versus declining trends?
2. What should the anchor point be for the lower threshold (somewhere above biological sustainability)?
  - There were a lot of responses, and JVCs were very animated on this topic.
  - Range of objective (high/low) is supported as it acknowledges flux in ecological systems, stochastic weather and climate change, and implementation variability among JVs.
  - An explicit link between population objective and habitat is also needed/desired.
  - One approach would be to plan for habitat to support upper end of population objective.
  - A cost-based approach, where cost for upper, middle, and low-end population objectives are determined and drive the conversation of which to meet, is one possibility.
  - "Stabilizing declining species is a big consideration for my JV."
  - Overall, a population objective is inherent to the JV business model and explains the over-riding opinion that JVs are just waiting on the direction to implement. One JVC's comment is probably representative: "It's hard, however, for me to make explicit comments on what this will mean for our JV or to judge our capacity to implement any/all of it until I (and our staff and board) can see more detail about processes for developing objectives, meaning population, habitat and human dimensions work separately, as well as how they will/should be integrated in the end."
3. To what degree does harvest management serve to achieve population and people objectives?

#### ***Key questions related to humans:***

1. Although large-scale institutions already exist for managing waterfowl population and habitat programs, no over-arching group exists to help coordinate people-related models, management actions, and monitoring. What is the scale of waterfowl-related users and people-related objectives that should be implemented?
2. States/provinces, some federal programs, and NGOs have a large number of independent programs aimed at people objectives (hunter recruitment programs, public engagement programs, etc.). To what degree will flyways and joint ventures engage in implementing coordinated management actions and monitoring related to people objectives?
  - Most answers focused on Q2 and the overall comment was that we already do this and have for 20+ years. When asked if there were any JVs implementing habitat without considering humans in the equation there were no responses to the contrary.
  - Some JVs in more populated areas have looked at human population as a threat to habitat targeting and it would be easy to reverse this model to benefit people.
  - "Urban" JVs consider public access an important consideration. "People want habitat, they want it swimmable, fishable, and want it to be there even if they don't use it."
  - With at least two JVs, "the public" is equated to voters on important habitat measures.
  - The point was made that JVs are all acquainted with the means objective of engaging people to help with habitat delivery but it may be more challenging to think about/deliver the NAWMP fundamental objective of delivering NAWMP human objectives with habitat.
  - Some JVs think they will be helping with hunter recruitment; others don't see their role.

***Key questions related to habitat:***

1. In light of landscape trends and relative to their traditional mission, how should habitat conservation partnerships (joint ventures in particular) consider deploying human dimensions frameworks and techniques to advance habitat delivery?
  - It is core to the JV business model to consider humans, but this is probably not done in a strict HD framework, and resources will be needed to implement.
2. How will coupling NAWMP population and human objectives impact the habitat conservation actions needed to support these dual objectives and what tradeoffs will need to be considered?
  - Tradeoffs could be measured with nascent NSST important landscapes mapping effort.
  - Some JVs are doubtful that a model/map could provide answers. A more organic approach reflective of each JV's situation will be appropriate.
3. Which audiences (e.g., waterfowl hunters, viewers and supporters) should be considered priority within different landscapes? Are certain audiences a priority across landscapes?
  - Different audiences will be priorities across JVs:
    - "Public has bought into wetland conservation; therefore, the net gain will be minimal. We will probably focus on hunters."
    - "Our JV sees outreach as key. The partnership is talking with new audiences such as CEOs in Silicon Valley about climate change, rising ocean levels, etc."
    - "Environmental goods and services is a key message as our hunter numbers are pretty low. We focus on spring time habitat anyway."
    - "Environmental goods and services is a co-driver with waterfowl populations and maintaining a hunting tradition."
4. Will go-to funding sources such as NAWCA be able to assist with targeting of habitat according to new objectives (e.g., hunters, viewers, etc.)?
  - To some extent NAWCA has moved in this direction with two points for access under technical question seven.
  - It was noted that strategic decisions orienting more dollars/habitat to the prairies may strain implementing habitat for humans in other landscapes.
  - The lack of integration between NAWMP PC and NAWC Council might be a challenge. Council can direct Staff to devise a scoring system in the NAWCA application that will favor some new habitat priorities (in a human dimensions context). Cross pollination among NAWCA staff, Council, IIC and/or HDWG may be desired.
5. To what degree are waterfowl habitat strategies also compatible/consistent with strategies for ecological goods and services (scale and approach)?
  - Depopulation in some JV landscape necessitates an ecological goods and services approach.
  - Supporting working landscapes was a popular theme especially for western JVs (grazing, aquifers, rice farming, flood control, etc). High overlap between water quality/quantity with waterfowl objectives was generally noted among JVs.
  - Although there is high overlap, it is not universal. Some ecological goods and services, such as mangrove restoration to mitigate storm surge, is generally a negative to waterfowl habitat. In some cases, the relationship is circuitous: water used to flood rice that benefits waterfowl is drawn from an aquifer.