The “People” Part of Waterfowl and Wetlands Conservation: Expanding the NAWMP for the Future

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Waterfowl in the Sonoran Desert?

- Over 80% of wintering Pacific Brant
- 70% of Pacific Flyway’s wintering Redheads
- Over 25% of Pacific Flyway’s wintering Surf Scoters
- Salton Sea: More than 25,000 wintering Snow Geese and Ross’s Geese and over 50% of Pacific Flyway’s Ruddy Ducks
- Mexico west coast: 15% of North America’s wintering waterfowl
- Sinaloa: 22.5% of Mexico’s wintering migratory waterfowl
“There are two things that interest me: the relation of people to each other and the relation of people to the land.” –Aldo Leopold
North American Waterfowl Management Plan 2012:

People Conserving Waterfowl and Wetlands
2012 NAWMP Revision

“This Plan focuses...on expanding an engaged community of users and supporters [including] hunters and a nonhunting public, both committed to conservation and valuing waterfowl and their habitat as essential characteristics of the North American landscape.”
NAWMP 2012 Goals

- Abundant and resilient waterfowl populations to support hunting and other uses without imperiling habitat
- Wetlands and related habitats sufficient to sustain waterfowl populations at desired levels, while providing places to recreate and ecological services that benefit society
- Growing numbers of waterfowl hunters, other conservationists, and citizens who enjoy and actively support waterfowl and wetlands conservation
Conservation is about behavior

- Start
- Keep
- Stop
Human Dimensions of Conservation

From Loomis, after Kennedy and Thomas, 1995
Social and Biological Planning

Monitoring & Research

Assess Problem

Implement

Adjust

Plan

Conservation Design

Evaluate

Design

Monitor

Conservation Delivery Implement

PEOPLE!
NAWMP Human Dimensions Working Group and Public Engagement Team
Habitat Management Questions

- What motivates people to participate in conservation and citizen science programs?
- What habitat features are desired by birders and hunters?
Population Management Questions

– What experiences are desired by birders and hunters without exceeding carrying capacity?
– How does population management contribute to desired recreational experiences?
People Management Questions

– What social processes contribute to public engagement?
– Why do people get involved?
– What prevents involvement?
– What management actions will be most effective in welcoming people?

Photo: Kimberly Kaufman
Birders, Hunters, and the Public: What Do We Want To Know?

- How do they interact with the environment?
- What drives their preferences for hunting and viewing destinations?
- How can we engage them in wetlands/waterfowl conservation?
Hunters

- Further develop and implement the 2008 Waterfowl Hunter Recruitment and Retention Strategy

Photo: USFWS
Private Landowners

- Increase landowner participation in conservation programs

Photo: USFWS
Birders/Wildlife Viewers

- Engage the birding/wildlife viewing communities and others in actions that contribute to waterfowl and wetland conservation

Photo: Jennie Duberstein
Birds and the American Public

- 2.4 million migratory bird hunters
- 86 million wildlife watchers
- 45.1 million bird observers
  - 38.1 million around the home
  - 16.3 million away from home

From 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation

Photo: D.L. Brubaker/USFWS
Questions?

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