

North American Waterfowl Professional Plan (NAWPEP) Progress Summary

Reporting period: October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023

Prepared by Diane Eggeman, NAWPEP Coordinator

The Steering Committee of NAWPEP works to advance recommendation #7 of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) 2018 Update: “Bolster training programs for future waterfowl management professionals.” The goal of NAWPEP is to: *Engage and assist universities, colleges, and all NAWMP partners with establishing, sustaining, and enhancing academic and experiential programs in waterfowl science and management, in order that sufficient numbers of professionals representing human diversity from across North America are supported, available, and employed to sustain professional capacity and excellence of future waterfowl science and management.* Specific objectives of NAWPEP and the current membership of the steering committee are presented in the [NAWPEP Strategic Plan](#).

The following summarizes actions of the steering committee related to its planning and operation:

- Steering Committee met by Zoom on 11 November 2022, 10 March 2023, and 25 July 2023
- Implemented [NAWPEP Strategic Plan](#) and work plan
- Reviewed Steering Committee membership and term expirations

The following reports progress toward the objectives of the strategic plan:

Objective 1: Obtain information on academic and practical credentials perceived necessary by waterfowl professionals for success in the profession.

- Received a 2021 doctoral dissertation (Clemson University) by Lauren Hernandez-Rubio containing a chapter on this subject (manuscript in preparation)
- Received and discussed input from Dr. Leigh Fredrickson (retired, University of Missouri) on academic and experiential needs of waterfowl students to become effective professionals

Objective 2: Determine numbers of graduates with baccalaureate and post-graduate degrees required to fill anticipated employment needs related to waterfowl science and management in 2025.

Thereafter, subsequent projections will be updated on 5-year intervals.

- Completed a survey of public and private-sector employers to assess current and future personnel needs
- Conducted inventory of advertised job opportunities for waterfowl positions
- Continued investigating concern about shortage of well-qualified applicants for waterfowl positions with agencies and organizations
- Began work with Delta Waterfowl on survey of waterfowl graduates to better understand factors affecting graduates’ career decisions

Objective 3: In collaboration with universities/colleges, agencies, and other NAWMP partners, and the larger natural resources conservation profession, engage with and implement efforts to train, recruit, and hire an inclusively diverse group of North Americans working in waterfowl science and management programs in all of the administrative Flyways by 2025.

- Maintained connections with North American Bird Conservation Initiative and its efforts toward diversity and inclusion
- Sought updates and new information on others' efforts toward diversity and inclusion
- Shared information with professors on U.S. federal effort, **Diversity Joint Venture for Careers in Conservation**: [Home - Diversity Joint Venture for Careers in Conservation \(diversityinconservationjobs.org\)](https://diversityinconservationjobs.org).
- Began effort to seek ideas and information from professors on how to better engage and encourage more young individuals to consider a professional career in waterfowl and wetlands

Objective 4: Promote and facilitate institutional educational and skills capacity to meet projected needs per Objectives 2 and 3.

- Maintained inventory of fellowships, internships, etc. to help identify gaps and needs
- Worked with the steering committee for the 2024 NAWMP Update on how to consider NAWPEP work and future role
- Conducted survey of university department heads to measure and forecast future waterfowl faculty capacity within their university
- Communicated findings and progress to the waterfowl and wetland management community via the NAWMP Committee and its working groups, AFWA's Waterfowl Working Group, flyways, North American Arctic Goose Conference and Workshop, and faculty
- Distributed presentation about NAWPEP and importance of university waterfowl programs for professors to use for university colleagues and departments
- Presented webinar on NAWPEP as part of NAWMP series
- Communicated about NAWPEP as part of presentation at Missouri Wetlands Summit
- Began assisting with plans for student engagement at Ducks9 conference, Portland, OR, February 2024