

2018 NAWMP UPDATE ASSESSMENT/IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY

DATE: 1 June 2017

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TITLE OF ACTIVITY: Survey of Waterfowl Professionals

Overview of purpose/issue: A survey of waterfowl professionals (n=597) was conducted as an opportunity for the management community to provide general feedback on implementation of the 2012 NAWMP Revision. The survey provides an evaluation from 367 survey respondents (61%) about progress on the recommendations from the 2012 NAWMP Revision and priorities for the community's work over the next 5-10 years.

Summary of Key Results:

- Most respondents were familiar with the NAWMP and have worked to implement Plan objectives. Most perceived waterfowl management to be performing well; however, they indicated changes are needed in stakeholder collaboration and university training of biologists.
- Relatively low success was noted for incorporating hunter satisfaction metrics into waterfowl management. Similarly, low success was perceived regarding progress on rallying conservation initiative among aesthetic-oriented users, birders / birdwatchers, and the general public.
- At least 50% of respondents agreed with the need to re-allocate resources among important waterfowl landscapes and increase attention on monitoring and evaluation. Respondents also indicated that an inordinate amount of time is spent on regulations, and federal and state level emphasis on waterfowl and wetlands protection and management has declined.
- Respondents indicated more progress and impact has been apparent on habitat and waterfowl populations than on constituent support, awareness of the need for wetland conservation, or interest in waterfowl hunting. "Don't know" was a common response, indicating a need for communication with professionals.
- Only moderate progress was perceived on 2012 NAWMP recommendations; however, each was viewed as important to include in the 2018 NAWMP Update.

Initial implications for the 2018 Update:

- Most survey respondents agreed that existing waterfowl management institutions largely are functional; however, most also agreed that on-going review and possible restructuring will be appropriate. Solutions include increased integration among policy groups, stronger linkage between technical working groups and the NAWMP Committee, and coordination of adaptive management across institutions.
- The top 5 areas of priority emphasis for the Update include habitat protection and management, monitoring waterfowl habitat trends and conservation success, monitoring waterfowl population abundance and demographics, policy efforts to conserve waterfowl, and engaging support from the general public.

Recommendations, if any, for the Update Steering Committee and/or Future of Waterfowl Workshop-2 Planning Committee – consider the following:

- Place emphasis for the FoW2 agenda and 2018 Update on the priority elements that emerged from the survey of professions (see above).
- "Don't know" was a common response in parts of the survey, indicating a need for greater communication with professionals regarding progress on NAWMP.