

2018 NAWMP UPDATE ASSESSMENT/IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY

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TITLE OF ACTIVITY: North American Ducks Symposium

Overview of purpose/issue: Progress towards 2012 NAWMP goals was reported during a special session at the seventh North American Duck Symposium. Our purpose was to update the waterfowl management community (primarily a technical audience) but also to continue meaningful steps towards Plan goals.

Summary of Key Results:

- The waterfowl management community is faced with revisiting objectives and management actions related to harvest regulations, landscape priorities, habitat conservation, and public engagement to garner broader support.
- Plan objectives for waterfowl populations, habitat, and engagement of supporters are inseparably linked yet managers are challenged to simultaneously consider each objective when management actions are implemented.
- Revised NAWMP objectives, assumed to approximate the values of stakeholders, have not been investigated by rigorous social science methods. A discrete choice modeling approach will help to better understand preferences of waterfowl hunters as well as birders for different attributes of their hunting or viewing experiences and thus, inform Plan objectives.
- The original management objective codified in AHM assumed that maximizing harvest would provide ample hunting opportunity and thus, hunter satisfaction and participation. Managers now are faced with considering how regulations affect multiple objectives for both ducks and hunters.
- Identification of priority landscapes to achieve the goals of the 2012 NAWMP will require new approaches and clear articulation of objectives. This will involve focusing resources on areas having the greatest impact on waterfowl populations but also acknowledging that habitat decisions influence conservation support.
- The challenge of integration becomes more tangible at regional and local scales where specific ecological and social factors affecting conservation decisions are more apparent and the potential solutions more evident. Greater attention to stakeholders' values and the use of social science methods are well suited to navigating tradeoffs at regional scales.
- Continued NAWMP progress will require a continuing commitment to informed management decisions and a willingness to examine and possibly amend the processes and institutions that support waterfowl management. The commitment to adequate adaptive capacity will be vital. An organic process of creativity, information sharing, and risk-taking presents an alternative to traditional planning approaches focused on process, accountability, and planning.

Initial implications for the 2018 Update:

- Acknowledge that social variability and change, evident throughout the 2012 Plan, represents a reality of wildlife conservation that often has not been explicitly integrated into conservation planning. Stakeholders, including those who make conservation decisions as well as those affected by them, must be more purposefully involved for the NAWMP to remain relevant into the future.

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

- Recommendations from the 2012 NAWMP Revision remain relevant, and progress made provides a foundation for a FoW2 agenda and emphasis in the Update.