



Midwest Coordinated Bird Monitoring Partnership – Steering Committee Charter

Finalized June 24, 2014

BACKGROUND

The **Midwest Coordinated Bird Monitoring Partnership** is a voluntary network of individuals committed to informed bird conservation decisions through enhanced coordination and exchange of monitoring information. Since 2009, we have been accomplishing these goals through regular workshops, an [interactive website](#), registry of Midwest bird monitoring programs, focused working groups, and a state-of-the-art system for data management and decision support ([Midwest Avian Data Center](#)). We have one full-time coordinator on staff to provide leadership and ensure progress towards shared goals. On occasion, we also contract with individuals to lead specific projects on a term basis.

The *Steering Committee* consists of representatives from up to 10 organizations, including federal and state resource agencies, universities, and national and regional conservation organizations. The Steering Committee's function is to provide overall guidance and direction to the Partnership. The actions undertaken by the Steering Committee are intended to complement and support existing collaborative partnerships, Joint Ventures, planning efforts, programs, and activities associated with the Midwest Coordinated Bird Monitoring Partnership.

PHILOSOPHY

Steering Committee members agree that monitoring, and the subsequent act of evaluation, is an integral component of an iterative, science-based approach to bird conservation and management. The value of monitoring and evaluation is often judged by how well information is regularly integrated into decision-making for management or conservation. Therefore, it is essential to ensure that this integration is in place at the inception of any monitoring activity and that data collection and analysis are statistically sound and designed to provide useful information for decision-makers and managers.

Steering Committee members are committed to the goals stated in the 2010 Framework for the Midwest Coordinated Bird Monitoring Partnership as follows:

- Integration of monitoring into bird management and conservation decisions;
- Broadening the scope of monitoring for species most at risk and for which we lack adequate information to make effective decisions;
- Coordination of programs among organizations and across spatial scales;
- Improvement of survey design, field methods, and data analysis; and
- Deployment of modern data management and sharing strategies.

ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES

The activities of the Steering Committee will be led by the Coordinator of the Midwest Coordinated Bird Monitoring Partnership. The role of the Steering Committee shall be to foster an iterative cycle of regional bird conservation planning, implementation, and evaluation through the following actions:

- Facilitate comprehensive and integrated population monitoring throughout the Upper Midwest Region (i.e., Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin) and in the context of full annual cycle conservation.
- Support operation and use of the Midwest Avian Data Center.
- Encourage active participation in the Midwest Coordinated Bird Monitoring Partnership from among technical monitoring interests, wildlife managers and conservation organizations, citizen scientists, and private individuals at all levels.
- Develop and maintain a strategic vision and sustainable business model for the Partnership.

Steering Committee members will be expected to:

- Provide input during quarterly calls and interim email discussions;
- Participate in one or more [Working Groups](#);
- Review and approve priorities for the annual Request for Proposals;
- Become trained ambassadors of the Midwest Avian Data Center;
- Represent his or her organization's interests in achieving the Midwest Coordinated Bird Monitoring Partnership's mission;
- Facilitate active engagement from his or her organization; and
- Disseminate important information and tools produced by the Partnership on a regular basis.

TERMS OF SERVICE

Steering Committee members are expected to serve a two-year term, and terms are renewable on an individual basis. Ideally, turnover in the Steering Committee will happen on a gradual basis, with sufficient overlap in composition to maintain the mission and functionality of the Steering Committee. Should a Steering Committee member no longer be able to participate as stated above, that member will help identify a suitable replacement for the length of the term.

MEMBERSHIP

Steering Committee members should be experienced conservation biologists with technical knowledge of monitoring science, strong communication skills, and a commitment to improving the biological foundation for avian conservation. They should have primary jobs in bird conservation or research and ideally should be positioned to influence mobilization of resources within their own and collaborating organizations to help meet the stated goals of the Midwest Coordinated Bird Monitoring Partnerships.

Representatives to the Steering Committee will be appointed by current Steering Committee members. Committee members may be replaced at the discretion of the Coordinator for the Midwest Coordinated Bird Monitoring Partnership after a one-year period of inactivity, and/or missing three consecutive scheduled Steering Committee calls. At the discretion of the Steering Committee, additional help may be recruited for special purposes on an ad-hoc basis.

Current Steering Committee Members:

Amanda Duren, Ohio Bird Conservation Initiative

Todd Jones-Farrand, Central Hardwoods Joint Venture

Melinda Knutson, US Fish and Wildlife Service (National Wildlife Refuge System)

Mike Monfils, Michigan Natural Features Inventory

Greg Soulliere, Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Joint Venture

Mike Ward, Illinois Natural History Survey

Tom Will, US Fish and Wildlife Service (Migratory Bird Program) and Midwest Partners in Flight

VACANT, Indiana Representative

VACANT, Iowa Representative

VACANT, Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative