

**2016 State of Stopover Symposium**  
**Stopover Protection/Restoration/Management Session Notes**

**Landbird Group Summary** (as presented at the plenary on Friday, October 7)

- Diverse group: representatives from TNC, ABC, Land Trusts, land managers, industry, parks, private citizens
- Envision a Great Lakes network of stopover habitat practitioners to provide:
  - Advocacy – Shared message supporting stopover habitat
  - Gaps in stopover habitat in the landscape – Where are the most effective places to work?
  - Education – Clearinghouse for migratory bird and stopover habitat information and resources, for both practitioners and public
  - Funding opportunities – database of sources and assistance in obtaining funding
  - Collaborations – Agencies and organizations and the work that they do in each area
  - Smaller protection/restoration networks – projects that may not be in larger databases (Audubon, etc)
  - Communication of regional plans and efforts – Existing initiatives, focal species, habitats, continuing updates of research findings.

**Shorebird Group Summary** (as presented at the plenary on Friday, October 7)

- Fire escapes for shorebirds:
- Shallow water at appropriate time
- Lack of woody vegetation
- Natural substrate

Examples:

Pastures, water treatment facilities, sod & cranberry farms, DOT mitigation sites, failed development sites, grazing management

Convenience stores for shorebirds:

- < 50 acres
- Single impoundment
- Consistent hydrology at proper time
- Limited ability for water management
- Limited management for biodiversity and/or limited resources
- Medium level of shorebird usage

Examples: Waterfowl production areas

Full service hotels for shorebirds:

- State- and county-owned lands, Federal refuges, Tribal lands
- 50 acres
- Ability to manage water levels
- 50 ft from active agriculture

- Multiple impoundments/microtopography
- High frequency of usage
- Actively managed for biodiversity

Potential sites:

Ontario

Pelee Island ag parcel    Essex County (little wetland habitat)

Wisconsin

Crex Meadows    Vernon Marsh    Horicon Marsh    Green Bay west shore    Turtle Valley

Big Muskego    Cat Island causeway    Kakagon Slough    Point Beach SF

Pike River watershed    Chiwaukee Prairie    Zeloski Marsh

Illinois

Redwing Slough    Killdeer Wetlands    McGinnis Slough    Eggers

Wabash River    Skokie Lagoons    Busse Wetlands    Emiquon

### **Landbird Break-out Group** (detailed notes)

#### 1. Advocacy to restoration and protection

- How do we effectively advocate for stopover/migrating birds?
- We need to come up with a shared (common) message
- As various plans are developed, updates are shared, including our shared message
- Support each other's migratory bird efforts
- Identify decision-makers & monitor developments (i.e. local, state, federal, international)
- Have access to educational materials to use for advocacy efforts
- Share what works and what doesn't work

#### 2) (Identify/address) gaps in broad front (gaps in habitat across a landscape), including multiple small sites

- Multiple Scales
- Re-define "Quality" in context
- Connectivity/adjacency
- Identify gaps
- Breach imposed barriers
- Stage Opportunities
- Engineered Naturescapes
- Cultural/Administrative
- Gaps in Management

#### 3) Education (managers, private owners, land trusts)

- Public research
- Web clearing house for migratory bird information
  - What should be on the site?
  - Who manages the site?

- Does a site already exist?
- How to sort the information?
- Contains all the relevant partners
- Trade Organizations [T.O.] (land trusts/forestry/ bird specific)
  - T.O. vehicle for transmitting information
  - I.D. gaps for flagship cost-share programs (e.g., Ruffed grouse/turkey/pheasant/waterfowl – where is old growth forest species?)
  - Info (criteria) to rank potential easement lands as to stopover habitat (i.e., justification for/against doing an easement – at least for migrants)

#### 4) Funding opportunities

- Inventory/database of funding sources
- Support/assistance in navigating grant process
- Fostering international funding opportunities
- Framework that shows how a project contributes to the big picture
- Cornell/TNC habitat project (self-funding?)
  - Portal for landowners to see how they “fit” in mosaic
  - Donation portal?
  - Tie into funding for compatible projects (pollinators, rain gardens, green infrastructure, etc.)
  - Use as means to introduce new audiences to stopover habitat idea

#### 5) Collaboration – local and across migration jurisdictions

##### Groups:

- Other Land Trusts and non-profits (i.e. TNC, Ridges Sanctuary, etc.)
- Local government units and state/federal agencies
  - USFWS
  - State DNRs
  - USGS
  - County Soil and Water (e.g., Door County)
- Local garden clubs, bird clubs, etc. (small non-profits)
- Philanthropic individuals or companies
- Foundations
- Local Utilities
- Schools/Universities (stewardship, monitoring, etc.)
- Volunteer pool
- Landowner associations
- Friends groups, watershed groups
- Agencies from other states/countries
- Service groups (e.g., Rotary, etc.)
- Resource professionals
- Hunting groups (e.g., Wild Turkey Unlimited, Ducks Unlimited, etc.)

#### 6) Locating networks and locations of smaller restoration and protection (groups)

- Identify areas (fragmented landscape)
  - Identify tradition/historic stopover habitat
  - identify new possibilities based on conservation or bird stopover value
  - restoration

- Identify stakeholders located through suitability based on research or on ecological assessment
  - Voluntary (restoration)
  - National and International
- Identify partners
- Determine lead
- Acquisition vs. easement
- Funding
- Installation of projects
- Ensure continuity (maintenance)

## 7) Informing Regional Migratory Planning

### Needs:

- Communication between partners
- Knowledge of existing plans and ongoing initiatives
- Creation of templates for sharing
- Lists of available resources
- Regional plan format acknowledges the full life cycle of birds as well as any stopover habitat requirements
- Identification of existing habitats and potentially restorable ones – IBAs
- Identification of focal species for planning efforts
- Open connection between research and management

## Shorebird Break-out Group – Detailed Notes

### Baseline Fire Escapes Criteria

- Shallow water at right time
- Lack of woody vegetation
- Natural substrate (no concrete or gravel)

### Fire Escape Obstacles

- Sides too steep
- No water control
- Contaminants/herbicides
- Small
- No management for biodiversity

### Examples of Opportunities:

- Pastures (Convenience Store?) – fencing out cattle
- Detention ponds (fire escapes)
- Ephemeral Ponds/wetlands (non-forest)
- Sod farms (convenience store)
- Cranberry farms (fire escapes? Not sure about timing?)
- DOT Mitigation Sites
- Grazing management

- Waterfowl production areas (convenience stores)
- River shoreline with no rip-rap (fire escapes)
- Failed development sites (fire escapes)
- Water treatment facilities (Convenience stores)

#### Convenience Store Criteria

<50 acres

- Single impoundment
- Consistent hydrology at proper time
- Limited ability for water management
- Limited management for biodiversity and/or limited resources
- Medium level of shorebird usage

#### Five-star Hotel Criteria

- >50 acres (state-owned lands, wildlife management properties, federal refuges, duck clubs, county lands, tribal lands)
- Ability to manage water levels
  - depth (mosaic)
  - control invasives
  - prey availability
- Minimum 50' buffer from active ag
- Multiple impoundments and/or microtopography
- High frequency of usage by shorebirds by diverse assemblage
- Being actively managed for biodiversity

#### Ontario Sites

- Pelee Island – ag parcel
- Essex County (SW corner of Ontario) currently has very little wetland habitat

#### Wisconsin Sites

- Crex
- Vernon Marsh
- Horicon (state and federal)
- Green Bay (W. shore, Peshtigo)
- Kakagon Slough
- Point Beach SF
- Bong?
- Pike River Watershed
- Chiwaukee Prairie
- Zeloski Marsh?
- Vernon Marsh
- Turtle Valley
- Big Muskego

#### Illinois Sites

- Redwing Slough
- Killdeer Wetlands
- McGinnis Slough
- Eggers
- Waubash River
- Skokie Lagoons
- Busse Wetlands
- Emiquon/Chataqua \*Model\*
- Can Ridge \*Model\*
- Carlile Lake

“Protection” – any RAMSAR designated site

- WI Point/St. Louis Riverway
- Allouez Bay

#### Recommendations

- States identify 5-star hotel sites
- Need to identify how much shorebird habitat is enough? Habitat goals – look to JV plan
- How big (relevant?) are contaminant/pesticide issues for shorebirds?
- Obstacles to 5-Star Hotels
- Public perception to drawdowns

#### Resources

Information Gathering:

- WI Shorebird Website (WGLBBO)
- RAMSAR Designation
- Wisconsin Wetland Association “Gems”
- eBird

#### Integrate Shorebird Management

- Wildlife Action Plans
- Master Plans
- Incentive Programs
- IBA’s – Identifying new sites
- Ducks Unlimited
- Tribal Restoration Planning
- In lieu of fees, prioritize shorebird mitigation
- Water Treatment Plants
- Chicago Wilderness

#### Great Lakes Initiative Stopover

- Public Lands planning
- Master plan process – scheduled for planning, updating
- Tribal Government (GLIFWC)
- County land certification
- Holes in data

## Funding Opportunities

- AOC
- GLRI
- NRCS and FS = RCPP, EQUIP, and CSP
- WCMP/NOAA
- USFWS
- NPS
- Knowles-Nelson Stewardship and others
- In lieu of fee (program)
- Super Fund
- Mitigation \$\$ from utilities
- Green infrastructure \$\$

Shorebird Group did some brainstorming on the 7 categories defined for a Great Lakes stopover initiative:

1. Advocacy to restoration and protection

2) (Identify/address) gaps in broad front (gaps in habitat across the landscape), including multiple small sites

- Public education to result in actions on the land, including research for management

3) Education (managers, private owners, land trusts)

- Certify landowner education on stopover
- Connect landowners and their actions to the bigger journey
- Connect Bird City and bird habitat certification
- Corporate lands leverage (e.g., agricultural)
- Education for land managers specific to stopover

4) Funding Opportunities – Throughout (see above)

5) Collaboration

What we need:

- Influence stopover habitat on private lands

Regional needs:

- Overall plan for Great Lakes
- Connect groups (e.g., Audubon) to projects/plans
- TNC = connections between plans (e.g., AOCs and municipal plans)

What do the land managers need from a Great Lakes network?

- Management locations for fire escape, convenient stores, and 5-star hotels
- Publicize/outreach on what is stopover habitat, why important?

6) Locating(Identifying?) networks and locations of smaller restoration and protection (groups) – regional

- Organizations that can best handle what projects
- What are the priorities
- What is already protected and managed for habitat and what is left

Network gaps for broad front (gaps in habitat across the landscape :

- Public education
- Funding
- Collaborations
- Small regional work

7) Inform regional planning efforts

Existing plans:

- RAP
- AOC
- LAMP
- Wildlife Action Plans
- COA-Wisconsin
- Biodiversity strat.
- IBA
- LTA and State
- Umbrella land trusts incorporate stopover conservation values into allowed and restricted uses
- “Certification for fire escapes” – isolated sites
- Finding gaps for broad front (gaps in habitat across the landscape)

Ontario:

- I.D. important natural areas = often stopover
- Connect to Michigan

Question: How does small, local work fit into Great Lakes regional framework?

- Smaller parcels/larger frame, larger plan
  - Migratory bird needs --Reference stopover bibliography:  
<http://glmigratorybirds.org/resources.html#.WDxciE0zU8Q>