XXVI Meeting of the Canada/Mexico/U.S.
Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management
Virtual Meeting
June 13-16, 2022

All Times Eastern Time Zone and Subject To Change
Working Table: Migratory Birds

DRAFT DETAILED AGENDA, Updated June 3, 2022

Co-Chairs:

- **Ryan Zimmerling**, Migratory Birds and Wildlife Health, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment and Climate Change Canada;
- **Humberto Berlanga**, Coordinador del Programa NABCI/ICAAN y Temas de Vida Silvestre, Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad (CONABIO), Mexico;
- **Ken Richkus**, Chief, Division of Migratory Bird Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S.

Coordinators:

- **Eric L. Kershner,** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, eric_kershner@fws.gov
- **Jo Anna Lutmerding,** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, jo_lutmerding@fws.gov

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Trilateral Committee Priorities for 2022

- Integrating Human Dimensions
- Climate Change
- Zoonotic Diseases
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Technology Innovation for Conservation

Migratory Birds Table Priorities:

- Implementing bird conservation for the Americas
- Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation
- Emphasizing actions to mainstream grassland bird and island conservation
- Coordination of efforts to reduce priority threats
- Improved Coordination of Monitoring and Information Sharing
- Wildlife Health

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MONDAY, June 13, 2022

All Times Eastern Time Zone

12:30-12:40	**Plenary Session** – Opening Country Remarks
12:40-1:40	**Plenary Session –** Plenary Session
1:40-2:00	**Panel of Speakers** – followed by discussion and Q&A
2:00-2:15	***Break***
2:15-2:30	**AGENDA ITEM 1: Welcome, Introductions, Adoption of the Agenda** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Co-chairs – Humberto Berlanga (CONABIO), Ken Richkus (FWS), J. Ryan Zimmerling (CWS) **DESCRIPTION:** Welcome and introductions of new and returning participants to the working table. Approval and adoption of the agenda. **BACKGROUND:** Standard item to build consensus and ensure full participation. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES**: ▪ Approval of any changes to the agenda. ▪ Adoption of the agenda
2:30-2:45	**AGENDA ITEM 2: 2021-22 Action Item Report (AIR)** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Co-chairs –Humberto Berlanga (CONABIO), Ken Richkus (FWS), J. Ryan Zimmerling (CWS) **DESCRIPTION:** Report on major accomplishments or challenges from the Action Item Report (AIR) (particularly those that are not on this year's agenda) and any outstanding actions from the previous meeting. **BACKGROUND:** The Table uses the AIR to record decisions and monitor progress on work. Working tables review the previous year's AIR at the beginning of each annual meeting. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** Monitor progress on action items and agreements. Identify issues and challenges in accomplishing action items.
2:45-4:30 (*Break 3:15-3:30)*	**AGENDA ITEM 3: Country Updates (30 min each)** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Co-chairs – Humberto Berlanga (CONABIO), Ken Richkus (FWS), J. Ryan Zimmerling (CWS) **DESCRIPTION:** Each country co-chair presents a short country report with relevant information to the MBT. **BACKGROUND:** Standard agenda item to present and underline relevant events that have occurred in each of the three countries.

	REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES: Information and identification of priority topics for further discussion.
4:30-5:30	**AGENDA ITEM 4: Centering Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Principles in Trilateral Bird Conservation** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Susana Mateos, U.S. NABCI Coordinator and Co-chairs – Humberto Berlanga (CONABIO), Ken Richkus (FWS), J. Ryan Zimmerling (CWS) **DESCRIPTION:** Join Trilateral Co-chairs while we share experiences and ideas on centering bird conservation and cultivating inclusivity. What does it look like when these align? **BACKGROUND:** Culture itself consists of layered, changing, and dynamic combinations of values, beliefs, attitudes, and experiences shared by people. The dynamic aspects of culture and people mean that cultural competency—an ongoing process of interacting "effectively and appropriately with people of differing cultures and backgrounds within an organization for the benefit of all" —entails a constant journey and process with no end-point. One essential aspect of that journey is cultural humility, a practice involving a focus on and respect toward others' cultural background and experience rather than the self, accountability to change at the institutional level, and awareness and mitigation of power dynamics and imbalances. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES**: Identify common themes among the Trilateral countries where there is opportunity for growth around principles of justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility for improving bird conservation outcomes.

TUESDAY, June 14, 2022

	Grassland Bird Conservation Joint Session with other tables (hosted by MBWT)
1:00-1:15	**AGENDA ITEM 5: Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) project: Addressing Central Grasslands and Migratory Birds Conservation in North America** **COLLABORATORS: Lucie Robidoux** and Antoine Asselin-Nguyen (CEC); Christian Artuso and Nathalie Savoie (Environment and Climate Change Canada); Humberto Berlanga and Vicente Rodriguez (Conabio - National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity), Jose Eduardo Ponce (Conanp - National Commission of Natural Protected Areas), Jose Manuel Galindo (Profepa - Federal Attorney for Environmental Protection), Omar Rocha (Semarnat - Secretariat of

	Environment and Natural Resources); and Samantha Brooke, John Carlson and Brian Smith (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service). **DESCRIPTION:** This session will provide an overview of the 2021-2024 CEC project to support central grasslands cross-sector management, restoration and conservation in Canada, Mexico, and the United States by raising awareness on the importance of grasslands, providing new knowledge for decision-making and strengthening collaboration through inclusive network-building and strategic planning. **BACKGROUND:** The CEC seeds, builds and supports North American cooperation for the conservation and management of ecosystems and wildlife by developing and implementing trinational projects with government, local communities, non-governmental organizations, and researchers. Over the years, the CEC has focussed on migratory bird conservation, most recently through projects on central grasslands (2011-15) and shorebirds (2015-2019). Recognizing that the central grasslands are one of the most endangered ecosystems in North America, and building on this past work, the CEC launched a new project on grasslands bird conservation in November 2021. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** Exchange information to create connections between grassland bird conservation work at the CEC and in the three countries, and Trilateral objectives; discuss opportunities to develop and deliver the project's work and disseminate products with partners.
1:15-1:30	**AGENDA ITEM 6: JV8 Central Grasslands Conservation Initiative** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Andy Bishop, Rainwater Basin Joint Venture (andy_bishop@fws.gov); Mike Carter, Playa Lakes Joint Venture (mike.carter@pljv.org); **Jim Devries**, Prairie Habitat Joint Venture (j_devries@ducks.ca); Deanna Dixon, Prairie Habitat Joint Venture (deanna.dixon@canada.ca); **Jennie Duberstein,** Sonoran Joint Venture (jennie_duberstein@fws.gov); Sean Fields, Prairie Pothole Joint Venture (sean_fields@fws.gov); Jim Giocomo, Oaks and Prairies Joint Venture (jgiocomo@abcbirds.org); Graeme Patterson, JV8 Conservation Director (graeme.patterson@jv8.org); **Jeff Raasch**, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (jeff.raasch@tpwd.texas.gov); Aimee Roberson, Rio Grande Joint Venture (aroberson@abcbirds.org); Catherine Wightman, Northern Great Plains Joint Venture (cwightman@ducks.org) **DESCRIPTION:** As North American native grasslands are disappearing, we are losing not only birds but also pollinators, working lands, opportunities for hunting and outdoor recreation, vast stores of organic carbon, and water security. These losses adversely impact wildlife and rural communities and economies across the continent. To address this critical issue, Migratory Bird Joint Ventures are applying what they have learned in turning things around for wetland birds to grassland birds. Migratory

	Bird Joint Ventures have some of the highest returns on investment in conservation. The dramatic reversal of downward population trends for waterfowl over the last 30 years is in large part due to the efforts and investment of Joint Ventures and their partners. Through the JV8 Central Grasslands Conservation Initiative, eight Joint Ventures — representing over 63 federal, state, provincial, non-profit, and industry conservation partners — are collaborating to stem grassland losses and the negative impacts to migratory birds. The Joint Ventures are working together across the breeding, migration, and wintering habitats used by migratory grassland birds during their annual cycle in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. To date, the Joint Ventures have completed a North American Great Plains Grassland Assessment to understand the extent of undisturbed native grasslands across the tri-national geography. In August 2020, we hired a Conservation Director who is driving the creation of the JV8 Central Grasslands Conservation Strategy (planned completion: summer 2021). This document will identify priorities for conservation investment and guide coordinated implementation of on-the-ground grassland conservation activities to address the causes of declining grassland bird populations across the eight Joint Ventures. The JV8 Central Grasslands Conservation Initiative builds on the power of partnerships and the Migratory Bird Joint Ventures' 35-year record of success in conserving wetland birds. Through this new initiative, the Joint Ventures are bringing people and resources together to scale up successful models of grasslands conservation. **BACKGROUND:** The North American central grasslands, from Canada to Mexico, are among the most threatened ecosystems in the world. Agricultural land conversion and unsustainable grazing practices have resulted in habitat loss and degradation and populations of birds that depend on grasslands have declined significantly. If things continue at the current rate, some species may become extinct in the next 50 years. To address these declines, eight Joint Ventures from Canada to Mexico formed the JV8 Central Grasslands Initiative for trinational coordinated grassland conservation. These eight Joint Ventures will work within their geographies and across boundaries to help ensure healthy grasslands for birds, other wildlife, and people who depend on them. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** • Discuss important issues, information, resources, and partners to consider in this effort. • Discuss potential sources of financial and institutional support for the development and implementation of the JV8 Central Grasslands Initiative and Strategy. • Continued support by the parties of the Trilateral Committee and Work Groups for collaborative conservation efforts for the central grasslands of North America.
1:30-1:45	**<u>AGENDA ITEM 7</u>: Central Grasslands Roadmap Summit**

COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Christian Artuso and Barry Robinson, *Canadian Wildlife Service*; Humberto Berlanga, *CONABIO*; Brian Smith and Bob Ford, *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*; Greg Butcher, *U.S. Forest Service*; Tate Lantz, *National Resources Conservation Service*; David Klute, *Colorado Parks and Wildlife*; Jeff Raasch, *Texas Parks and Wildlife*; Graeme Patterson, *JV8 Initiative*; Catherine Wightman, *Northern Great Plains Joint Venture*; Jim Giocomo, *Oaks and Prairies Joint Venture*; Seth Gallagher, *National Fish and Wildlife Foundation*; Irene Ruvalcaba, *Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo Leon*; Alice Boyle, *Kansas State University*; Josh Demorrett and Natalie Riley, *ConocoPhillips*; Drew Kramer and Diana Leiker, *Tristate Generation and Transmission*; Alison Holloran, *Audubon Rockies*; Aviva Glaser, *National Wildlife Federation*; Libby Khumalo, Monica Terkildsen and Martha Kauffman, *World Wildlife Fund;* Bill Milton, *Winnett ACES;* and Steve Jester, *Partners for Fish and Wildlife;* **Brandt Ryder**, *Bird Conservancy of the Rockies*

DESCRIPTION: On 24 – 25 May 2022, the second Central Grasslands Roadmap Summit will be held in Fort Collins, Colorado as an in-person follow-up and verification to the virtual summit held in 2020. The virtual summit, subsequent workgroups, and metric-specific workshops as well as the in-person summit will synthesize input from over 600 participants from eight diverse sectors (Indigenous & First Nations; private land managers, owners, ranchers & producers; federal agencies; provincial & state agencies; industry & private sector; academia including scientists, researchers, and universities; non-governmental organizations; foundations & funders). The summit addresses the crosscutting Trilateral priorities of integrating human dimensions into biome-wide conservation planning while simultaneously addressing connectivity and adaptation to ecosystem change to ensure resilient grasslands. This collaborative effort is elevating all voices that are critical to the future of our grasslands and the diverse community of partners living and working in the Central Grasslands. The Roadmap provides a guiding framework for international cooperation and coordination on conservation that supports the Letter of Intent (LOI) on grasslands currently being prepared for the Trilateral. It is also supporting other examples of greater coordination on grasslands, including a memorandum of understanding (MOU) across several federal partners in the USA. The intent of the federal MOU is to elevate grasslands as a priority for federal agencies and ensure coordinated and collaborative conservation efforts. This is a 600+ million-acre landscape and we are striving for alignment on efforts to protect and enhance existing grasslands, while addressing the millions of acres that are threatened by invasion of woody species and cultivation.

The long-form of the roadmap, which contains detailed, consensus-based priorities and actions, is a guiding framework to implement next steps for grassland ecosystem conservation while supporting the diverse human communities that depend on healthy grasslands. The roadmap promotes biodiversity, grassland resiliency and improving grassland bird populations, while reducing key threats, and, perhaps above all, elevating grassland conservation through improved coordination, communication, and

	integration. To date, more than a dozen partners including the Buffalo Nations Grassland Alliance have provided letters of support for the roadmap effort. During and after the second summit, we will focus on building relationships and bridges across sectors while also discussing ways to change, and measures to target, for addressing bird, pollinator, and other wildlife population declines. We will also identify quantitative metrics for human communities, soil and grassland health, water conservation and carbon sequestration. **BACKGROUND:** The Central Grasslands are a shared ecosystem between Canada, the U.S. and Mexico that has been a focus of the Trilateral Committee for more than a decade. They are also an ecosystem in crisis and we are nearing the point of losing much of the unique biodiversity associated with it. Collectively we have lost more than 70% of the migratory birds dependent on the Central Grasslands. A recent study published in *Science* found that we have lost three billion birds, or roughly 25% of all birds in the U.S. and Canada, since 1970. The same study identified that 1 of every 4 birds lost was a grassland bird. Recovery strategies are being developed through initiatives such as the "Road to Recovery", and four of the most vulnerable species are birds of the Central Grasslands that depend on all three countries at some point in their annual cycle. Despite ongoing efforts across multiple sectors and organizations to address grassland loss and degradation, migratory grassland birds and other associated species have continued to decline, indicating ongoing, disparate efforts are insufficient and not adding up. The Central Grasslands Roadmap aims to bring together grassland stakeholders from 8 different sectors and 3 countries to develop a common framework that will increase collaboration and leverage our voices and resources to reach the critical mass needed to effectively conserve the Great Plains–Chihuahuan Desert grassland ecosystem. The Roadmap provides both guidance and context for the many grassland-related initiatives underway across the three countries, and a means to connect them. The Roadmap concept was first presented to the Trilateral Committee during a joint session of the Migratory Birds and Ecosystems Working Tables in 2019. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** This presentation will summarise the roadmap priorities and long-term plans and provide updates on the outcomes from the second Summit.
1:45-2:00	**AGENDA ITEM 8: Grassland Letter of Intent** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Co-chairs –Humberto Berlanga (CONABIO), Ken Richkus (FWS), J. Ryan Zimmerling (CWS) **DESCRIPTION:** During the previous virtual Trilateral (17 – 20 May, 2021), there was renewed discussion of the grasslands collaboration Letter of Intent (LOI). The LOI has subsequently been drafted as in currently in legal review. The purpose, as currently drafted, is:

	… to provide a specific framework for "the Agencies" to renew and strengthen efforts to collaborate on the conservation and restoration of grasslands and grassland bird populations in North America. Activities as currently draft are: 1. expand cooperation in regional, bilateral, and trilateral activities in support of grassland habitat conservation and restoration, 2. support collaborative initiatives related to grassland bird and habitat conservation, 3. invite broad participation and expertise in ecological restoration, agriculture ("grass-based economies") and agricultural policy, human dimensions, and social sciences relevant to land-use and land-management choices, Indigenous knowledge systems and cultural expertise, fire ecology, climatology, continent-wide geospatial tracking of grassland extent and condition, and other disciplines, 4. provide necessary expenses (each agency, non-binding) 5. make all non-proprietary technical information obtained available to the public to the extent permissible. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** The LOI will be discussed in preparation for relevant signatures. The timeline for signature will depend upon the legal review process in the three countries.
2:00-2:15	***BREAK***
2:15-2:45	**AGENDA ITEM 9: Tri-national efforts towards Grassland Conservation** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Co-chairs –Humberto Berlanga (CONABIO), Ken Richkus (FWS), J. Ryan Zimmerling (CWS) **DESCRIPTION:** Discussion of how the three nations can develop better coordination and synergy with regard to grassland conservation. **BACKGROUND:** Grassland conservation has been a priority of the Trilateral Committee for a number of years and numerous efforts are underway. This time will be used to further coordination, identify needs and gaps, and chart a collaborative approach moving forward. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** Identify areas where Tri-national coordination can be improved and priorities where collaboration and coordination will improve the conservation status of grasslands.
	Wildlife Health Joint Session with other tables (hosted by MBWT)
2:45-3:00	**AGENDA ITEM 10: Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in Migratory Birds in Canada**

	COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Cynthia Pekarik, Head - Wildlife Health Unit, Environment and Climate Change Canada – Canadian Wildlife Service; Trevor Thompson, Wildlife Health Biologist- Wildlife Health Unit, Environment and Climate Change Canada – Canadian Wildlife Service; Michael Brown, Wildlife Health Biologist- Wildlife Health Unit, Environment and Climate Change Canada – Canadian Wildlife Service. **DESCRIPTION:** This presentation will provide a status update of HPAI (H5N1) in Canada and provide background of the current HPAI outbreak in Canada and the North American context. It will include an update on the number of confirmed HPAI cases in wild birds in Canada by species and province, as well as virus distribution. A description of key findings from the latest international data will indicate the potential impacts the virus could have on wild birds. This presentation will describe past and current surveillance efforts in Canada and will recommend next steps for avian influenza surveillance and intra-continental collaboration. This will include working with responding agencies in the United States (e.g., USDA, USGS) and Mexico to promote surveillance and reporting on continental spread of HPAI. **BACKGROUND:** In December 2021, HPAI (H5N1) was detected in a Great Black-backed Gull on the Avalon Peninsula in Newfoundland, Canada marking the first confirmed case of HPAI, subtype H5, in North America since 2015. As of March 21, 2022 HPAI has been detected in wild birds in an additional three eastern Canadian provinces as well as in British Columbia on the west coast. The HPAI virus circulating in Canada is subtype H5N1, clade 2.3.4.4b, and corresponds to the HPAI virus circulating throughout Europe beginning spring 2021 and into winter 2022. Mortalities in a wide range of bird species in Europe have been confirmed as a result of HPAI H5N1 infection, including in species at risk. Current surveillance efforts in North America indicate a wide distribution of H5N1 throughout the Atlantic Flyway, and detections of H5N1 in wild birds have occurred throughout all four continental flyways. Mortality events across a range of species have been observed in both Europe and North America with confirmed cases of H5N1 among the birds affected. Therefore, there is a concern for North American species at risk and migratory bird populations. Commercial poultry operations across multiple provinces and states have reported H5N1 positive cases and the industry has already incurred large-scare loss of livestock. Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) has responded to this outbreak, in collaboration with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), Provincial/Territorial governments and the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative (CWHC). **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** A continental approach to surveillance and reporting on distribution and spread of HPAI in wild birds benefits global wild bird populations, the commercial poultry industry and human health. Canada is committed to working with the United States and Mexico to advance a collaborative

	approach to risk management towards this threat to wildlife and ecosystems in North America. A continent-wide HPAI reporting dashboard should be pursued. ECCC is also committed to approaching this wildlife disease outbreak from an international One Health perspective and welcomes collaboration from partners in Mexico and United States.
3:00-3:15	**AGENDA ITEM 11: Tri-national Discussion on Approaches to Addressing Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI).** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Co-chairs –Humberto Berlanga (CONABIO), Ken Richkus (FWS), J. Ryan Zimmerling (CWS) **DESCRIPTION:** Discussion of how each country is addressing HPAI. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** Identify areas were Tri-national coordination can inform decision-making to reduce and avoid future spread of HPAI.
3:15-3:30	***BREAK***
3:30-4:00	***Anthropogenic Impacts***
	AGENDA ITEM 12: Reducing Bird Collisions with Communications Towers *(written update only, no presentation)* **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Joelle Gehring (Joelle_Gehring@fws.gov, FWS), Eric Kershner (FWS), Julie Bourque (CWS) and Christian Roy (CWS) **DESCRIPTION:** Birds are attracted to non-flashing lights during night migrations. Communications towers can be safely lit using only flashing lights, which reduces bird collisions by as much as 70% and reduces tower construction and operation costs. Outreach is needed to encourage and assist tower operators in making this cost saving change and mainstreaming. **BACKGROUND:** Scientists estimate that each year 6.8 million birds, primarily Nearctic-Neotropical migrants, collide with U.S. and Canadian communications towers. Towers lit with non-flashing lights at night are involved with significantly more avian collisions then towers lit with only flashing lights. In 2015 the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration changed tower lighting recommendations to systems that eliminate non-flashing lights, maintain aircraft safety, reduce tower lighting and maintenance costs to the industry, and reduce migratory bird collisions by as much as 70%. Transport Canada offers a similar option to tower owners. Mexico has not yet included this option in tower lighting recommendations and outreach is required. Using only flashing lights on existing and future towers is one of the most effective and economically feasible means of reducing avian fatalities at communications towers. Education of the industry and natural resources agencies is critical to implementation on existing towers.

	REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES: Engage representatives of Mexico to support and assist in contacting and communicating with Mexican government and tower industry. Support Canadian efforts to determine tower ownership in Canada, encourage owners to extinguish unnecessary lights, explore next steps for Canada's efforts.
3:30-3:45	**AGENDA ITEM 13: Reducing bird collisions with building glass** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Joelle Gehring (Joelle_Gehring@fws.gov, FWS), Eric Kershner (FWS), Ken Richkus (FWS), **Pam Toschik** (FWS), Ryan Zimmerling (Canada) and Charles Francis (Canada), Vicente Rodriguez (Mexico), Humberto Berlanga (Mexico) **DESCRIPTION:** Every year over one billion birds collide with glass. Birds cannot distinguish reflective glass from the surrounding landscape and sky. Effective solutions are available to building owners and managers. By incorporating bird friendly measures into building maintenance, renovation, and construction, reduce bird collisions across North America, which will reduce one of the leading causes of bird mortality. **BACKGROUND:** Most glass collisions (99%) occur at low-rise buildings and at urban and rural residences, less than 1% of collision mortality is at high-rise buildings (Loss et al. 2014). Many of the bird species or families that are reported to collide most frequently with glass are also facing significant population declines. Many government facilities cause bird collisions. Designing or retrofitting government facilities to be bird safe and enhancing public education efforts on how to reduce collisions can further increase the bird conservation impact. Much work has been done in North America in the past few years, through actions to retrofit or design bird-friendly buildings, and changes to policies and regulations. For example, the U.S. GSA changed the standards for new federal buildings to be bird friendly in 2021, and Canada published Bird-Friendly Design Standards in 2019. This session will provide an opportunity for sharing information and best practices. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** To understand the status of addressing bird collisions with building glass in each country, foster commitments to adopt bird-friendly standards for federal wildlife agency buildings in each country, including monitoring and mitigating bird collisions, and share resources on monitoring, mitigating, and reducing bird collisions with building glass.
3:45-4:00	**AGENDA ITEM 14: Tri-national Discussion on Addressing Human Caused Mortality Sources** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Co-chairs –Humberto Berlanga (CONABIO), Ken Richkus (FWS), J. Ryan Zimmerling (CWS) **DESCRIPTION:** Discussion of how each country is addressing human caused mortality, including mainstreaming efforts, partnerships, and best practices.

	BACKGROUND: Human caused mortality can be addressed at larger scales if common priorities are identified. Information sharing is key for Tri-national coordination. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** Identify areas were Tri-national coordination can be improved and priorities where collaboration and coordination will reduce the threat of human caused mortality.
	Hemispheric Conservation Coordination
4:00-4:15	**<u>AGENDA ITEM 15:</u> North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) 2023 Update** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Contacts: CWS – **Jacey Scott**, Jacey.Scott@ec.gc.ca USFWS – **David Gordon**, david_gordon@fws.gov Collaborators: <u>NAWMP Plan Committee Update Committee</u> USFWS: David Gordon, Anthony Roberts CWS: Vanessa Charlwood, Helen Kerr, Jacey Scott AFWA: Dean Smith DUI: Diane Eggeman <u>Plan Committee Co-Chairs</u> Jerome Ford (USFWS) Daniel Wolfish (CWS) **DESCRIPTION:** There is a statutory requirement to update the NAWMP every 5 years. The 2018 update, signed by Canada, Mexico and the USA, was themed "Connecting People, Waterfowl, and Wetlands". In February 2022, the NAWMP Plan Committee initiated the process, including agreeing on a path forward, for the 2023 update. This revitalized update is envisioned to return the NAWMP to the forefront of partners' various planning processes, update content within the Plan, and act as a communications initiative to a large audience. This Update will streamline the larger 2018 Update and focus on where the NAWMP community has come in the past five years and what is yet to be done. In order to achieve the objectives for this update and ensure the mandate and associated goals of the NAWMP continue to be relevant to partners across North America, commitment from the three signatory countries to engage in the process is required. **BACKGROUND:**

	The North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) is an international partnership to restore, conserve and protect waterfowl populations and associated habitats through management decisions based on strong biological foundations. The ultimate goal is to achieve abundant and resilient waterfowl populations and sustainable landscapes. In 1986, the Canadian and American governments signed this partnership agreement, laying the foundations for international cooperation in the recovery of declining waterfowl populations. Mexico became a signatory to the NAWMP with its update in 1994. As a result, the NAWMP partnership extends across North America, working at international, national and regional levels on a variety of waterfowl and habitat management issues. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** Commitment from the three countries to engage in the NAWMP update process.
4:15-4:30	**AGENDA ITEM 16: Southern Wings: Connectivity Across the Americas** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Deborah Hahn,** Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies **DESCRIPTION:** The mission of Southern Wings is to provide a mechanism to support and facilitate conservation projects that support the conservation of shared migratory bird species in Mexico, Central and South America and the Caribbean. This is ongoing program for the State agencies with partnerships with Mexican and Canadian partners. We have presented on this program at previous meetings. **BACKGROUND:** The Program started in 2009. Since 2009 39 state fish and wildlife agencies have contributed over $3.5 million to projects in the Colorado River Delta, Chihuahuan Desert grasslands, Laguna Madre, Sierra Madre Occidental, and Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico; Costa Rica; Nicaragua; Dominican Republic; Guatemala; Bolivia; and Colombia. It connects well with the Trilateral priority of connectivity even though terrestrial sites for migratory birds are not always right next to each other. It also connects well with many of the Table's priorities such as mainstreaming grassland bird conservation and implementing next steps for bird conservation in the Americas and the Trilateral Committee's priority of connectivity. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** Inform the Committee about the projects occurring in Mexico, consider how to increase participation by Mexican and Canadian partners for the conservation of shared migratory bird species, and discuss potential additional collaboration opportunities.
4:30-4:45	**AGENDA ITEM 17: Progress update and input on Tri-National Action Plan** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Eduardo Ponce, Natalie Savoie (CWS), **Becky Stewart** (CWS), Guy Foulks (FWS), **Brian Smith** (FWS), Eric Kershner(FWS), Ken Richkus(FWS), Humberto Berlanga (CONABIO), Vicente Rodrigues, Charles Francis (CWS), Ryan Zimmerling (CWS)

	DESCRIPTION: A team (includes co-chairs of the migratory bird table and additional experts) has formed to develop a Tri-National Action Plan aimed at identifying tangible conservation outcomes through tri-national coordination and collaboration. The team held their first two meetings in April and May 2022, and began scoping potential concepts for a plan of this scale. The team will provide a brief overview and seeks Committee's feedback in moving forward. **BACKGROUND:** Action Item from 2021 Trilateral meeting is to develop a Tri-national action plan that aligns common priorities across all three nations. The goal is to create a strategy to identify tangible outcomes that are achievable through coordination and collaboration. North American Waterfowl Management Plan and North American Bird Conservation Initiative principles are to serve as models. This plan will also consider how to move conservation coordination beyond the trilateral into a hemispheric approach. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** Committee input on Plan Outcomes
4:45-5:00	**<u>AGENDA ITEM 18:</u> America's Flyway Framework – Moving Toward Action** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: Rob Clay**, Manomet, Greg Butcher, USFS, Guy Foulks, **Brad Andres**, and Scott Johnston, USFWS, Natalie Savoie CWS **DESCRIPTION:** Present and discuss a way forward to implement flyway-scale conservation of migratory birds in the Americas, building on the America's Flyway Framework. **BACKGROUND:** Although the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) has supported flyway work globally for many years, efforts in the Americas have stalled. To engage countries in the hemisphere, a collaborative international mechanism will need to address the full international agreement landscape and the variation in signatories among member parties. A mechanism and structure that acknowledges the differences yet seeks common goals is likely the only viable alternative for the Americas. Any agreement, and subsequent work plan, should take full advantage of the work done by the America's Flyway Framework Task Force and other Americas-wide efforts. Any agreement should have a strict focus on migratory birds, while recognizing their contributions to human well-being and healthy ecosystems. One potential model to consider is the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** 1. Canada, Mexico and the U.S. agree to pursue a multi-lateral agreement for the conservation of migratory birds in the Americas. 2. The Trilateral countries will work together to develop a strategy to engage other countries in the Americas to gauge overall interest, type of mechanism and appropriate levels of national government involvement. 3. Trilateral leaders will set a specific timeline and appoint staff to accomplish the actions above.

5:00-5:30	**<u>AGENDA ITEM 19:</u> Open Discussion on Coordination of Hemispheric Conservation Priorities** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Co-chairs –Humberto Berlanga (CONABIO), Ken Richkus (FWS), J. Ryan Zimmerling (CWS) **DESCRIPTION:** Given the urgency and multitude of conservation needs, tri-national coordination is key to developing priorities and actionable tasks for addressing population declines. **BACKGROUND:** With documented declines across the continent, coordinated action is an important need. The three nations can share information, tools, and strategies for addressing priority conservation needs. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** Discuss high priority opportunities for coordination and collaboration.

WEDNESDAY, June 15, 2022

1:00-1:30	**<u>AGENDA ITEM 20:</u> Proposed Changes to Bird Conservation Regions in Northern Canada** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Dean Demarest – USFWS, Migratory Birds & Science Applications, LR4 Robert Ford – USFWS, PIF Coordinator Partners in Flight International Science Committee, chief contacts – Ken Rosenberg, Cornell Lab of Ornithology/American Bird Conservancy (ret.) **Pete Blancher, Canadian Wildlife Service (ret.),** **peter.blancher@sympatico.ca** Marcel Gahbauer, Canadian Wildlife Service Alaine Camfield, Canadian Wildlife Service Arvind Panjabi, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies **DESCRIPTION:** The Partners in Flight (PIF) International Science Committee is bringing forth a proposal to revise boundaries of several Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in northern Canada and Quebec to address existing inconsistencies/limitations in their use/applicability as ecoregional divisions within the BCR framework. The proposed changes would split several extremely large BCRs, and correct boundaries in Quebec, to bring them into better conformity with BCRs as meso-scale ecoregional divisions with fairly homogeneous avifaunas. The splits would conform to ecoregional hierarchies that are widely accepted and already in use in northern Canada and Quebec. It is our understanding that Mexico (CONABIO) has been developing proposed revisions to BCRs in Mexico and these may be brought forward for discussion as well.

BACKGROUND:
BCRs were envisioned as ecologically distinct regions with similar bird communities, habitats, and resource management issues meant to facilitate landscape level bird conservation planning and assessment. Application of the BCR framework occasionally suggests the need for revision of specific BCRs to improve fidelity of the overall system in representing ecogeographic or avifaunal differences important to various conservation applications. As one primary example, PIF collaborates with several other major bird conservation initiatives to maintain and administer the Avian Conservation Assessment Database (ACAD), which establishes a peer-reviewed, transparent and replicable means to evaluate and rate the relative vulnerability of the entire North American avifauna. The ACAD has a spatial basis in the BCR framework, and is used widely across the bird conservation community to aid in establishing priorities for conservation attention. Recent efforts to update the ACAD with current assessment data have identified several challenges with regard to the some of the BCRs in northern Canada (BCRs 3,4, 6, 7 &8).

To address these challenges and avoid complications in future updates, PIF proposes splitting these BCRs, making each resultant region (new BCR) more comparable in spatial scale, ecological scope, and avifaunal importance to BCRs elsewhere in North America. Whereas most of the BCR framework is rooted in aggregates of CEC level III divisions, these northern Canada BCRs are much less ecologically homogeneous. Splitting these BCRs into smaller, more ecologically similar units, and adjusting the boundaries in Quebec, would facilitate more accurate predictions of presence, abundance and trends within these BCRs for many species.

At the time of this writing, coordination is occurring with relevant stakeholders, including Canadian Wildlife Service, Joint Ventures, Provincial natural resource agencies, Unified Science Team, Boreal Songbird Initiative, and bird conservation partners in some potentially affected regions in Alaska. The changes are not drastic or controversial, and almost entirely insular to Canada, with one exception in BCR 4 in Alaska. Feedback thus far has been neutral or supportive. The proposed changes (splits) follow accepted ecoregional frameworks (CEC, Terrestrial Ecozones of Canada) and could be readily implemented. There is not a lot of landscape level bird conservation implementation in these regions that is based strictly on BCR lines, so the implications to "on the ground" work are minimal. Most of the implications pertain to the use of BCRs in characterizing the relative importance of BCRs to avifauna across North America more broadly. In Quebec, most of the proposed changes are already guiding conservation implementation as they reflect known, relevant, ecological boundaries.

To our knowledge, there does not appear to be any active tri-national NABCI forum or existing process for adopting official changes to the BCR framework at this time. NABCI was the entity that, under auspices of the CEC, first proposed and developed the BCR framework. Thus, this proposal is being brought to the Trilateral Migratory Bird Table for consideration and discussion, and to determine a path forward for endorsement, or to otherwise address the void in tri-national NABCI presence. It is our understanding that Mexico, through CONABIO, has also been planning to propose a number of changes

	to Mexican BCRs. Those changes are not the subject of this briefing, but if brought forward to the Trilateral Migratory Bird Table would likely be discussed in conjunction with the present proposal to revise the northern Canada BCRs. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** • discuss and determine appropriate "official" role of Trilateral Migratory Bird Table as a decision body for formalizing changes to BCRs • to the extent agreed, endorse changes to BCRs in Canada, subject to any additional consultation • provide recommendations and feedback on implementing official BCR revisions to ensure consistency in use/application, dissemination of shapefiles and other geospatial products, etc • support communications regarding endorsed BCR revisions through appropriate Trilateral channels
	Marine Debris and Bird Conservation
1:30-1:40	**<u>AGENDA ITEM 21:</u> Marine debris and effects to birds** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** **Caleb Spiegel, USFWS, Migratory Bird Program, Northeast Region** Scott Johnson, USFWS, Migratory Bird Program, Northeast Region Pete Leary, USFWS, National Wildlife Refuge System, Headquarters Eva DiDonato, NPS **DESCRIPTION:** This session will present a broad overview of marine debris in the U.S., impacts to birds, and a framework to help address the issue. The discussion will focus on opportunities to build Trilateral coordination and collaboration to answer questions related to extent of the marine debris and jointly developing resources to monitor bird interactions with marine debris. **BACKGROUND:** Impacts of debris on marine and coastal wildlife are increasingly documented throughout the world, as generation and input of waste into the environment rises. Nearly 300,000 tons of small plastic pieces are thought to be circulating in the world's oceans (Eriksen et al. 2014), and over 640,000 tons of additional derelict fishing gear enters the ocean each year (Macfadyen et al., 2009). Primary impacts of marine debris on wildlife include entanglement or entrapment in fishing gear and consumer litter, ingestion of macro- and micro- plastics, and degradation of nesting habitats. Despite many anecdotal reports and largely localized research, the scope of marine debris impacts on wildlife remains largely understudied, and associated mitigation efforts (such as clean-ups) are not always focused on maximizing benefits to wildlife. More coordinated efforts are required to better understand and address this issue in order to conserve wildlife. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:**

	Tri-national cooperation to better understand the extent of marine debris impacts on birds and other trust wildlife, including associated monitoring needs, in each country. Wildlife agencies in Canada, the U.S., and Mexico explore the potential of increased engagement in understanding and addressing marine debris impacts in North America, including providing coordinating partnerships.
1:40-1:50	**<u>AGENDA ITEM 22:</u> Plastic pollution and shorebird conservation** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** **Dr. Scott Flemming**, ECCC, Canada **Dr. Jennifer Provencher**, ECCC, Canada **DESCRIPTION:** This session will present a recent review of plastic pollution and shorebirds. The presentation will focus on what is known about shorebird and plastic pollution interactions, and a prioritization of species that may be at high risk to plastic ingestion as a result of ecological and environmental variables. The discussion will focus on identifying shared questions of interest that could be developed into joint projects and monitoring. **BACKGROUND:** Concerns about the impact of plastics pollution on the environment have been growing since the 1970s. Marine debris has reportedly entangled and/or been ingested by 914 marine species ranging from microinvertebrates to large marine mammals. Shorebirds could have a high potential to be exposed to and ingest plastics pollution, as many species migrate long distances and periodically concentrate around shorelines, coastal areas, and estuaries that can have elevated levels of plastics pollution. Currently, little is understood about plastics exposure, frequency of occurrence, and potential impacts relating to shorebirds. In this study, we catalogued and reviewed available studies across the globe that examined plastics pollution in shorebirds. We then quantified relevant traits of species and their environments to explore how shorebirds may be exposed to plastics pollution. Of 1106 samples from 26 shorebird species described within 16 studies that examined plastics ingestion, 53% of individuals contained some form of plastics pollution. Overall, Haematopodidae (oystercatchers) had the highest frequency of occurrence (FO) of plastics, followed by Recurvirostridae (avocets), Scolopacidae (sandpipers, phalaropes, godwits, curlews), and Charadriidae (plovers). Plastics occurrence was much greater among species that migrated across marine areas (either oceanic or coastal) than those species that used continental flyways. Species that foraged at sea, on mudflats, or on beaches, had higher average occurrence of plastics ingestion than species than foraged in terrestrial, or freshwater environments. Finally, species that used sweeping foraging modes showed higher levels of ingested plastics and contained a far greater number of plastic pieces than all other techniques. These conclusions are based on a limited number of species and samples, with the distribution of samples skewed taxonomically and geographically. Using the combined knowledge of known

	shorebirds-plastics interactions and shorebird ecology, we present a hierarchical approach to identifying shorebirds that may be more vulnerable and susceptible to plastics ingestion. We will use this study as a framework to discuss with partners potential joint projects that could be undertaken in Canada, US and Mexico in order to understand a holistic lifecycle approach for shorebird exposure to plastic pollution via entanglement and ingestion. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** Discussion of trilateral cooperation and reporting of plastic pollution in shorebirds
1:50-2:00	**AGENDA ITEM 23: Tri-national engagement to understand and address marine debris for bird conservation.** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Co-chairs –Humberto Berlanga (CONABIO), Ken Richkus (FWS), J. Ryan Zimmerling (CWS) **DESCRIPTION:** Discussion of how the three nations can cooperatively develop ways to understand the scope and scale of marine debris and its effects to birds. **BACKGROUND:** Marine debris is increasingly perceived as a threat to birds and their habitats though there is still a need to monitor its prevalence, where it occurs, and evaluate approaches to reducing adverse effects. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** Identify opportunities for collaboration and cooperation among the three countries to increase monitoring of marine debris and its effects to birds.
2:00-2:15	***BREAK***
	Seabird Conservation
2:15-2:35	**<u>AGENDA ITEM 24:</u> Trilateral Bycatch Working Group** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** **Vicente Rodríguez** (CONABIO), Yuliana Bedolla (GECI), Humberto Berlanga (CONABIO), **Scott Johnston** (USFWS), Elizabeth Labunski (USFWS), **Jake Russell-Mercier** (CWS), Julie Bourque (CWS) **DESCRIPTION:** As an outcome of the 2021 Trilateral, the Migratory Birds Working Table co-chairs approved the formation of a Bycatch Working Group in 2022, which is co-chaired by and includes members from the US, Mexico, and Canada. The initial goals given to the Bycatch Working Group include a) discussing the impact of by-catch in each country: what is known, gaps, and steps to reduce by-catch, and b) identifying a plan for how the Trilateral can help address this issue. The Bycatch Working Group will provide an update on the activities and progress to date of this newly formed group, preliminary suggestions of how the Trilateral may help to address the issue, and proposed future work which will help to identify priority next steps to maximize conservation gains.

	BACKGROUND: Incidental take in fisheries (bycatch) is a global conservation concern for seabirds. International collaboration is necessary in order to address the threats posed by fisheries bycatch to shared migratory bird species. As such, following discussions during the 2021 Trilateral, a Bycatch Working Group was formed under the Migratory Birds Working Table to foster collaboration and explore shared priorities among Mexico, the US, and Canada regarding this important topic. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** The Bycatch Working Group presents its formation and an overview of the situation on bycatch by country, and seeks endorsement of the Migratory Birds Working Table for continued work to identify other key actors and opportunities for collaborative actions to mitigate the problem of bycatch. The Bycatch Working Group also seeks suggestions of additional members from other important departments and organizations in members' respective countries.
	Joint Session with Species Table - Seabird and Shorebird Conservation (hosted by Species table)
2:35-2:55	**<u>AGENDA ITEM 25:</u> Translocation of Black-footed Albatrosses from Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge, USA to Create a Breeding Colony on Guadalupe Island Biosphere Reserve, Mexico** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Eduardo Ponce Guevara (CONANP), Humberto Berlanga García (CONABIO), Eric VanderWerf (Pacific Rim Conservation), Robby Kohley (Pacific Rim Conservation), Federico Méndez Sánchez (Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas), Julio Hernández Montoya (Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas), Annie Little (National Park Service), Steve Barclay (USFWS, Midway Atoll), Jared Underwood (USFWS, Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument). **BACKGROUND:** The Black-footed Albatross (*Phoebastria nigripes*) has a total breeding population of about 57,500 pairs, 95% of which nest on low atolls in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. Inundation of breeding colonies from sea level rise and storm surge associated with climate change is its most serious long-term threat. Protection of suitable nesting habitat and creation of new colonies on higher islands are among the highest priority conservation actions. Guadalupe is a large, high island that is protected as a Biosphere Reserve and already supports a thriving colony of Laysan Albatrosses. Black-footed Albatrosses already forage in the cold waters of the California Current around Guadalupe, which are less likely to be affected by climate change than most other regions of the Pacific. Creation of a breeding colony in the eastern Pacific would increase the breeding range of the species and enhance its resiliency to climate change. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:**

	To report on the progress of two years (2021 and 2022) of Black-footed Albatross translocations from Midway Atoll to Guadalupe Island. Also, we seek continued support and endorsement by the MBWT for this translocation project, that will continue for two more years at least.
2:55-3:15	**<u>AGENDA ITEM 26</u>: Trilateral Island Initiative: Conservation and Restoration of the Islands of Canada, the United States, and Mexico** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Annie Little (NPS), Gilles Seutin (Parks Canada), Federico Méndez Sánchez (Conservación de Islas), Gregg Howald (Advanced Conservation Strategies), Patty Baiao (Island Conservation), Humberto Berlanga (CONABIO), John Randall (The Nature Conservancy), Nick Holmes (The Nature Conservancy), Eduardo Ponce (CONANP), Eric VanderWerf (Pacific Rim Conservation), Robby Kohley (Pacific Rim Conservation) **DESCRIPTION:** This agenda item focuses on a collaborative trilateral effort to conserve and restore marine island ecosystems, including seabird populations. Following the signing of the Letter of Intent (LOI) at the 2014 Trilateral Committee meeting, the three countries have been collaborating on multiple issues of shared interest related to island conservation. The Trilateral Island Working Group will update the MBWT on the status of current collaborative efforts, including ongoing projects, priorities, and efforts to promote the LOI. We will highlight island conservation efforts that in particular relate to the 2022 priorities, including technological innovation, connectivity, and adaptation to ecosystem change. **BACKGROUND:** Over the last decade, multiple bilateral and trilateral island restoration projects have been initiated. In order to further encourage coordination and collaboration on island projects, a Trilateral Island Working Group was created in 2012. This group developed the LOI that was signed by the three countries at the 2014 Trilateral Meeting in Querétaro, Mexico. The LOI documents that the three countries intend to engage in cooperative bilateral and trilateral activities to promote sustainable environmental policies and practices in support of island conservation. The Working Group will discuss achievements, priorities, and updates of recent collaborative efforts related to island conservation. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** We seek continued endorsement by the Trilateral Committee of collaborative conservation efforts on islands in Canada, United States, and Mexico. The goal of the Trilateral Island Initiative is for the three countries to engage in cooperative bilateral and trilateral activities to promote sustainable environmental policies and practices in support of island conservation.
3:15-3:30	***Break***
	General Conservation
3:30-3:45	**<u>AGENDA ITEM 27:</u> Trinational Conservation for Western Forests** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Bob Ford, Partners in Flight coordinator, USFWS (Robert_P_Ford@fws.gov; 901-268-3395. Greg Butcher, International

	Programs, US Forest Service (gregory.butcher@usda.gov). **John Alexander (Executive Director, Klamath Bird Observatory (jda@klamathbird.org)**, Sarahy Contreras Martiniz Universidad de Guadalajara-CUCSUR (sarahy.contreras@academicos.udg.mx). Wendy Easton, Canadian Wildlife Servie (wendy.easton@ec.gc.ca). **DESCRIPTION:** Evidence suggests that western forest bird population declines are associated with 100 years of conifer-centric management that discouraged natural and anthropogenic disturbance (i.e., fire) and reduced amount of old growth and natural patterns of post-disturbance succession (i.e., broadleaf), resulting in forests that are "departed" from a natural range in variability. The result is a decreased resiliency to climate-driven fires, putting forests, forest resources (e.g., water), human communities, and forest birds at risk. This will be implemented from a One Health lens focused on fire and climate resilience and security, water quality, and forest restoration need. We propose that the Trilateral Committee support and help deliver a coordinated trinational conservation effort for western forests that integrates human dimensions and human community wellbeing targets such as clean water and fire risk reduction). Specifically, the trinational effort can build on existing incentive programs in each country (Strategic Partnerships Initiative – Canada; Medio Ambiente y Desarrollo Territorial – Mexico; Bipartison Infrastructure Law – US) to determine ecological change and strategies for adaptation to that change. This project addresses Trilateral Committee, Migratory Bird Table priorities of human dimensions and adaptation to change, with the major themes of developing the next steps for western forest bird conservation and trinational coordination to reduce risk for bird populations as well as human communities. **BACKGROUND:** Almost 1 billion of the 3 billion bird population decline in 50 years were among forest obligate species (Rosenberg et al 2019). In western forests, 19 of 39 species are experiencing long term decline; 14 species populations have experienced recent declines (3 generations). Long and short term population declines have generated a prioritization for conservation action for these species, at least 16 occur on the USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern (2021) continental list and the Partners in Flight Watch list (2016), 8 are included on the Road to Recovery list and 7 of 8 species are on State Greatest Conservation Need in the states where they nest. The Partners in Flight Western Working Group has recently designated a Forest Birds working group to specifically provide science and information that will guide decision making by western Migratory Bird Joint Venture Management Boards. The conservation actions and priorities are guided by the Partners in Flight Conservation Investment Strategy entitled "An Integrated Conservation Strategy for Western Temperate, Mexican Pine-oak, and Tropical Cloud Forest Birds: North America to Central America", which is multi-national in scope and encompasses the full annual cycle of many species. This work will inform the emerging concept of a "Western Forest Initiative", led by Joint Ventures, which can link human well being targets, forest management and bird conservation.

	REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES: Federal agencies and partners can help leverage existing incentive programs in each country (Strategic Partnerships Initiative – Canada; Medio Ambiente y Desarrollo Territorial – Mexico; Bipartison Infrastructure Law – US) to determine ecological change and strategies for adaptation to that change. We can guide investments in forest restoration from each program to ensure benefits for at-risk western forest birds. Support of the Partners in Flight Western Working Group - Forest Birds Committee to have trinational participation can ensure cross country coordination of science needs and priorities specific to ecological change and departure, human dimension aspects, and implementation for human well being targets that also addresses habitat limiting factors for priority bird species.
3:45-4:00	**AGENDA ITEM 28: The Desert Thrasher Working Group: Binational Conservation of Bendire's (Toxostoma benderei) and LeConte's Thrashers (Toxostoma lecontei)** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** **Corrie Borgman** (USFWS; corrie_borgman@fws.gov), Adam Hannuksela (Sonoran Joint Venture; adam_hannuksela@fws.gov), Edwin Juarez (Arizona Game and Fish Department; ejuarez@azgfd.gov), Elisabeth Ammon (Great Basin Bird Observatory, ammon@gbbo.org), Elroy Masters (Bureau of Land Management; emasters@blm.gov), Francisco Puente (Organización Vida Silvestre A.C; fpuente25@yahoo.com), Geoff Geupel (Point Blue Conservation Science; ggeupel@pointblue.org), Karla Montaño Perez (Comisión de Ecología y Desarrollo Sustentable del Estado de Sonora; karla.montano@sonora.gob.mx) **DESCRIPTION:** The Desert Thrasher Working Group is a binational group addressing conservation of Bendire's and LeConte's Thrashers. We will provide updates on current work being undertaken by the group, including a Conservation Strategy with a threat assessment for both Mexico and the United States (following the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation). The Strategy also includes suggestions for management practices, an updated predictive model for these birds in the United States, and range-wide survey results including surveys in Sonora in 2022. These surveys not only provide valuable data, but have also provided opportunity to work with the Seri tribal community in Sonora through participation. Finally, an ongoing research project studying migratory connectivity in Bendire's Thrashers has shown connections of birds between the two countries (wintering locations identified in Mexico), highlighting the importance of our binational shared responsibility to these birds. While there is growing interest in desert thrasher species among biologists in the region, some challenges and needs hinder progress. These include a lack of biological knowledge necessary to develop beneficial management practices, lack of planning to address primary threats such as urban and renewable energy development, lack of funding and capacity to gather sufficient data to inform proactive conservation, and an overall lack of awareness of desert thrashers across audiences. **BACKGROUND:**

	The Desert Thrasher Working Group (DTWG) was formed in 2011 to address conservation issues and declining populations of Bendire's and LeConte's Thrashers across their range. Both species are of conservation concern as included on numerous lists (BLM Sensitive Species, USFWS Bird of Conservation Concern, State Wildlife Action Plans for all states where they occur, Partners in Flight; additionally Bendire's Thrasher is included on the IUCN Red List). In spite of this, they are generally unknown and understudied due to their low occurrence and cryptic nature. Conservation of these species are hindered by lack of awareness and numerous knowledge gaps that include even basic ecology such as distribution, habitat needs, and migratory behaviors. The DTWG works towards filling these gaps and creating awareness for the species (https://borderlandsbirds.org/projects/desert-thrasher/). The group consists of members from federal agencies (Bureau of Land Management, Department of Defense, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), state agencies (Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, Sonora, and Utah state wildlife agencies), and non-governmental organizations (American Bird Conservancy, Audubon Southwest, Maricopa and Tucson Audubon Societies, Great Basin Bird Observatory, Organización Vida Silvestre A.C., Point Blue Conservation Science), universities (New Mexico State University, Universidad Estatal de Sonora), and Joint Ventures (California Central Coast, Sonoran). Group accomplishments include creation of a standardized survey protocol, conducting surveys across five states in the United States, with surveys initiated in Sonora in 2021 and 2022, management of data with the Borderlands Avian Data Center of the Avian Knowledge Network, a predictive map for modeling thrasher occurrence, and an ongoing study of migratory connectivity. The group actively works to identify conservation needs and additional partners to address issues for Bendire's and LeConte's thrashers. The DTWG also provides a forum for collaboration and communication. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** • Continued or strengthening support from governments in Mexico and United States to raise awareness and address high priority conservation needs. • Strengthening and building of partnerships, especially in Mexico, and with new potential stakeholders in both the U.S. and Mexico, such as the renewable energy industry. • Improved cross-border coordination and collaboration for thrasher surveys
	Monitoring and Data Management
4:00-4:15	**<u>AGENDA ITEM 29:</u> Update on remote sensing and machine learning integration for migratory bird monitoring** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** USFWS/DMBM – **Mark Koneff** BOEM/ESP – Tim White USGS/UMESC – Jennifer Dieck USGS/EESC – Andy Royle **DESCRIPTION:** The FWS, BOEM, USGS and others are collaborating to advance the integration of remote sensing technologies and improve the safety, data quality, and

	efficiency of broad-scale aerial migratory bird surveys. The scope of continental migratory bird monitoring programs and the high-resolution imagery required for species identification produces tremendous data volumes. Machine learning methods and in-flight processing capabilities are being investigated to automate data processing and improve efficiency. **BACKGROUND:** Traditionally low-level surveys using human observers have been used to collect data over broad geographic regions and under tight phenological and regulatory timelines to inform management decision making. These methods have proved to be fast and cost-efficient in generating required population data, however, they do exposure personnel to increased risk and the individual biases associated with many different observers can affect the quality of resulting population estimates. Remote sensing technologies are being investigated to improve data quality and to reduce the risk of obstacle strike, provide aircrews additional maneuvering capability, and increase margin of safety. Hardware/software for in-flight and field data processing as well as machine learning methods are being developed and refined to improve data processing efficiency and automation. Research on integration of machine learning outputs from remote sensing aerial surveys with statistical population estimation frameworks is also in progress. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** Inform partners of the status of this effort and discuss opportunities for enhanced trinational cooperation on these efforts.
4:15-4:30	**<u>AGENDA ITEM 30:</u> Technology Innovation for Conservation: The Motus Wildlife Tracking System** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Birds Canada (**Pete Davidson and Stu Mackenzie**). We have long-established collaborators in organizations with conservation mandates including Environment and Climate Change Canada, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network, American Bird Conservancy, Selva, and many leading academic conservation science departments. **DESCRIPTION:** This agenda item is intended to open discussion of the Motus Wildlife Tracking System (Motus) as an innovative technology tool to fill knowledge gaps and inform adaptation to ecosystem change for a wide variety of species using the Trilateral region (and regions further south). The aim is to catalyze a discussion about how Motus can be used to help to drive Trilateral conservation and collaboration priorities. The network of Motus collaborators now numbers >1,300 academic institutions, non-government/non-profit organizations, for-profit corporations, and local, state/provincial and federal governments. With this diverse international collaboration framework, the opportunity to coordinate applied research results to conservation has never been better. Further, the system had recently undergone a substantial expansion across western Canada, central (Great Plains grasslands) and western (Pacific Flyway including key shorebird stopover) regions of the United States and Mexico, enabling us to address issues shared by all three countries. We will provide a suite of examples of how Motus is being used to inform conservation and address understanding of threat issues at local to

	continental scales. For example, how migratory behavior (derived from detailed spatio-temporal information that Motus generates) can indicate condition of habitat at stopover sites like coastal wetlands; or understanding how contaminants affect migratory bird and insect behaviors, and likely carry-over effects into reproductive and key survival stages of species life cycles. XXVI Virtual Meeting of the Canada/Mexico/U.S. Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management June 13-17, 2022 **BACKGROUND:** Motus is an international collaborative research network that uses cooperative automated radio telemetry to track small flying organisms (birds, bats, and insects). Motus collaborators deploy small radio transmitters on animals that are detected by stations placed at strategic locations across the landscape. Motus allows for the collection of novel movement data for small animals at a variety of spatial and temporal scales that was previously only possible for larger animals. The infrastructure, technology and data are affordable and accessible, and the tags are now so small they can be safely fitted to the smallest birds, bats and even insects like the Monarch butterfly. The system enables the conservation science community to undertake impactful research and education on the ecology and conservation of hundreds of species simultaneously. Motus harnesses the collective power of collaborators across the network into a coordinated coalition that expands the scale and amplifies the impact of everyone's work, and helps optimize scarce research and conservation dollars. Motus is a program of Birds Canada. Individuals, researchers, or organizations collaborate with Motus by the deployment and maintenance of one or more Motus receiving stations, and/or by deploying system-registered tags on flying animals. Since 2016, the number of Motus receiver stations annually active has increased almost 300%, from 430 to >1,280 in 31 countries; the number of projects has increased five-fold from ~75 to 450 projects, deploying over 30,000 tags on more than 270 species of birds, bats, and insects (including >80 species of conservation concern in the western hemisphere), from which >100 peer-reviewed journal papers have been published. As collaborations continue to grow, Motus is anticipated to expand to further fill geographic gaps in the receiver station network, integrate more tracking systems, and catalyze priority-based research and conservation objectives. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** We seek direction from the Trilateral Committee on specific work streams that Motus could most usefully pursue with regards to i) implementing next steps for bird conservation for the Americas, ii) coordination of advancements in reducing priority threats, and iii) improved coordination of monitoring and information sharing.
4:30-4:40	**<u>AGENDA ITEM 31:</u> Creating Conservation Corridors for Migratory Birds using Remote Technology and Closed-Circle Economies** COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS: United Corridors AC, Huimilpan, Mexico. University of Sonora – (MM) University of Arizona- (MM) Past collaborators: Bird Conservancy of the Rockies (RMBO) CONANP/Semarnat/Profepa

	In process: Pronatura NE- in relation to Military Macaws (MM) **DESCRIPTION:** How to create functional habitat corridors for migratory birds while respecting private land and ejidos, that can also generate economic output. These closed-circle conservation-based economies could sustain further habitat protection, reforestation, and conservation action. Points to start or act as bases for connecting the landscape could be initiated through citizen-science based projects that focus on key migratory bird species. However, to maintain large databases, allow for collaborative data access, and to integrate remote monitoring systems that include MOTUS and WISNs (Wireless Information Sensor Networks) could be a challenge. This idea of making conservation projects self- sustainable economically could obtain greater habitat protection and enhancement efforts for migratory birds, while also connecting wintering ranges and provide vigilance by Mexican ejidos. **BACKGROUND:** Observations of conservation and habitat outcomes of a citizen science-based project in the Sierra Gorda Biosphere Reserve, Mexico have shown pro-conservation behavior and community driven request for reforestation to protect their charismatic Military Macaw. The Community Monitoring of the Military Macaw project started in 2013 in collaboration with CONANP and Peace Corps, then continued through United Corridors AC until 2018; which is currently focusing on habitat connectivity and migratory birds, along with outreach and environmental education. United Corridors AC is a small but effective NGO that currently has donation status in Mexico. Due to changes in government and current constraints in Mexico, United Corridors AC has been doing more outreach during the pandemic years as a more concrete project is defined that creates remote sensing stations and bases to focus connectivity effort. With recent government changes in late 2021 that stalled the reforestation efforts, United Corridors is rebuilding relationships. The Community Monitoring of the Military Macaw project still continues through another NGO, Corredores Biológicos AC. United Corridors AC would like to refocus on migratory birds and other migratory species, with particular emphasis on connectivity results and integrating remote monitoring technology. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** Best way to manage large databases that includes photos and videos, that also allow for collaborative access without data-loss compromises, or sharing of data with inappropriate actors. How to make conservation appealing to the public through economic incentives that actually work (beyond carbon credits, PES, ie. achievable and tangible results in the short term and in the context of climate change to conserve birds quick enough). How to effectively construct, manage, and monitor connectivity corridors' conservation success using migratory birds as an indicator.

	Collaborative partnerships for managing and sharing big data and connectivity projects that focus on migratory birds.
4:40-5:30	**AGENDA ITEM 32: Open discussion of remote monitoring and coordination among the Trilateral countries.** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Co-chairs –Humberto Berlanga (CONABIO), Ken Richkus (FWS), J. Ryan Zimmerling (CWS) **DESCRIPTION:** Discussion of availability and coordination of remote monitoring among the Trilateral countries.

THURSDAY, June 16, 2022

1:00-1:20	**AGENDA ITEM 33: Tri-national Coordination of Bird Banding** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Lesley Howes, **Charles Francis** (CWS); **Humberto Berlanga, Vicente Rodriguez** (CONABIO); **Antonio Celis-Murillo** (USGS). **DESCRIPTION:** Bird banding and the use of auxiliary markers is a fundamental tool in ornithology. A coordinated approach to bird banding and marking in North America is imperative to ensure that bands and other markers remain unique and banding, tracking and encounter data are deposited into a secure database and accessible for future use to support research and conservation decision-making. We are seeking direction and support to advance three broad issues relevant to bird banding in North America: strategic planning for the existing North American bird banding program; advancing an effective centralized banding program in Mexico; and improving coordination among bird banding programs across the Americas. The North American Bird-banding Program, involving US and Canada, is one of the longest standing international collaborations for wildlife science and conservation, dating to the early 1900s. The most recent review of the bird banding program was through a Federal Advisory Committee report published in 2008. Since then, bird banding has evolved to include new and developing technologies for bird tracking, data management and reporting technologies have advanced considerably, while there are ongoing challenges related to resources. We believe this program would benefit from an updated program review and development of a new strategic plan. This plan should cover many different aspects including modernizing data management platforms, improving cooperation amongst agencies within and among countries in managing banding

activities, addressing new and emerging technologies (such as tracking devices), identification of program priorities, development of standards and training materials, dissemination of data and results, and ensuring adequate resourcing and support.

In 2015, the executive table of the trilateral committee signed a letter of intent, committing support for development of a comparable program in Mexico coordinated with the North American Program; however, to date, this program has had limited progress, due largely to lack of resources in Mexico. We would like to review and propose some options to move forward on this.

Finally, we would like to discuss ways to strengthen relations with other banding programs in the Americas through reinvigoration of the Western Hemisphere Bird Banding Network (WHBBN). This has the potential to improve coordination of banding programs in the Americas, and benefit conservation science through band, marker and data management.

This submission fits in the theme: Improved Coordination of Monitoring and Information Sharing, and supports the priorities of Technology Innovation for Conservation, and Connectivity as well as implementing next steps for bird conservation for the Americas.

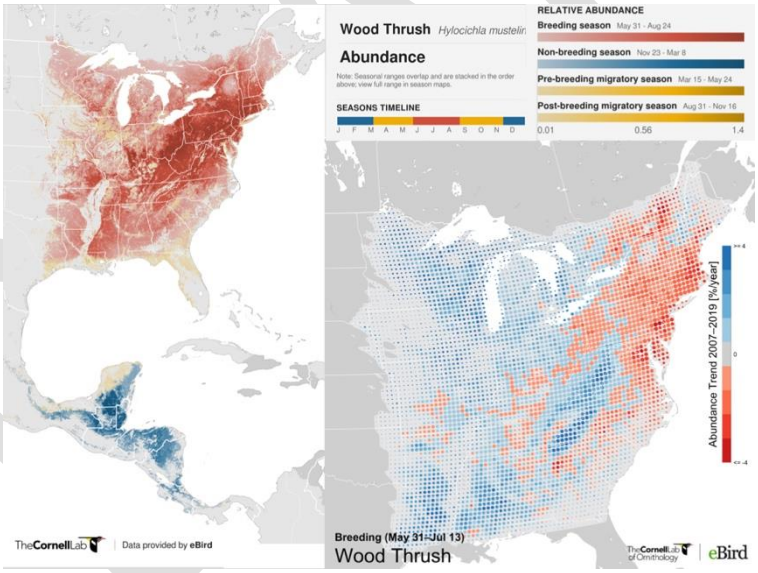
BACKGROUND: In 2015, the Trilateral Committee approved a Letter of Intent providing a cooperative framework to support development of a coordinated approach for bird banding across North America. This agreement supports various conservation and management initiatives including Mexico's participation in the Flyway System. Some progress has been made, including development of a draft agreement between USGS Bird Banding Lab (BBL) and CONABIO for the coordinated use of auxiliary markers on birds. By working with partners, standards for training and guidelines for use of birds in science have been developed and applied in North America and elsewhere resulting in a pool of well-trained banders and some valuable training materials that are useful in all 3 countries. However, development of a centrally managed program in Mexico remains elusive.

The Canadian Banding Office and the Bird Banding Lab have been working cooperatively with SEMARNAT and CONABIO since 2006 with the long-term goal to support banding program collaboration in the Western Hemisphere. The Western Hemisphere Bird Banding Network was formed in 2007, and had some initial good progress. However, it has been relatively inactive since 2010 resulting, limiting development of banding programs in many countries. Lifecycle and connectivity projects in the Americas are affected by lack of bands and programs.

	REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES: - Support for a comprehensive review and strategic plan for the North American Bird Banding program. - Discussion of options for advancing development of a Mexican Bird Banding Program under the Trilateral LOI.
1:20-1:40	**<u>AGENDA ITEM 34:</u> Advances in data sharing and improved coordination using the eBird citizen-science platform to support bird monitoring and conservation across the Americas** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** **Amanda D. Rodewald**, Ph.D., **Viviana Ruiz-Gutierrez**, Ph.D., **Orin Robinson**, Ph.D. Center for Avian Population Studies at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Cornell University **DESCRIPTION:** Avian conservation and management efforts for the Americas will require significant investments in improved coordination and sharing of monitoring and resulting information. To this end, we will (1) provide an overview of recent developments of the Cornell Lab's citizen-science data (eBird), (2) highlight collaborative efforts to apply eBird data to fill data gaps needed to inform management and conservation decision-making, and (3) provide an overview on how eBird can support monitoring and information needs of government agencies, NGOs and other partners across the Americas. We will highlight examples of how eBird information is being used to inform decision-making, from filling in information gaps created by COVID-19, to informing management for waterfowl and raptor populations. **BACKGROUND:** The Cornell Lab of Ornithology's largest citizen-science program, *eBird*, serves as a platform for engagement, collaboration, and monitoring efforts focused on bird populations worldwide. Since the program started in 2002, eBird has successfully engaged over 700,000 volunteers, contributors, and collaborators to submit over 1.1 billion observations from around the world. The Cornell Lab is committed to helping scientists, practitioners, and decision-makers access, analyze, and apply eBird data to fill in information gaps needed to effectively guide management and conservation-decision making. As part of this commitment, the *eBird Status and Trends* project (https://ebird.org/science/status-and-trends/), led by Lab scientists and data analysts, is focused on developing innovative statistical models that use high quality data in eBird to generate robust estimates of avian distribution, abundance, and population trends. In this session, we would like to highlight recent collaborative projects on applications of eBird data products to fill information gaps needed to inform policy, conservation, and management. Since 2018, the *eBird Status and Trends* project has been providing valuable information on year-round relative abundance and distribution for 1,004 species across the globe. The eBird data products, all freely available online, include animations of weekly abundance distributions for each species based on estimates of relative abundance information at 2.96 x 2.96 km resolution. The high spatial and temporal resolution on relative

abundance allows us to follow changes in abundance and habitat associations of an individual species along across their full annual cycle. We also provide summary data products, such as mean and maximum values of relative abundance ,for each season in static maps and at the same spatial resolution.

Our ability to look at patterns across the breeding, migratory, and overwintering periods of all North American birds has allowed us to forge collaborative partnerships to best support conservation-decision-making, from state and government agencies, to localized projects with NGOs. We will present examples of these collaborations, such as our work with the *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service* to use eBird data to compliment the Service's surveys to improve population size estimates for Bald and Golden Eagle. In addition, year-round estimates of eBird relative abundance for Bald Eagle were used to help define low-risk collision for wind development projects. We have also worked with the *U.S. Geological Survey* to use eBird data to fill in gaps for surveys cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For this work, we found that combining eBird data with USGS aerial surveys improved precision and allowed USGS researchers to fill in the population estimates for missing survey years. We are also working on a partnership with *USGS, USFWS,* and *Ducks Unlimited* to validate eBird relative abundance for waterfowl populations to aerial surveys and refuge counts. This effort will help fill in information gaps in current monitoring efforts and develop methods that will allow current waterfowl survey data to be integrated in eBird *Status and Trends* products to best inform waterfowl management in North America. We will also highlight examples of our commitment to data sharing to improve conservation decision-making, such as our work with the *Partners in Flight (PIF) Science Committee* on their *Avian Conservation Assessment Database (ACAD)*. We are providing PIF with year-round data summaries to allow for the assessment of the conservation vulnerability resident and migratory species, from Canada to Central America. We are also providing information to *State Agencies*, such as using eBird relative abundance to estimate priority areas of breeding connectivity in Latin America to guide where States can support species conservation.



Lastly, we will preview unreleased eBird trends of 451 species that breed from northern Mexico to Southern Canada. The breeding season trends are estimated for 2007-2019 at

	27 x 27 km resolution. This unprecedented data product allows us to not only see trends at across a large scale, such as a Bird Conservation Region, a State, or a species' individual range, but also at a small, local scale resolution where most on the ground conservation actions take place. **REQUESTED SPECIFIC OUTCOMES:** 1) Increase awareness of the potential of eBird to guide and evaluate conservation and management efforts, and fill in critical information gaps in monitoring, at a Trinational Level. 2) Generate new collaborations to enhance the effectiveness of eBird products for North America 3) Introduce eBird as a data management and monitoring platform
1:40-2:00	**AGENDA ITEM 35: Open Discussion on Coordination of Data Management and Monitoring** **COLLABORATORS & CONTACTS:** Co-chairs –Humberto Berlanga (CONABIO), Ken Richkus (FWS), J. Ryan Zimmerling (CWS) **DESCRIPTION:** Discussion of potential future advancements in the coordination and collaboration of bird banding and marking, use of citizen-science, and data management across multiple platforms among the Trilateral countries.
2:00-2:15	***BREAK***
2:15-3:15	**AGENDA ITEM 36:** ET Joint Session Prep – Co-Chairs Only
3:15-3:30	***BREAK***
3:30-4:30	**AGENDA ITEM 37:** Joint Session – ET and Working Tables
4:30-5:00	**AGENDA ITEM 38:** Post ET Joint Session Follow-up – Co-Chairs Only