

The Trilateral Committee Working Tables Highlights (2012-2013)

The Canada/Mexico/U.S. Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management (Trilateral Committee) facilitates international cooperation to conserve the living heritage of North America. The Working Tables implement the biodiversity conservation priorities of the three countries. These are some of the achievements for 2012-2013.

Law Enforcement Working Table

Accomplishments centered on cooperative capacity building to enhance the enforcement of wildlife protection laws, particularly those regulating international trade and trafficking of North American and global species. Highlights include the following:

- The Service's National Fish and Wildlife Forensics Laboratory hosted an expert forum on best practices in wildlife forensics for scientists from the United States and Mexico in September 2012. A similar meeting with representatives from Environment Canada was held in January 2013.
- The Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) training program for members of the Mexican Federal Police was conducted in February 2012 in Oaxaca, Mexico.
- Officers from all three nations completed a covert computer training course presented by an industry expert in Miami in March 2012. A 2nd session of this training was delivered in March 2013 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.



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- Wildlife Intelligence Specialists from the U.S. and Canada presented a training course on intelligence gathering and analysis in the wildlife crime context in Miami in March 2012. Attendees included officers and other enforcement staff from the U.S., Canada, and Mexico.

Ecosystem Conservation Working Table (ECWT)

The program of work focused on the following priority topics: ecosystem services, invasive species, island restoration, and landscape scale conservation. Highlights include the following:

- The ECWT devoted an entire day of the annual meeting to presentations and discussion of research, policies, tools, and partnerships on ecosystem – services-based approaches to natural resource planning and management.
- Biologists and Invasive Species Specialists from Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. held meaningful discussions on a broad array of topics including partnership initiatives such as the North American Invasive Species Network; results, research, and challenges on specific projects like rat eradication for island restoration; control of cheatgrass using native soil bacteria; and monitoring the effects of Saltcedar

beetle on tamarisk along the Rio Grande

- Supported existing projects and identified and developed project proposals at the landscape and island scale

Migratory Bird Working Table

While accomplishments address multiple fronts such as flyway conservation for waterfowl, landscape-level conservation, and working with the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI), one of our recent priorities that involved many of these focuses was grassland conservation in North America. Highlights include the following:

- Supported North American Bird Conservation Initiative partners working across large landscapes and throughout the full annual cycle to conserve grassland bird populations and ecosystems within working landscapes.
- Published a status assessment and conservation plan for Henslow's Sparrow and initiated development of conservation plans for the Grasshopper Sparrow and Bobolink.
- Supported Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory as it continued ground-breaking research and strengthened conservation partnerships in the Chihuahuan region of Mexico.
- Facilitated the development of 2014-2015 grassland bird conservation priorities by the Commission for Environmental Cooperation.
- Worked with Partners in Flight, resulting in plans to develop conservation business plans for focal grassland bird species throughout the Western Hemisphere during its 2013 International Workshop.

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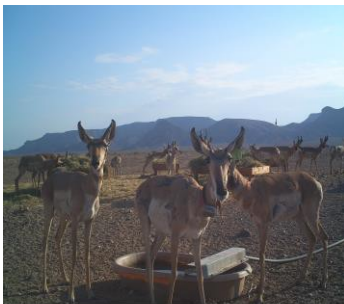


Grasshopper Sparrow © Mike McDowell

Species of Common Conservation Concern Working Table

Accomplishments centered on cooperative conservation efforts for cross-border species of common concern. The following highlights two of the more than 20 ongoing projects on which the Working Table collaborates:

- A captive breeding pen was established on Kofa National Wildlife Refuge (KNWR) in December 2011. As of January 2013, there are 22 pronghorns on site, nine of which were fawns born at KNWR in 2012. Likewise, releases were initiated in 2006 at the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge breeding pen. As of January 2013, 91 pronghorn have been released into the wild, of which 61 are still alive.



Sonoran Pronghorn © Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge

The multinational Black-footed Ferret recovery efforts are helping to restore the grasslands of western North America, and ecosystem on which many other species at risk depend. At present, this species' status has steadily improved from presumed

extinct, to maintenance in captivity, to being reintroduced in 20 sites in Canada, Mexico and the U.S.

- Last year, 11 additional captive raised and preconditioned kits were released in the Grasslands National Park, Saskatchewan, supplementing the existing population. This was the first year that a known wild born female ferret was documented as having her own kits. In addition, a total of 228 ferrets were released at Vermejo Park Ranch in New Mexico and eight other existing sites.
- The continued presence of significant prairie dog populations was witnessed in Janos Chihuahua, Mexico during a local visit.

CITES

Accomplishments centered on regional cooperation to ensure effective outcomes within CITES fora, particularly the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES.

- The North American Region cooperated and submitted an Information Document to AC26/PC20 (Inf. 3, March 2012), which provided draft language for a Resolution on non-detriment findings. Regional consensus on this issue was influential in shaping the draft Resolution that was approved by the Animals Committee and the Plants Committee, and ultimately adopted by the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP16) (March 3-14, 2013, Bangkok, Thailand).
- Representatives from the CITES authorities of Canada, Mexico, and the United States met in Cuernavaca, Mexico, February 4-7, 2013, to discuss key issues in advance of CoP16. Although the three countries take individual positions at a CoP, the meeting presented a key opportunity to

share information, discuss positions, and develop strategies as appropriate.

- CITES CoP16 was successful for the North American Region, with the adoption of many of the proposals and initiatives submitted or supported by the three countries, including listing in the Appendices of a number of species of sharks, tortoises and freshwater turtles, and tropical timber species, and the adoption of a U.S. proposal on the frequent cross-border movement of musical instruments that contain CITES-listed species.



Scalloped hammerhead, listed in CITES Appendix II at CoP16 ©NOAA

- Mexico prepared a Spanish-language CITES identification guide for *Agalychnis* frogs. In late 2012 and early 2013, Mexico and Canada worked together to translate this guide into English and French. Cooperation on projects such as this are part of our regional commitment to share and work together on regional outreach materials.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
International Affairs
Division of International Conservation
4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 100
Arlington, VA 22203
Tel: 703 358-1754
Fax: 703 358-2115
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