

PLAN FOUNDATION APPENDIX A

Prairie Pothole Joint Venture Organization, Roles and Responsibilities

Organizational Summary

The PPJV, established in 1987 as one of the original six, priority joint ventures of the U.S., is made up of a multi-state Management Board of agencies and organizations that share a common interest in the conservation of the wetland and associated upland ecosystem of the Prairie Pothole Region. The PPJV also consists of a Joint Venture Coordinator, Technical Committee, Steering Committees/Action Groups for each State, Habitat and Population Team Offices (HAPET) and various working groups of partners that address NAWCA projects, Farm Bill issues, and other conservation activities pertaining to the prairies.

Participation in the PPJV involves multi-level representation from a wide cross-section including landowners, private conservation organizations, Federal and State agencies, land trusts, National Wildlife Refuges, public utilities, hunting groups, university representatives, local community representatives, business representatives, and other stakeholders.

The boundaries of the PPJV include the Prairie Pothole Region of Minnesota and Iowa, North and South Dakota and Montana, including the 5-Valleys—Flathead, Blackfoot, Bitterroot, Clark Fork, and Swan River, of Western Montana.

The PPJV is an informally-constituted partnership dedicated to bird habitat conservation and is not a legal entity.

The PPJV employs some key elements that make it a successful vehicle for conservation in the prairies:

- The PPJV is popular with landowners because participation is voluntary and programs are non-regulatory.
- The PPJV fosters innovative partnerships among Federal, State and local governments, conservation organizations, the business community, Tribal governments, and private landowners. These partners provide funding, technical expertise, equipment, personnel, and land access.
- The PPJV leverages resources through pooling funding, information, and personnel, accomplishing in a coordinated process what would not be accomplished individually.
- The PPJV works regionally in the Prairie Pothole Region, but sees the need and opportunity to address larger issues of bird conservation on an international basis in the

Western Hemisphere, sharing expertise and technical assistance with other joint ventures in the U.S. and Canada and with international conservation partners.

- PPJV partners work on both public and private lands. Public lands, such as National Wildlife Refuges and State lands act as cornerstones for PPJV activities. However, they do not provide sufficient habitat to sustain an abundance of prairie wildlife. Consequently the main thrust of the PPJV is in working with private landowners.
- PPJV partners continue to improve databases and scientific technologies that help the PPJV target conservation efforts where they will do the most good and make the best use of resources.
- PPJV partners provide critical leadership in the development and implementation of conservation provisions in the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Bill.

During the first 15 years of the PPJV (1987-2002), partners protected, restored, or enhanced nearly six million acres of habitat through a combination of partner funding and the North American Wetlands Conservation Act. However, the prairie pothole states continue to lose grasslands and wetlands at alarming rates, fueling serious declines in a wide range of bird species. Success of the PPJV requires the continued coordinated commitment of all partners and steady funding from participating private organizations and State and Federal agencies.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Prairie Pothole Joint Venture is a dynamic partnership that functions as a network, not as a hierarchy. Free and open information exchange, willingness to partner at the local, regional and national/international level, emphasis on including scientists, resource managers, researchers, policy makers, administrators, communicators, private landowners, and on constantly seeking additional needed talent characterize the PPJV.

The **PPJV MANAGEMENT BOARD** consists of the following agencies and organizations:

Bureau of Land Management
Delta Waterfowl Foundation
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
National Audubon Society
Natural Resources Conservation Service
North Dakota Game and Fish Department
North Dakota Natural Resources Trust
Pheasants Forever
South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks
Swarovski Birding and The National Wildlife Refuge Association
The Nature Conservancy
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Wildlife Management Institute (vacant)

MANAGEMENT BOARD members will have the following attributes: represents a conservation organization, agency, or corporate/business entity with a conservation interest; holds an executive leadership position that allows for the commitment of personnel and funding; commits to actively pursuing partner activities on behalf of the PPJV; seeks support for the PPJV with both internal and external audiences; and participates in a leadership role at meetings and in other PPJV activities. While Management Board members represent their agencies and organizations, as Management Board members they are also responsible for decision-making that benefits the *PPJV as a whole*.

The Management Board provides general oversight and guidance for the Joint Venture. It is a broad policy making group that interprets goals and objectives of various bird initiative plans (North American Waterfowl Management Plan, Partners In Flight Landbird Plan, U.S. Shorebird Plan, North American Waterbird Conservation Plan), and other pertinent policies such as Farm Bill programs, into direction and guidance for the PPJV.

The Management Board works closely with the Joint Venture Coordinator, with other members of the Management Board in partner/funding activities, and within their respective organization or agency to ensure support for the PPJV and related programs. The Management Board receives regular updates from the Technical Committee Chair and from the HAPET offices, as well as updates from the respective membership. Management Board members are regularly requested by the Coordinator to participate in a variety of external audience activities that are pertinent to the overall success of the PPJV.

The primary responsibility of the Board is to provide policy and financial support for PPJV programs and activities.

Additional responsibilities include:

- Influence and take action on national policy, legislative, and funding issues which pertain to the PPJV, especially USDA Farm Bill conservation provisions.
- Determine policy and guide implementation of PPJV activities.
- Ensure communication and problem resolution among PPJV partners.
- Assist in the development and dissemination of PPJV education and outreach materials.
- Review and take action on committee recommendations.
- Conduct periodic reviews and assessments of accomplishments in coordination, biological planning, monitoring and evaluation, communications and outreach, and project implementation.

- Rank and prioritize North American Wetlands Conservation Act projects.
- Seek increased cooperation and collaboration with the Prairie Habitat Joint Venture (PHJV) on issues and activities of mutual opportunity and benefit.

The Management Board will meet twice annually, but may also meet as needed for pressing business as determined by the Board Chair. The Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Director, Region 6 (lead region for FWS) traditionally chairs the Board, with co-chair assistance from the FWS Regional Director, Region 3.

The Management Board will be queried on a biennial basis as to whether or not they wish to see a change in the Board Chair. If so, the Chairship shall be rotated as determined by the Board membership.

New Board members may be added at any time. The Board will review an application or petition for membership and give its approval or disapproval. The Board may decide that in the interests of the PPJV partnership, new members representing different sectors not already on the Board are required. In this case, the Board may appoint an ad-hoc subcommittee to find needed representation.

BOARD PROCEDURES are as follows:

- In most matters the PPJV Board will operate by consensus.
- On issues where consensus cannot be reached, a simple majority is all that is required for decisions.
- In matters of public policy, the PPJV Management Board will require a vote. Two-thirds of the Board members present (or their officially designated representative) must vote in favor of a motion for the action to proceed.
- Board members (or their representatives) must be present at the meeting to vote.
- The same procedures will apply for decision-making by e-mail or phone.

The *CO-CHAIRS of the BOARD* are responsible for conducting regular meetings of the Board and ensuring regular evaluations and assessments of Joint Venture activities and progress. The Chair coordinates, facilitates and participates in the decision-making process of the Board. The Chair functions as a spokesperson for the PPJV in public relations efforts, particularly at high-level meetings and other public gatherings. The Chair represents the PPJV in any formal or informal Joint Venture Association activities. The Chair may appoint an alternate or designee to function as a spokesperson in any JV Association activities, subject to approval by the Management Board.

BOARD members are responsible for participating on working committees as required, as well as reviewing PPJV initiatives and projects, and assessing JV accomplishments within their

respective organizations. Members assist in bringing new initiatives to the Board, ensure good internal communications of PPJV matters in their respective organizations or working circles, provide external communications and information on PPJV funding needs to key contacts in the agricultural policy sector, the various bird initiatives, and funding sources including NAWCA and the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act, corporate entities, and foundations. Board members ensure that State Action Groups or Steering Committees are working smoothly and serve as conduits to bring information and concern from these Groups or Committees to the Board.

The **JOINT VENTURE COORDINATOR** is responsible for coordinating and facilitating the overall development and implementation of PPJV activities. The JV Coordinator assists the Management Board in the development of leadership and vision for the PPJV, facilitates the development of PPJV partnerships at all levels, ensures the coordination and administration of FWS appropriated administrative funding, and oversees the administration of day-to-day operations of the PPJV.

The JV Coordinator serves as a primary link between members of the Management Board, Technical Committee, other working Committees and State Committees, HAPET offices, and coordinators of the various bird initiatives and other joint ventures for day-to-day operations.

The JV Coordinator provides overall policy and informational guidance and recommendations to the Management Board, HAPET and other elements of the PPJV organization and facilitates all functional elements of Joint Venture operations. The Coordinator facilitates biological planning, monitoring and evaluation, strategic planning, and conservation delivery in the PPJV.

The JV Coordinator serves as primary staff for the Board Chair. The Coordinator is responsible for coordinating all aspects of NAWCA projects for the PPJV and provides the Board with a draft recommended ranking for approval. The Coordinator serves as a member in all standing committees established by the Management Board.

PPJV STANDING AND AD HOC COMMITTEES are constituted and approved by the Management Board and their charges are determined with the assistance of the Board and the JV Coordinator. Standing Committees have specific goals and assignments as determined by the Management Board. Additional committees may be formed as the need arises. Committee Chairmen are designated by the Committee and maintain a close working relationship with the JV Coordinator on all Committee issues. Committee chairs make regular reports to the PPJV Management Board. Current PPJV Committees include but are not limited to:

STANDING COMMITTEES:

Technical Committee:

- Composed of 10 recognized technical experts in waterfowl, landbird, shorebird, waterbird biology, adaptive resource management, prairie

ecology, agricultural issues, bio-economics, human dimensions of user groups, management decision making, and prairie wetland and grassland issues.

- The Technical Committee will work with ad hoc working groups on a variety of PPJV issues. The Technical Committee will also develop a network of PPJV affiliated science peers which can be “tapped” for assistance. The Technical Committee will work with State Wildlife Grant contacts and other similar contacts to develop coordinated planning where appropriate.
- Representatives will work in a team, and are proactive in identifying the needs of the PPJV and in recognizing opportunities to advance PPJV objectives. They think strategically, and they consider broad impacts and issues as well as specific questions. They further knowledge and development of the biological foundations of the PPJV.

Responsibilities include:

- Review, evaluate and refine habitat and population objectives.
- Ensure that critical assumptions and questions are being addressed through scientific research.
- Conduct periodic evaluations and assessments of PPJV objectives, strategies and accomplishments, and their affects on bird populations.
- Assist in prioritizing management strategies and activities including targeting landscapes and areas for recommended management practices.
- Provide recommendations of biological information needs with accompanying costs and potential results where appropriate.
- Facilitate a unified working process between MN/IA and the Dakotas/MT; and between PPJV and PHJV. Members of the TC will meet at least once a year with PHJV counterparts.
- Ensure information exchange among PPJV partners.
- Review PPJV Implementation Plan for timeliness concurrent with NAWMP and other Bird Initiative Plan Updates and update PPJV Implementations Plan as needed for Management Board review and approval.
- Deliver technical and science-based information and recommendations to the Board in a timely and proactive manner for consideration.

- Develop, if needed, sub-committees for certain aspects of PPJV work, such as a waterfowl sub-committee, shorebird sub-committee, landbird sub-committee, or waterbird sub-committee.

Farm Bill Committee:

- Composed of representatives of the Management Board with specific interest or connections to Farm Bill issues and concerns. Representatives will ensure timely and up-to-date communications with members of the agricultural community and other Farm Bill working groups.

Responsibilities include:

- Provide regular updates to the Board on agricultural policy issues affecting the prairies.
- Develop action items for the Board regarding regional and national legislative and policy issues affecting the PPJV.

Communications Committee:

- Composed of Management Board members and communications contacts in or associated with the PPJV. Members will have an interest and some background or expertise in communications.

Responsibilities include:

- Guide and assist the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of a communications/education program (including development of such materials as accomplishment reports, newsletters, and surveys for internal and external audiences of the PPJV).

AD HOC COMMITTEES:

Awards Committee:

- Composed of Management Board members.
- Solicits and receives award nominations, and recommends worthy recipients to the Management Board.

- Recognizes partnerships (Group or Organization), land managers (Stewardship), professionals (Professional), communications and outreach (Communication), and most active Board member of the year (Board).

STATE ACTION GROUPS/STEERING COMMITTEES/ALL BIRD WORKING

GROUPS are broad-based groups whose members support the various bird initiatives (NAWMP, PIF, NAWCP, and USSCP), NAWCA, and the PPJV within their particular state. Membership includes key partners with a wide array of interests and perspectives.

The Action Group/Committee/Working Group's primary role is to provide state-wide coordination for planning and implementation of PPJV objectives and activities. Specific activities include:

- Coordinate planning, monitoring and evaluation, research, and project development to avoid duplication and determine how programs can complement each other.
- Coordinate all Joint Venture activities when there is more than one Joint Venture in the State.
- Coordinate NAWCA projects for timely submissions and avoidance of in-state competition.
- Facilitate communications on PPJV activities and needs between partners, the media, legislators, and other local and regional officials.
- Provide information, ideas, recommendations, and suggestions to the PPJV on strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation, and accomplishment reporting.

Joint Venture Management Board members or Technical Committee members in each State who participate in these working groups will be responsible for facilitating the group in their work and for communication on a regular basis with the Joint Venture Coordinator on the activities of the group.

Habitat and Population Evaluation Team (HAPET)

The HAPET offices were established in 1989 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at the request of the PPJV Management Board. Originally, the primary functions of the HAPET's were to coordinate a waterfowl population and production survey (Four-Square Mile Survey) and use computer models to assist in developing waterfowl management plans for Wetland Management Districts (WMDs) in the PPJV. In 1990, HAPET offices were tasked with acquiring needed biological information to "feed" models and develop computer techniques and procedures which would enhance wildlife management capabilities.

With the adoption of the wetland/grassland-associated non-waterfowl migratory bird objective in 1995 by the PPJV Management Board, HAPET offices broadened their activities. Geographic Information System (GIS) technology is being employed as a routine part of all aspects of HAPET projects and process to improve biological knowledge integrate planning for other migratory birds.

The mission of HAPET offices is to provide partners with technical assistance and information to aid in achieving the goals and objectives of the PPJV and the various migratory bird plans including NAWMP, PIF, USSCP, and NAWCP. These offices serve as the lead teams for biological planning, and monitoring and evaluation within the joint venture. HAPET personnel gather, analyze, and assemble pertinent information that provides managers with the critical biological foundation necessary for management decisions relating to waterfowl, other migratory birds, and wetland/grassland habitat. Cooperative efforts with partners and an adaptive management approach are integral to HAPET operations.

Principle activities of HAPET offices include: biological planning (Mallard Model), monitoring waterfowl populations and habitat, Breeding Birds Survey analysis, breeding marsh bird and shorebird surveys, assessment of USDA programs including Conservation Reserve Program and impacts of “Swampbuster” protection, restorable wetland inventory, and implementation of numerous GIS projects and evaluation projects.

It is expected that significant work will continue to occur in building the information base necessary to understand and manage bird populations in the prairies, and that technology will continue to advance, particularly with modeling capabilities. Evaluation, monitoring and research as part of the HAPET office’s mission will be a growing area.

HAPET personnel participate in the PPJV Technical Committee, and represent the PPJV on various regional and national scale biological planning and assessment teams. HAPET office personnel work closely with the PPJV Coordinator on overall planning, monitoring and evaluation activities and with the many PPJV partners in the acquisition of digital data, development of spatially explicit models, and production of GIS products.

In building a scientific foundation, PPJV partners are critical to the overall mission and success of the joint venture. As a partnership, the PPJV is collaborative and cooperative in meeting the goals of the joint venture, yet it is recognized that each partner maintains its own mission and agenda. In the case of building a scientific foundation, numerous partners work in cooperation. Some, such as the Ducks Unlimited’s Great Plains Regional Office, maintain a research and development section and GIS laboratory. Others, such as the Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center and the Mid-Continent Science Center, have numerous scientists on staff and various laboratories. Each of the State agencies has a cadre of scientists and various scientific capabilities. Cooperative Wildlife Research Units and Universities in the PPJV have staff and equipment as do various Federal agencies such as the Bureau of Reclamation, the Bureau of Land Management, the Corps of Engineers, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The HAPET offices and the PPJV Technical Committee seek to leverage scientific information and scarce financial resources and to avoid duplication of effort.

It is the policy of the PPJV to seek partnerships in order to create capacities for landscape-level planning and assessment, including decision support models, conservation planning guides and potential web-based population monitoring programs.