

**Minutes of the 23 August 2007 Conference Call of the Board of Directors
Western Field Ornithologists**

Recorded by Jean Brandt, Recording Secretary

The (telephone) conference call of the Board of Directors of the *Western Field Ornithologists* was convened by President Dave Krueper at 2:00 PM on Thursday, 23 August 2007.

Present: Board members and officers in attendance included: Elisabeth Ammon, Carol Beardmore, Jean Brandt, Jon Dunn, Robbie Fischer, Ted Floyd, Kimball Garrett, Dan Gibson, Gjon Hazard, Dave Krueper, Tom Ryan, Dave Shuford, Cat Waters, and David Yee.

Also Present: Phil Unitt

Absent: Bob Gill, Mike San Miguel, and Jay Withgott.

Meeting called to order - Welcome and Roll Call

Minutes

- Ammon moved, Waters seconded, M/S/C to approve the minutes from the 28 June 2007 conference call.
- Brandt mentioned that we have not approved the minutes from the 28 September 2006 Board Meeting (Boulder) and suggested that approval of minutes should be done consecutively regardless of the venue (face to face or conference call). This will be discussed in Henderson.

Treasurer's Report

- Fischer emailed the finance reports to the Board and the spreadsheets and statement from July were discussed; Ammon requested that Fischer include a "plain English" summary of any issues and "red flags" with the reports. (Fischer, who joined us a little bit later, agreed that this will be done).
- Fund-raising is still badly needed and the letter to Life Members will go out next week. (Life Memberships cost only \$150 in 1978 but are now \$500 and we have about 125 such members. Patron Memberships are \$1000 and have been the same all along). It was suggested that a letter should be sent to the general membership also. There was a discussion of the need for Board members to have complete membership lists; this would aid in fund-raising, networking, etc. Fischer and Waters both mentioned that there has been resistance from the membership to having a membership list publicized. We have, in the past, published our membership list in *Western Birds*, but only giving city/state (no full contact information). We agree we will not share member information with other organizations. Fischer will come up with a proposal on how to handle requesting permission from members to share contact information – probably on the renewal form - and will present her suggestions to the Board.

Henderson NV updates and assignments; future meetings

- Waters reported that all is still OK but we have not yet quite made “room match” (promised number of rooms) but are approaching it. Ammon has been in touch with President of local Red Rock Audubon. Fischer is working on getting WFO board members on all of the field trips. Biggest need now is for volunteers to lead field trips (most Board members have already agreed to do so).
- Dunn suggested resurrecting the guidelines for field trip leaders (such as those written up for Orange County and Boulder meetings) and distributing them to the leaders. Floyd will get copy of Boulder guidelines to Waters. Dunn suggested scheduling a brief meeting of all field trip leaders (after opening reception?) to go over guidelines and to deal with last minute logistical issues.
- Future meetings: Waters asked Board to read through information she sent out, and this will be discussed at the Henderson board meeting.
- Annual meeting financial guidelines were drafted by Waters; she would like comments from Board members for discussion at Henderson meeting.
- Ammon might have arranged a book seller for the meeting. She and Waters will discuss this further. Discussions of possibilities of silent auctions, book auctions, etc., as fundraisers at future meetings.
- Waters hopes to have editors of *Rare Birds of California* present at Henderson meeting to sign the books, but no confirmations yet.

Committee Briefings

Board members were asked to comment on issues raised by brief reports that Krueper sent around; no formal presentation.

Finance

- Waters asked Fischer for a paragraph with the finance spread sheet explaining the sheet in easy terms and also to flag upcoming problems or alerts. Kind of a heads-up reminder. Fischer agreed.

Field Trips

- Ryan would like to have a discussion with other members of the Committee prior to the September board meeting. There is nothing new on the agenda right now. Waters brought up the possibility of arranging a field trip onto a large ranch in n. Nevada that has never been open to the public; this would be their first formal invitation to outside people. Beardmore is still interested in having WFO set up “working trips” that would gather data (e.g. to Sierra de la Laguna in the Cape District of Baja California). These trips would not make a profit; Waters asked who would handle the logistics of these trips. Krueper asked Beardmore to put together a proposal to run through field trip committee.

Cuba Field Trip Update and Cuba Permit Situation

- Gary Markowski joined to meeting at 2:52 p.m. to discuss the Cuba trip situation. Fischer had to sign off at the same time. Markowski is from the Cuban Bird Studies Program, which organized the last WFO trip to Cuba. He has been asked to summarize the status of this years’ permit and future trips, as well as the possibility of WFO’s trying to apply for its own permit.
- No U.S. citizen can travel to Cuba without a U. S. Treasury Dept. license. Markowski has had licenses for about 12 years, partnering with John McNeally and his Land Trust, then in 1998 pursued a group license to provide programs to ABA, Audubon chapters,

etc. He has had about 500 Cuba participants over the years. Right now, the license has not been issued after a 7 month wait period (more extended than usual). The main reason is that there was a change in the personnel of the Land Trust (McNeally has left).

- Question: Is WFO interested in being the licensee (the licenses are for 12 months)? Markowski doesn't know if U. S. Treasury will switch the license to WFO, or whether we would have to start the license application over again. Only if the former happens would there be time to salvage this November's trip. Markowski would submit the application, signed by WFO President. If this all happens rapidly, a license could be granted in time for a trip late this winter (say, March or April). If WFO has the license, any birder traveling on these trips to Cuba would have to become a member of WFO.
- Question: Is there a problem (with IRS?) that this program is not directly related to WFO's mission? (subsequent discussion indicates this is probably not a problem). Markowski went through all of the benefits (scientifically, conservation, etc.) of the program as it has been running.
- Action item is for the WFO Board to decide whether WFO will be the applicant for the U. S. Treasury Department license. Application template is in place; would just need appropriate editing (as of 2004 there is a much more structured application).
- Beardmore asked if there were any responsibilities and liabilities. Would we need to create a curriculum, and all participants would need to comply. Markowski replied that this has all been done in the past - he has done about 45 trips over the last 10 years, with no negative repercussions or any questions about the legitimacy of the projects. Markowski's license has been for informal bird surveys, rather than an education-based license. So the main requirement is to contribute to a bird database.
- Waters asked what kind of timeline is needed for the Board to make a decision about applying for a permit? If we are submitting a new application, the sooner the better if we are going to try to salvage a trip during winter 2007-8; but the only real hope for salvaging a trip for this winter is if the current license is renewed or if application can simply be transferred over to WFO.
- Waters considers WFO's application for this license as a major step, and she has indicated that she would want to consult thoroughly with lawyers, etc. Is it a problem that Markowski works through a for-profit travel agency (Moreno in Canada)? Markowski receives a management fee and has his expenses paid; he also pays museum staff and others who help out in Cuba.
- If we want to try to come to a decision next week (Krueper is mostly unavailable), Ryan can coordinate discussion items/questions from Board members and get to Markowski. Please get all comments to Ryan by noon Saturday (25 August).
- Re: The trip scheduled for November 2007: Garrett and Markowski will touch bases no later than tomorrow (24 August) afternoon; if the license has not been issued by then, Garrett will notify those signed up that the trip has been cancelled, but that there is a chance a trip will run later in the winter, and they will have first chance.

Publications

- Shuford would like Finance Committee to discuss and approve his recommendations regarding the funding of the California Bird Species of Special Concern monograph. This needs to happen prior to the September board meeting.

For the following committees, see written reports (copy at end of minutes) sent out prior to the meeting:

Membership (Garrett)
Nominating (Hazard)
Western Birds (Unitt)
Website and Webmaster
Scholarships
Fundraising
Unusual Sightings Committee

Wrap-Up

- Meeting adjourned at 3:47 p.m.
- Next Board Meeting will be on Thursday 27 September 2008 at the 32nd WFO Annual Meeting at Sam's Town, Henderson (Las Vegas), NV. We have scheduled the Board Meeting from 1:00 – 5:00 pm

Committee Briefings

(Please review before the conference call)

I. Finance (Fischer)

- See Fischer's email from August 20, 2007 for update and three financial documents

III. Future Meetings (Waters)

- Debbie Van Dooremolen, as our science chair this year, has met the August 15 deadline so that WFO has all abstracts edited (thank you Phil Unitt), a list of authors and paper titles set for the program (a copy has gone out to all Board members, etc) with a preliminary science program schedule listed on the website. Each of you should send Van Dooremolen a note of thanks for the amazing job that she has done to date. debbie.VanDooremolen@snwa.com . This is a first for us, meeting the deadline, getting the titles and authors in Western Birds and having the preliminary schedule for the science session on the website in advance of the meeting. Helping out along the way were Phil Unitt who did the final abstract editing, Jay Withgott and Ted Floyd .

A. Las Vegas, 2007

- Meeting is coming along okay with thanks to RedBud Audubon for on site logistics and Great Basin Bird Observatory for sponsoring the airfare of our featured speaker and helping with other logistics and communications. Almost the only conservation organization active in Clark County Nevada, Redbud Audubon has its hands full trying to make the most of this meeting and straining their core committee's planning schedule. They are doing a fantastic job.
- Field trips for annual meeting: There are still openings and if you haven't contacted Je Anne and copied Fischer and I, please do so and tell Je Anne if you are willing to lead and on what days. It also wouldn't hurt to include a thank you to Je Anne, gann2@cox.net in your email . She's been working hard to put together the field trip

program and leaders from the local people in Las Vegas. Many thanks, too, to Ammon who helped mightily to fill out the roster of leaders available who are familiar with the region. And, to each of the Board members who quickly responded to Je Anne Branca who is the onsite field trip coordinator in Las Vegas. By next week, we'll have to fill in the spots from the registrants for the meeting.

- Book signing is still being settled upon. Ammon is working with UNR bookstore about having GBBO sponsor it.
- Our own book may or may not arrive for the meeting, we'll see. Fingers crossed.

We need to vote on locations for the annual meetings for 2009 and 2010 (see more below).

B. Future meetings:

San Francisco 2008

- San Mateo chamber of commerce and visitors/convention bureau is still slow to respond so we do not yet have an exact date or hotel. Expense is an issue and we are negotiating with the Radisson chain. Fischer and Joseph Morlan will be the onsite meeting coordinators. Please contact Fischer and tell her what you want to volunteer to do in regard to the meeting:
 - work on obtaining abstracts
 - editing abstracts
 - writing the meeting promotion
 - arranging for 2 - 3 workshops
 - Work with the science committee
 - Set up the social programs
 - Arrange catering
 - Advance publicity

Idaho or other northern point for 2009 or 2010

- There is no coordinator yet for this meeting but our president, Krueper is in contact with a colleague in Idaho. We have a number of other prospects should this not prove doable included, but not limited to, Vancouver British Columbia, Utah, Wyoming, Washington State. It has been suggested that we need to move north. It is not too early to volunteer to take on a particular aspect of this meeting using the list for 2008.

Ensenada, Mexico 2009/2010.

- Beardmore has offered to coordinate this meeting for the Fall of 2009 or 2010. She will need help and any of you who have strong San Diego contacts that can help with arranging for field trip leaders, etc. should get on the horn and tentatively begin touching base with people. The more quickly we can identify jobs and people willing to volunteer to do them, the easier the meeting planning will go for Carol. See the above list.

Southern California area 2011

- Los Angeles, Pasadena, San Bernardino, Redlands California are being suggested for this meeting since there are strong organizations associated with this area.

C. Preliminary Annual Meeting Financial Guidelines. Please review this document that Waters and the WFO Meeting Committee compiled. Krueper sent this out before the conference call-in information.

IV. Membership (Garrett)

- Dunn has been working on contacts in several western states and Kimball and Jon hope to have a full list of contacts and liaisons in the near future

V. Nominating (Hazard)

- Gjon has agreed to remain chair of the Nominations Committee for one more year
- Board members who will be “terming-out” include Gibson and Mike San Miguel. Ted has decided to step down.
- Three people have been nominated: John Feenstra, Ed Pandolfino, and Osvel Hinojosa Huerta

VI. Western Birds (Unitt Unitt)

- Western Birds vol. 38(3) is currently at the printers

VII. Publications (Shuford)

A. CBRC "Rare Birds" Book (Waters, Unitt, Shuford)

- Book is in final stages of production: printing is completed and signatures are at the bindery. Books should be shipped in early September and available at the annual meeting in Las Vegas for sale, at a price of \$59.95 (10% discount for members), and for book signing. Kudos to Waters and Unitt for guiding the book through the final stages of production and early stages of marketing.

B. Bird Species of Special Concern monograph (Shuford , Waters, Unitt)

- Copy editing of manuscript has been completed and changes incorporated. CDFG looking at manuscript one last time; await any final changes, which should be very minor. Title page and verso of title page have been drafted and distributed to CDFG for comment; revised version will then be supplied to pubs committee for comment and final approval.
- Unitt has highly recommended Tim Brittain for the job of design and layout of this inaugural volume of WFO’s monograph series *Studies of Western Birds*. For the last 20 years, Tim has done the layout and typesetting for *Western Birds*. Tim has been supplied all the components of the BSSC volume that are need to prepare a bid, which he should produce during the last week in August. Given Tim’s longstanding work on *Western Birds*, Unitt’s high recommendation of this work, and Tim’s responsiveness and understanding of the budget constraints of nonprofits, Shuford recommends that WFO contract with Tim for the typesetting and design of the BSSC volume, pending review of his bid by the finance committee and comparison of this bid with the corresponding portion of Allen Press’s prior bid for layout, typesetting, and printing of the volume. Pending results of the printing of “Rare Birds” by Allen, Shuford tentatively recommends having Allen also print the BSSC volume from camera ready digital files prepared by Tim Brittain.

- Final budget needs to be prepared on the basis of revised figures on design, layout, typesetting, and printing of this volume.
- Common elements of the design of the BSSC volume should serve as a template for future volumes of *Studies of Western Birds*. This template should be a one time cost, providing savings for future volumes.
- Funds to cover the vast majority of this volume are in place. To date, \$8500 in contributions for this volume have been received, with another \$1200 on its way. CDFG has drafted a contract with WFO for publication of the volume, which will serve as the conduit to transfer the \$25,000 they pledged as their contribution for this publication. WFO needs to read and sign this contract; presumably money will be sent to WFO after invoices are sent on the basis of deliverables outlined in the contract.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Finance committee reviews Tim Brittain's bid for design and layout of the text and cover of BSSC within a week of receipt of this bid. If approved, contract with Tim is drawn up as soon as possible so Tim can begin this work.
2. WFO reads and signs the contract with CDFG for the \$25,000 for BSSC publication. If changes to the contract seem warranted, these are transmitted to CDFG right away.

C. Posting Additional Volumes of Western Birds on SORA (Unitt, Shuford)

- Unitt has put Tim Brittain in touch with Brian Freels at SORA to see if the pdfs that Tim produces for each issue of *Western Birds* are compatible with the format required for posting and search on the SORA website.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Unitt to report back by the annual meeting in Las Vegas on whether pdfs currently produced are adequate for SORA or, if not, how such files can be produced.
2. Recommendation should be made as to how and when to get another volume of *Western Birds* to SORA so that we continue to have all volumes of *Western Birds* on SORA except for the most recent two years.

VIII. Website and Webmaster (Krueper)

- Krueper spoke to Tim Avery about interest and availability to become the new WFO webmaster. Avery is excited about the opportunity and is ready to get started on the project once his fieldwork eases slightly in the near future. Will need to coordinate with Peter LaTourrette for the domain information, the ftp address, the login name and the password so that he can initiate the process.
- Avery would also like to put his creative stamp on the webpage (re-design). He has already started a "mock-up" page with some changes, additions, etc.
- We discussed "process" for approval of website changes, and we agreed that for format and content changes, approval by a small "WFO website committee" would be best. This group would be charged with providing guidance, consistency and quality control for the website. Krueper would like volunteers or nominations to assist in this effort. Floyd and Withgott would be key additions. Others?

ACTION ITEM: Finalize members of the "website committee."

- We would like to have a Board member serve as a “link” between Avery and the WFO web committee. Withgott’s name up as highly recommended. Avery is excited to work with Withgott, and I (among others) also feel that if Withgott were to agree to this we would all be thrilled. Avery and Withgott provide a wonderful mix of brains, insight, technological expertise and avian knowledge.
- Particulars: webpage redesign should cost between \$500 and \$1000. Maintaining the website for WFO and CBRC should not exceed 5 hours per month, should not exceed \$100 in any given month, and should not exceed \$1000 per year. Avery felt comfortable with these numbers.
- Guidelines for submitting postings to the website will be established (as per discussions with the Finance Committee) and this document will be distributed to the Board and membership as applicable.
- Also noted was that it is critical that at least three people have access to the website for posting instantaneous updates (especially important as we approach the annual meeting).
- Avery’s website: <http://www.timaverybirding.com/>

IX. Scholarships (Floyd)

- This committee has been inactive this past year

X. Fundraising (Garrett and Dunn)

- The fundraising letter to Life Members has been written, printed, and is being signed. Letters will go out around the end of the week
- No WFO funds used in printing and mailing of the letter

XI. Unusual Sightings Committee (state by state representatives (Garrett, Dunn et al.)

- Contacts being made in several western states to function as contributors of unusual sightings or events
- Further meeting amongst planning committee planned at the Henderson meetings (Garrett, Dunn, Gibson, and Yee)
- Other WFO members may be asked to contribute (Committee will be in touch)