

# Meeting Notes

## FLORIDA PANHANDLE SHOREBIRD WORKING GROUP

### FEBRUARY 9, 2017

- 10:00 - 10:15 Welcome and Introductions Julie Wraithmell, Audubon Florida
- 10:15 - 10:35 USDA Predator Control Update Richard Hinnah, USDA-APHIS
- A recent amendment to the FWC/USDA contract has been signed
  - USDA has been trapping shorebird sites in the order dictated by the matrix
  - USDA has hired an additional trapper, Caleb, who will be covering the Eastern Sites. Mike continues to trap Western Panhandle sites, and Garrison will fill in as needed on the East and West.
  - Tyndall AFB now has a full time USDA employee to control predator issues. Eglin AFB has 2 employees designated to control beach predator issues.
  - The best way to control coyote predation is to keep trapping pressure on coyotes during the breeding season. If coyotes are only removed once outside of breeding season, they will continue to repopulate beach sites from inshore.
- 10:35 - 11:35 Breeding Bird Survey Protocol Jen Manis and Janell Brush, FWC
- In a trivia-style format, Jennifer and Janell addressed several survey/FSD data entry situations that have proven to be challenges for surveyors specifically within the Panhandle.
- 11:35 - 12:00 Florida Shorebird Alliance Update Shea Armstrong, FWC
- Shea demonstrated new search/query capabilities that the FSD will be rolling out soon. This will allow shorebird partners to seek specific information regarding shorebird data statewide instead of having to pick through spreadsheets of all of the data.
  - Partners were also directed to view pages 31 & 35 of the 2015 Data Summary Report found on the FSA website in order to familiarize themselves with the future directions and research directions of the FSA and FSD.  
[http://flshorebirdalliance.org/media/53554/FSD\\_AnnualReport2015\\_Final\\_Maps.pdf](http://flshorebirdalliance.org/media/53554/FSD_AnnualReport2015_Final_Maps.pdf)
- 12:00 - 12:30 Lunch (meat/vegging pizzas, cost = \$5/person. Drinks will be provided)
- 12:30 - 12:50 FWC Winter Shorebird Survey results Marvin Friel, Audubon Florida
- Marvin gave a preliminary summary of the data collected during the 2017 winter survey. The data can be accessed at <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/13MFjRop1aRGCAIuo-LZTMvp92DI9EVkm0dxMDk9a5hc/edit#gid=4>
- 12:50 - 1:10 Critical Wildlife Areas- Winter Data Caroline Stahala, Audubon Florida
- Caroline enumerated the importance of collecting, storing, and analyzing Wintering shorebird data.
  - This data not only provides information on shorebird presence and abundance, but also gives insight into the patterns of their activity and prevalence at a specific site. We get a better idea of what the birds are doing and how specifically they rely on a site during the winter.
  - The data can/has been used to support CWA designations and the need for year-round closure.

- 1:10 - 1:30 Crow Study Results -  
Emetic Study & Depredation Marianne Korosy, Ph.D. Audubon Florida
- Marianne presented research conducted with Dr. Beth Forsys of Eckerd College to determine whether the use of emetic eggs could reduce crow depredation of shorebird and seabird nests.
  - Korosy and Forsys determined that emetic eggs could be a reasonable solution for crow depredation of nests if:
    - You have the resources, funding, and employee time to create the emetic eggs- Eggs and Carbachol (emetic) cost ~\$100/site, and emetic eggs must be visibly monitored while they are on the study site.
    - There are less 20 crows in an area, and the crows are residents- If new crows came into an area, the new crows would consume eggs until they were conditioned to avoid the emetic eggs.
  - Forsys plans to conduct a similar study using eggs that will inflict a mild electric shock to the crows, instead of emetic eggs. Electrified eggs avoid the high cost and regulatory hurdles associated with using emetics such as Carbachol.
- 1:30 - 1:50 Rooftop Survey Methods & Productivity Emily McKiddy, Audubon Florida
- Emily presented her comparisons of various rooftop survey methods.
  - Emily has determined that flush counts greatly underestimate the productivity of rooftop nesting. Game cameras installed on the rooftop provide better data, while methods that allow a surveyor to look down onto the entire rooftop provide the best data.
  - Emily has been working closely with partners and volunteers to develop methods to get better views of rooftop nesting sites throughout the panhandle.
- 1:50 - 2:05 Changes State-designated species- ISMP Ashley Warren, FWC
- Least Tern and Snowy Plover will remain state listed as Threatened
  - American Oystercatcher and Black Skimmer have been uplisted from Species of Special Concern, to State-Threatened. This affords them the same level of protection as LETE and SNPL.
  - Brown Pelican has been delisted, but it is still protected federally under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act
- 2:05 - 3:10 Open Forum discussing management tools Bonnie Samuelson, Audubon Florida  
Jen Manis, FWC
- People leaving holes on the beach has become an issue. Signs and stewarding to inform people of the hazards. Partner with sea turtle monitoring because holes are also hazardous to turtles. Partner with "Leave no Trace" initiatives.
  - You can report shorebird disturbance issues (dogs, people inside posting, etc.) to the MyFWC.com website to create records of incidents.
  - Employee turnover was identified as a hindrance to educating stakeholders regarding beach driving bmp's and being good beach stewards. An educational video/online training was proposed as a solution.
- 3:10 - 3:30 Group assessment of meeting: What was good?  
What can be improved? Discuss ideas for future meetings
- 3:30 Adjourn