

Saltmarsh Sparrow Executive Committee Meeting Notes

January 25, 2024
11:00am – 12:00pm

Present: Wendi Weber (FWS); Sam Robinson (DE), Jonathan McKnight (MD), Christine Conn (MD); Nathan Webb (ME); Jenny Dickson (CT); Jessie Yung (FHWA), Christina Ryder (FWS), Aimee Weldon (FWS), Cory Riley (NH); Jim Farquhar (NY); Lou Chiarella (NOAA); Mel Cote (EPA); Todd Bobowick (USDA); Kyla Hastie (FWS); Mo Correll (FWS);

Important Updates – Aimee Weldon and Mo Correll

- 2023 Funding Successes
 - >25 of ~200 projects on priority project list received funding (\$>21M)
 - Funding Highlights:
 - 2 of the 3 America the Beautiful projects facilitated by NEA/FWA/FWS received funding this year (\$3M, 1000 ac, NH and RI)
 - NFWF National Coastal Resiliency - \$2.2M for 1000 ac of salt marsh restoration in MD Coastal Bays
 - State Saltmarsh Sparrow Restoration Priorities Document and Mapper
 - Finalizing next iteration of Saltmarsh Sparrow State Management Guidance documents: [Restoration Priorities - Atlantic Coast Joint Venture \(acjv.org\)](https://www.acjv.org)
 - Restoration monitoring capacity: rapid assessment of restoration sites is occurring in 8 out of 10 states within the Saltmarsh Sparrow breeding range; Significant funding coming from NFWF through the DWCF for monitoring in 2024.
Additional capacity needed for monitoring in 2025 and beyond.

Broadening our salt marsh conservation effort - Wendi Weber

Committee discussed broadening the focus of our Saltmarsh Sparrow Executive Committee to include the larger suite of salt marsh and coastal resiliency values. This expanded focus would continue the good work the Committee has been doing on Saltmarsh Sparrow but broaden the geography to include the entire Atlantic coast, bring in additional partners with interests beyond birds (e.g. fisheries, communities) and expand the messaging beyond tidal marsh birds to include these values. The Saltmarsh Sparrow priorities would continue to be important core conservation areas in the Northeast, given how many other resiliency priorities are supported through Saltmarsh Sparrow conservation.

The Committee broadly supported such an expansion and felt it would help to move coastal marsh conservation efforts forward in a productive way. FWS will take the next steps on building this expanded focus and return to the Committee with next steps.