

**ACJV Management Board Meeting Notes**  
**March 18-19, 2015 – Charleston, SC**

Present: Breck Carmichael (SC); Sarah Fleming, Doug Gorby, Craig LeSchack, Emily Purcell, Chris Vaughn (DU); Mike Burger, Mike Dawson, Matt Johnson (Audubon); Rick Jacobson (CT); Dick Yetter (NRCS); Craig Rhoads (DE); Lise Hanners, Sarah Hartman (TNC); Jon Ambrose (GA); John Dunn (PA); Laurel Barnhill, Pam Toschik (FWS); John O’Leary (MA); David Cobb (NC); Allan O’Connell (USGS); Jim Connolly (ME); Mitch Hartley, Tim Jones, Kirsten Luke McCord, Deb Reynolds, Caleb Spiegel, Craig Watson (ACJV).

**ACTION ITEMS below in Yellow**

**Introductions & Approval of Minutes**

Sarah Fleming will replace Bernie Marzcyk as Ducks Unlimited (DU) rep from northern portion of ACJV. Laurel Barnhill, representing David Viker at the meeting, will soon assume the job of Chief of the Division of Migratory Birds for the Southeast Region (Region 4) of the USFWS.

David Cobb moved to approve the Minutes from the 2014 Summer Meeting; John Dunn seconded, and minutes were approved.

**Status of Biological Priorities & Workplan**

Mitch Hartley reminded the Board that our Biological Priorities Document specifies our current priorities and staff focus/activities, which are to be reviewed and approved at the summer meeting. No major changes to the document are anticipated prior to Summer Board meeting, but we will seek feedback from the Tech Committees prior to updating the priorities document and workplan. We may check in with the Tech Committee via an upcoming Webinar to review and discuss Science Program priorities, this spring.

**Strategic Plan Update**

Mitch discussed how the 2009 Strategic Plan has not been updated as originally discussed back in 2014. This document is an over-arching framework for the ACJV, and is somewhat generic in terms of describing the overall structure and function of the ACJV, but not specific priorities—those are detailed in the biological priorities document and biennial workplan.

**ACTION:** Breck asked Rick Jacobson to form a small subcommittee to help revise/review the Strategic Plan prior to the summer Board meeting: (Rick Jacobson & Mitch will head up) Craig LeSchack, Mike Burger, Pam Toschik, Sarah Fleming

**Grants Update**

Caleb Spiegel summarized the success of ACJV partners with NAWCA and Coastal Grants in FY2015. In the last 25 years we’ve conserved over 2 million acres through NAWCA. ACJV staff go to NAWCA Council Staff meetings to clarify/support ACJV project proposals, and help develop strong proposals with partners by providing guidance and input on proposals, sometimes helping to organize partnerships.

Mitch stated that the ACJV would again have discretionary grant funds under the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) through the EPA, and the 2015 deadline was mid-April. Great Lakes partners can have a call to discuss potential projects (e.g., Sarah Fleming). We briefly discussed our ranking process for projects, which are just from NY and PA in the ACJV, and thus far project selection has been straightforward and simple.

Craig Watson mentioned how partnerships from SC & ME won national “JV Conservation Champion” awards from the Association of JV Management Boards. Awards were presented at an outreach event hosted by DU in SC (at location where we will have a field trip later today). Breck pointed out that SC’s NAWCA success is largely due to great grant writing (especially by DU). Dan Forrester will soon replace Wayne McCallum as representative on NAWCA Council. NAWCA is up for reauthorization – in Senate Committees. Nothing in House yet (wrapped up in Sportsman Act of 2015). Non-federal partners recommended that everyone who can do so should advocate for and support NAWCA reauthorization.

We highlighted the NAWCA posters produced by Kirsten, who said similar ones could be made available to any Board members, either for the entire ACJV *or* state specific. John O’Leary asked if it may be helpful, for outreach purposes, to have more details for specific model projects. It would be important to have such products available across the ACJV. Deb Reynolds said she can (and regularly does) provide targeted outreach materials that partners request, as needed. Individual State fact sheets are available for *all* partner conservation work, by state, but don’t focus just on NAWCA. These fact sheets no longer include “project” maps due to differences in reporting among programs. Dick Yetter said it would be helpful if we could show partners maps/locations of projects, perhaps available on ACJV website. Then future work could be informed by and better dovetail with past projects. Mitch said that a product to provide that information, a “Managed Lands database” at the Flyway Scale has been discussed among the board for years, but so far was not seen as a high enough priority, given our resources. Some states already have this sort of system, others have been wanting it. It would allow us to consider NAWCA work when making other land conservation decisions. Kirsten pointed out that a National Easements Database exists, and we should cross-reference that to make sure that all NAWCA projects are in it. Doug Gorby said that DU is building a national-scale map/database that shows all protected lands:

**ACTION:** Doug will provide link to website

Acres and dollars often don’t tell the whole story of conservation value/work being done in an area; more qualitative info is needed for outreach, e.g., describing how a project helps us to meet conservation goals.

**ACTION:** John O’Leary will work with Deb to come up with a *model* NAWCA grant outreach product for MA, which could be applied similarly to other states in the ACJV

### Shorebird Strategy Update

Caleb discussed how the ACJV can fit into the broader implementation of the Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Business Strategy. More discussion with our Tech Committees is needed to determine the highest-priority implementation strategies for our partners, *prior* to the Summer meeting. Board members will talk to their staffs about how the ACJV should contribute to implementation of Shorebird Strategy.

**ACTION:** Caleb will provide Board with his list of shorebird contacts he obtained from Tech Committee meetings (ASAP)

**ACTION:** Deb will send shorebird accomplishments form to Board

A new Salt Marsh Business Planning effort is also getting off the ground. This could be an important effort, and should be considered more to see how the ACJV can participate. The “SHARP” research group (at Universities in Maine, Connecticut, and Delaware) is leading this effort, which is a work in progress. NAWCA & Coastal (NCWCG) grant proposals have already begun to use the shorebird strategy to support conservation work on the ground.

### Communications Update

Deb Reynolds discussed how her new Communications Tech Committee has met, and is using shorebird-related outreach as an initial focus for that group (see packet handout). She has gotten major help from Cathy Hurst (CT), and Jennifer (last name?) from NC. The Board provided one or more main communication “point(s) of contact” (POCs) for this new committee. The first call was a big success,

with most members participating. In the future, the Communications Tech Committee could also take on other ACJV-related topics.

**ACTION:** Deb will send an e-mail to the Board letting them know who is on the Communications Subcommittee

### **New ACJV Website**

Deb showed our new/updated website to the Board, and asked that they provide feedback. Please look to make sure representative names are correct. Google analytics is being used to track what pages are being used most. Deb will ask the Communications Tech Committee to evaluate the effectiveness/success of website before the site goes live, in the next couple of weeks. One major goal of our new website is to link to websites and social networks of Communications Tech Committee member organizations. We will also provide a link to an internal page for meetings (e.g., Board agendas & documents), which will be accessible via password. We need to continue to work with the committee to make sure we have a good process for ACJV partners to provide their news on ACJV website (through ACJV staff).

### **2015 Hill Visits**

Mitch said that the annual JVs' Congressional "Hill Visit" meetings would happen next week. No ACJV reps will be in town for it, but Anne Law (who works for ABC and is a major organizer of the event) will be there, and may visit some members in the ACJV. The Association of JV Mgmt Boards also will be meeting. Part of this year's national agenda is to ask for all JVs to have a budget increase to incorporate climate change/resiliency into JV work on the ground. JVs will be meeting w/ Dan Ashe, and probably our OMB Examiner. Mitch asked if any Board members are interested in future Hill Visits? JV Staff member typically will go with one or more State & NGO partners. Next visit planned for Spring 2015 budget discussions.

**ACTION:** Rick, Breck, & Mitch will discuss further

Deb Reynolds stressed how important it is to develop relationships with staffers from ACJV states & highlight our accomplishments. More targeted congressional outreach is most effective (e.g., ACJV participates in state events w/ congressional representatives surrounding specific projects & partnerships). Such events have to come through (and be lead by) partners, as federal dollars generally are not allowed to be used to organize congressional events. Lise Hanners volunteered to facilitate events with partners like TNC.

**ACTION:** Mitch will share list of key legislators with Board members

Deb reminded everyone that ACJV outreach materials are available for partners to use for congressional outreach. We discussed whether board members were comfortable supporting their own priorities (e.g., State Wildlife Grants) and JV-related programs (e.g., NAWCA & NCWCG) at the same time, and David, Rick & others said they were willing to support both.

*Break*

### **ACJV Science Program Review**

Mitch discussed how the ACJV has not had a formal review of its science program since Tim was hired, more than 11 years ago. Tim gave an overview presentation of our science program, including a description of completed & ongoing projects (e.g.s., BCR plans; Urbanization models; Decision Support tools; Designing Sustainable Landscapes; Integrated Waterbird Management & Monitoring (IWMM) program; sea duck survey). A dynamic "PREZI" slideshow is available, which identifies what projects have been undertaken within each of the four foundational science needs for the ACJV.

One ongoing issue has been limited staff (1.5 FTE) and discretionary funds, compared to the vast geographic scale of the ACJV. Since the emergence of LCCs we have tried to efficiently engage and identify complementary roles/collaboration. We shared the ACJV Tech Comm subcommittee recommendations (see handout), which voiced support for the general direction of the Science Program but emphasized the need for more info on the status of current projects and what resources would be needed to complete them. Tim displayed the most recent “priority science needs” for the ACJV. Mitch asked if we need to reduce the number of projects (or scope of projects) we work on because of limited staff resources? Breck asked about working with the Black Duck and Sea Duck JVs, since they have their own funding devoted entirely to science projects.

We discussed how we will develop our “short list” of priority projects for our science program. Tim said our existing “science needs” process (which has generated a list of needs twice in the last five years) needs to be revised (a Tech Comm subcommittee has been formed to do so). This process has identified a broad list science needs for our Science Program and our partners, and needs that we have no capacity or expectation to meet (i.e., a “wish list”). Our current discussion is meant to focus not on that “science needs” process, but rather a process to review and assess our ACJV science program, specifically. For both aspects, perhaps, we need to better identify how partner resources can be tapped into, to meet common objectives. Board discussion led to suggestions for the following next steps:

- 1) Complete status assessment of current projects, resources needed to complete them, & timeframe for completion
  - 2) Identify what is in work plan that is not on project list – “crosswalking”
- Also:*
- 3) Determine what partners on Tech Committee are contributing to priorities or could contribute more; determine specific roles of all partners
  - 4) Determine how ACJV work and LCC work fits together – coordination via outreach efforts
  - 5) Better (more focused) prioritization is needed on current and new projects (Tech Comm & Board input)
  - 6) Better identify what the links are between the science and the delivery capacity/implementation

*See Day 2 Notes For Related Action Items*

#### Integrated Waterbird Management and Monitoring (IWMM)

Tim shared an IWMM update handout and gave a presentation on IWMM, including a recent case study from Matamuskeet, NC, and general project status. IWMM has a new administrative home and some dedicated funding (as of Oct 2014) as part of the FWS’s National Wildlife Refuge System Inventory & Monitoring Program, which now supports project coordinator & science coordinator positions. A communication team formed in the last year, to provide better synthesis/simplification of IWMM, and promote & highlight accomplishments. A draft Communications Plan is being developed.

## **DAY 2**

### **Designing Sustainable Landscapes**

We discussed the status of and possible next steps for the Southeast “Designing Sustainable Landscapes” (DSL) project. Mitch introduced the topic, and described how our original project relates to the SALCC Conservation Blueprint 2.0 just released, to begin discussion of what the ACJV needs to do. Tim presented the three options previously presented to the board for finishing the project. The preferred option was #1, but after the workshop in Charleston, it was noted that the SAMBI DSL products were not included in the Conservation Blueprint 2.0 (CB2.0). Mitch and Tim briefly explained some of the

common efforts and what the CB2.0 lacks relative to the DSL vision. Laurel Barnhill explained how the LCC moved away from the original vision of the DSL, and how DSL was integrated into CB2.0. Laurel thinks the SALCC project is appropriate for the objectives it was designed around, but our question is whether the CB2.0 will give the ACJV partnership what it needs and wants, or whether we still desire some of our original DSL products. Breck agreed, but stated that our needs are more refined, and that the ACJV needs to figure out how to finish our DSL project, we just need to find the resources to do so. Discussion was about what roles the JV and the LCC plays, and what are the exact products of each. David Cobb posed the question of whether our Management Board and the SALCC Steering Committee has ever met to discuss shared goals. Tim mentioned the possibility that there may be two divergent products from ACJV/SALCC. Lise asked about relationship between NALCC and ACJV. There was some discussion about the similarities and the differences between the products and approaches of the NA & SA LCCs, and discussion about their mission/vision. Breck asked about the three options, and wondered if there are more options? Laurel asked if DSL projects were meeting needs of JV, Tim stated no, they need to be more fully developed. He explained that the LCC products would not relate to the JVs goals. Discussion related back to three options. Jim Connolly related his experience in ME and talked about duplication and differences. Mitch suggested technical folks from the LCC/JV meet, along with some Board members, to discuss our goals and forge relationships to converge our efforts. Discussion was about how to use the products and what level of detail will be used or is really needed for these products. Sarah Hartman asked about how to translate priorities to local efforts to seek political support.

**ACTION:** We will convene a technical summit of ACJV/SALCC staff and Board member representatives to meet and discuss this topic and make a recommendation to the ACJV Management Board. Breck will write a letter to David Viker (chair of LCC) with the help of Laurel, to suggest this meeting.

Breck would like to see this meeting happen prior to the next steering committee of the SALCC, in early June. John O'Leary suggested that the Board think about how these products are going to be used. Rick Jacobson asked about implications of differences in methods and direction. Jon Ambrose is concerned about use of LCC products being applied at a scale that is inappropriate (e.g., application of broad-scale data to address fine-scale issues). Where we have better fine-scale data, we should use that information to address local conservation need. Coarser regional datasets can provide useful context for those assessments. There was discussion about the relative coarseness and scale of models and their related utility. Tim noted that neither effort really can be used for parcel-level implementation.

### **Budget Update**

Mitch presented a table showing the ACJV budget and explained the itemized table. We discussed how we've used our contract GIS position (Kirsten) for other projects that are not central to—and are sometimes unrelated—ACJV business. He also explained the increased cost of “overhead” due to filling the Chief's position and a new budget position in the Division of Migratory Birds in Region 5. Mitch indicated the overall trend is declining budgets and we cannot fully operate as a staff with continued decreases in budget and increases in overhead. Dunn asked about travel costs. Travel costs could be reduced if necessary. Centennial costs were discussed, and there were questions about ways to increase our base budget. Mitch began the discussion about how the Board could contribute to any budgetary needs, and retain full capacity of staff rather than having our time taken away from ACJV work duties. There was some discussion of Region 4 contributing to the ACJV. Mitch explained how programs are administered and each Region has differing overhead/surcharge/operations costs. Discussion turned to our contract GIS position. There appears to be a budget shortfall for FY16, even if that cost is zeroed out. Over the years, the ACJV has consistently acquired outside funding to cover some of the costs of our GIS position, but doing so takes away part of Kirsten's time and limits the amount of work she can contribute to ACJV partners and projects. Craig Watson made the point that we need to have this position paid for,

full-time, and ACJV work has been slowed down and hindered due to our not having a dedicated, full-time GIS position to support ACJV work.

### **Board Contributions**

Mitch talked about how we've considered our funding needs previously in two different categories of "asks:" a relatively small amount of money (e.g. \$4k) is needed each year to cover meeting costs (i.e., coffee and food breaks) and Association of JV Management Board (AJVMB) dues, neither of which are we allowed to pay with USFWS funds. Past options discussed include annual dues, meeting registration costs, and rotating ownership of meeting responsibilities. The second type of funding we've asked the board to consider is "major" funding, to maintain our core staff positions (including GIS contractor), without having to farm out staff to other partners to acquire external funding. At the summer meeting, there seemed to be consensus that larger asks (e.g., \$2k per board agency or organization) should be in the form of requests for funding for discreet projects.

Breck noted that the ACJV is one of the few JVs that do not pay dues, regardless of what we call those contributions. Federal agencies probably could not participate with regular contributions, though in the past we have done contract work for USGS. Contributions would be organization/agency-based, not based on individual members. John Dunn noted that it is easier for PA to do registrations, but the downside is the unknown amounts coming in each year. Maine noted that large registration costs (e.g., \$1,000) would not be feasible for his agency, but they would be ok with writing project agreements. Breck talked to WMI about a mechanism to handle funds, and they are willing to consider helping us do so, and ABC has expressed similar willingness to handle contributions for the ACJV. Jim Connolly suggested separate discussions for the two different asks. Rick Jacobson favored the registration process to cover the smaller funding needs, as the JV staff generally knows that an approximate number of folks will attend and should be able to cover their annual costs through reasonable registrations. There was a general consensus that the more modest funding need (for breaks and AJVMB dues) could be handled through modest registrations at the winter meeting. At the Summer Atlantic Flyway Council meeting, registration could not be charged by the ACJV since the Flyway handles those meeting costs and already charges >\$200. Pam mentioned that another mechanism could be set up for voluntary contributions. Discussion was to have a once-annual registration fee of \$200. The ACJV can supplement that by paying for meeting rooms. Rick hoped that over time this pot of money could grow, but Mitch estimated that with normal attendance, \$200 per member likely would come close to covering costs each year. Jim Connolly discussed the bigger question of funding our GIS position, and expressed how important this was to do for our science program; greater capacity is needed to meet our current needs, without consideration of any expanded science program. Jim said he hears three scenarios; one to fund meeting costs, another one to fund current staff capacity, and one process to voluntarily contribute to discretionary projects. David Cobb suggested a Pittman-Robertson (PR) approach with very high flexibility and latitude for states to participate, but nothing mandatory.

Breck wanted to settle the issue of registration costs, and more discussion ensued. Consensus was to have registration fees paid at the winter meeting to cover all annual meeting costs, but a motion on this was postponed to after our discussion of By-laws.

Mitch asked about what a specific project ask would look like; JV staff presented a template in the board folder. Rick likes the Atlantic Flyway Council model, where proposals come up from the Technical Committees. Any asks must be related to Biological and Science priorities. Jim Connolly stated that we need to make a decision and move forward. Tim noted that there is a justification in the ACJV Strategic Plan. Breck asked that staff develop a five-year plan, as we just can't keep kicking this down the road.

**ACTION: ACJV staff will come up with options for a five-year plan to fund our GIS position.**

## **ACJV Bylaws**

The draft in the board packet was modeled in part on those of the Appalachian Mtn JV. Rick discussed the main points of the draft document. Tim Jones related concerns about language regarding membership of committees deemed to be useful or needed; perhaps clarification in language is needed, or we could add a comment about ACJV staff being ex-officio members. Dunn suggested using the Flyway model where there are voting members, and associate members that do not have voting rights, but are members that can contribute and be useful. There was discussion about a voting process versus a consensus-based process. Tim noted that our Technical Committees generally operate on consensus, but have operated on a voting basis in the past; in such cases representatives from DU north and south each had a vote. There was considerable discussion about which model to use, and DU brought up Board membership and related Technical Committee memberships, using the example of a private landowner and industry.

Rick Jacobson will add in language about entities under the membership section, remove a phrase about assessment of dues, add in that meetings of Board and Tech Committees will be conducted by consensus, work on finance sections (add in financial reporting). After Rick has made those changes, the bylaws will be distributed to the Board.

**ACTION:** Draft Bylaws will be distributed for Board consideration and approval at the summer meeting.

Mitch brought up the possibility of seeking corporate support for the ACJV partnership, as it related to DU's mention of industry. This is discussed more below.

## **Avian Summit in S. Padre, TX**

Mitch introduced the topic by providing a brief history of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) and how it prompted several other major bird conservation initiatives and ultimately lead to the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI). The board packet includes a one-page summary of the major goals, objectives, and recommendations for the January summit, which focused on better integrating joint ventures, the bird initiatives, and NABCI. Rick Jacobson attended on behalf of the ACJV Board, as did most ACJV staff. Rick thought it was a well-run meeting, but noted that only a few state people were there; efforts for resident game birds were not well-covered, and there was really no "earth changing" discussion. There was discussion about merging the science teams for NAWMP and the other bird initiatives (i.e., TriST). Much of the discussion centered on making NABCI more functional, e.g., by having oversight from a body like our Management Board. Minutes of the meeting are not yet available, but should be forthcoming. There was some concern about who was allowed to attend, as some groups and agencies felt left out. Two important outcomes from the meeting from the ACJV perspective is the intended reinvigoration of NABCI, and the merging of the PIF Science Committee and TriST.

## **NAWMP Update**

Last fall Tim and Mitch provided the second-ever ACJV "assessment report" to the NAWMP Plan Committee. Mitch explained about the NAWMP Plan Committee (PC) review of the ACJV, and wanted to clarify that one PC comment about the ACJV needing to improve upon was inaccurate or incomplete as written, and dealt with our development of waterfowl breeding population objectives. The ACJV is working on these, but has already completed non-breeding objectives. The PC letter implied an urgency for progress on both. Breck mentioned the Human Dimensions (HD) workshops being conducted (including a recent one in SC) that relate to the expanded HD component of NAWMP. Mitch mentioned another aspect relating to HD work; the board packet includes a reprint from Ashley Dayer about her HD work on hunters and birders, relating to conservation attitudes and activities.

## **LCC Update**

Ken McDermond (SALCC Coordinator) passed away recently. The SALCC Coordinator position is open. The SALCC is working on natural resource indicators and testing process. There is a new State of the South Atlantic report that just came out. A series of workshops for the Conservation Blueprint 2.0 have been held (including one prior to the Management Board meeting in Charleston). A final Blueprint 2.0 is due out in May 2015. Next SALCC Steering Committee meeting will be in early June, somewhere in Virginia.

A report from the NALCC is provided in the packet. Much of the attention of the NALCC has been focused on finishing their “Designing Sustainable Landscapes” project, particularly the Pilot effort focused on the Connecticut River Watershed. They have also been heavily involved in Hurricane Sandy-related work. A summary of projects was also provided.

There is currently a \$5M increase for JVs being proposed for use in climate change/resiliency work. Several LCCs have contacted the ACJV about the use of this money. Jon Ambrose asked about sideboards on those funds, and so far there haven’t been any. John O’Leary said we should invite Climate Science Centers into the discussion, and Jim Connolly suggested that we should look at how LCCs can better help us fund our science needs.

**ACTION: Mitch will host a meeting with LCCs and Climate Science Centers within the ACJV to discuss implementation priorities along the Atlantic Coast, related to climate change.**

## **Parking Lot**

### Science Program Review

Our Tech Committee will work with JV staff on current science projects, and look at status of projects and timeframe and resources needed for completion. We will identify any science needs or project in the workplan that is *not* on our project list. We need to clearly distinguish between projects underway/ongoing, versus science needs. There was a short discussion on JV staff projects and Flyway science needs. Priorities should be tied to our Biological Priorities document, and consider work that is being done by other partners. We should consider the full life cycle of a project, before taking it on. In other words, if a project requires multiple phases and we don’t have the capacity to complete all phases needed, should we take on the project at all? We need to be realistic about identifying ACJV staff capacity; we should probably have half the capacity of the needs identified, but the ACJV could move ahead and make progress on the more important half of the needs, that they can realistically address. We need to take charge of the projects in progress, and clarify what will it take to finish these out, including resources, partners, and a timeline. Our list of science needs can be tiered to our other guiding documents, after we’ve teased out the projects from the workplan, etc., and then we must put them in order of priority for consideration at the summer Board meeting. There should be 4-6 priority projects, status, needs, etc. (including what is in our workplan) for the Board to decide upon. Breck urged us to prioritize projects that inform ACJV partners working on the ground. Jim Connolly thought we should ask about each project “Why aren’t others doing this? Why is it a good fit for us?”

### Science Prioritization Next Steps:

- 1) ACJV staff will work with Tech Committees to produce a status assessment – what projects are in progress; what is needed to complete them (time/resources)
- 2) We will review the list of incomplete projects, our “Priority Science Needs” list, and work plan priorities, and make sure they are all at the same “project-level” of specificity, i.e., not including specific projects and broad science themes (i.e., an “apples to apples” comparison)



- 3) For each project we will consider: a) linkage to habitat delivery, b) benefit(s) to ACJV partners, c) who will lead the work, d) how does it connect to work already being done, and e) is this project already being conducted by others?
- 4) Work with Tech Committee to go over/rank list (webinar &/or summer meeting). This year prioritization will be given to a) incomplete projects *and* top ranked projects from priority science needs list presented to Tech Comm in Delaware. Come up with top 4-6 projects to present to the Board in July
- 5) Work with Tech Comm to come up with better process to: a) prioritize science projects lead by ACJV staff over ~2-year period, b) come up with new priority science needs list for ACJV partnership  
Our priority needs list would include more projects than could be tackled at one time, and the prioritization process would be repeated every two years

We will discuss any proposed prioritization process with the Board in July.

### BCR Planning

Craig stated that BCR 29, BCR 69 plans are complete and are on the JV website, BCR 31 planning process beginning in April.

### Corporate Support

Mitch discussed how we could follow the path of a few JVs (especially out west) who get major (e.g., \$20k-\$100k) annual support from corporate partners. Also, some corporations affect a lot of habitat (e.g., timber companies) that is important for wildlife, so some of our partners may appreciate increasing our collective engagement with such corporations. There was some discussion about this, and it was pointed out that some joint ventures have included corporate (and private landowner) representatives to their Management Board. We could consider that as well, e.g., develop a one-page report of the pros and cons for having a corporate Board member. Some warned against doing so, as it could lead to having a Management Board that does not represent a strict wildlife conservation perspective. Mitch emphasized that we are just considering some initial exploration of more corporate engagement, and ACJV staff will not be spending very much time on this effort. Craig L. agreed that we could seek funds independent of having a corporate board member, but if board membership did become a possibility, then there might need to be a one pager developed to further delineate that process. Mitch clarified that his short-term objective is to seek external funding that would support the ACJV mission and vision, and current priorities. Sarah Hartman offered TNC's guidelines for corporate support, and her assistance with work in the corporate world. Mitch participated on an international "avian conservation" certification program for the Wildlife Habitat Council, and discussed working with them to pursue and further develop ideas about potential corporate donations. Breck suggested an *ad hoc* committee to explore this further  
**ACTION: An *ad hoc* committee (Mike Burger, Sarah Hartman, Craig LeSchack, David Cobb, and Deb Reynolds ) will explore the idea of seeking corporate funds for the ACJV.**

### Saltmarsh Conservation

In the last six months, an effort to develop a Saltmarsh Business Plan has been moving forward. Mike Burger thinks it overlaps well with ACJV biological priorities and suggested that overlap as a basis for us to be involved and engaged in that effort. Many of our highest-priority species will likely benefit, e.g., Black Duck, the saltmarsh sparrow complex, Black Rail, shorebirds, etc. Laurel asked how the ACJV staff and technical committees can get plugged into this process? There was discussion at the winter flyway meetings to focus our summer meeting on saltmarsh habitat conservation, specifically in light of sea-level rise and ensuring black duck wintering habitat. SHARP is a well-established and successful research effort focused on breeding saltmarsh songbird species (e.g., Saltmarsh and Seaside Sparrow),

secretive marshbirds and black duck, though its emphasis is almost exclusively on the breeding-season habitat use of focal species.

**ACTION:** ACJV staff will suggest to tech committee chairs that the summer meeting focus on saltmarsh conservation, and include engagement with related groups/efforts underway

## NRCS

A national meeting of joint ventures and NRCS officials was recently cancelled and rescheduled, due to bad weather. The focus was on “Working Lands for Wildlife,” and the new “Regional Conservation Partnerships Program (RCPP), which is a good opportunity for increasing capacity for habitat conservation delivery in the ACJV. Some of our partners submitted RCPP proposals, though generally not coordinated with ACJV staff, so we want to learn more about the program, and see if we can help our partners successfully tap into this program. The AMJV just got a \$5M project funded for Cerulean Warbler work. There was discussion from partners who participated last year. The most competitive proposals were those providing a 1:1 cash match. Most projects funded were those where NRCS biologists had a great understanding of programs, landowners needs, and had relationships with landowners. Board members generally thought it was a good program and discussed some of their experiences. There was a request to send out to Board members a link for the RCPP projects that were funded. That link is here:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/farmbill/rcpp/?cid=stelprdb1264664>

## **Review of Action Items**

Breck summarized Action Items from the meeting, which are highlighted above and summarized below:

- A subcommittee will help revise/review a new Strategic Plan prior to the summer Board meeting: Craig LeSchack, Mike Burger, Pam Toschik, Sarah Fleming
- Doug Gorby will provide a link to a website with a GIS layer of all protected lands
- John O’Leary and Deb Reynolds will develop a *model* NAWCA grant outreach product
- Caleb will provide Board with list of shorebird contacts obtained from Tech Committee meetings
- Deb will send shorebird accomplishments form to Board
- Deb will send an e-mail to the Board letting them know who is on the Communications Subcommittee
- Board chairs and Mitch will discuss congressional outreach and may request assistance from others
- Mitch will share list of key legislators with Board members
- Breck will write a letter to David Viker (chair of LCC) suggesting a technical summit of ACJV/SALCC staff and Board member representatives to meet and discuss the ACJV DSL and Conservation Blueprint 2.0 products and determine next steps needed
- ACJV staff will come up with options for a five-year plan to fund all our current staff positions
- Draft Bylaws will be distributed for Board consideration and approval at the summer meeting
- Mitch will host a meeting with LCCs and Climate Science Centers within the ACJV to discuss implementation priorities along the Atlantic Coast, related to climate change
- An *ad hoc* committee (Mike Burger, Sarah Hartman, Craig LeSchack, David Cobb, and Deb Reynolds) will explore the idea of seeking corporate funds for the ACJV
- ACJV staff will suggest to tech committee chairs that the summer meeting focus on saltmarsh conservation, and include engagement with related groups/efforts underway

Mitch said a summary of Action Items and meeting highlights will be distributed immediately after the meeting. Laurel requested that these be out by early Monday morning for directorate meetings next week.

**ACTION:** ACJV staff to distribute meeting summary and action items by Monday. (DONE)

Mitch recognized ACJV staff and SC DNR staff for all their assistance and hospitality for this meeting.

**Meeting Adjourned**