

NEWS AND NOTES

BOARD OF DIRECTOR NOMINATIONS

1998 NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE:

David Dobkin (Chair) and Barbara Kus

The following people (in alphabetical order) have agreed to be nominated for the Cooper Ornithological Society (COS) Board of Directors.

1. *Patricia L. Kennedy* is Associate Professor of Wildlife Biology at Colorado State University. She received her Ph.D. in Biology/Ecology from Utah State University in 1991. She has been a member of the Society since 1976 and is now a Life Member. She regularly attends meetings, and has published papers in, and reviewed manuscripts for, *The Condor*. She is an Elective Member of the American Ornithologists' Union. She has served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Raptor Research Foundation and has been an Associate Editor for the *Journal of Raptor Research*. She also served on committees that have provided scientific guidance on ornithological policy issues for the Ornithological Council. Her research interests focus on the ecology and conservation of rare species.

2. *Lloyd Kiff* is Science Director at The Peregrine Fund in Boise, Idaho. He was previously director of the Western Foundation, curator of ornithology at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, and team leader of the California Condor Recovery Team from 1986-1993. He received his M.S. from UCLA in 1966 and has been a member of the COS since 1964 (honorary member since 1991). He served as co-chair for the 1990 joint meeting of the COS and the AOU in Los Angeles, and he has been assistant treasurer, chair of six committees, Board member, and president of the COS. His research interests have focused on the avian egg, contaminant effects on birds, ecology of Neotropical birds, host parasites, and the California Condor.

3. *Carlos Martínez del Río* is associate professor of Biology and curator of the bird collection in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Arizona. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Florida in 1990. Carlos joined COS in 1985. Although he has not regularly attended COS meetings, he will do so if elected and looks forward to it. He has published three papers in *The Condor* and has reviewed manuscripts for this journal. Although he does not consider himself a card-carrying conservation biologist, he is active in conservation organizations. He conducts field research in Chile, México, and the western United States. His research interests include avian digestive and metabolic physiology and the role that birds play as pollinators and seed dispersers.

4. *Terry Rich* received his B.S. in Wildlife Ecology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1972, graduating with honors, and an M.S. in Zoology from Idaho State University in 1977. Currently working as national Nongame Bird Program Manager for the Bureau of Land Management, he spends most of his time working on bird conservation through Partners In

Flight at the regional, national, and international levels. He has been a member of the COS since 1977 and was elected as an Honorary Member in 1997. He served the Society as secretary from 1989-1997, and also has served on the Ballot-Proxy, Paper Awards, Conservation-Resolutions, Membership, and Student Travel Awards Committees. He has presented a paper at nearly every annual meeting since 1977 and has several publications in *The Condor*. He continues to have a personal interest in shrubsteppe birds and ecology.

5. *Tom Scott* is a Cooperative Extension Wildlife Specialist in the Department of Environmental Science Policy and Management at the University of California, Berkeley. His position currently is housed in the Department of Earth Sciences, UC Riverside, where he is associate director of the UCR Center for Conservation Biology. He received his Ph.D. from the Department of Forestry, UC Berkeley (1987) and an MS in Ecology (1986) and BS in Zoology (1977) from San Diego State University. He was Scientific Program Chair of The 1996 COS Meeting, Student Award Chair and Local Committee Member at the 1990 COS/AOU meeting, and has run three workshops/symposia for the COS meetings: The Use of GIS in Ornithology (1989), Innovation in Ornithology (1996), and Avian Response to Human Disturbance (1996). He has served on the membership and student travel committees of the COS. He has one paper published in *The Condor* and has reviewed papers for the journal. His research includes the demography of birds in fragmented landscapes and the response of birds to human disturbance.

REPORT OF THE SIXTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COOPER ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The Cooper Ornithological Society held its 68th annual meeting in conjunction with The American Ornithologists' Union, Wilson Ornithological Society, Association of Field Ornithologists, and the Colonial Waterbird Society at the Regal River Front Hotel, St. Louis, Missouri, 6-11 April 1998. The Local Committee was chaired by Bette Loiselle, and the Scientific Program Committee was chaired by Jeff Brawn. There were close to 1,330 registrants. The program included 495 papers, 149 posters, 55 talks in 9 symposia, and 10 workshops.

The Society's award for lifetime achievement in ornithological research, the Miller Award, was presented to Russell A. Balda. A full citation is published on p. 785 of this issue. Glen Woolfenden, the Miller Award Committee chair, read the full citation inserting "he/she" instead of Russ's name, drawing guffaws and chuckles from the banquet audience. The ploy held us and Russ in suspense, until Glen said the recipient was noted for his/her ground breaking work in behavioral ecology of the Pinyon Jay. At that point, Russ almost choked on his water and the audience laughed and applauded in approval. In his impromptu acceptance speech, Russ wished for us all to find "our Pinyon

Jay” to captivate our imagination, and to enjoy and appreciate.

Mewaldt-King Student Research Awards were presented to Paul G. Rodewald, school of Forest Resources, Pennsylvania State University, for “Habitat use and selection by Neotropical migratory songbirds during migration,” and to Daniel A. Kluza from the Natural History Museum, University of Kansas, for “Effects of anthropogenic landscape disturbances on bird assemblages of Mexican dry forests.” Bethany Woodward and Tom Grub assisted John Faaborg, the Mewaldt-King Award committee chairperson, with the selections this year.

Four awards were presented for outstanding student papers. Claudia Macias Caballero, Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey, was awarded the A. Brazier Howell Award for her paper, “Monitoring the nesting colonies of the endangered Maroon-fronted Parrot in Mexico.” Paul R. Martin, University of Montana, was awarded the Frances F. Roberts Award for his paper “Ecological interactions and fitness costs to coexistence in two congeneric wood warblers (Vermivora).” Board of Directors Student Paper Awards were presented to Cameron Ghalambor, University of Montana, for “Variation in incubation strategies among coexisting nuthatches (Sittidae): testing the relative importance of nest predation and microclimate,” and Rodney Siegel, Department of Avian Sciences, University of California—Davis, for “Hatching asynchrony reduces the duration, not the magnitude, of peak load in breeding Green-rumped Parrotlets.” Student paper award recipients received 5-year memberships to the Cooper Ornithological Society and hard bound books donated by Cambridge University Press.

Through the annual balloting by all members of the Society, William R. Dawson, Nadav Nur, and Donald R. Powers were elected to three-year terms on the Board of Directors. Proposed By-law changes printed in the November 1997 issue of *The Condor* (99:1024–1025), also were accepted.

In the Board of Directors’ meetings, the following were elected to, or continue in, office: J. Michael Scott, President; Glenn E. Walsberg, President-elect; Eileen M. Kirsch, Secretary; Peter Stettenheim, Assistant Secretary; Erick G. Campbell, Treasurer; Larry S. Mangan, Assistant Treasurer; Walter D. Koenig, editor of *The Condor*, and John T. Rotenberry, editor of *Studies in Avian Biology*.

The next annual meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Society will be held at the Doubletree Inn in Portland, Oregon, 29 March–3 April, 1999. Erick Campbell is chair of the Local Committee.

Several resolutions were passed by the Board of Directors. If you know of individuals or organizations that should receive official copies of one or more of these resolutions, contact Martin Raphael, chair of the Conservation-Resolutions committee, or David Blockstein, who carried the resolutions to all participating Ornithological Societies at the meeting.

EXXON VALDEZ RESTORATION RESERVE FUND

Whereas, in the court settlement following the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill, a trust fund was established to provide

for restoration and enhancement of resources injured as a result of the spill, and a trustee council was created to oversee the allocation of that money with a mission to return the environment to a “healthy, productive, world-renowned ecosystem;”

Whereas, the impact of the spill was primarily on the marine ecosystem and its inhabitants, including Common Murres (*Uria aalge*), Thick-billed Murres (*Uria lomvia*), Pigeon Guillemots (*Cepphus columba*), Marbled Murrelets (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*), cormorants (*Phalacrocorax* spp.), and other seabirds;

Whereas, more than half of the money available for restoration has been spent on land purchases to protect valuable fish and wildlife habitats, not all of which will directly improve the marine resources damaged by the spill;

Whereas, the Trustee Council previously established a Restoration Reserve account to provide funds for restoration activities after the last Exxon payment in 2001;

Whereas, in adopting the restoration plan, the Trustee Council specifically recognized that monitoring recovery, understanding the spill’s effects on the ecosystem, and undertaking needed restoration activities “on an ecosystem basis” will extend well into the future;

Whereas, by 2001, the reserve fund is expected to total about \$140 million, including interest;

Whereas, the Trustee Council will make a decision in 1998 on the allocation of that fund;

Whereas, scientific research is necessary for an understanding of the northern Gulf of Alaska ecosystem, which has not been well studied. For example, there is a need for increased understanding of the interrelationships among seabird colonies and their dependence on poorly-studied forage fishes in the region;

Whereas, use of the information based on research is essential for protecting the marine resources of Prince William Sound and the northern Gulf of Alaska;

Whereas, only through continued research and monitoring will it be possible to determine the long-term effects of the spill and of the measures used to mitigate those effects;

Whereas, the chief scientist of the Trustee Council has proposed using the reserve fund to establish a permanent, adaptive, interdisciplinary research and monitoring program, which “would track, and eventually predict, ecosystem changes and provide a basis and mechanism for long-term restoration, enhancement, and wise management of marine resources in the northern Gulf of Alaska;”

Therefore be it resolved that the American Ornithologists’ Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, Cooper Ornithological Society, and Wilson Ornithological Society encourage the *Exxon Valdez* Trustee Council to (a) establish a permanent fund for competitive, peer-reviewed research and monitoring of the northern Gulf of Alaska ecosystem and (b) allocate all or nearly all of the restoration reserve fund for this purpose.

Therefore be it further resolved that an ongoing marine conservation biology research and monitoring program should be based on the following core principles:

1. Research and monitoring should focus on conserving and recovering the living marine resources and biological diversity of the Gulf of Alaska, and should be coordinated with other federal and state marine research programs in Alaska, such as those in the Bering Sea, to leverage efforts and enhance the benefits of each.

2. Decisions on research and monitoring proposals should be based on a competitive scientific peer review process involving not only Alaskan scientists, but a mix of scientists throughout the United States with appropriate expertise in the various research topics to be considered. The best science results from involving the most appropriate scientists in all aspects of the process, and from basing funding decisions on emerging scientific and management questions. The resulting science should be of sufficient quality for publication in the best scientific journals.

3. The overall design of the long-term monitoring and research program should be reviewed by the National Research Council, the National Science Foundation, or other appropriate scientific bodies.

4. Research and monitoring should be ecosystem-oriented, designed and implemented to understand the processes and relationships governing marine ecosystem functioning, to enhance recovery of living marine resources that were harmed by the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill or are otherwise in decline, and to address emerging environmental problems and biodiversity loss in the Gulf of Alaska.

5. Research and monitoring should not be narrowly focused on maximizing certain resources for short-term economic gain, but should be broad-based and seek to understand how marine ecosystems function as a basis for management and conservation in the long run.

6. Use of indicator species is appropriate in some cases, however, in addition to studies on specific species, integrative research should be conducted to tie together information through modeling and other techniques to develop an understanding of processes affecting species on large geographic and temporal scales.

7. Research and monitoring projects should include long-term studies, allowing observation of environmental variation over decades to increase scientific understanding of ecosystem processes that vary over long time periods, and enhance our understanding of natural vs. human-caused environmental changes.

THE PUBLIC LANDS FUNDING INITIATIVE

Whereas, America's public lands, wildlife, fish, and plants are irreplaceable natural assets that belong to, and benefit, our entire nation;

Whereas, the ideals underlying the creation and protection of our parks, refuges, forests, and other national lands have been admired and emulated around the world;

Whereas, these public lands represent an investment in America through the conservation of our natural and cultural heritage;

Whereas, more and more Americans are turning to our public lands for education, recreation, and the economic well being of their families and communities;

Whereas, ironically, at the same time that these assets are increasing in value, their vitality is threatened by inadequate funding and shortsighted investment in the agencies that care for them;

Whereas, the account in the federal budget that pays for the care and upkeep of our public lands (Function 300—Natural Resources and Environment) is slated to decrease over the next five years under the Balanced Budget Agreement;

Whereas, the financial condition of our public land and natural resource management agencies is in crisis and without significant increases to base-funding over the next five years, these agencies and programs will be unable to protect and manage the resources entrusted to their care;

Therefore be it resolved that the American Ornithologists' Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, Cooper Ornithological Society, and Wilson Ornithological Society support the Public Lands Funding Initiative, including the following proposed funding increases that are based on data requested from the agencies, and reflect real need:

1. The Fish and Wildlife Service, \$710 million to operate the National Wildlife Refuge System, to implement the Endangered Species Act, and for migratory bird management.

2. The National Park Service, \$630 million for natural and cultural resource protection, park operations, and maintenance of physical infrastructure.

3. The Bureau of Land Management, \$125 million for wildlife, fisheries, and threatened and endangered species, to provide recreational opportunities, and for paleontology research. (Note: the request for BLM is well below needs for adequate stewardship of its 260 million acres. This request is based on amounts that could be used effectively with limited or no increases in staff.)

4. The Forest Service, \$618 million for Fish, Wildlife, and Rare Plants; Recreation; Wilderness; Road Obliteration and Maintenance; Invasive Species; Rangeland Management; and Research on Wildlife, Fish, Water, and Air.

5. The U.S. Geological Survey's Biological Resources Division, \$185 million for biological research, resource monitoring, information transfer, and maintenance and operations of research laboratories, cooperative research units, and their equipment.

6. The Land and Water Conservation Fund, at least \$700 million (assuming the base does not include the additional \$699 million in FY98) to achieve full funding for land acquisition needs in the four agencies and to revitalize the grants to states and local communities for recreation and open space needs.

REFERENCES

The Public Lands Funding Initiative is an effort of a broad coalition of environmental, recreational, scientific and other organizations dedicated to working for additional funding for government programs benefiting wildlife and wildlands. The entire Defining Statement document is located on GREEN's web site: <http://www.defenders.org/inter2.html> You will also find a

listing of the groups who have already signed on to the initiative.

NORTHEAST NATIONAL PETROLEUM RESERVE

Whereas, the Northeast National Petroleum Reserve ("the Reserve") is a low-lying coastal region comprising nearly 4.6 million acres of nearly undisturbed foothill tundra and wet tundra, and

Whereas, the Reserve encompasses the largest stretch of low-lying, coastal plain tundra and foothill tundra in Alaska, and perhaps in North America, and

Whereas, the ecosystems and habitat represented in the Reserve are not found in protected areas in Alaska, and

Whereas, numerous bird species are found in the Reserve, including the Yellow-billed Loon (*Gavia adamsii*) and Gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolis*), which nest only in this region in the United States, the threatened Spectacled Eider (*Somateria fischeri*) and Steller's Eider (*Polysticta stelleri*), molting waterfowl, and large populations of many shorebirds and waterbirds, and

Whereas, the Colville River Special Area of the Reserve has been recognized as one of the most significant regional habitats for raptors in North America, including nearly 90 nesting pairs of Peregrine Falcons (*Falco peregrinus*), which have only recently returned to this area following the DDT-caused decline in the 1970s, and

Whereas, The Bureau of Land Management is considering an Integrated Activity Plan for the Reserve, with five alternative courses of action, each making a certain amount of the Reserve available for gas and oil extraction activities, and

Whereas, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement analyzing each of these alternatives is inadequate in that it fails to evaluate adequately the unique ecological and biological features of the reserve, and fails to address available literature on the response of bird populations to various types and levels of development, and

Whereas, there has not been adequate surveying of the presence and abundance of the bird species found in the region,

Therefore be it resolved that the American Ornithologists' Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, Cooper Ornithological Society, and Wilson Ornithological Society recommend that the Bureau of Land Management defer the selection of a management plan for the Reserve until basic surveys and research have been completed, or, if deferment is not possible, that the Bureau of Land Management select Alternative A, the "no action" alternative which will continue the current management and allow no oil or gas leases, and

Be it further resolved that whatever management plan is selected by the Bureau of Land Management, that it be implemented in such a manner as to include very specific safeguards, based upon scientific information, to protect the environment and the wildlife found within the Reserve.

NATIONAL FOREST MANAGEMENT, FOREST HEALTH, AND ROADLESS AREAS

Whereas, America's national forests are comprised of 156 separate forests, encompassing 25 percent of all federal public lands (200 million acres), providing essential habitat for many bird species and other biota, including a greater number of threatened and endangered species than on any other system of federally owned land;

Whereas, the remaining large, unfragmented, roadless areas provide particularly important and irreplaceable habitat for many species, and such areas are found almost exclusively on national forests and other public lands;

Whereas, many of America's national forests are overcut and fragmented due to excessive logging;

Whereas, few roadless areas are protected (for example, in the Blue Mountains of eastern Oregon and Washington, less than 8% of 722,000 acres of forested roadless areas are administratively protected);

Whereas, the Clinton Administration is attempting to implement policy to favor conservation based on the capacity of the land;

Whereas, elements of this policy include a proposed 18-month moratorium on logging in large roadless areas (greater than 5,000 acres) in most national forests;

Whereas, the proposed moratorium is consistent with the recommendations of the Eastside Forest Scientific Society Panel (Interim protection for late-successional forests, fisheries and watersheds; The Wildlife Society Technical Review 94-2, 1994), in which the American Ornithologists' Union was a participant;

Whereas, there is considerable effort in Congress to oppose Administration policy and allow more logging under the guise of a so-called "forest health crisis";

Whereas, the American Ornithologists' Union and the Cooper Ornithological Society have each passed resolutions challenging the scientific basis of the "forest health crisis";

Therefore be it resolved that the American Ornithologists' Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, Cooper Ornithological Society, and Wilson Ornithological Society support the efforts of Forest Service Chief Michael Dombeck and the Clinton administration towards increasing conservation and protection of roadless areas in national forests.

Be it further resolved that the American Ornithologists' Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, Cooper Ornithological Society, and Wilson Ornithological Society urge the Clinton administration to extend these roadless area protections to all national forests and to roadless areas of 1,000 acres or more.

Therefore be it further resolved that the American Ornithologists' Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, Cooper Ornithological Society, and Wilson Ornithological Society oppose Congressional attempts to increase logging of national forests under the guise of a "forest health crisis" and urge Congress to take steps to prevent loss and fragmentation of roadless areas.

FUNDING FOR NATURAL RESOURCE SCIENCE

Whereas, scientific knowledge is a necessary basis for effective management of natural resources;

Whereas, present knowledge of the natural resources of the United States is insufficient for many management objectives to be achieved;

Whereas, current federal funding for biodiversity and ecosystems research and monitoring (estimated at \$460 million by the National Science and Technology Council) is inadequate to meet the needs of resource managers and decision-makers;

Whereas, the proposed fiscal 1999 budget of \$158 million for the Biological Resources Division (BRD) of the U.S. Geological Survey, is less than its budget for fiscal 1994 (\$164 million) before the 104th Congress imposed a 15% cut when BRD was an agency known as the National Biological Service;

Whereas, budget restrictions on BRD allow it to accomplish relatively few priorities identified by other agencies in the Interior Department, leaving the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with a list of some 300 unaddressed research needs, and have caused a 40% decrease in BRD maintenance activities and no new construction since fiscal 1994;

Whereas, the research budget of the U.S. Forest Service has remained essentially flat since a 5% recession in fiscal 1995 and research is now at about 7% of the agency budget rather than the 11% that has been traditional,

Whereas, neither President Clinton's 21st Century fund for research nor Senator Gramm's National Research Investment Act of 1998 (S. 1305) include science in the natural resource agencies and departments among their significant proposed increases in science funding;

Whereas, a 1998 report of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (Teaming with life: investing in science to understand and use America's living capital) recommends increases of up to \$200 million annually (phased in over three years) for research, education, management, and information infrastructure necessary to make sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems;

Therefore be it resolved that the American Ornithologists' Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, Cooper Ornithological Society, and Wilson Ornithological Society encourage the President and the Congress to significantly increase funding for natural resource science and related activities in agencies including the U.S. Geological Survey (particularly the Biological Resources Division), the U.S. Forest Service, and the proposed National Institute for the Environment (NIE) under the National Science Foundation.

IZEMBEK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Whereas, The Izembek National Wildlife Refuge (INWR) and the Izembek Lagoon (Izembek State Game Refuge) it encompasses, located on the Alaska Peninsula, is so important as wetland habitat for wildlife diversity that it was recognized as the first wetland site in the United States placed on the list of wetlands of international importance under the "Ramsar" Convention, and

Whereas, the refuge and the lagoon are being considered for additional international recognition as a reserve of international importance by the Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network, and

Whereas, the refuge provides habitat for numerous bird species, including a resident, non-migratory Tundra Swan (*Cygnus columbianus*) population, approximately half the world population of the threatened Steller's Eider (*Somateria fischeri*), the entire Pacific Brant (*Branta bernicla*) population, and the entire population of Emperor Geese (*Chen canigica*), and

Whereas, the Refuge's Kinzarof Lagoon has the only significant eelgrass (*Zostera marina*) beds on the Pacific side of the Alaska peninsula, which is a primary food source for numerous bird and fish species, and

Whereas, two identical bills, S. 1092 and H.R. 2259, are presently before Congress, each of which has been passed by committees in their respective houses, which would direct construction of a road that would traverse seven miles of the Izembek Wilderness and four more miles of the Refuge, and bisect an isthmus between the Izembek and Kinzarof Lagoons, and

Whereas, the bills suspend the application to the road project of all environmental laws, including the Endangered Species Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and all federal provisions to protect wetlands and to require environmental impact assessments, and

Whereas, the proposed road through this fragile tundra is likely to: degrade wilderness values; increase silt loads to the Lagoon and/or decrease fresh-water flow to the Lagoon, which could affect eelgrass growth and production; disturb wildlife, including the many birds in the area and result in increased pressure from future human disturbance; expose the Izembek Lagoon to waterborne contaminants from shipping accidents or potential offshore oil development; and

Whereas, Congress designated 95% of the INWR as wilderness in 1980, and the Wilderness Act prohibits the building of permanent roads within any wilderness areas,

Therefore be it resolved that the American Ornithologists' Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, Cooper Ornithological Society, and Wilson Ornithological Society urge Congress to reject S.1092 and H.R.2259 and to oppose any other effort to build a road through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge.

DESIGN OR MODIFICATION OF BUILDINGS AND OTHER STRUCTURES TO REDUCE COLLISIONS BY BIRDS

Whereas birds are often unable to recognize sheet glass as a barrier, and at least 100 million to a billion birds are killed each year in the United States alone by striking glass of various sizes, in all types of human-built structures, during every season, and

Whereas the lights in tall lighted structures such as those in multistory buildings are known to disorient and result in bird fatalities from colliding with windows and opaque walls, and

Whereas glass can be modified to transform it into barriers that birds can recognize and avoid, and

Whereas the enactment of a building policy of minimum night lighting, especially during migration, can markedly alleviate bird attraction and confusion around tall buildings and towers,

Whereas, the problem of collisions between birds and windows is ubiquitous, incremental, cumulative, insufficiently documented, and not well recognized as to its magnitude or its parameters, and

Whereas, there has been insufficient research on building design and placement, alternative materials, landscaping, and other measures to minimize collisions;

Therefore be it resolved that the American Ornithologists' Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, Cooper Ornithological Society, and Wilson Ornithological Society encourage the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as custodians of the nation's migratory bird resource, to make research related to bird-window collisions and their avoidance high on its priority list and to encourage the Biological Resources Division of the U.S. Geological Survey to carry out the needed research;

Therefore, be it further resolved that the American Ornithologists' Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, Cooper Ornithological Society, and Wilson Ornithological Society encourage the American Bird Conservancy to undertake a campaign, similar to its "Cats Indoors" campaign to raise awareness of the issue and to work with glass manufacturers, architects, builders, developers, landscape planners, building managers, and home owners to find ways to reduce the problem of unintentional killing of wild birds in collisions.

COMMUNICATION TOWERS AND AVIAN MORTALITY

Whereas, an estimated two million to four million birds are killed in collisions with communication towers, particularly those higher than 200 feet, in eastern North America alone each year, and

Whereas, towers 200 feet and taller are required to be lit for aircraft safety, generally with blinking lights, and

Whereas, birds migrating at night are attracted by the light and circle the tower, striking supporting guy wires; and

Whereas, there are presently at least 75,000 towers above 200 feet tall in the U.S. (according to the Federal Aviation Administration) and another 100,000 are expected to be constructed in the next decade (according to the communications industry) due to expansion in various communications markets, and to accommodate digital TV;

Whereas, the accrued impact of thousands of towers on migrant songbird populations may be significant for declining species such as Cerulean Warblers and endangered species such as Kirtland's Warbler,

Therefore be it resolved that the American Ornithologists' Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, Cooper Ornithological Society, and Wilson Ornithological Society urge the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to endorse studies involving experiments toward finding lighting systems for towers that reduce avian mortality.

Be it further resolved that the American Ornithologists' Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, Cooper Ornithological Society, and Wilson Ornithological Society encourage the communications industry to voluntarily reduce the number of new towers by collocated new transmitters on existing towers and to work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to minimize collisions of birds with towers;

Be it further resolved that the American Ornithologists' Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, Cooper Ornithological Society, and Wilson Ornithological Society strongly encourage the USFWS to work with the FAA and the Federal Communications Commission to study the magnitude of the problem, including thorough preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement, and to develop a national plan to minimize collisions of birds with towers.

RELEVANT LITERATURE

- Cochran, William W., and Richard R. Graber. 1958. Attraction of nocturnal migrants by lights on a television tower. *Wilson Bull.* 70:378-380.
- Kemper, Charles. 1996. A study of bird mortality at a west central Wisconsin TV tower from 1957-1995. *Passenger Pigeon* 58:219-235.
- Larkin, Ronald P., and Barbara A. Frase. 1988. Circular paths of birds flying near a broadcasting tower in cloud. *J. Comparative Psychology* 102: 90-93.
- Ogden, Lesley P. 1996. Collision course: the hazards of lighted structures and windows to migrating birds. *World Wildlife Fund Canada and the Fatal Lights Awareness Program.*

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE SALTON SEA AS SIGNIFICANT WILDLIFE HABITAT

Whereas, the Salton Sea, the third largest interior saline lake in North America, formed by accidental water diversions from the Colorado River into southeastern California in 1905-1906 and presently maintained by inflows of water imported for agricultural purposes, agricultural runoff, and freshwater river flows, has long been recognized as providing significant wetland habitat for a highly diverse array of migratory and breeding waterbird populations, and

Whereas, recent surveys have revealed populations of up to 1.5 million Eared Grebes in midwinter (Jehl 1988), up to half of California's wintering White-faced Ibis (Shuford et al. 1996), and regional significance as an integral component of the Pacific Flyway for tens of thousands of migratory shorebirds (Page et al. 1992), waterfowl, and American White Pelicans, as well as significant breeding colonies of Double-crested Cormorants and Caspian Terns (K. Molina, unpubl. data), nearly 40% of the nesting Black Skimmers (Collins and Garrett 1996), and by far the larger of only two breeding populations of Gull-billed Terns in western North America (Parnell et al. 1995), and

Whereas, the Salton Sea has been documented to be of significant value as avian habitat from the time of its formation (see, for example, early studies reported by Grinnell 1908, Dawson 1923, Pemberton 1927, Miller and van Rossem 1929), and has retained this

significance in the subsequent nine decades, with the Sea and its surrounding agricultural lands remaining a renowned birdwatching locality of national significance with over 350 species recorded and immense numbers of breeding, migrant, and wintering birds, in addition to unique post-breeding use by a variety of subtropical waterbirds, and

Whereas, the Salton Sea represents a complex mosaic of habitats and land-use types, from saline lake waters to brackish and freshwater deltas resulting from both natural and imported (agricultural) water sources, and state and federal wildlife refuges, agricultural areas, and geothermal developments, all with equally complex interactions and often competing interests, and

Whereas, the State of California and surrounding regions have experienced significant losses of wetlands (Johnson and Jehl 1994), including coastal wetlands, interior wetlands (most notably the Colorado River delta and Tulare Lake basin), and interior saline lakes such as Owens Lake (Jehl 1994), making the Salton Sea, despite its "artificial" genesis, especially unique and important as de facto mitigation on a regional if not continental scale, and

Whereas, significant colonies of ground-nesting colonial waterbirds and herons, as well as of the recently established Brown Pelican, have thrived during the 1990s, likely due in large measure to decreased levels of human recreational uses of key portions of the Salton Sea (Molina 1996), and

Whereas, the Salton Sea has experienced high levels of eutrophication, salinization, and contamination, resulting in diminished water quality (Setmire et al. 1990), and

Whereas, freshwater sources for the Salton Sea are currently under threat from planned diversions to coastal urban regions of California, and

Whereas, there have recently been large-scale mortalities of birds (150,000 Eared Grebes in 1992, 1,400 Brown Pelicans in 1996, many nesting Double-crested Cormorants in 1997) and millions of fish, all symptomatic of severe problems in the ecosystem, and

Whereas, current attempts by agencies, NGOs, private concerns, and lawmakers to "save" the Salton Sea are gaining momentum, including engineering studies, Congressional legislation, and an Environmental Impact Statement together with a scientific review committee conducted by the Department of the Interior, and

Whereas, there is no consensus on what is meant to restore or "save" the Salton Sea,

Therefore be it resolved that the American Ornithologists' Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, Cooper Ornithological Society, and Wilson Ornithological Society recognize the significance of the Salton Sea to wildlife and supports rehabilitation and conservation efforts for the Salton Sea that are responsive to the needs of wildlife and based on sound and thorough biological data; that recognize the importance of freshwater, delta, brackish, saline, and agricultural habitats at the Salton Sea; that improve water quality and guarantee continued adequate sources of freshwater; that stress the critical need for protection and isolation of

waterbird colonies from human and other disturbance; and that seek to minimize threats to wildlife potentially resulting from urban and recreational development.

Be it further resolved that the American Ornithologists' Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, Cooper Ornithological Society, and Wilson Ornithological Society support an approach that allows sufficient time to study the situation, including all feasible options, that any additional research funds are added to agency core budgets, that no money be spent on "emergency action" before a full environmental impact statement is completed, including studies of the impacts of brine or salt disposal from all pumped water, and that the implementation of whatever action be recommended must meet all environmental laws, including the National Environmental Policy Act and the Clean Water Act, and that judicial review of proposed actions be allowed without restraint.

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SNOW GOOSE POPULATION MANAGEMENT

Whereas, an exponentially growing population of Lesser Snow Geese (*Chen caerulescens*) breeding along the border of Hudson Bay and migrating through mid-continental North America is overgrazing and over-grubbing its breeding habitat, causing changes in vegetation and soil salinity and threatening large portions of the Arctic ecosystem with potentially irreversible ecological degradation; and

Whereas, plant species grubbed and eaten by the rapidly growing Snow Goose population in the Arctic are being destroyed to an unprecedented extent, and are being replaced over vast areas by unpalatable, salt-tolerant species; and

Whereas, extensive scientific research on the effects of Snow Geese, including long-term enclosure experiments, suggests that their alteration of the biotic environment, especially plant community composition and structure, and the abiotic environment, especially soil chemistry, may be irreversible; and

Whereas, long term studies show that populations of many bird species that depend on tundra habitat are declining precipitously as Snow Goose populations have grown and there is a concern that these declines may be linked to the growing Snow Goose population. These declining populations include species such as Hudsonian Godwit, Smith's Longspur, Yellow Rail, American Golden Plover, and Stilt Sandpiper, and a host of more widespread species with substantial numbers potentially at risk; and

Whereas, the rapid increase in mid-continent Snow Goose populations is primarily a result of human modifications of habitat on the wintering grounds, along the migratory routes, and in the staging areas; and

Whereas, the habitat modifications promoting population growth of Snow Geese include modern and large-scale agricultural practices throughout the non-breeding range, and these conditions are likely to persist for many decades; and

Whereas, scientific evidence indicates that a continued growth of the mid-continent Snow Goose populations threatens the integrity of important wildlife habitat, including managed refuges, waterfowl wintering grounds, and key migratory resting and staging areas in the United States; and

Whereas, density-dependent population control mech-

anisms will not self-regulate exponential population explosion of Snow Geese because of the species' demonstrated ability and willingness to extend both nesting and foraging ranges continually into new areas as the existing breeding grounds become degraded; and

Whereas, the mortality of adult geese is viewed as the driving demographic variable by which humans can hope most effectively to reduce the total population, its rate of growth, and its effects on the environment; and

Whereas the 1997 report entitled, Arctic Ecosystems in Peril: Report of the Arctic Goose Habitat Working Group has been published by the Arctic Goose Joint Venture (AGJV) Management Board and Working Group (under the auspices of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan), has received adequate peer review, and concludes with a series of specific recommendations to reduce Snow Goose numbers.

Therefore be it resolved that the American Ornithologists' Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, Cooper Ornithological Society, and Wilson Ornithological Society endorse the science-based recommendations of the Arctic Goose Habitat Working Group as necessary steps for reducing mid-continent Snow Goose numbers "to a level of about 50% of current numbers by the year 2005" (1997, Arctic Ecosystems in Peril: Report of the Arctic Goose Habitat Working Group, p. 118).

Therefore be it further resolved that the American Ornithologists' Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, Cooper Ornithological Society, and Wilson Ornithological Society recommend that the Arctic Goose Habitat Working Group and other appropriate organizations identify and develop solutions to the anthropogenic changes in environmental conditions that have led to the problem.

DRAW A CONDOR FOR *THE CONDOR*

The editorial staff invites readers to submit drawings of a California Condor to replace the one currently on the masthead of each issue of *THE CONDOR*. We are looking for a drawing that will reproduce well in black-and-white yet be more elegant than the one currently being used. All drawings submitted become the sole property of the Cooper Ornithological Society and will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. There is no monetary reward for winning this contest. However, the successful illustrator will be acknowledged and gain worldwide recognition through the distribution of the journal. Send all submissions to: The Condor Editorial Office, Hastings Reservation, 38601 E. Carmel Valley Rd., Carmel Valley, CA 93924.