

Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society

Board meeting March 15, 2010

At Sandwich Delites, Berea, Ohio

Present: Gayle Albers, Kit Birch, Gerianne Hannibal, Nancy Howell, Penny O'Connor, Terry Robison, Mary Anne Romito, Tom Romito, Stan Searles, Diane Sigler

1. Nancy Howell reported \$12,809.72 in the treasury. Additional money is coming in from the Annual Appeal. May have an additional donation from a major benefactor. We are still waiting to hear about our Audubon grant proposal.
2. Flagging points for IBA forest breeding bird survey
 - a. Terry Robison noted that there are many flags in the Metroparks, many projects. Asked that we use nothing lime green or pink, or checkered, and keep flags as small as possible.
 - b. Tom mentioned that we have been putting 2-3 on each point, and also some flags along the way.
 - c. Discussion of need for flags. Some observers have points distant from a trail, or have only surveyed the points for one season. Need flags as a guide.
 - d. Kit asked about Metroparks policy on staying on trails. Terry said it is strongly encouraged, no firm rule. People making extra trails are becoming a problem in some areas.
3. Analysis of IBA data: Sarah Mabey of Hiram College is looking at WCAS survey data. She has some students doing GIS analysis. Terry Robison is also analyzing data. Sarah Mabey will do some distance sampling, analysis of forest cover, what makes some birds easier or more difficult to detect. Stan raised the issue of ownership of data. Articles may reflect WCAS in acknowledgements. Tom would like some data for the spring outreach talks. Terry said that he might be able to update some of the graphs.
4. Training and testing for IBA year five will be April 19, 2010 6 p.m. at Rocky River Nature Center.
 - a. Distance 6-7 p.m.
 - b. Bird test 7-8 p.m.
 - c. Brief on protocols and flagging
 - d. Provide forms to observers
 - e. Take pictures at each observation point
5. Together Green Grants
 - a. Tom received e-mail from Sandra Buckles at Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland
 - i. Museum is taking care of grant writing

- ii. Role of WCAS would be to help with physical restoration and monitoring
- iii. Nancy observed that the Ashtabula site is far from WCAS members, would like for WCAS to apply for a project nearer to our watershed and our members.
- iv. Tom observed that WCAS may be able to use materials created for other grant applications as a starting point.
- v. Stan: IBA collaboration will be a good thing if COAC (Council of Ohio Audubon Chapters) revives.
- vi. Nancy noted the first step will be to see what we have written in the past.
- vii. Stan suggested the idea of collaborating with the Rocky River Watershed Council. Also in grant proposal we should mention the Stakeholders meeting in November 2009.
- viii. Stan asked if we can get a list of CMNH properties or conservation areas in our IBA region. Nancy said yes, but likely more properties in area will be in the hands of Western Reserve Land Conservancy.

6. Middleburg Hts. Wind Turbines

- a. At the Cuyahoga County Fairgrounds. Tom, Diane and Stan attended meeting. Stan spoke near the end, in favor of wind energy, and on the probable impacts on birds. Stan mentioned communication towers, and buildings as having more impact.
- b. Most questions had little to do with wildlife.
- c. WCAS offered assistance in monitoring.
- d. WCAS will send a letter of support in advance of the meeting. Nancy will share the letter that she sent as a citizen.
- e. Gayle noted that impacts have to do with weather, per speakers at Wildlife Diversity Conference.
- f. Stan asked, since this wind turbine is intended for education and demonstration that it could be shut down at certain times when impact would be greatest.

7. Stakeholders meeting, follow-up

- a. Tom suggested we specifically invite certain attendees from November
- b. Penny suggested that all who attended in November should be invited for followup.
- c. Diane noted that people have approached her about the follow-up.
- d. Tom would like to pick a date as soon as possible.
- e. Description of topics and preparation for second meeting:

The board decided to hold the second stakeholders meeting as soon as possible since the original attendees are expecting this, and it shouldn't take too much preparation this time. The date will be Wed., April 28, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. An e-mail will be sent out to all who participated in the first meeting asking something like: "Do you think your organization is interested in collaborating with WCAS on various conservation initiatives in the Rocky River Watershed?" We can also ask if their organizations

have already been doing anything related to this, and encourage them to share information with us at the meeting. Tom will send an invitation letter reminding of some of the findings of the last meeting, and asking people to bring info on how we may follow up and collaborate. Diane noted what we want as the objective for this meeting: to identify key initiatives, what needs to be done to reach these goals, how all the groups fit in the grand scheme both individually and with each other, and where WCAS needs to be either individually or as a part of a collaboration with one or all of the attendees, depending on the issue, to obtain these goals.

8. . Tom will write about the up-coming UltraWalk in a front page article for the next issue of the The Feathered Flyer. We all need to talk up this event to our members, especially at our monthly meetings. We need more walkers.
9. . Terry has been number-crunching our survey data and told us Sarah (on Hiram College staff) is also going to be evaluating our data. She has a student who will be helping her, as well as “distance sampling” valid statistical information computer software. It estimates the detection probability since we are not actually seeing everything out there. It takes the observed number of birds and extrapolates probable actual number of birds out of that. The question of who does all this information eventually belong to came up, and it was stated that we would want some type of recognition for the raw data we supplied. It is hoped our data will help answer questions such as: is density of birds related to quality of habitat?, how does habitat change affect birds?, are trends continuing or changing?, etc.
10. Tom and Stan will be going to the next monthly meeting of the Rocky River Watershed Council (fourth Wed. of each month). Both Tom and Stan would like to know why the RRWC has not been more involved with WCAS activities since we are part of the RR Watershed. They plan to encourage the council members to do so, especially for the UltraWalk. They will also talk to Mike Durkalec, Acquatics Biologist for the Metroparks, who is chairman of the RR Watershed Council.
11. The Zoo bird house trail will be studied on March 22 at 2:00 by board members. We will be evaluating where current nest boxes exist, where to put future boxes, and what are our target species. We need to be thinking about educational aspect of this trail, and if we can tie it into climate change and its effects on birds.
12. The Verizon Employee Engagement Team has volunteers we may possibly be able to use to help build bird houses for the zoo trail. They might also help by taking part in the UltraWalk.
13. Buzzard Day is March 21 and WCAS will have a table staffed by board members.
14. Kit reminded everyone that all information and articles for the Feathered Flyer needs to be emailed to her, or put on the web site, by April 4.
15. The next WCAS Board Meeting will be on Monday, April 26 at 6 p.m. at Sandwich Delites in Berea, OH.