



**2009 Annual Report to the
Atlantic Coast Joint Venture Management Board
March 10, 2010**

Highlights

- Atlantic Coast Joint Venture (ACJV) partners protected, restored and enhanced an estimated 432,626 acres of habitat in 17 states and commonwealths in FY 2009. Cumulative accomplishments for Atlantic Coast Joint Venture Partners from 1988 to the present now exceed 5.3 million acres.
- Atlantic Coast Joint Venture partners received 34 North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) standard and small grants (the most ever) in FY 2009 for a total of \$18 million in grant funds matched by \$76 million in partner funds and resulting in nearly 77,000 acres conserved. An additional 42 NAWCA projects were submitted for FY 2010 funding through the NAWCA program and 27 were selected or recommended for funding.
- Due to a partnership between the ACJV and the U.S. Attorney's office in Massachusetts, in 2009, an additional \$4.6 million was deposited in the NAWCA fund as a result of an Exxon-Mobil settlement for an off-loading oil spill in the Mystic River (Boston Harbor); this money is targeted for coastal wetland projects in Massachusetts. ACJV staff are now working with local partners and communities to develop a balanced approach to funding local projects near the site of the spill and addressing broader coastal wetland conservation needs in Massachusetts.
- ACJV partners continued their success with the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation grant program in FY 2009, receiving nine grants in six states for \$5.9 million, matched by \$9.2 million in partner funds for the conservation of 10,346 acres.
- Joint venture staff, management board and technical committees completed a revision to the joint venture strategic plan that updated and provided additional detail on goals and strategies for joint venture organization, communication, biological planning, conservation design, conservation delivery monitoring and research and articulated key roles for the joint venture in climate change research and adaptation planning and in collaborations with other landscape conservation efforts. The plan was approved by the board in July, 2009.
- Joint Venture partners (including North Carolina State University and Auburn University) made substantial progress on a three-year AFWA/USFWS multistate grant project for *Designing Sustainable Landscapes for Bird Populations in the Eastern United States* that will serve as a model for conservation design in the joint venture. Four partner meetings were completed in the South Atlantic Migratory Bird Initiative pilot area including 55 state, federal and NGO partners and resulting in the selection of about 30 focal species representing 16 habitat types. Initial landscape change analyses and species habitat modeling and decision support tool development have been completed and are expected to be completed in 2010. Additional USGS funds are now being contributed for the completion of range-wide vulnerability assessments for North American birds and for climate change planning aspects of the project.

- Joint Venture Staff and partners participated in several Northeast Regional Conservation Needs (RCNs) projects including the second phase of the Northeast Habitat Mapping project with The Nature Conservancy. Joint venture staff and partners provided support to the RCN process by suggesting and editing proposed new RCNs, and serving as Regional Technical Coordinators for two RCNs: Creation of Regional Habitat Cover Maps and Development of Habitat Conservation Initiatives at a Landscape Scale.
- The ACJV continues to strengthen relationships with the Black Duck Joint Venture (BDJV); both joint ventures are overseeing a research project that is nearing completion on wintering black duck energetics that will assist in developing meaningful habitat objectives. Similar energetics research on brant is also nearing completion. ACJV partners and staff are also collaborating with BDJV on development of annual life-cycle model of black ducks that will help year-round habitat needs for this priority species.
- ACJV, USFWS and USGS staff are designing an Integrated Waterbird Habitat Monitoring and Management program for the Atlantic Flyway that provides information to managers by integrating monitoring and management of habitats for wetland birds (shorebirds, waterfowl and wading birds) at National Wildlife Refuges, state wildlife management areas and other managed areas. USFWS and partner funds have been pooled and a post-doc hired to advance the project and initial implementation is expected during 2010. ACJV technical committees are providing information on state wetland management decision needs.
- ACJV staff and partners are playing leadership roles in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) including the latest Update. The ACJV Science Coordinator completed his term as Chair of the NAWMP Science Support Team during 2009.
- ACJV staff play a leadership role in the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan (USSCP) by representing all joint ventures on the USSCP Council and ensuring that shorebird science needs are considered in JVS and Landscape Conservation Cooperatives.
- ACJV staff and Ducks Unlimited assumed a leadership role of the Wetland Action Team under the Chesapeake Bay Program and staff participated in the writing of two chapters (on habitats and landscapes) under the Executive Order for Chesapeake Bay signed by President Obama this spring. The Wetland Action Team is now developing 2025 wetland restoration and protection goals for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed as part of the Habitat Goal Implementation Team.
- Joint venture partners in Delaware and New Jersey are now exploring a Delaware Bay Working Group to address the highest priority bird habitat conservation needs for Delaware Bay identified in the New England Mid Atlantic Bird Conservation Plan (BCR 30) and State Wildlife Action Plans. State meetings to discuss this working group were held in New Jersey and Delaware this year. ACJV staff also provided guidance to Congress and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation on needs and organizational options for a possible appropriation for Delaware Bay restoration.
- ACJV and state staff have continued to develop and facilitate landscape-level efforts to create and maintain early-successional habitat in New York and New England and improve avian monitoring in successional habitat across the region. These efforts will better coordinate management efforts among a host of partners in seven adjacent states, including state wildlife agencies, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, Universities, NGOs, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. New initiatives in Maine and New Hampshire, targeting the New England Cottontail, have energized actions in those states (and attracted \$10M in National Fish & Wildlife Foundation funds) and JV partners are making sure that migratory bird habitat is included in their efforts. The JV is also advocating with partners through webinars and other means for a regional habitat management database building on the model developed in Massachusetts.

- Joint venture staff and partners continue to play a coordination role for the Northwestern Atlantic Birds at Sea Initiative and to maintain an extensive ACJV website to distribute information. Due to the efforts of this partnership, the Mineral Management Service is funding additional ship and aerial survey and data compilation to better understand the distribution of marine birds and vulnerability to nearshore and offshore energy development. Joint venture staff are providing guidance to NOAA and to the Pacific Seabird Group on Atlantic Coast seabird issues.
- Joint Venture staff are working with an interagency collaborative composed of representatives from NOAA, the U.S. Navy, MMS and FWS, to develop a "Comprehensive Assessment of Marine Mammal, Marine Turtle, and Seabird Abundance and Spatial Distribution In U.S. Waters of the western North Atlantic Ocean." The collaborative is proposing to develop models and associated tools to provide seasonal, spatially-explicit density estimates of these marine species.
- Joint venture staff and partners continued initial conservation planning and mapping for the Piedmont Bird Conservation Region (BCR 29). They will coordinate efforts with the expansion of the Designing Sustainable Landscapes project to the Piedmont through the North and South Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperatives.
- Joint Venture staff are working with USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center to implement a Science Support Partnership project for the *Development of Estimation Methods*; this project will help guide conservation design for multiple priority species and habitats.
- Joint venture staff and partners are working with USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center to implement a Science Support Partnership grant to support on *Coastal wetland dynamics and wildlife populations: modeling the effects of sea level rise and landscape change*
- Joint venture staff and partners are working with USFS and USGS on a Quick Response research proposal on *Habitat Configuration for Mature-Forest and Scrub-Shrub Birds*.
- Joint Venture staff are helping to lead and guide the Service's implementation of climate change adaptation, strategic habitat conservation and landscape conservation cooperatives by participating in regional and national teams and working on collaborative approaches with partners.
- Joint venture staff participated in the drafting of Development and Operations plans for the North Atlantic and South Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperatives as well as initial planning for the Peninsular Florida and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperatives.
- Joint venture staff, technical committees and management board are actively involved in discussions regarding the relationship between the ACJV and emerging landscape conservation cooperatives.
- Joint venture staff and partners are contributing to national and regional products and initiatives on communications and outreach related to joint ventures, bird conservation and climate change and continue to build relationships with Congress through visits and discussions with Congressional staff.

Performance Measures by Component and Objective

Component	Objective	Overall Performance Output	Annual Accomplishment Measures	2009 Status/Accomplishments
Coordination and Organization	Structure and partnership coordination	Strategic plan	Strategic plan updated every 5 years	Update completed in 2009
		Management board	Productive management board meetings held; board members engaged and involved	Well-attended board meetings held via conference call in March and July and in person in December
		Technical committees	Productive technical committee and subcommittee meetings held; members engaged and involved	Technical committees held in February and July; subcommittee meetings met via conference calls
		State working groups	Functioning state working groups formed and maintained	State working groups in several states; state meetings in DE and NJ
		Focus area working groups	Functioning focus area working groups formed and maintained	Delaware Bay (DE,NJ) group being developed; Southern Tip expanded (VA)
	Joint venture staff, administration and funding	Staff	Appropriate levels of staff maintained for work outlined in Strategic Plan	Four full time, two part time staff and one contractor; need for additional GIS and science staff
		Administration	Administrative structure in place to manage staff budget and contracts with low overhead	Administrative structure in place through USFWS; overhead for management positions and administration is about 15%
		Funding	Sufficient funding to support JV administration, structure and seed funding	FY 2009 budget of \$831k not sufficient to maintain existing staff, meet additional science staff needs and provide seed funds
	Biological Planning	Overall structure, planning and information management	Biological Foundation Plan	Biological Foundation Plan updated and maintained as needed
Waterfowl Implementation Plan			Waterfowl Implementation Plan updated and maintained following NAWMP updates	Will be updated following NAWMP update
BCR and marine bird planning			BCR and marine bird workshops hosted, BCR and marine bird plans developed and updated as needed for all BCRs in JV	Piedmont BCR planning underway; Marine bird planning very active and funded through partnership and grants
Information available			Biological Planning information developed and maintained on ACJV website and translated to appropriate scales and formats	BCR and marine bird planning tools available; JV plans available; additional tools will be made available when complete
Biological planning steps		Priority species and focal species	Priority species lists and focal species lists developed and maintained for each BCR	Priority species lists complete for all BCRs in the joint venture; focal species developed for Designing Sustainable Landscapes Project

Component	Objective	Overall Performance Output	Annual Accomplishment Measures	2009 Status/Accomplishments
		Population objectives	Population objectives stepped down from continental, national or range-wide plans to BCRs and states	Completed BCR plans include stepped down landbird population objectives using PIF methodology; Game Bird technical committee finalizing waterfowl population objectives
		Threats and limiting factors	Threats and limiting factors assessed for focal species	Known threats and limiting factors identified through BCR plans and waterfowl implementation plan but more detailed assessment is needed
		Population-habitat models developed	Population-habitat models developed for focal species in each BCR	Modeling underway through Designing Sustainable Landscapes project using a combination of modeling approaches (habitat suitability, occupancy, etc.)
Conservation Design	Conservation design resources at appropriate scales	GIS databases	Spatial data including habitat data layers (e.g. land cover) and other key landscape features (e.g. roads, urban areas, protected areas) maintained at flyway, BCR and state scales	Basic spatial data maintained for ACJV staff. Additional spatial data needs to be available via the Web. Basic spatial analyses completed for most BCRs.
		Decision support tools available	Decision support tools available for partners at appropriate scales including BCR, state and local scales	Decision support tools being developed through Designing Sustainable Landscapes. Not yet available.
	Conservation design steps	Assessment of current habitat capacity	Assessments of current habitat capacity at BCR or state scales using population-habitat models	Expert-driven assessment of waterfowl habitat capacity in Waterfowl Implementation Plan; model-based assessment being developed through Waterfowl Migration Model. Additional model-based assessment being developed through Designing Sustainable Landscapes. Not yet available.
		Prediction of future habitat capacity	Assessments of future habitat capacity at BCR or state scales using population-habitat models and different scenarios for stressors (e.g. climate change and urban growth)	Model-based assessment being developed through Designing Sustainable Landscapes. Not yet available.
		Decision support tools developed	Decision support tools developed to guide management decisions on how much of what habitat is needed where on the landscape	Decision support tools being developed through Designing Sustainable Landscapes. Not yet available.
		Optimal landscape designs	Optimal landscape designs developed to guide management decisions	Optimal landscape design statistical approaches being developed through

Component	Objective	Overall Performance Output	Annual Accomplishment Measures	2009 Status/Accomplishments
				Science Support Program. Landscape designs being developed through Designing Sustainable Landscapes. Not yet available.
		Habitat objectives	Estimates of habitat needed to achieve population objectives	Simple estimates of habitat needed to support population objectives available in BCR plans. Need to use model approach in future
		Managed/protected lands	Annual assessments of habitat under protection and management and gaps in protection	Secured lands data annually updated by TNC in Northeast; less frequently in Southeast; management database developed by MA with possible expansion to other states.
Conservation Delivery	Delivery Partnerships	State working groups	Conservation projects developed, funded and implemented by state working groups	Maine Wetlands Coalition had 10 projects funded through NAWCA and CWG.
		Focus area working groups	Conservation projects developed, funded and implemented by focus area working groups	Projects implemented through numerous focus area projects including Altamaha (GA), Buzzards Bay (MA), Chesapeake Bay (MD), Down East and Kennebec (ME), Onslow Bight (NC) Cape May (NJ), Delaware Bay (NJ, DE), Montezuma and St. Lawrence (NY), Northeast Ecological Corridor (PR), Winyah and ACE Basin (SC), Southern Tip and Roanoke (VA), Lake Champlain (VT, NY).
		Regional habitat delivery groups	Delivery guidance by habitat type or program developed	Early successional partnerships developed in New England and New York; forest conservation in northern New England.
	Project Funding	ACJV project seed funding	Proposals submitted and prioritized	No seed funds available in FY 2009
			Projects funded, acres conserved	No seed funds available in FY 2009
			Projects tracked and reported	No seed funds available in FY 2009
			Additional funding for seed projects	No seed funds available in FY 2009
		Federal grants	NAWCA projects submitted, projects approved, acres conserved	54 projects submitted, 34 approved, 77,000 acres
			National Coastal Wetland projects submitted, approved, acres conserved	9 grants approved, 10,346 acres
	Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation projects submitted, projects approved, acres conserved		3 projects selected	

Component	Objective	Overall Performance Output	Annual Accomplishment Measures	2009 Status/Accomplishments
			National Fish and Wildlife Foundation projects submitted, projects approved, acres conserved	Not available
		State Wildlife Grants and other state grants	State Wildlife Grant project applications submitted, projects approved, acres conserved,	Not available
		Non traditional funding sources	Funding sought and received from non-traditional funding sources	Over 700 bird habitat conservation projects completed by JV partners through various sources
	Information for Guiding Delivery	Informed Federal, State and foundation programs	Information provided to guide delivery of Farm Bill, Forest Legacy and other federal and state and foundation programs	Early successional workshops assist Farm Bill delivery; decision support tools being developed
		Informed State Wildlife Action Plans	Information provided to guide revision of State Wildlife Action Plans and information compiled on regional priorities from state plans	JV staff and state partners work closely on regional information to support SWAPS and database to compile SWAPs
Monitoring and Evaluation	Population monitoring	Coordination of existing monitoring programs	Coordination and participation in existing monitoring programs,	Marsh bird monitoring
		Existing monitoring programs modified	Monitoring programs modified to meet ACJV objectives	Expected through flyway waterbird monitoring
		Monitoring needs identified and programs developed	Identification of unmet priority monitoring needs; design of additional monitoring programs	Painted bunting monitoring developed
		Atlantic Flyway Waterbird Monitoring	Integrated Atlantic Flyway waterbird monitoring and management system developed and maintained	Initial modeling developed, post-doc hired, coordination with JV technical committees
	Habitat monitoring	Habitat monitoring objectives	Habitat monitoring objectives and parameters developed	Not yet developed
		Landscape change assessment	Assessment of net change in ACJV landscape conditions and habitat types at multiple scales	Coarse (NLCD) assessment as part of JV plans, not available at finer scales. Working with NSST to develop BCR net landscape change initiative.
	Conservation tracking	Project tracking database	Spatial ACJV accomplishment tracking database improved and maintained	Over 700 records tracked annually, half with point data available. Need to develop or work with existing spatial databases
		Managed lands	Consistent spatial managed lands database developed and annually updated	Developed in Massachusetts and proposed for other states in ACJV

Component	Objective	Overall Performance Output	Annual Accomplishment Measures	2009 Status/Accomplishments
Research	Research coordination and funding	Science Advisory Committee	Advisory committee established and meetings held	Not yet fully established
		Research priority list	Annual list updated and maintained on website	Draft list developed by technical committees
		Program and grant funding for research	Research proposals written, projects funded	Research proposals for SSP and LCC funds
	Research prioritization	Uncertainties	Key uncertainties and assumptions in biological planning and conservation design identified and prioritized	Uncertainties identified through Designing Sustainable Landscapes
		Sensitivity	Sensitivity of limiting factors assessed to prioritize research needs within ACJV	Not fully assessed
Communication and Outreach	Strategy and Assessment	Annual outreach strategy	Outreach strategy updated annually	Annual strategy developed
		Assessment	Periodic assessments of priority audiences conducted	Not yet conducted
	Partners	Annual outreach strategy	Outreach strategy updated annually	Annual strategy developed
		Newsletter	Quarterly electronic newsletter developed and distributed	Done
		Website	Web pages designed for partner use created updated; information available in appropriate scale and format	Being kept up to date
		Fact sheets	State fact sheets updated annually	Updated in 2009
		Partner meetings and presentations	Meetings with and presentations to states, field units of federal agencies, conservation organizations and others	Multiple meetings throughout flyway
	Public	Brochure	Brochure developed/updated	Brochure updated, folder developed
		Web pages	Web pages designed for public use created and updated	Multiple new pages developed
		Educational products	Educational products designed for habitat conservation produced	Not yet developed
	Congress	Outreach strategy	Biennial congressional strategy developed/updated	111 th Congress strategy developed
		Contacts and visits	Information provided to members and staff	Information provided to 19 offices of key members
			Visits completed with Association of Joint Venture Management Boards	12 visits conducted
	Other hill/district/site visits completed		No other visits conducted	

FY 2008 Acres Conserved by Program

Program	Protected	Restored	Enhanced	Total
Coastal	10,046	300	0	10,346
DU	8,838	3,398	15,923	28,158
NAWCA	62,618	12,354	1,927	76,899
NWR	5,835	0	0	5,835
PFFW	43,408	20,848	3,097	67,353
State	17,673	882	118,004	136,558
TNC	139,169	0	0	139,169

FY 2008 Acres Conserved by State

State	Protected	Restored	Enhanced	Total
CT	1,679	197	479	2,355
DE	38	1,207	6,550	7,795
FL	15,468	2,177	107,549	125,195
GA	23,789	2,429	24	26,242
MA	7,034	942	599	8,575
MD	10,201	1,071	2,506	13,778
ME	56,598	4,112	0	60,709
NC	24,561	8,413	16,120	49,094
NH	1,340	0	0	1,340
NJ	2,066	1,176	0	3,242
NY	74,507	530	235	75,271
PA	205	110	3,059	3,374
PR	445	416	469	1,329
RI	928	41	0	969
SC	25,101	1,946	542	27,589
VA	12,648	10,085	295	23,028
VT	2,236	417	89	2,741
Total	258,844	35,267	138,516	432,626

Cumulative Total Acres Restored by Year

Year	Protected	Restored	Enhanced	Total
1988	44,938	6,088	7,620	58,645
1989	35,259	7,211	11,536	54,007
1990	146,612	3,017	27,863	177,492
1991	115,369	8,677	25,626	149,672
1992	72,297	25,839	21,506	119,641
1993	122,494	6,452	34,405	163,351
1994	56,849	24,635	41,358	122,841
1995	37,736	30,830	25,425	93,992
1996	25,065	17,530	23,020	65,614
1997	36,665	11,716	12,318	60,698
1998	49,085	10,505	15,348	74,938
1999	177,401	34,185	11,800	223,386
2000	93,687	17,987	7,170	118,844
2001	175,012	28,044	17,053	220,109
2002	367,948	53,745	12,297	433,990
2003	141,686	32,211	18,565	192,461
2004	56,847	13,982	18,231	89,060
2005	1,021,904	7,502	19,137	1,048,543
2006	194,464	14,725	25,205	234,394
2007	336,449	21,951	48,828	407,228
2008	185,793	36,856	53,982	276,631
2009	258,844	35,267	138,516	432,626
unknown	432,867	12,932	85,823	531,622
Total	4,185,271	461,887	702,632	5,349,785

The sources of information were: the NAWCA databases maintained by the USFWS Division of Bird Habitat Conservation and the Atlantic Coast Joint Venture, the National Coastal Wetland Conservation Act grant FAIMS database and project files, the National Wildlife Refuge System Realty database, the Ducks Unlimited, Inc. national accomplishment database, the USFWS habITS database, the Nature Conservancy accomplishment database, contributions from state Waterfowl Technical Committee members for activities accomplished by their agencies, contributions regional and state Partners for Fish and Wildlife Coordinators, and other sources. Although significant efforts were made to avoid double-counting acreage accomplishments that were shared among these programs, limited information on some of these projects make it likely that some double-counting occurred.

Fiscal Year 2009 Partner Accomplishments
(map only reflects partners that included latitude and longitude data)

