**Attendees:**  Breck Carmichael (SC), Emily Jo Williams (ABC), Patty Riexinger (NY), John O’Leary (MA), Gary Casabona (NRCS), Mike Burger (NAS), Catherine Sparks (RI), Jim Connolly (ME), Mark Scott (VT), Sarah Fleming (DU), Sarah Hartman (TNC), Bob Ellis (VA), Larry Herrighty (NJ), David Cobb (NC), Diane Eggeman (FL), Gwen Brewer (MD), Rick Jacobson (CT), Pam Toschik, John Stanton (USFWS) Mitch Hartley, Craig Watson, Deb Reynolds, Tim Jones, Kirsten Luke (ACJV).

**MEETING MINUTES**

Breck called the meeting to order, reviewed the agenda and asked for introductions. Minutes from the March meeting were approved unanimously

**Bylaws**

Rick lead a discussion of the new ACJV Bylaws, originally discussed at the March board retreat. Potential issues included what the ACJV staff role would be in actions taken by Board, Board membership, issues related to who gets to vote, and the set of officers needed. A major issue related to finances, and the need for a new officer: secretary/treasurer. In the future, we expect to accrue a small amount of money from registration fees at our spring meeing, and possibly from others sources (e.g., corporate support). When that happens, we’ll need a secretary/treasurer to oversee those funds and report out to the chairs and the board. Mike Burger asked about attendance at annual meeting, versus attendance at discretionary meeting. Mitch suggested that the bylaws require one face-to-face meeting, but others might be held via conference call/webinar.

EJ Williams asked about conductance of meetings. The bylaws state that most business is by consensus but that financial decisions would be covered by Roberts Rules of Order, which Rick noted were very specific if also bureaucratic. Most decisions will be by consensus but financial decisions will be formal votes. Gwen asked if it was intended that individuals would recuse themselves if they had any conflict of interest with decision. Gwen also asked whether “present” meant virtually as well? E.g., if Craig LeSchack can’t be here does give a proxy does that mean he’s present? Mitch noted that we handled it that way in the past. What happens if you don’t attend two consecutive annual meetings? The bylaws only suggest that the board chairs check in with a member when that happens. It doesn’t mean that the representative would be removed, just asked if they are still interested. Pam asked for a clarification about the term budget, and asked that we distinguish between appropriated USFWS funds (i.e., our base budget for paying salaries, etc.) and any discretionary funds raised by the board. From the US Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) perspective they want to clarify that the Board doesn’t have direct oversight of the FWS’s budget allocation, which is administered and supervised by FWS staff. Rick will work with Pam to clarify since the intent of that section was only to pertain to money raised by the Board. Board business will only be conducted when a quorum is present. A quorum was defined as 50% of board members present. Dianne asked about membership and would prefer to see that new membership had to be approved by 2/3 vote of the Board. After discussion, it was agreed that 2/3 vote meant 2/3 of members present or voting (i.e., including proxies), assuming a quorum is present, as required. John O asked about whether there needs to be a section on the role of the Board and the role of the Coordinator? Rick would prefer not to include that level of detail. Pam noted there was a parallel process of revising the Strategic Plan, and asked if we’d want the newer language there? Pam would prefer to use the newer language. Rick said we have two options: a) try to edit at lunch and adopt today; b) work on this after the meeting and bring them back at the next meeting. The board is willing to work on adopting them today. Catherine thanked Rick for his efforts.

**Biological Priorities & Annual Workplan**

Mitch provided some background context, about our process of clarifying and redefining our focus since becoming an all-bird JV. If you look at the Workplan, the version in the packet is annotated for the Board with the status/progress on each item. Green means all is well, changes to deadlines are in red and any substantive comments are in yellow. There have been changes relative to the Science Program Assessment and we will talk more about this later in the agenda. The proportional allocation is there to give the Board an idea of how staff time overall is allocated. Breck noted that there was a reference to a summer meeting in July; he said this is the last meeting that will occur in July. EJ noted that Deb’s section seemed briefer than other sections (Objective 7), and suggested we add a sentence or two to show how these support the biological priorities. EJ asked whether we should add a task supporting NABCI? Deb said she will add that, especially since BEAC will be part of NABCI.

ACTION: Add a few sentences to workplan to clarify how each section links to JV priorities.

Dianne asked specifically what the new partnerships were in 2015, under Task 1.3? There is one in Maine, two in the Chesapeake Bay (Rappahannock region) and the Palomar project in FL, plus a new Everglades wildlife refuge partnership and Myakka Partnership in Florida. Dianne mentioned there were very few deadlines beyond 2016, other than the ongoing annual tasks. Mike would like to add support for a little more information as to how the tasks relate to Biological Priorities. The individual staff effort tables are beyond the need of the Board and really is staff oversight/supervision. Mitch said we were doing that mostly for inreach but maybe we can maintain that internally for those Board members that may want to see that level of detail. We will add more information in the first section, then remove staff level detail and the workplan would be more appropriate for the Board. Pam asked whether it made since to have two different documents: a) an accomplishment report and b) a workplan. Mike suggested adding it in the same document versus having two separate documents. Mitch noted that we are in the early stages of developing an annual accomplishment report (JV Communications Plan).

Patty noted that this is a workplan for the staff and doesn’t include what the larger partnership is doing. Mitch noted that we have struggled with this over the years and have a hard time getting accomplishment reporting from all the partnership (about 75% reporting on average). Mike noted that we have had this discussion in the Strategic Plan revision and we are trying to head in that direction. Rick anticipates our Strategic Plan will provide the impetus for setting us up to do this in the future. Craig thinks we are doing what Patty is asking but we haven’t captured it in a form that board members can review. EJ noted that when she saw this it made her think of the matrix of JV functions. Mitch noted that we have shared the Desired Characteristics of JV matrix with the Board, indicating the progress we’ve made to date. With the size of the ACJV it is a fairly monumental effort just to collect and compile basic accomplishment data from our partners. David Cobb noted that from the partner’s perspective the definitions also have made it challenging for partners to report. For example, NC has five different divisions doing conservation and trying to cross-walk our definitions with their efforts is difficult. Craig mentioned that one of the issues we had is the geographic scope of our JV. AMJV has what Patricia asked for, but we have seven BCRs versus one in most other JVs. Tim said that our BCR plans are sort of a workplan for the Partnership as a whole. Bob Ellis asked whether there was an accomplishment report for each BCR. S taff reported that there is a general one for SAMBI but not the others. How do we understand what others are doing in the BCRs? EJ thinks this speaks to the Partnership and not the staff. It’s not fair to put this on the staff. How does this Board get this type of reporting done? Pam thinks we’re circling around Patty’s question and asked what are we collectively doing that is different than our individual actions? Maybe Board members can step up and fill some of the capacity gaps? Rick said we need to think how we capitalize on the New England Cottontails effort? Breck noted that as a habitat JV this should be the largest proportional effort; therefore we should lump some of these categories since they are all related to habitat delivery.

**Strategic Plan Revision**

Rick noted that we have formed a workgroup to revise the ACJV Strategic Plan. After the Spring (2105) retreat the workgroup worked on condensing the previous Strategic Plan and revising the Mission and Vision. We are still struggling on how to incorporate measureable objectives. We have had a more recent conference call than the draft in front of the Board. Rick would like the Board to decide on the Vision statement. Do we include human and societal values? Rick thinks the shorter version is implicit in including human dimensions. Dianne and David would include the ecological and societal values. Does the Board agree to the following?

“An Atlantic Coast region where native birds thrive to support ecological and societal values.”

What about the word habitat? So we could have “where native birds and their habitats thrive.” Mitch suggested adding the “ecological and societal values” to the Mission statement instead of having it in the Vision statement. Dianne would like to keep the concept of human dimensions in the Vision statement. Pam would strongly support keeping the human aspect in, but have it in the Mission statement. Rick noted that we have two vehicles (Vision and Mission) and three concepts: birds, habitats and people. We need to decide where to put each of those. Do we have a preference on how we move forward? Pam suggested that on the last call we modified the Vision and Mission statement, and asked if we can share that. Gwen suggested “An Atlantic Coast region where birds and their habitats thrive in a cultural landscape.” EJ suggested “An Atlantic Coast region where birds and their habitats thrive and benefit people.” Mark Scott suggested adding “American” people. David asked who are the “people?” Who decides what the benefit is? Pam suggested that the benefit would be what we decide it is. Harder to think about what society wants, easier to think about what the benefits are. Rick thinks all the societal values are in the mission statement. Catherine wants to put a period after the word thrives (“An Atlantic Coast region where native birds and habitats thrive.”). I would deal with the benefits to ecological and societal values in the mission statement. David would like to know how the Mission statement will read before agreeing to this suggestion.

Dianne said “for the benefit” doesn’t convey the notion off access. Mike Burger said he was getting comfortable that the benefit includes ecosystem services and enjoyment of the public (i.e., access). Catherine asked Dianne if this is a public access issue. Dianne said that this is a big part of it. Catherine wondered whether the Board needs to decide what the role of the ACJV is in public access, versus the role of our individual agencies/organizations. Mike wants to include societal values but doesn’t want to include public access explicitly. Mitch would like us to keep benefit since it is a much wider concept. Rick thinks we’re close and would like the workgroup to revise the Mission and get back to the Board with language that includes “use, benefit and possibly enjoyment.”

Mitch discussed the fact that the JV needs a clear set of priorities and a set of measurable objectives. The Board would be expected to sign off on this. We should be asking what are we, as a joint venture, doing that is different/better because we are doing it together as a group of partners? The strategic plan will lay out what we hope to do and how to get there, integrating ACJV staff, and partner efforts. There was a discussion about what the Watchlist was and how it related to BCR priority lists and state’s SGCN. Both the Watchlist and BCR list are similar but the BCR lists may include more species on there due to human dimensions, as we’ve been discussing. It was not clear whether most hunted species were not on the watchlist because their populations are stable, or because if they are abundant enough for harvest they are not of acute conservation concern. David said that there are some species that we still hunt even though their populations are declining (e.g., Bobwhite). Rick suggested that we need a set of species and measurable objectives. Therefore, we need a workgroup to move forward on that. The Board wants to move forward with setting these priorities and measurable objectives. We need species distributions, regional representation, habitat distribution and societal considerations. EJ said we should consider this a set of priorities that will change over time such as every five years. There was interest in having a workgroup of Technical Committees and Board members evaluate species/habitats. Breck suggested that the members of the Strategic Plan workgroup work with the Technical Committees. Gwen suggested that the Board might want to provide a charge to the workgroup so it’s clear what they are working on.

ACTION: The Strategic Plan workgroup will develop a clear charge to the Technical Committees to develop the priority species/habitat list.

John suggested that maybe we need to have some measurable objectives for Board members to participate. Maybe not just attending the meetings, but how each state/NGO could contribute to our ommon goal(s).

Mark wanted to know whether human dimension and public access could be put in as a strategy with a measurable objective.

Gwen noted that the Waterfowl Implementation Plan and BCR plans are mentioned but we need to include the other Initiative Plans. Also, we may want to link directly to objectives in the Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Business Initiative, and/or SWAPs,

John asked about how the Service looks at the relationship between the LCCs and the ACJV. Pam thought that by doing the Strategic Plan we can better define that relationship. Mitch noted that there is good ongoing dialogue between the LCCs and ACJV and, in general, we are working together in a common direction. LCCs look to us for certain information and they are helping us with many of our science needs, such as helping our ability to have more explicit habitat and population goals.

Dianne wondered whether we should be looking at priorities at the BCR scale. Mike and Mitch noted that the Strategic Plan work committee had a similar discussion.

**ACJV Science Program Status Review**

The Board previously endorsed a review of the ACJV Science Program. ACJV staff developed an exhaustive summary of all science projects we had been involved in or were planning. At a June 8th webinar the tech committee decided that there were only four potential projects that met the objectives laid out by the technical committee (i.e., identified as a science need, has already had a major investment of staff/partner effort in the past, not yet completed) and needed to be prioritized: IWMM, SAMBI DSL, developing Population Objectives, and a black duck/salt marsh Decision Support Tool (DST). (Tim’s presentation is available for more information) Dianne said she appreciated the process of how we got here and appreciated the staff’s effort to deliver science that can help the individual partners do their jobs in habitat delivery. Gwen noted that if the Board wants to move on another project then it’s up to the partners to step up and help get this done. Mitch noted we have tried to rely more on partner support (and less ACJV staff leadership and coordination) in recent years in developing population objectives and haven’t been very effective with concerted effort by ACJV staff.

**Grants Updates**

The 2016-01 NAWCA February cycle results are in; 11 excellent projects were submitted but only three were funded. Fourteen proposals were submitted for the 2016-02 July cycle. Two-star projects were withdrawn and re-submitted; single-star projects were not withdrawn. Craig expects that getting many of these 14 funded will be difficult.

Mitch noted he was surprised that we are still getting funding for the GLRI; approximately $250,000 per year. We had only one submission this year, which was funded: headwater forest protection for the Niagara River, which is a globally important bird area.

The National Coastal Wetland Conservation Grant program is becoming an important program for us. We have gotten more projects from the Southeast Region (R4) in recent years. Breck asked whether you could have a Coastal and NAWCA grants on the same project. Mitch noted that you could, so long as you were clear about your intentions in your proposal/budget. Sarah Fleming asked when we would be looking for GLRI proposals again, and Mitch said generally proposals are due in February. EJ Williams asked when will Coastal Grants decision be announced, and was told December or January.

**NAWCA / BP Funding**

Kirsten put together NAWCA maps (in the packets and on the wall). NAWCA has multiple sources of funds: appropriated dollars, and other funds mostly targeted to the “coastal zone.” Since 2013 there has been an additional $15-20 million per year as part of criminal fine for the 2010 BP oil spill. However, there has been a real decline in appropriated dollars, roughly coincident with the introduction of BP fines, and the “other” (Coastal Zone) funds have also decreased (though not as much). NAWCA Council has struggled somewhat to decide how (and how much $) to spend the BP funds. There seems to be a split in the Council between members who want BP funds go to helping projects in the prairies; while other members opposed that effort and prefer to have those funds more focused on the Gulf. Last December, Council agreed to spend more money in the prairies. In the past there have been two slates (coastal and non); this past round they presented three slates, adding one for BP funds. This past round they used several million dollars of “coastal” funds to fund high-scoring projects in the Gulf Coast, then used some of the BP funds for projects in the prairies. As a result of not using BP funds to fund Gulf projects, our JV got very few of our strong projects funded. JVs were asked to discuss this with their respective Management Boards. Senator Cochoran has raised concerns about use of BP funds, and added language to the Service’s budget that BP monies should be spent in the Gulf states.

Larry asked how they were able to spend BP funds outside the Gulf region. The court settlement gives Council that latitude. EJ asked if there was a tie to the Gulf Coast for the projects in the Prairies that were funded with BP funds. Mitch replied there was a biological linkage to the Gulf. Craig brought up the issue of the nexus to the Gulf Coast. Initially our applicants were providing a nexus to the Gulf via a “hotspot” map showing band return connections to the Gulf. Council apparently has decided to remove all the hotspots from the map except for the Gulf Coast area and the Prairie Pothole region.

ACTION: Mitch will give Bob Ellis more information on the NAWCA projects in Virginia that were not funded.

Breck asked Mitch if any other JV Mgmt Boards were planning on writing letters to NAWCA Council. Mitch did not know. There was discussion about the relative threats to areas in the ACJV and in the prairies. EJ asked whether ACJV staff can document whether our JV is experiencing more significant (or long-term) threats than the Prairies. EJ suggested we get objective information on this, before we make any claims about that issue. Breck said that some of our partners may have discussions with Senator Whitman before the next MBCC meeting, as there has been some talk about that from applicants in our JV.

EJ – Mitch you brought us a message from Council staff, is there any expectation that we will do something? Mitch said we were told that our board should weigh in on this with Council if they have concerns.

**Bylaws Revisit**

Rick said the bylaws were recrafted slightly, to incorporate minor suggestions that were made in the morning: changes made to Mission, 2/3 needed to approve new member, section on attendance, finances/ACJV account, and ¾ needed for voting off board.

**Corporate Funding Considerations**

A committee (David Cobb, Sarah Hartman, Mike Burger, Craig LeSchack) was established to address the ACJV obtaining commercial/industrial support. Some questions to board members were posed (see handout). Mitch went over “Suggested Next Steps.” Sarah Fleming asked how funds might be allocated; Mitch said that we would develop a decision-making process for the Board. EJ commented that other JVs handle such support differently, and suggested discussing Management Board representation by corporate contributors. Decision at this time was not to seek such members out for board position until those relationships are well-established. Gary suggested that he would take the one-page document and send it to his superiors for their input. Pam said in the USFWS it went through our Solicitor’s Office and was ok. Rick noted that corporate contributions would not necessarily be related to Board membership; any such corporate entity that would end up on our board should be interested and involved in conservation. Gwen cautioned use of funds for food/breaks, etc. as that may not appeal to corporate interest in showing conservation work on the ground. The committee will continue to work with others to identify potential “red flags” and other concerns relative to solicitation. EJ noted some corporate sponsorship may be different than other corporations that have foundations with the purpose of making charitable contributions; e.g., Plum Creek has RFPs to deliver habitat conservation through its foundation. Sarah Fleming noted that DU does a lot of work with corporations and said that providing explicit goals and objectives means much more to funders than a general proposal.

ACTION: Committee will work to revise one-pager for folks to use to obtain feedback from their agency/organization for any concerns.

**Board Funding for Priorities**

Breck reviewed our discussion of this in March, and how we’d be charging registration for the next (spring) meeting, to cover some of our basic costs for the year (e.g., AJVMB dues, and breaks). The other funding needs outstanding include 1) projects that we need financial support from the Board in order to complete (science or implementation) due to lack of staff capacity; and 2) providing some level of ongoing support to maintain current staffing level, in the face of declining budgets, which the board has acknowledged as important. Rick was anticipating having more discreet funding requests and projects to vote on. Mitch says we are ready to do that, but no specific proposals were brought forward for this meeting, in part because our science priorities were on the table for discussion by the board. What is needed now is to discuss an amount to be provided by members to assist in JV budget shortfalls. EJ noted it could be problematic, but ABC has a development staff to perhaps assist with projects and other JV needs. ABC and WMI could handle money on behalf of the ACJV. Pam asked EJ to quantify the amount of overhead they charged on agreements. EJ said they often subsidized JVs to keep overhead charges at a minimum. Rick asked if USFWS could pay an assessment, but noted that USFWS already is contributing significantly to the JV (currently 100% of their budget, approximately $0.9M). Gary though that for NRCS an assessment probably would not work; Rick asked Gary C. to find out about NRCS. Rick asked about NGOs, and Mike Burger said it may depend on the amount that is requested and if it is a regional project or an assessment. DU would need to know how the money would be spent and the justification. TNC is about the same; the amount requested is a factor, and they would have to know in advance, but $1000 seems reasonable. ABC would be more supportive of specific projects. Craig W. suggested a matrix for partners to identify capabilities. Gwen discussed the AMJV model which is kind of informal yet there is an expectation that most partners will contribute in most years. Breck is concerned with securing the GIS Spatial Analysist’s position beyond the current year-to-year soft money situation. Patty asked about when partners would need to provide money; Rick wanted to know what is the AJCV budget year. Now that by-laws have been adopted, we can find out how to orchestrate handling funds from multiple partners, perhaps use WMI, have Board members find out about assessments; Rick suggested we have all this in place for the Spring meeting.

ACTION: ACJV staff and chairs will put together two page document/assessment plan for use by Board members.

**Communications Update**

Kirsten updated the Board on GIS products we are serving up to partners, showing NAWCA layers helpful to potential applicants. Deb updated the Board on the new IWMM website, and the example NAWCA outreach project that was discussed at the Spring meeting in Charleston. That product has evolved from a two page document to an online storyboard product. Kirsten went through the example, explaining the products and images. Deb explained the idea behind this project and asked the Board for feedback. John suggested we include pictures of people enjoying and using the project area, e.g. duck hunters, or families enjoying a property. Catherine asked who the audience might be. It could primarily be used for Congressional staff, or could be a model for different audiences. Patty noted that “before and after” pictures of habitat and wildlife would help to tell the story not only to the federal audience, but to state and local legislative audiences. There was much discussion on how to use a product like this, particularly as a link distributed and networked. The general discussion was the product was great and very useful for states. John suggested allowing states to use this, and Kirsten said it is available to states, and could relieve ACJV staff of some of their outreach work. Breck asked that staff refine this product for South Carolina, since this was the first example.

ACTION: Deb and Kirsten will refine the web-based NAWCA example for South Carolina and Deb will work on different audiences and messages.

**LCC Updates**

Breck noted that an Acting SALCC Coordinator has been working to coordinate activities, but is now gone; their newest product is Conservation Blueprint 2.0. They recently finished a work- planning process and identified three priorities: promoting the blueprint, improving science, and implementing conservation. The SALCC is discussing corporate support as well.

Catherine shared a handout from the NALCC. Some state directors have expressed concern about what they are getting from the NALCC in terms of useful products, which was discussed at the last NALCC Steering Committee meeting. We briefly discussed the status of the Connecticut River Pilot Project, and Regional Conservation Opportunity Areas. No updates for Peninsular Florida or Caribbean LCCs.

Mitch discussed how he started setting up quarterly calls with the the ACJV and all of the LCCs and Climate Science Centers in our flyway. It has been difficult maintaining that momentum at busy times of year (e.g., prior to the summer board meeting), but Mitch will continue to set up these calls on a regular basis. John O’Leary noted that CSCs are a really valuable resource. Patty noted that Ken Elowe plans to visit with states to assist them with how to better use NALCC science products.

**Changes in Meeting Schedule**

Due to changes in the regulatory framework, this summer’s Atlantic Flyway Council meeting will be the last summer meeting, and the main meeting now will shift to October. The ACJV Management Board will start to have it’s annual board meeting in 2016 at the October AFC meeting, and we will continue to meet each spring for a two-three-day board retreat. This format should work better for Management Board meetings. Mitch suggested that due to the difficulty of having a partner workshop and board meeting during the same week, in the future we will have a workshop at the winter AFC Tech Section meeting, then have a regular tech committee meeting in October, when we have our board meeting. There was a brief discussion on the venue of the next Retreat (e.g., Georgia, Florida) with no resolution.

**New Business**

Breck asked Pam to update the Board on the status of refilling the Coordinator’s position. It has just been advertised, and Pam asked for help in recruiting for this position, which closes on July 30. Rick offered to assist with selection process, and Breck and EJ volunteered as well. Sarah Fleming asked if there was going to be a panel, and Pam said it is not quite worked out yet. Sarah asked about the timeline, and Pam said as quickly as possible. At any rate, a new Coordinator should be hired well before the time of the next Board meeting.

A few last additions to the By-laws were made, as well as those discussed in the morning. The ACJV’s business year is proposed as being the calendar year; proposed officer terms of service are the calendar year. Larry moved that we adopt the new by-laws, Mike Burger seconded the motion, and the By-laws were passed by unanimous vote.

Breck recognized Mitch for his service as ACJV Coordinator over the last four years, and expressed his appreciation for all of his good work during Breck’s time on the board.

ACTION: Before the next meeting, a Secretary/Treasurer needs to be appointed or delegated.

Action/Notable Items were summarized at meetings end, which included:

* Workplan to be modified and distributed
* Strategic Planning committee to give charge to tech committee for highest priorities and measurable objectives for new Strategic Plan
* Mitch will provide additional information about NAWCA status to Bob Ellis
* Corporate funding committee will develop one-page summary for further review by partner agencies/NGO
* ACJV staff and chairs will draft a two-page document describing an assessment by board members to help fund the ACJV
* Deb and Kirsten will refine the SC NAWCA outreach example
* Pam to enlist board members on panel to refill Coordinator position
* New ACJV Bylaws approved
* A new Secretary/Treasurer needs to be chosen by spring, 2016