American Oystercatcher Recovery Initiative
2017 Working Group update
History

- Oystercatchers recognized as a species of conservation concern
- The American Oystercatcher Working Group was formed at the Waterbird Society Meeting in 2001.
- Mix of researchers, land managers, conservation groups
- Rapidly expanding group
- Annual meetings have been held since 2001
- In 2008 the group developed a business plan for Oystercatcher population recovery in cooperation with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Oystercatcher recovery business plan

• 2008 - Business plan for Oystercatcher population recovery developed in cooperation with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
• Problem: declining population
• Objective: 30% population increase in 10 years
  – ~ 0.5 chicks/pair/year
• Solution: Coordinated long-term management and conservation
• Predicted outcomes for different levels of funding/capacity
• Scale:
  – 10M over 10 years in matching support from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)
  – Encompasses the range of the American Oystercatcher on the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts of the United States
**American Oystercatcher**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Duration:</th>
<th>Program Investment:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008 - 2018 (yr 6 of 10)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NFWF Funding</strong></td>
<td>$3.7M $5.0M (74%)</td>
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<td><strong>Grantee Match</strong></td>
<td>$4.2M Ratio: 1:1:1</td>
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**Species Outcomes:**
- **American Oystercatcher**
  - *Haematopus palliatus*

**Goal**
- Increase the # of individuals from 10,204 to 13,265
- Increase the # young per breeding pair from 0.28 to 0.5

**Progress**
- 35%
- Updated 2013
- 93%
- Updated 2013
Projected Oystercatcher population trend with three management outcomes:

- Red line: No new management
- Yellow line: 50% of pop w/ increased fecundity
- Blue line: 100% of pop w/increased fecundity

Population projections
AMOY Steering Committee

- Organized in 2012
- Small group dedicated to advancing Working Group goals throughout the year
- Meeting agenda – priority items
- Organize annual meeting
- Spearhead working group initiatives
- 2 year term
AMOY Steering Committee

• Shiloh Schulte, Alex Wilke, Todd Pover, Felicia Sanders, Ruth Boettcher, Tim Keyes (meeting rep)

• Implemented new succession/turnover plan for the steering committee

• Call for nominations and vote online

• Todd, Ruth and Felicia are stepping down this year – Alex staying on to help with transition

• New committee: Shiloh Schulte, Shilo Felton, Lindsay Addison, Pam Denmon, Tim Keyes
Conservation Strategies

• Coordinated Management
  – Planning
  – Communication
  – Shared resources, management strategies

• Coordinated Monitoring
  – Common metrics, survey standards, and reporting

• Conservation scale
  – ~900 miles of coastline managed
  – ~1400 AMOY pairs under active management
  – 30+ partners in US AMOY Working Group
  – Partners in every Atlantic and Gulf Coast state
  – Federal, State, and private support for the initiative
  – Expanded international cooperation
2017 Productivity
Productivity

AMOY Recovery Initiative

Average 0.50 chicks/pair per year after start of recovery initiative
Projected Oystercatcher population trend with three management outcomes

- No new management
- 50% of pop w/ increased fecundity
- 100% of pop w/increased fecundity

Population:
- 2003: 10971
- 2005: 11284
- 2007: 10100
## Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Initiative

**Conservation Outcomes**

*The life history of shorebirds is a chronicle of life on the edge of survival.*

Atlantic Flyway 10 year goals are expressed at three levels: the strategy, the species, and the initiative level.

| Initiative Goal: Increase Atlantic flyway shorebird populations 10% by 2025 | Species Goals: Target reduction goals will vary by species and location; specific targets will be developed as part of the Best Management Practices | Strategy Goals: For each strategy:  
• Commercial & Residential development,  
• Coastal Engineering,  
• Incompatible Management  
• Invasive Plants,  
• Predation,  
• Human Disturbance,  
• Hunting Pressure |

"The life history of shorebirds is a chronicle of life on the edge of survival."
Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Initiative
Implementation plan

Key Strategies:

• **Manage and protect habitat** - reduce the loss of shorebird habitat to development so that (1) by 2025 the number of acres of shorebird habitat is the same or has been improved on from 2014, and (2) by 2025 there will be a 10% increase in shorebird use at sites targeted for action.

• **Minimize predation impacts** - reduce the number of nests, chicks, and adults lost annually to predators at approximately 180 priority breeding sites, which in combination with other threat reduction strategies, results in the target increase in populations of priority species (10%) by 2025. Target reduction goals will vary by species and location.

“The life history of shorebirds is a chronicle of life on the edge of survival.”
Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Initiative
Implementation plan

Key Strategies:

- **Reduce human disturbance** - reduce the threat of human disturbance to achieve levels of reproductive success and annual survival that will contribute to the recovery of declining populations and achieve long-term stability of shorebird populations.

- **Reduce shorebird hunting** - achieve a sustainable harvest of shorebirds by reducing hunting pressure by 20% by 2025 where harvest is legal and decreasing the illegal harvest of shorebirds in the Caribbean islands and northern South American countries.

“The life history of shorebirds is a chronicle of life on the edge of survival.”
The ultimate measure of success is an increase in the population size of the focal species.
AFSI/Funding landscape

- Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Initiative (AFSI)
  - Major initiative for shorebird management/recovery
  - Primary funding from NFWF
  - AMOY initiative is now part of AFSI
  - Current RFP for AFSI includes AMOY work, but we no longer have a separate AMOY RFP within the Foundation
  - Potential challenge for funding of annual management needs