

**American Oystercatcher Working Group Annual Meeting**  
**Nov 30 – Dec 3, 2021**  
**Meeting Notes – Day 4**

9:00 am to 9:10 am Introduction and orientation

9:10 am to 10:50 am *Session continued: Research and Management*

**\*American Oystercatchers in the Gulf of Fonseca- Salvadora Morales (15 min. + Q&A)**

- monthly shorebird counts in El Salvador 2020-2021, migratory shorebird census every January and February (Central America Waterbird Census), simultaneous counts on shrimp farms, fall migration counts, and BMPs with shrimp farms.
- increased knowledge of breeding and non-breeding areas. Resighted 18 banded birds from the US
- important sites in Bahia Jiquilisco for nesting in Golfo Fonseca
- generally seen feeding in mudflats and roosting in shrimp farms (24 ind) but in October high count of 65 individuals roosting on shrimp farms. In November, a new shrimp farm Sahiamn Seafood had 54 with 6 banded birds.
- Working with producers for BMPs- dikes free of vegetation to provide roosting sites
- in El Salvador, generally, November is the highest counts
- In breeding season in Nicaragua: 4 nests, 2 active nests monitored by local volunteers, no chicks observed. Observed vultures and caracara near nest, with AMOY defending nest. Tidal inundation a threat as well.
- Volunteer was unable to read or write, but able to use WhatsApp for sending pictures and voice reports. This is a reality in Central America.
- In El Salvador there are reports of WIPL and AMOY nesting on Isla Pajarito, Bahia Jiquilisco, but sea level rise and recreational disturbance are threats. More opportunities in the next season to monitor, several chicks seen.
- working with local communities, continue to work with producers (5 shrimp farmers), increasing efforts.
- total 4 pairs in Nicaragua, 3 pairs in El Salvador, 0 in Honduras- still no banded chicks.
- Next steps-protect nests, foraging and roosting sites, involve shrimp farmers, build capacities to better survey shrimp farms and involve producers.

**Questions:**

- do the shrimp farmers see the shorebirds as a problem? The shorebirds aren't a problem but the cormorants that also roost there are a problem. But we are working with producers to help them identify the shorebirds vs the cormorants. Using noise (air cannons) to scare birds, trying to help them come up with other ways.
- there are program t-shirts to raise awareness and build pride
- does vegetation removal increase erosion? It can, but also vegetation can pose security problems with reduced visibility- vegetation removal is expensive but has to happen every 4-5 years.

Corresponding Chat Transcript:

09:27:13 From Tim Keyes to Everyone:

*Do the shrimp farmers see the birds as a problem?*

09:27:16 From Kate Goodenough to Everyone:

*Wonderful mascot!*

09:27:25 From Shiloh Schulte to Everyone:

*Have the producers been generally receptive to your work or do they see the birds as a problem?*

09:27:25 From Tami Pearl to Everyone:

*Thanks for sharing!*

09:27:41 From Mary-Catherine Martin to Everyone:

*Well done!*

09:27:44 From Anna Parot to Everyone:

*I love it!!!*

09:27:51 From Joseph Marchionno to Everyone:

*Wow! Incredible costume.*

09:28:10 From Todd Pover to Everyone:

*Looks like they had cool program shirts too?*

09:28:30 From Abby Sterling to Everyone:

*Is there an issue with removing vegetation and potential increase erosion for shrimp farmers?*

09:30:02 From Kate Goodenough to Everyone:

*A tricky situation. I appreciate your efforts!*

09:30:45 From Ezra Thompson to Everyone:

*Very neat to see habitat and substrate differences! Were pipping fragments able to be documented for the nest that went from 3 to 1 egg and was suspected as hatched?*

09:32:00 From Pam Denmon to Everyone:

*Great presentation. Thank you! Looking forward to hearing more about your future efforts.*

09:32:09 From Abby Sterling to Everyone:

*Thanks Salva! Great presentation!*

**\*Prying into the Everyday Lives of the American Oystercatcher: What Finescale Movements Reveal About Space Use- Kate Goodenough (15 min. + Q&A)**

- trying to better understand relationship of nesting habitat choice, foraging strategy and adjacency of forage upon productivity
- predictions include pairs on traditional barrier beaches and on stable habitats will have highest success, closeness to foraging sites will have success
- using GPS level trackers to look at individual movements, between habitats, and between foraging sites
- combining GPS telemetry with productivity, movement analyses
- three habitat sites: barrier islands, artificial islands, and shell rakes with both adjacent and non-adjacent foraging territories

- in 2021 deployed 21 GPS trackers with lat and long, time stamp, every 30 minutes, throughout the breeding season with radio data downloads
- have 21k data points!
- day vs night: all individuals conducted night foraging, throughout the entire night. Distances of movement were greater on shell rakes during the day vs night, but opposite on islands.
- some suggestion that travel distance was based on reproductive stages, no chick rearing- stay close but about 25% of the time much further out
- shell rake bird- during incubation bird never moved more than 3.55km, and during chick rearing never moved more than 2.4 km
- another example, during incubation movement was low, but then the after-nest-loss period it moved 27 km, did not re-nest
- 80% of forage movement for birds without adjacent foraging are greater, while for the bird with foraging adjacent they were moving less than 500km
- Next steps include tagging more birds, looking at landcover analysis, and looking at other factors going forward.

#### Questions:

- used Teflon and stretch magic. Sew the Teflon ends back in with nylon thread. -do tags record speed? Yes- they allow us to see when birds are moving. Had a good idea of standard error before putting out tags. If you have refurbished units from ecotone, reach out to Kate for lessons learned- there are some weird issues. Speed doesn't matter for walking/foraging. Looking at distance and speed to determine if they were foraging.
- looking at chicks, and bringing chicks to the foraging areas, looking at brood survival, also some restrictions for pairs with many neighbors. Barrier islands where pairs have gotten to chick stage, we could look at the difference between contiguous vs adjacent to see if there is a change in focal areas
- looking at stable isotope analysis to understand diet to see if there are differences in what the birds are eating based on habitat to better understand the whole story
- could use handheld or base station antennae

#### Corresponding Chat Transcript:

*09:41:21 From Tim Keyes to Everyone:*

*What kind of attachment harness did you use?*

*09:42:58 From Kylie Wilson to Everyone:*

*Have you noticed if the timing of their foraging corresponds to low tides?*

*09:43:33 From Kate Goodenough to Everyone:*

*We used a leg-loop harness.*

*09:44:27 From Tim Keyes to Everyone:*

*They didn't cut through the harness? We had short term success with Teflon tape - but they worked through it.*

*09:44:39 From Shiloh Schulte to Everyone:*

*could the shorter distance during chick rearing be a result of moving chicks closer to feeding areas?*

*09:45:03 From Kate Goodenough to Everyone:*

*No, we reinforced the Teflon.*

09:45:44 From Tim Keyes to Everyone:  
*with mono?*

09:46:05 From Lindsay Addison to Everyone:  
*EMR had limited space to move a brood, due to presence of other AMOY pairs, but I think that would be the case for some pairs, especially once the chicks are a little bigger and are more mobile.*

09:46:22 From Lindsay Addison to Everyone:  
*Stretch Magic*

09:48:52 From Erica Nol to Everyone:  
*Wow..this is great work Kate!*

09:49:38 From Ezra Thompson to Everyone:  
*Do tags record speed to differentiate between points flying vs. walking/foraging? Also, what is the price/tag set-up?*

09:50:29 From Tim to Everyone:  
*Very cool work Kate. Could you elaborate on what your plans for the SIA diet characterization are?*

09:52:16 From A Hackney to Everyone:  
*In addition to the habitat database, it would be awesome to have a collection of experiences/ tips for using GPS tags. Brands that worked well, "life hacks", preferences, etc.*

09:52:42 From A Hackney to Everyone:  
*(Spoken as someone who needs to deploy some in the next year or so...)*

09:54:41 From Tim Keyes to Everyone:  
*Did you download data with a handheld yagi - or set up stations?*

09:54:50 From Erica Nol to Everyone:  
*Why did you predict higher productivity on barrier islands?*

09:55:21 From Ezra Thompson to Everyone:  
*thanks! Yes, that covered question, I wondering if flight vs. other was able to be differentiated, very cool! we documented one female AMOY (Red W07) foraging on oysterbar over 15 miles away from active nest in 2021. Great project and presentation!*

09:57:41 From Lindsay Addison to Everyone:  
*Ezra, wow, that's an ambitious female!*

09:58:35 From Tim Keyes to Everyone:  
*Great job!*

09:59:03 From Kate Goodenough to Everyone:  
*Thanks for the questions everyone!*

09:59:15 From Shiloh Schulte to Everyone:  
*Great talk Kate!*

**\*Does Habitat Suitability Limit Productivity and Population Viability in Chincoteague, VA?- Lyn Brown (15 min. + Q&A)**

- low productivity at Assateague and Assawoman Islands, Assateague has about 21-26 pairs and Assawoman has 40-31 pairs, but less than 5 chicks at either site.

- looking at how habitat quality varies spatially, including food supply, identify habitat variable that predict success and how they influence population dynamics
- trying to understand why the # of breeding pairs varies between sites.
- habitat features differ on importance based on reproductive stage.
- banding all adults at both islands, nest monitoring during study, use nest fate data, behavioral observation, foraging and nest habitat measurements, using breeding and habitat mgmt. data from WG, and banding
- using Dan Catlin's habitat suitability model
- interested in using band resighting data to look at emigration, immigration, and site fidelity, looking at larger scale data from the Working Group

#### Questions:

- how do you plan to look at food profitability? Looking at behavioral foraging observation, to look at the size of the prey, then using equations to gauge the size and weight, handling time, and doing observations about invert and bivalve abundance.
- the WG is looking into data sharing agreements.

#### Corresponding Chat Transcript:

10:07:10 From Kate Goodenough to Everyone:  
How will you determine food profitability?

10:12:18 From Kate Goodenough to Everyone:  
Sounds good! Looking forward to seeing the research.

10:13:19 From Kevin Holcomb to Everyone:  
We are looking forward to working with you again! Thank you Lyn

10:13:40 From Lindsay Addison to Everyone:  
This is exciting new work!

10:14:05 From Erica Nol to Everyone:  
Thanks Lyn for a great presentation

10:14:22 From Pam Denmon to Everyone:  
Interesting talk Lyn! Hope you can make it down south when you have spare time (haha).

#### **\*Tracking American Oystercatcher Chicks to Determine Survival on Metompkin Island, VA- Mikayla Call (15 min. + Q&A)**

- an important breeding area, flat, overwash is common, undeveloped and difficult to access.
- productivity, usually around 100 pairs per year, productivity averages 0.62 chicks per pair, but there has been a decline since about 2016 despite active predator management. No obvious reason for decline, saw high hatch success but might be low chick survival.
- use GSM-enabled system to track chicks, in addition to traditional productivity monitoring. Two subsites, one with open beach (north) with mud flats that are accessible and another (south) with marsh adjacent but difficult to access due to veg.
- glued tags to one chick per brood. Monitored daily chick movement, if chick was observed without tag, chick and tag were re-glued. When chick mortality was observed, tried to determine cause of death and looked at all chick remains to determine cause of death.

- remote tracking consisted of a tower and station to detect signal within 1.5 km, and communicated with solar nodes that expanded the range of detection. Able to monitor tags remotely. Also used a handheld antenna.
- monitored 26 pairs, early nest depredation was due to foxes, and loss due to nuisance flooding. Hatch success was similar between two sites, but productivity driven by chick survival.
- 7/16 fledged. Fate for 5 chicks- 2 due to falcon, and 3 chicks predated/scavenged by ghost crabs. 2 untagged chick mortality was accounted for due to another AMOY, and one for ghost crab.
- tag retention was 9.2 days, identified fate of 75% of chicks but it was very labor intensive, identified threats due to avian predators and ghost crabs.
- pin feather growth decreased tag retention, able to recover about half the tags using the grid and the handheld antennae. Lost signal is the reason for unknown fates.
- study will continue next year, goal to tag 30 chicks and expand node grid.

#### Questions:

- used vet bond at first, but it wasn't successful, then switched to an ultracontrol superglue.
- looking at chick movement in the future, but the accuracy for triangulation is still too coarse, but there is progress and with the grid system there should be some ability to look at continuous tracking.
- did observe interaction between adults and ghost crabs, usually with nests, but also some instances of adults with aggressive interactions with GC. All tags were recovered within birds' territories. One chick may not have even been mobile that was recovered from a GC burrow.
- did see some signal loss overnight-could have been owls
- any difference in weight or body condition between two sites when recapped to reapply tags- not frequent enough recaps, did not see differences from what they did get.

#### Corresponding Chat Transcript:

10:20:01 From Shiloh Schulte to Everyone:

*How frequently did the tags fall off?*

10:21:08 From Mikayla Call (Virginia Tech) to Everyone:

*It really varied but tag retention time averaged around 9 days.*

10:24:31 From Shiloh Schulte to Everyone:

*Were you able to generate a mortality curve to show probability of mortality at each day post-fledging?*

10:25:28 From Mikayla Call (Virginia Tech) to Everyone:

*I would like to do that eventually, but haven't been able to yet.*

10:27:34 From Kate Goodenough to Everyone:

*Did any of the tags have broken antennas?*

10:28:17 From Mikayla Call (Virginia Tech) to Everyone:

*None of the tags we recovered had broken antennas, but it's possible broken antennas could have caused the lost signals.*

10:28:42 From Tami Pearl to Everyone:

*Great job Mikayla!*

10:28:43 From Erica Nol to Everyone:

*Did you learn how far the chicks moved and perhaps how far from parents? What a lot of effort! Great work.*

*10:28:44 From Kevin Holcomb to Everyone:*

*Excellent work Mikayla! Looking forward to next season!*

*10:29:08 From Ruth Boettcher to Everyone:*

*Great job Mikayla!!!*

*10:29:12 From Katie Walker (she/her) to Everyone:*

*Great work, Mikayla! Did you observe any interactions between ghost crabs and AMOY adults/chicks? Also, were the burrows where you recovered the tags/carcasses within the brood's territories?*

*10:30:29 From Erica Nol to Everyone:*

*Thanks!*

*10:30:33 From Kate Goodenough to Everyone:*

*I advocate gps tags!*

*10:30:36 From Alex Wilke, The Nature Conservancy to Everyone:*

*Great presentation Mikayla! Really looking forward to how this project will inform our cooperative management of this critical nesting site.*

*10:32:28 From Katie Walker (she/her) to Everyone:*

*!Definitely suggests that they're depredating....I've seen them take PIPL but not AMOY. Great results from year 1! Thanks!*

*10:33:37 From Pam Denmon to Everyone:*

*@Katie-I know at least some of us have seen them chewing on the AMOY chicks during monitoring.*

*10:34:03 From Pam Denmon to Everyone:*

*Great work Mikayla!*

**\*Abundance and Distribution of Breeding American Oystercatchers on the Delaware Bay Beaches of New Jersey- Meghan Kolk (15 min. + Q&A)**

- preliminary survey work from barrier beaches, breeding AMOY first confirmed on DE Bay coast in 2016, small pilot in 2018, but full survey in 2021.

-window census May1-10, +/- 2hrs of high tide. Difficulties in monitoring due to closures from May 7-June 7 for REKN, access was difficult, only able to survey 33/35 sites, time constraints were challenging for keeping survey in window.

-significant differences between Atlantic Coast and Bay Coast in NJ, Bay beaches lack dunes, over wash frequently, backed by marshes, less recreation, more inlets, food resources include ribbed mussels and oysters, there are some restoration activities following Hurricane Sandy with sand and oyster reefs for erosion control.

-documented 13 pairs at 8 sites, located 8 nests at 5 sites, one banded bird, 9/13 pairs were concentrated within a 5-mile section. Overwash is common at these sites.

-other interesting observations- the banded bird (orange A76) had a four-egg nest, 2 hatched and one chick fledged.

-some areas had foraging birds, there was a flock of 11 birds- maybe non-breeders?

-next steps- understanding the elevation and predation risks, and non-breeding use.

Questions:

-could not determine bill color for sure, but overall it seemed like the flock was adults. Erica mentioned that they've seen females laying in other nests when there is habitat limitations, which could be the reason for the 4 egg nest.

Corresponding Chat Transcript:

*10:44:18 From Erica Nol to Everyone:*

*Interesting talk. These habitats are so similar to those where I studied AMOY. How did you recruit volunteers?*

*10:45:18 From Erica Nol to Everyone:*

*Did you look at bill colours of non-breeding flocks to see if they were younger birds?*

*10:45:28 From Abby Sterling to Everyone:*

*Were you able to assess the age of the birds in the flocks? Young birds potentially?*

**11:05 am to 11:25 am- Session continued: Research and management presentations**

**\*Helicopter Survey for Breeding American Oystercatchers in New Jersey- Todd Pover**

-tracking Atlantic coast beaches since 2003, but not able to conduct a complete survey of breeding pairs in marshes since 2007. Number of breeding pairs has tripled from 50-150- due to better management or due to movement from marshes to barrier beaches because of sea level rise?

-challenges due to capacity and inaccessibility that have prevented more frequent full surveys of breeding birds. Boating isn't easy, so tried to do an aerial survey, using a helicopter with no windows and doors. Three surveyors per flight, started on May 19<sup>th</sup>

- survey altitude 200-500 feet, looking for sweet spot to detect birds but not flush them too badly. Flew rough transects following marsh island boundaries, crisscrossing east to west.

-detection- could see birds, but could not tie birds to observed pairs or territories, had to survey during high and low tide, so some birds were foraging and could not assign birds to pairs or territories, in some cases the barrier beaches were so close to marshes, so some of the beach birds might have been foraging in the marsh. Did miss some known marsh nesting birds, so detection may have been lower than thought.

- did not achieve objective of being able to assess breeding numbers on back bays and marshes, covered a significant area, but given that they couldn't determine the breeding pairs, they did not cover the entire coast. This could be used to monitor where density is not so high, remote areas were this is the only way, smaller areas that can be covered in one tide cycle, or if you're just trying to count adults rather than pairs.

Questions:

-were you able to use ground truthing to get comparisons to understand accuracy, detection and correction factors? Trying to fly the DE Bay if they have time this year to look for new wintering birds.

Corresponding Chat Transcript:

*10:48:02 From Todd Pover to Everyone:*



*Obviously the focus on Del Bay has been on red knots, and for good reason, but we are hoping to show it is a potential important area for AMOY too.*

*10:50:13 From Emily Heiser to Everyone:*

*I think this also goes back to the overall NJ question for Atlantic coast birds as well - are they moving from marsh to Bayshore/AC beaches bc of SLR or are they simply just increasing? Likely both but we don't know.*

*11:19:46 From Kashi Davis - NJDFW to Everyone:*

*Great job, Todd! TY for presenting!*

*11:20:45 From Lindsay Addison to Everyone:*

*What kind of substrate do you think the breeding pairs are on? Such as, just wrack in marsh or do you have sand or shell deposits?*

**11:25 am to 11:40 am- Committee update: Capture & Banding Committee- Shiloh Schulte**

-Goal is to make sure that everyone has the same information and protocols for banding AMOY. Capture collective group knowledge on capture, banding and BMPs. There is already a great resource rather than creating our own- the North American Bander's Manual for Shorebirds:

[www.nabanding.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Shorebird-Manual\\_February2018.pdf](http://www.nabanding.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Shorebird-Manual_February2018.pdf)

- Some AMOY specifics should be included: including AMOY BMPs, background and rationale for AMOY banding, the AMOY banding color and number scheme, band ordering information and the procedure for attaching the engraved AMOY bands including the method for sealing bands.

-Also some capture specific methods that are not in the manual: chick capture, minimum age and size, adult capture techniques including noose mats, woosh nets, noose mats at nests and box traps and nests

-Capture methods for adults during non-breeding season- cannon nets/roosts, capture for injured or entangled birds like noose mats or net guns, and GPS tags and harness methods including attaching, deployment and manufacturers.

-We can talk to Sheri about if we should pursue a full manual update or creating a supplement to the manual. We need to decide if we need to protect certain content, and an understanding about how we want to present this (videos etc).

Corresponding Chat Transcript:

*11:30:07 From Lindsay Addison to Everyone:*

*[www.nabanding.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Shorebird-Manual\\_February2018.pdf](http://www.nabanding.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Shorebird-Manual_February2018.pdf)*

*11:33:27 From Tim Keyes to Everyone:*

*add bow nets to box trap at nests*

*11:37:45 From Katie Walker (she/her) to Everyone:*

*This would be a great resource*

*11:37:50 From Lindsay Addison to Everyone:*

*SC has done box traps too*

*11:38:06 From Kate Goodenough to Everyone:*

*I would be happy to assist!*

*11:38:11 From A Hackney to Everyone:*

*Con confirm, Sue's ACME AMOY box trap is amazing*

11:38:11 From Lindsay Addison to Everyone:  
*I mean, successfully done box traps (if I am recalling correctly)*

11:38:49 From Lindsay Addison to Everyone:  
*I'm also happy to help*

11:38:50 From Maureen Durkin to Everyone:  
*Raya and Marvin make great noose-tying videos :)*

**11:40 am to 11:55 am Committee update: Productivity Database Committee- Pam Denmon and Lindsay Addison**

- Pam-we have continued conversations to collect productivity in a standardized way to enter into a standardized database. Many partners and a lot of effort- almost to a completed draft of survey protocol.
- There are a few pilot surveyors. Basing data collection and entry around pairs rather than nests. Developing fields and definition in excel, but the database itself has not been designed, but they will be working on developing the database soon. Anyone can collect data and enter data as long as they follow the protocol, regardless of survey effort. After the pilot they will revise the collection and the database.
- USFWS wants to be involved because they can use the same ideas they have been using for PIPL.
- A database would allow us to get into granular information about survival of chicks, large scale efforts to pull together data to better understand management etc. Also, will be useful for providing an example to other WGs about how to do this and show off the benefits of our work. The PIPL database is also being revised as it's being implemented more broadly, there are also some differences in how to monitor these two species- so we had to adapt that significantly to create a special AMOY database.

**Corresponding Chat Transcript:**

12:41:17 From Tim Keyes to Everyone:  
*How did the discussion of modifying the PIPL database vs starting a new one end up?*

12:42:33 From Alex Wilke, The Nature Conservancy to Everyone:  
*Thanks Pam and all for your tireless work on this. Looking forward to the results of the pilot year!*

12:43:04 From Pam Denmon to Everyone:  
*Thanks Alex-it's been a huge team effort!*

12:43:53 From A Hackney to Everyone:  
*Yeah, Pam's a pretty big deal! ;)*

12:44:08 From Pam Denmon to Everyone:  
*oh no!*

12:44:58 From Tim Keyes to Everyone:  
*Thanks Pam*

**11:55 am to 12:25 pm- Funding avenues discussion: USFWS at-risk species, RAWA, NFWF Caleb Spiegel, Shiloh Schulte**

- What is the USFWS thinking about in terms of AMOY initiative?

Caleb: the at-risk species initiative is a regional effort to combine USFWS expertise and resources across agencies, increase capacity and build partnerships to keep species from being listed rather than being reactive. In 2017, there was a small number of species focused on the ESA national listing workplan which is maintained by Ecological Services Department, had very few birds except salt-marsh sparrow. Being considered at-risk raises visibility to direct funds and raise efforts. In 2019, they began to expand the list to get more input from states and other service staff to make sure the list was more comprehensive. A cross program steering committee, state fish and wildlife agencies emphasized priority species to add new species. It wasn't just potential listed species, but also included species that were declining, including Atlantic Coast beach species, AMOY, RUTU and WHIM. AMOY were a priority species because there's a precedent for conservation and also it's a heavily managed species so it needs to be a priority on federal land. Formed an internal at-risk team that's cross-programmatic, and now there are species based focal group. Refuges is really interested in this initiative. Right now there is no new funding associated with this initiative for at-risk species, but some new money including infrastructure funding, this initiative will allow us to focus on what we should do and how we should look at using new funding opportunities to apply to our objectives. Need to be clear and explore how we work on refuges to support our priorities and priorities of other groups like the AMOY WG.

-How can we work together even with no new resources to have actionable steps and metrics of success to achieve our goals?

Caleb: Opportunities to have the AMOY WG review the work plan to make sure our group's priorities are represented. Trying to make sure that infrastructure and climate change are represented- there will likely not be a beach-nesting bird pot of money, but if we are well organized we might be able to take advantage of other sources. Pam is involved with the at-risk species piece and she may co-lead the AMOY sub-team.

-Can USFWS help us leverage the conservation and financial benefits that some of the Beneficial Use projects could provide to help with how the USACE assesses costs for projects that could provide conservation benefits?

-Scott thinks that looking at collaborations and cost sharing might be a way to do that.

Mike: The NOAA funds 207 million dollars for habitat restoration projects are match free. Need to highlight multiple benefits, the CELP program is coming back online, many new programs coming online. Shiloh- working off the business plan we might have some framework for assessing the cost of conservation of an AMOY, might help us to create some value per AMO. Tim: might just need to figure out how to calculate costs to deal with the delta.

Scott Johnston- An opportunity to access new funds involves thinking through our existing plans and repackaging them so they are more relevant to new tangential sources of funding. The Manomet workshop to talk about beneficial use and USACE and NRCS, DOT, enormous opportunity. The workshop to talk with agencies is a great example of ways to leverage resources. Currently highlighting the success of the AMOY work is a shining example of what the investment of resources can do, working to revise the AFSI plans. Acknowledging the support from NFWF, new RFP. There is a great amount of collaboration and that is what they most want to see. That collaboration is a

direct result of working through AFSI, the funding has been flat the last few years, but they are working internally to try to increase that. 625k annually is what NFWF is able to put in. There are other grant programs like coastal resiliency. The focal species and the at-risk species plans have been really important for making the case for AMOY.

-thanks from Stephen to Scott Johnston.

-Coastal resiliency can include things that have human benefits like green infrastructure and beach and barrier dune restoration. The seed support from NFWF has been critical in creating this group that generates new funding opportunities, new ideas, and results, we are able to implement.

-Lindsay: some projects have no human benefits- so trying to make sure that projects that don't have that link are prioritized for AFSI vs moving projects that do have human benefits to the CR side. Some of the coastal projects with human benefits might be more common on the Gulf Coast vs the Atlantic Coast (Shiloh)- RESTORE ACT funding.

Amanda- some of the bird island projects in the Gulf don't have a strong human component, some of those are looking at erosion control.

-Individual restoration projects can be hard to fund, but it's also really hard to fund technicians and on the ground monitoring. Some resources have included Disney. Limitations to funding has resulted in groups working together more broadly to look for small and medium sized pots of money to fund work. More opportunities with some coastal resilience through emergency coastal resilience funds.

-RAWA funding- Recovering American Wildlife Act- introduced to congress to bring 1.3 billion to state wildlife agencies. This would help states implement their SWAPs. Any updates now that that's moving forward?

-Wildlife Society chapters have been advocating and have been very active- could be a good way to better understand where it sits in terms of lobbying.

-GA- updates- RAWA was on hold till infrastructure but there is broad bipartisan support. Not sure if Build Back Better is next, but does seem to have support.

-VA- heard the same thing although they are starting to put together a list of projects. If it does pass, the administration might delay the availability of funds by a year or two. There is a senate hearing on December 8<sup>th</sup>.

Corresponding Chat Transcript:

*11:59:52 From Mike Molnar to Everyone:*

*Here is a document that has some of the Infrastructure Funding opportunities that we discussed earlier this week. We have slides that we can share from the Infrastructure funding panel discussions. <https://www.coastalstates.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Infrastructure-Bill-Coastal-Appropriation-Public-Version-1.pdf>*

*12:05:45 From Kris Vagos to Everyone:*

*Can't hear him either*

*12:05:55 From Scott H (he/him) to Everyone:*

*i have a new computer with a bad mic.*

*12:05:59 From Scott H (he/him) to Everyone:*

*have to reboot*

*12:06:56 From Pam Denmon to Everyone:*

*Thanks Caleb.*

*12:12:48 From Lindsay Addison to Everyone:*

*Yes. Echoing Tim, if beneficial use (specifically for natural systems and conservation vs. to benefit the built environment) came with some kind of credit when the USACE does its cost engineering that would facilitate such projects being considered least-cost alternatives. Especially in areas that don't have other funding sources for habitat work.*

*12:15:00 From Scott H (he/him) to Everyone:*

*apologies everyone. it is a computer issue.*

*12:15:32 From Scott H (he/him) to Everyone:*

*Thanks Scott johnston*

*12:16:04 From Scott H (he/him) to Everyone:*

*Yes, \$625k annually*

*12:16:26 From Scott H (he/him) to Everyone:*

*a new opportunity may be coastal resilience*

*12:17:56 From Scott H (he/him) to Everyone:*

*coastal resilience funding has to align with human communities vis a vie green infrastructure including beach barrier dune restoration*

*12:18:49 From Scott H (he/him) to Everyone:*

*Thanks for all of the work by this working group. it makes my job easy to plug in to the priorities you all develop and advance.*

*12:19:55 From Scott H (he/him) to Everyone:*

*thanks shiloh*

*12:20:16 From Scott H (he/him) to Everyone:*

*sounds good*

*12:20:18 From Lindsay Addison to Everyone:*

*The CR funding can be great for projects that align with human communities, but for those that don't align, having funding specifically for them would be helpful. Maybe that's pie in the sky, I know.*

*12:28:19 From Jessica S to Everyone:*

*The coastal resilience point is interesting. It might be interesting to hear from local groups on the Gulf coast that might be actively trying to gain coastal protection for their communities.*

*12:28:26 From Mike Molnar to Everyone:*

*NFWF Emergency Coastal Resilience Fund RFP open for areas impacted by disasters last year - some Gulf Coast, NC, NE and Mid-Atlantic areas eligible. In addition to improving resilience for human environment also requires improving habitats for fish and wildlife species - <https://www.nfwf.org/programs/emergency-coastal-resilience-fund>*

*12:29:09 From Scott H (he/him) to Everyone:*

*Thanks Mike. yes, this is one of our coastal resilience funding opportunities.*

*12:33:48 From carmenjohnson to Everyone:*

*There's a Senate hearing on RAWA on the 8th.*

*12:34:27 From A Hackney to Everyone:*

*Contact information for Wildlife Society Conservation Affair Committee members and involved chapters: <https://wildlife.org/policy/recovering-americas-wildlife-act/>*

*12:34:40 From Caleb Spiegel to Everyone:*

*I have to run. Good conversation. I will be in touch in the new year with more about our regional At-risk Species Initiative.*

*12:34:44 From A Hackney to Everyone:*

*<https://wildlife.org/policy/conservation-affairs-network/>*

***12:25 pm to 12:55 pm- Steering committee business and wrap-up- Shiloh Schulte & Co.***

- feel free to let the steering committee know if you want to join, or to join a subgroup. Next round of aerial surveys. Working on publishing the previous data from aerial surveys.
- next meeting- for now, might be online, but the hope and dream would be an in-person meeting. At this point, we can't bank on it.
- Future meetings will likely always have a virtual component because we've had great turnout and participation, which is great. And wonderful to include people that can't travel.

***12:55 pm to 1:00 pm Wrap up and adjourn***