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June 29, 1992

TO: Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Team

FROM: Information-Education Steering Committee, Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Team

SUBJECT: Kirtland's Warbler Information-Education Steering Committee Progress Report

The Information and Education (I & E) Steering Committee, appointed at the February 1992 Recovery Team meeting, met this spring to begin our assignment of identifying strategies for improving public knowledge and understanding of the Kirtland's warbler and its management program. Committee members include Kate Winsor, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Twin Cities; Mike DeCapita, USFWS, East Lansing; Connie Chaney, U. S. Forest Service (USFS), Mio; and Bob Hess, Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Wildlife Division, Lansing. Dave Case of D. J. Case and Associates was invited and agreed to join the Committee.

Although the Committee was appointed to develop both long-term and short-term information and education strategies, we chose to focus our first efforts on identifying actions to implement this summer. Long-term strategies will be developed at future meetings.

The Kirtland's Warbler I & E plan developed by D. J. Case and Associates, and presented at the February 1992 Recovery Team meeting, was used to identify key issues and concerns and to develop I & E strategies and actions to focus on immediately. Actions are listed below and generally follow the order as they appear in the Actions Section, pages 8 through 12, of the I & E plan.

These recommended actions were developed in response to the major issues and concerns focused around KW habitat management practices--timber management (clear cutting, size of cuttings), forest fire danger (perceived as increased by KW burns), delay in jack pine plantings after cuttings and fires, and general misunderstanding or lack of knowledge on the needs of the warbler and how warbler management is directed at meeting these needs. Local opposition to warbler management centered in the Grayling area on state forest lands and in the Mio area on federal forest lands.

Action 1 Conduct "by invitation" tours.

These special tours will be, in addition to the regularly scheduled public tours, out of the Holiday Inn in Grayling and the Huron National Forest office in Mio.

The Committee recommended five (5) special "By invitation" tours be conducted-- two out of Grayling and three out of Mio. The purpose of the tours will be to show and explain the management practices being carried out for the warbler, and to identify and discuss the interests and concerns of the individuals invited. Invitees need to know that the Recovery Team and management agencies are seeking their input and listening to their interests and concerns.

The two Grayling tours are to be conducted for (1) local community and business leaders, and (2) individuals and organizations that have expressed concern for habitat management techniques used on state forest lands. Mike De Capita and Gary Boushelle were coordinators of these tours, and due to new job assignments, these tours have been postponed until 1993.

The three special tours planned for Mio included one for local community and business leaders, one for the Mack Lake Homeowners Association, and the third for people who have expressed concern about habitat management practices on federal lands such as those from the Pine River area.

Thus far, Forest Service staff have conducted tours for the Mack Lake Homeowner's Association and special tours with small groups of local residents concerned about management practices in the Pine River area. The tours and the close communications they allowed vastly improved the attendees' understanding and acceptance and appreciation of KW management, and staff's understanding of the attendees' concerns.

As a result of the Mack Lake Association tour, members of the Association will present their concerns to the Recovery Team at the June meeting.

Action 2 Pay overtime or authorize compensatory time for agency personnel to communicate with target audiences.

Agency staff involved in KW management are already fully scheduled and find it difficult to take time to talk to local people and groups about warbler management. The Committee is requesting that interested employees be recruited by agency staff and allowed to allocate a portion of their time to make contacts with key opinion leaders and groups, or be authorized to work overtime hours. A list of individuals and groups should be developed and targeted for this action. A slide program has been developed by USFS staff at Mio and could be duplicated for general use by agencies on the KW team.

Action 3 Develop a series of informational flyers for various target audiences.

The Committee identified two flyers to be developed for this year.

One flyer has been completed, entitled, "WORKING TOGETHER TO SAVE A SPECIAL BIRD, Managing the Forest for the Kirtland's Warbler." It is targeted at a general audience and was written around a theme of "Why the forest looks like this." It introduces warbler management in a broader landscape context and explains, for example, why the jack pine-dominated community occurs where it does, geologically and climatically, what and how natural disturbances have historically maintained this community type, how the warbler is dependent upon this natural community and its disturbance regime, and how forest practices are maintaining warbler habitat by replicating natural disturbances. It also will identify benefits of

management, opportunities to bring more tourists and commercial interests to the area, and how other wildlife benefit from jack pine management practices. Draft copies were circulated to selected Recovery Team members for review.

The Forest Service has agreed to print the four page brochure. Copies will be available for distribution in July. Recovery team members are asked to circulate the brochure throughout their offices and agencies, and provide copies to the public through their office's literature racks.

Kate Winsor did an excellent job of writing and producing the original draft. She can produce camera-ready copy on her desktop publishing program in the Twin Cities Regional office.

The other flyer would be written for landowners in the jack pine warbler areas. It would list and speak to their concerns and explain warbler objectives and practices. It has not been written.

Both flyers will be used for external and internal communications, and help agency staff respond to questions or complaints from the public. Flyers will be printed in a simple, 8 1/2-inch X 11-inch format so they can be easily photocopied.

Action 4 Develop a fire protection information campaign.

This action is aimed at landowners who live, or own cottages, in the jack pine area. No progress has been made on this action. The committee will work on this during the fall and winter. The fire specialist for the Huron National Forest will be asked to work with DNR fire specialists at Roscommon and Mio to develop this campaign and a flyer on how homeowners can fire-proof their yard and home.

Action 5 Implement a media relations campaign.

All activities involving KW conservation should be reviewed on an ongoing basis to determine the opportunities they provide as "news hooks" to interest the news media and the public. Also, news articles should be written for local newspapers, and state and national magazines. The Committee would like to encourage--and is asking--agency and University staff involved in warbler research or management to review all their activities and assess their potential appeal to the news media.

Specifically, we are asking KW staff for three things:

1. DEVELOP A LIST of those activities they feel are news worthy and call or send it to your representative on the Committee, or to Bob Hess, chair of the Committee. From these suggestions, we will develop a list of activities to promote and work with our agency public relations or I & E staff to actively solicit news media involvement in these activities. This might include putting together a list of activities with dates, locations, and names to contact, and sending it to news media and outdoor writers early in the field season, or actually meeting with them to seek their interest.

2. TAKE THE INITIATIVE and think about how each can promote the work they are doing, and then go about publicizing these activities by calling local newspapers or television stations, for example, and inviting them to these activities or events.

If KW staff doesn't have the time to make the contacts themselves, they should contact their agency's public affairs staff, or call one of us on the KW I & E committee for assistance.

Examples of news stories or events that would have news "hooks" include things such as prescribed burns, trapping and banding of warblers, and KW tours.

This action would be carried out most effectively if public affairs people from the USFS, USFWS, and DNR work together. I & E Committee members are contacting these staff for their involvement and ideas. The Committee also felt that one person should be appointed to coordinate this long-term effort. A decision to appoint or hire a coordinator was deferred until we could discuss this with the Recovery Team. Dave Case said his firm would be interested in serving as coordinator if it was decided to contract for this service outside the agencies.

3. LISTS OF REPORTERS AND MEDIA CONTACTS that have shown that an interest in the warbler should be developed. These lists will be used to mail news releases, newsletters, and pamphlets developed by the KW program in an attempt to get more positive exposure for the KW. We are asking agency staff to send us names of media people they have worked with, or they feel would be interested in KW work.

Action 6 Develop materials for use in schools.

The following materials are recommended:

1. WILDLIFE DISCOVERY KITS similar to those developed for wolves, raptors, and wetlands by the DNR Natural Heritage Program should be developed for the Kirtland's warbler. These kits are designed for use by natural resource staff and teachers and youth leaders such as scout and 4-H leaders. They include a wide variety of educational materials, books, pamphlets, videos, and student activities which teach the biology of the featured species or natural community. Kits cost approximately \$200 each to assemble. Eve Rolandson, who coordinated the development of the DNR discovery kits, is working on this assignment. KW staff should contact Eve for more information.
2. TEACHER MATERIALS on the KW are being developed for use in schools. Connie Chaney and Eve Rolandson are working with teachers from the Mio area to assist with the development of these materials.

A meeting was held with the Mio/Au Sable science and history teachers to discuss the use of the KW in their applied science curricula during the 1992-93 school year.

Other priority actions identified by the Committee included Action 15, "The development of visual/presentation aides," and Action 16, "Updating the KW video." Top quality slides and video footage are needed for implementing these actions and other I & E efforts.

3. **SPECIAL KW ISSUE OF "TRACKS".** Bob Hess met with Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) staff. They liked the idea of a special issue featuring the Kirtland's warbler and agreed to develop one for spring 1993. "TRACKS" is an educational brochure which is produced monthly during the school year, and 90,000 copies are sent out to schools, mostly in Michigan. MUCC would donate staff time to write and produce this issue. Cost to the Recovery Team would be \$2,000 to \$3,000 which would include postage to the 90,000 classrooms. Additional copies can be obtained for a cost of \$13 per thousand.

If the USFS, USFWS, and DNR each contributes \$1,200, the 90,000 issues will go to the schools plus each agency could get 15,000 additional copies for distribution. A decision must be made by September 15 to get a special issue committed by MUCC staff.

Action 7 Develop an interpretive hiking trail in Mack Lake area.

The Huron National Forest is currently designing a trail for Mack Lake as a part of its recreational opportunity guide program.

Actions 7, 8, and 9. These three actions all include tours or interpretive signing. It was decided to combine these actions into one.

The Committee recommends that a self-guided motor tour route be developed in the KW management area. The Committee asked Dave Case if he would prepare a general proposal for developing a motor tour that would include an interpretive hiking trail in the Mack Lake area, interpretive stops with signs, a tour brochure, etc. This proposal could then be reviewed by the Team, refined if needed, and later used to obtain local input and support, and private, corporate, or foundation funding. Dave will develop a proposal for presentation at the June 1992 Recovery Team meeting.

Action 10 Develop a KW "Update" newsletter.

The Committee recommends that two newsletters be prepared each year. The first newsletter, entitled, "KW Notes", has been put together by the Committee and summarizes what is going on this field season; for example, tours, surveys, research, pine plantings, burns, and timber sales. "KW Notes" is designed for use by a general audience but will be especially useful to help keep agency employees who work in the KW management areas, including receptionists and office staff who respond to public inquiries about the KW, updated on KW activities and events.

Each agency was asked to submit a list of activities they will be involved in this summer. The newsletter was produced from the information that was provided. Kate Winsor of the Endangered Species office in the Twin Cities created the newsletter from the materials provided by the agencies. It is a good first start. We hope to get a more complete list from all agencies for future newsletters. This first issue was heavy on DNR activities and information.

Other priority actions identified by the Committee included Action 15, "The development of visual/presentation aides," and Action 16, "Updating the KW video." Top quality slides and video footage are needed for implementing these actions and other I & E efforts.

DNR photographer Dave Kenyon has an interest in and has agreed to photograph the warbler and KW management and research activities throughout the 1992 field season. He was able to photograph the census and will accompany KW agency staff to photograph management and research activities. The video footage and photographs he is taking will be used to produce an updated video and slide program for the KW. A KW video script was written under contract several years ago, and was used to develop a "story line" for footage and photographs to be taken.

KW staff should also take photographs of KW activities they are involved in, whenever possible, to depict major or unique management activities. Copies of these slides or footage should be provided to the public affairs or I & E section in their agency for use by other staff.

Summary of Actions the I & E Committee needs assistance on from KW staff and Recovery Team members are as follows:

Action 2 Pay overtime or authorize compensatory time for agency personnel to communicate with target audiences.

It is hoped, supervisory staff will commit employees time to focus on presentations to the public, civic, and conservation organizations. I & E Committee members will help supervisors and employees develop I & E materials if requested. The new KW flyer and newsletter, and reprinting of the "Bird of Fire", are available to accompany these presentations.

Action 5 Implement a media relations campaign.

Staff and Recovery Team members are asked to:

1. Submit a list of KW projects or activities that they feel would appeal to news media personnel as news stories and/or those that have a particular "news hook".
2. Submit names of news media reporters or contacts they have worked with or those they feel would be interested in doing a story on the KW, and those who should be included on a mailing list for newsletters, news releases, and other I & E materials.
3. On an ongoing basis, review all their activities for their potential for news stories. Take initiative to obtain positive publicity by contacting news media when opportunities arise, or contact agency public affairs or I & E Committee members for assistance.



Action 10 KW "Update" newsletter.

Review this first draft of "KW Notes", and send comments and/or suggestions for improvement, to Kate Winsor. Be thinking about what should be included from your agency for future newsletters; I & E Committee will contact Team members this fall for the fall issue. Comments on the first issue should be sent to Kate Winsor, c/o USFWS, Endangered Species Division, Federal Building, Fort Snelling, Minnesota 55111-4056.

June 28, 1992

This committee report was prepared by Bob Hess, I & E Committee Chairperson.

REH:ack

- cc: Mr. Kenneth Rex Ennis, Recovery Team Leader
- Mr. George E. Burgoyne, Jr., DNR
- Mr. Gary Boushelle, DNR
- KW I & E Steering Committee Members

Bob
AB

184 201: Kirtland's Warbler Information-Education Steering Committee Progress Report

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