

Coordinated Shorebird Predation Management Webinar Communication & Outreach

March 30, 2021, 2-3p *Eastern Time*

Agenda & Notes

AGENDA:

I) Overview of Webinar Series, Webinar Logistics & Objectives (5 min) [Caleb Spiegel, USFWS]

- Habitat Working Group subgroups
 - Human disturbance
 - Predation management – not very active until these webinars
- Webinars meant to bring people back together after development of the Guidance and Best Practices
- Previous webinars posted on [AFSI website](#)

II) Background, Resources, and Case Studies (25 min)

- Overview of communication & outreach information from NFWF-funded AFSI [Guidance & Best Practices](#) and follow-up workshop [Caleb]
 - Best Practice 6 (pp. 52-57) in Guidance and Best Practices document addressed Community engagement, outreach and communication; as well as associated Supplemental Materials (pp.161-175) (talking points, outreach materials)
 - Here today to talk about existing needs and future work
 - For example, need of material that links feeding wildlife to lethal control, e.g. “A fed bear is a dead bear”
 - 2020 PIPL/LETE Workshop – predator management communications workshop. No immediate push for additional work after this, COVID was a factor. Checking in about this again.
 - Overall recommendations from that workshop – see slide on webinar recording.
- Overview of Furbearer Communication Strategy and related resources (10 min) [Colleen Olfenbittel, NC Wildlife Resources Commission]
 - Review of resources presented in Best Practice 6 to lead to discussions about needs for further resources from both the furbearer and shorebird side
 - Everyone needs to be a good communicator, especially when talking about issues like trapping. Access the resources! **Furbearermanagement.com**
 - Collectively, we are viewed as experts on this topic, even if you don’t feel like the expert.
 - Good communication is critical to support lethal predator management
 - Need to understand the public’s perception and empathize; public tends to be uninformed about trapping but some biologists need to educate themselves more as well
 - Majority of public does not know about trapping (Responsive Management 2001 and 2016). Lots of education potential.

- Thought of as a “Controversial topic” – BUT surveys suggest that it’s not as controversial as we think. Increase in public approval ratings - now in the majority. Trapping for wildlife restoration support is even higher (85% approval: Responsive Management 2016).
- Consistent messaging; talking points
- **Resources**
 - Furbearermanagement.com
 - [BMP trap search portal](#)
 - Communications Strategy for trapping and furbearer management: 2-pronged approach
 - Public attitude survey results – reports and brochure
 - **New Resource:** Science Briefs – Animal welfare, Animal Selectivity, Sustainable Use
 - What other topics would be useful to this group?
 - [Trapping Matters Workshops](#) – opportunities to explore effective communications, key messages; empowering for biologists for communicating about trapping
 - 4 workshops scheduled in 2021 – (e.g., WV, VA, USFWS regional office) contact Thomas_decker@fws.gov
- **Some potential next steps of interest**
 - Gauge interest in communications strategy
 - Gauge interest in workshop
 - Develop new Science Briefs aimed at shorebird management
 - Other materials not identified here

• Case study - Fox trapping in New Jersey: From challenges to resources (5 min) [Todd Pover, Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey]

- Reporting out on lessons learned after particular situation with fox trapping in Brigantine, NJ. Lots of misinformation posted about the incident. Emphasized need for more organized approach to communications
- Formed Working Group to address the matter – varied partners
 - FAQs developed for public and media consumption (see slide for examples)
 - Predator Management Talking Points developed to guide communications with the public, media, municipalities, and elected officials.
 - Caution - sharing some of these documents can be tricky depending on intended audience
- Be prepared – sometimes it’s out of your control in terms of what gets out to the public
- Be transparent as you are able within agency/organizational constraints
- Consistent messages USED consistently
- **Unmet need – how to manage social media outlets? To engage or not? How much?**

• Case Study - Management on privately owned beaches on Martha’s Vineyard: Key lessons (5 min) [Luanne Johnson, BiodiversityWorks]

- Martha’s Vineyard, private beaches and crow management
- Dogfish Bar, 1 mile, 5-9 pairs PIPL
- 17-20 private landowners; “Share the Shore” well with the birds
- 2014 started losing chicks soon after hatching to crows

- Implemented anti perching devices
- Lethal management with box trapping and euthanasia
- Strategies that worked to get landowner support
 - Provided data to landowners
 - Long term relationships facilitated support
 - Asked permission and support early in process
 - Direct email and one-on-one communications
- Messages for lethal control that worked
 - Superabundance influenced by human presence and behavior, we need to be part of the solution for a problem that we influenced
 - Reference small overall numbers of animals trapped
 - Terminology – “trap” was not received well. Instead use substitute, e.g. Box Trap, Havahart.
 - Reference attempts to use non-lethal control if applicable
 - Relocation messages – relocation often not legal, impacts individuals at relocated destination, timing to avoid orphaned animals.
 - Productivity data that shows increases related to predator management can be a powerful message
- Biodiversity Works does this work themselves – gives them a different perspective and ability to relate their messages to the public.
- Question for Luanne – anything that they wished they had as a resource that is missing?
 - Social media plan as Todd mentioned
 - Crows are popular with the public and the public tends to have more empathy for them; more materials and talking points relative to rise in mesopredators due to changes in the landscape related to humans; more messages about this will be helpful.
 - **Idea for new Science Briefs about mesopredators. Also see idea about Story Map.**
 - AFWA messages – check to see if messaging lines up with recommendations from AFWA. E.g. Abundant wildlife, in some cases overabundant. Using the term humane. These recommendations can apply across many different situations.

III) Discussion (25 minutes) [All]

(1) CHALLENGES & NEEDS: [Caleb]

What communication and or outreach-related challenges do you encounter at sites where you conduct predation management?

- AERIAL PREDATORS
 - Great Lakes Piping Plovers = challenges with Merlin. Working with other managers to address particular situations.
 - NJ = Peregrine Falcons - working w/ biologists in NJ to monitor activity
 - **More resources are needed for non-lethal methods to deal with Merlin and other aerial predators.**
 - **Studies needed to look at home range, cameras to see what is being brought back to nests.**

- Lasers have been used as method of non-lethal management – contact (susivonoettingen@fws.gov) about lasers in Tern colonies

What associated needs are not being met right now with current resources? Tools, resources, info?

- NEED GOOD MESSENGERS (e.g., experts from the trapping world) that could be available to help communicate to local groups on predation management to support the ‘bird people’.
 - Colleen confirmed that when the actual trappers talk, it’s always a positive reaction. Makes a more personal connection.

(2) EXISTING RESOURCES: [Caleb]

- What resources have you used that have helped you (and can potentially help others on the webinar) meet particular communication & outreach-related challenges?
- Have you consulted the *AFSI Guidance & Best Practices* on the topic? How about the *Communication Strategy for Trapping & Furbearer Mgmt/BMPs*?

(3) MOVING FORWARD: [Deb Reynolds & Caleb, USFWS]

- If you identified any needs not being met by existing resources, what collaborative action(s) could be taken to develop a resource(s) to meet these needs?
- What level of effort would such an action(s) require?
- What are some ways to foster better information sharing on the topic?

DEB REYNOLDS

- Emphasized what Colleen said about the fact that many of us are biologists and sometimes it’s ok to seek out another messenger with those specific types of communication skills
- **REMNERS ABOUT RESOURCES AVAILABLE ON AFSI WEBSITE:**
 - Guidance and Best Practices for Coordinated Predation Management
 - Available [HERE](#) via AFSI website, along with the two prior webinars
 - AFSI Website also has [searchable outreach material database](#) which is a place to submit outreach materials
 - FOLLOW-UP: Colleen could submit some of the materials that she presented on AFSI database for easier discovery by shorebird managers**
 - Shorebird Forum for the Americas – recently under AFSI management. Excellent way to communicate and share information among other shorebird practitioners: www.shorebirdforum.org

IV) Next Steps (5 minutes) [Caleb]

- A webinar recording & relevant notes will be posted on AFSI website in upcoming weeks.

- A follow-up AFSI inquiry will be emailed to the group to:
 - further identify and prioritize collaborative actions that webinar participants could undertake
 - gauge interest from participants in engaging in actions
 - compile additional suggestions that were not covered during webinar

Follow up questionnaire will be coming from AFSI to send additional comments/answer discussion questions (above) in more detail - sometime in May

- Caleb will plan follow-up meeting **after field season** to facilitate next steps on actions of interest

WEBINAR PARTICIPANTS (36):

First name	Last name	Affiliation
Lindsay	Addison	Audubon North Carolina
Elizabeth	Amendola	Audubon Connecticut
Emily	Argo	USFWS
Marja	Bakermans	Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Henrietta	Bellman	Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife
Bri	Benvenuti	USFWS - Rachel Carson NWR
Olyvia	Childress	USFWS - Arcata Field Office, California
Elizabeth	Colhoun	NC Coastal Reserve, NCNERR
Audrey	DeRose-Wilson	Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Robin	Dyer	USDA-APHIS, Maine
Jillian	Farkas	USFWS - Michigan Field Office
Susan	Guiteras	USFWS - Coastal Delaware NWR Complex
Beth	Forys	Eckerd College, Suncoast Shorebird Partnership
Anne	Hecht	USFWS - Ecological Services
Emily	Heiser	NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife
Lindsay	Hermanns	Virginia Tech Shorebird Program
Kevin	Holcomb	USFWS - Chincoteague NWR
Luanne	Johnson	BiodiversityWorks, Martha's Vineyard MA
Stephanie	Koch	USFWS - Eastern Massachusetts NWR Complex
Meaghan	Lyon	Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey
Mark	McCollough	USFWS - Maine Field Office
Eileen	McGourty	USFWS - Monomoy NWR
Kate	OBrien	USFWS - Rachel Carson NWR
Colleen	Olfenbuttel	NC Wildlife Resources Commission
Todd	Pover	Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey
Meagan	Racey	USFWS - Ecological Services
Debra	Reynolds	USFWS - Migratory Birds
Samantha	Robinson	Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife
Laura	Saucier	Connecticut Dept of Energy and Environmental Protection
Kayla	Smith	BiodiversityWorks, Martha's Vineyard MA
Caleb	Spiegel	USFWS - Migratory Birds
Tim	Sullivan	USFWS - NY Field Office
Kate	Tweedy	Little St. Simon's Island
Kiah	Walker	USFWS - Parker River NWR
Alex	Wilke	The Nature Conservancy, Virginia Coast Reserve
Laura	Zitske	Maine Audubon