



## **Pintail Action Group Annual Meeting**

**September 22, 2007**

**Mesquite Room**

**Hotel Arizona**

**181 West Broadway**

**Tucson, Arizona**

**8:30 AM – 2:00 P.M.**

**In Attendance:** Joe Fleskes (USGS, Chair), Jim Devries (DUC), Dave Haukos (USFWS, TTU), Mindy Rice (TTU), Bob Trost (USFWS-DMBM), Mike Eichholz (SIU), Jim Sedinger (UNR)

### **Meeting Objectives:**

- Chair report
- Review progress on action items from last meeting
- Task team updates
- Reports of on-going pintail research & management
- Discuss update of research & conservation priorities
- Elect new Vice-Chair
- New business
- Set new action items
- Set next meeting date

### **Chair Report (Fleskes)**

NSST update:

- Fleskes participated in December ('06) NSST meeting in Austin, TX to present update on PAG activities, and June ('07) NSST meeting in Minneapolis, MN to discuss Action Group support needs (i.e., joint Coordinator position, seed research funding)
- NSST decided not to provide a funded Coordinator position for Action Groups but potential funding is available for high priority PAG info needs as part of a NSST process
- A Proposal to continue and expand pintail population modeling effort was submitted to NSST. The USFWS (Koneff) has expressed an interest to participate in the expanded modeling effort.
- **ACTION: Devries** (in-coming Chair) will work with **Bob Trost, John Eadie, Bob Clark** and **Joe Fleskes** to modify pintail population modeling proposal, pursue funding, and coordinate efforts with Mark Koneff. (End of Oct deadline).

Contacts/meetings/miscellaneous:

- As a follow-up to the 2006 Pintail Workshop (Bismarck, ND), organized a working group meeting of 10 PAG members in Sacramento, CA on Sept 6-7,

2007, to draft an update of pintail research and management needs (see discussion below).

### **Previous Action Item Updates (Progress, Challenges, Revisions)**

#### Website Status Report (Eichholz)

- No counter possible because of University web host.
- Eichholtz will now be handling website updates himself.
- **ACTION: Devries** will email PAG members to ask for papers for website.
- **ACTION: Fleskes** will send Devries PAG email list.

#### Communications/Articles (Fleskes)

- **ACTION: Fleskes** will prepare PAG article for California Waterfowl magazine.

#### PAG PowerPoint Talk (Fleskes/Devries)

- Eadie presented PAG update PPT at Pacific Flyway meeting
- Devries presented PAG update PPT at Central Flyway meeting
- **ACTION: Eichholz** will contact Mississippi Flyway to present PAG PPT update (**Devries** will send PPT to Eichholz)
- **ACTION: Devries** will draft notes for PAG PPT and circulate to Joe, Dave (and others)

#### Key Joint Venture contacts

- **ACTION: Devries** to review and update

### **Task Team Updates**

#### Demographic Models

Based on discussions at our September 6-7 meeting, an expanded Task Team has been formed to draft a proposal to develop a continental pintail model that links population-level dynamics (top-down) to demographic processes (bottom-up; vital rates, landscape-linked). The proposal will be submitted to NSST for funding consideration (see above under “Chair Report”).

#### Brood Pair Analysis-Brood Survey to Index Production (Trost)

**ACTION: Trost** will examine the July survey data prepare a brief report to PAG on the issue.

#### May Survey Bias

No update. This has been addressed in current Pintail AHM model by an adjustment factor based on the mean latitude of the population during the May breeding Waterfowl Survey. Survey design likely will not change.

#### Pintail Harvest Strategy/AHM (Trost)

Trost answered questions regarding the current Pintail Harvest Strategy. The new strategy removes the requirement that the population grows by 6%/yr if below the NAWMP goal. Main discussion regarded whether the modeling process is correctly accounting for the current carrying capacity of the landscape and the potential impact that over-estimating carrying capacity may have on calculated allowable harvest.

#### Banding Program

Recommendations awaiting completion of Band-Recovery Assessment

#### Pintail Band-Recovery Data Assessment (Rice/Haukos)

Rice and Haukos presented (nearly) final version of report.

Eicholtz suggested running an additional model to see if survival is higher in 'overflight' years (i.e., correlated with average latitude of the population...would suspect higher survival if nesting effort is lower in those years). This could be an important point.

**ACTION:** PAG will draft a letter to send to USFWS (Bob Blohm) to emphasize the importance of improving pintail banding.

**ACTION:** PAG will provide comments (based on this assessment) on the draft USFWS Banding Needs Document when it becomes available for comment.

**ACTION:** Rice/Haukos will run an additional survival model exploring the overflight hypothesis

### **On-Going Pintail Research and Management**

#### Body condition, Avian Influenza (Fleskes)

Fleskes provided an update on recent or on-going pintail-related research including: Central Valley waterfowl ecology study recently completed, study on spring habitat use and abundance in SONEC, on-going body condition study in Central Valley, on-going pintail food habits on ag-lands study in Tulare Basin, and an on-going avian influenza and pintail genetics study in U.S. and Japan in cooperation with USGS-Alaska Science Center et al. (contact Fleskes for details).

#### Evaluation of DUC Pintail Mgmt Program (Devries)

This study has completed its third and final year of field work in 2007 (near Hussar, AB) examining pintail habitat selection and nest survival in landscapes ranging from crop-dominated to grass-dominated. Six, 16mi<sup>2</sup> study sites per year with 2 replicates crop dominated, 2 replicates grass/hay dominated, 2 replicates native grass dominated. Fall cereals planted on crop and tame grass dominated sites. Nest searched all habitats including croplands. About 400 pintail nests were been found over the course of the study. Nest survival has ranged from ~5% in spring-seeded cropland to ~28% in winter wheat. Analysis will continue this winter.

### **Update of Research & Conservation Priorities** (Devries/Fleskes/all)

Devries/Fleskes provided an update on PAG working group that met in Sacramento Sept 6-7. The objective of the meeting was to review and revise hypotheses for pintail decline and research/conservation needs of pintails based on new information gathered since the 2001 meeting in Sacramento. The results of this meeting will be drafted into an update of the 2003 document "The Northern Pintail in North America: The Problem and a Prescription for Recovery". The update document will follow a similar format to the original and become the primary working objectives for the PAG to address over the next 5 years. A draft of the document will be available by spring 2008.

### **New Business**

#### Election of New Vice-Chair / Transfer of Chair

Dave Haukos was nominated and elected as the new PAG Vice-Chair. Jim Devries assumes the Chair of PAG from Joe Fleskes. Many thanks to Joe for 2 years of dedicated service as PAG Chair.

#### Review New Action Items

See ***ACTION*** items in text above

#### Next Meeting Location

Next meeting date and location was not decided. It was discussed that it would be desirable to meet in conjunction with the NSST in mid-late 2008 depending on schedule. In future years, meetings in conjunction with the N.A. Duck Symposium are likely the best option.

***ACTION:*** **Devries** will investigate potential to meet in association with an NSST meeting in 2008 and will inform membership of the meeting date and location at least 2 months in advance.

**Adjourned 2:00 PM**