



Partners in Flight - U.S.



What is *Partners in Flight* (PIF)?

Partners in Flight / Compañeros en Vuelo / Partenaires d'Envol was launched in 1990 in response to growing concerns about declines in the populations of many land bird species. The initial focus was on neotropical migrants, species that breed in the Nearctic (North America) and winter in the Neotropics (Central and South America), but the focus has spread to include all landbirds. The central premise of Partners in Flight (PIF) has been that the resources of public and private organizations in the Western Hemisphere must be combined, coordinated, and increased in order to achieve success in conserving bird populations in this hemisphere.

Partners in Flight is a cooperative effort involving partnerships among federal, state and local government agencies, philanthropic foundations, professional organizations, conservation groups, industry, the academic community, and private individuals. All Partners in Flight meetings at all levels are open to anyone interested in bird conservation and we eagerly seek your contribution.



Click [here](#) for PIF Contacts (national, regional, and state level)

PARTNERS IN FLIGHT MISSION

The Partners in Flight mission is expressed in three related concepts:

- **Helping Species at Risk** - Species must be conserved before they become imperiled. Allowing species to become threatened or endangered results in long-term and costly recovery efforts whose success is far from guaranteed. Endangered species must not only be protected from extinction but must be recovered to once again play their roles in ensuring the future of healthy ecosystems.

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- **Keeping Common Birds Common** - Common native birds, both resident and migratory, must remain common throughout their natural ranges. These species comprise the core of our avian diversity and are integral to the integrity of the ecosystems of which they are a part.
- **Voluntary Partnerships for Birds, Habitats and People** - Conservation of landbirds and their habitats is not a task that can be undertaken alone. Partnerships must be formed with others who are working for conservation on the same landscapes as well as those who depend on those landscapes for their economic and social well-being. The conservation of natural systems is fundamentally necessary for life on earth, including that of humans.

PARTNERS IN FLIGHT GOALS

PIF Long-Term Goals

- Ensure an active scientifically-based conservation design process that identifies and develops solutions to threats and risks to landbird populations.
- Create a coordinated network of conservation partners implementing the objectives of the landbird conservation plans at multiple scales.
- Secure sufficient commitment and resources to support vigorous implementation of landbird conservation objectives.

PIF 36-month Strategic Goals (2012)

- Increase our capacity to support full life cycle conservation.
- Integrate Partners in Flight priorities and objectives into public agency, Joint Venture, Landscape Conservation Cooperative and private lands natural resource planning and action.
- Engage Partners in Flight's constituencies, audiences, and partners in priority conservation actions through more effective education, outreach and communications.

- Expand the Partners in Flight network and increase financial resources to support landbird conservation activities.

Major Partners in Flight Products

[Saving Our Shared Birds: Partners in Flight Tri-National Vision for Landbird Conservation](#) (Canada-US-Mexico)

[Partners in Flight North American Landbird Conservation Plan](#) (continental US-Canada plan)

[Partners in Flight Landbird Conservation Plans](#) (plans for individual states and/or physiographic areas)

[Partners in Flight Technical Series](#)

[Other Partners in Flight-related Publications](#)

Relation to the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) and Other Bird Initiatives

Partners in Flight is committed to maintaining the science and planning base for the hundreds of species of landbirds for which PIF is the advocate. However, PIF is also completely committed to the principles of the [North American Bird Conservation Initiative](#) (NABCI) and to working closely and efficiently with all bird conservation initiatives and, indeed, with all conservation initiatives in the broadest sense. An inherent objective of each committee and working group described below is to coordinate and communicate at all appropriate levels with other initiatives to ensure that our conservation efforts are efficient and effective. Our committees, working groups and other organizational structures also will continue to be flexible as bird conservation grows and evolves.

PARTNERS IN FLIGHT - U.S. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

[Contacts for PIF committees and working groups](#)

National Committees and Working Groups

Council - The PIF Council consists of chairs of the national committees and working groups listed below as well as representatives from Canada and Mexico. The Council provides a forum to discuss and resolve major issues that involve all levels of PIF. Specific responsibilities include: 1) identifying program-wide priorities and making decisions on courses of action, 2) ensuring that effective communication and coordination exists, 3) discussing policy issues that concern the structure, operation, and mission of the program, and 4) reviewing working group activities to ensure that all needs are addressed and duplication is avoided. The Council meets twice annually.

Steering Committee - Partners in Flight is coordinated by a Steering Committee whose members represent state government agencies, federal government agencies, non-governmental conservation organizations, and private industry. The Steering Committee identifies PIF priorities and coordinates overall direction and action. This committee meets twice a year, during the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in March and at sites to be determined in September. A chair and a vice-chair are elected by members for 2-year terms.

State Agency Committee - The State Agency Committee consists of representatives from State and Territorial fish and wildlife agencies and is served by the [Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies](#) (AFWA) PIF/Shorebird/Waterbird Working Group. Representation on the committee is composed of one member from each regional fish and wildlife association (i.e., Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Association of Midwest Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Resource Agencies), and a fifth member who chairs the committee. The chair is appointed by the president of AFWA, with which all regional associations are affiliated, and the regional representatives are designated by the presidents of the regional associations. AFWA is an association of fish and wildlife agencies in all 50 states of the United States, the U.S. Territories, Puerto Rico, the Canadian Provinces, and the Mexican federal government. The PIF/Shorebird/Waterbird Working Group meets twice a year – during the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in March and during the annual meeting of

the AFWA in September. A coordinator is staffed by AFWA.

Federal Agency Committee - The Federal Agency Committee is comprised of representatives from each federal agency that has an interest in landbird conservation. Member agencies are encouraged to take appropriate actions within the limits of their respective authorities, policies and budgets. The Federal Agency Committee meets four times a year. At least three of these meetings will be via conference call, and if the issues to be addressed require it, the fourth will be a face-to-face meeting. In addition, Committee members meet unofficially during the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in March and during the annual meeting of the AFWA in September. Responsibility for chairing the committee rotates every two years to a different member federal agency. The chair also acts as a liaison to the Council for the Conservation of Migratory Birds (Executive Order 13186).

Non-governmental Organization Committee - The Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Committee consists of representatives from all NGOs that endorse the program and will actively commit resources to foster its goals. This committee determines its own structure and meeting schedule.

Industry Committee - The Industry Committee consists of representatives from private industry that support landbird conservation. Participation is open to all industries that endorse the program and will actively commit resources to foster its goals. This committee determines its own structure and meeting schedule.

Awards Committee - The Awards Committee solicits nominations for Partners in Flight awards, reviews nominations, and makes recommendations to the PIF Council for approval. The chair is appointed by the PIF Council and the chair selects additional members of the committee. [PIF Awards](#) are given annually in four categories - Investigations, Stewardship, Communication, and Leadership - and are presented in the spring at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference. Procedural details are reviewed and revised, as necessary, by the committee.

Science Committee - The Science Committee ensures an active

scientifically-based conservation design process that identifies and develops solutions to threats and risks to landbird populations. This includes maintaining, revising and evaluating the technical content of the PIF North American Landbird Conservation Plan, the PIF Tri-National Vision, the PIF Species Assessment Database, the PIF Population Estimates Database, and related foundational pieces. This working group is responsible for addressing all other technical issues concerning landbird conservation at the national and international levels, including research, inventory, and monitoring issues. The Science Committee provides assistance, as practicable, to regional, BCR, JV, state or other geographic scales and is responsible for helping to step down continental objectives and to resolve discrepancies between continental and regional biological objectives. The Committee elects a chair and meets as needed.

International Working Group - The International Working Group seeks to actively involve participants from Canada, Latin America, and the Caribbean. This working group strives to adapt the Partners in Flight program to meet international resource conservation needs. This is accomplished by publishing a newsletter - [*La Tangara*](#), assisting with international communication and training, strengthening in-country programs, promoting north-south linkages, and integrating international issues into Partners in Flight activities.

Bird Education Alliance for Conservation - The [Bird Education Alliance for Conservation](#) (BEAC) is a coalition of educators representing universities, bird observatories, local, state, and federal agencies, and environmental education and conservation groups. BEAC promotes bird conservation education and develops effective ways to implement bird conservation through communications, education and outreach.

Regional Working Groups

Four regional working groups have been established in the West, Midwest, Southeast and Northeast. Each has a chair and a committee structure that generally parallels those at the national level. Chairs are members of the Steering Committee. The regional working group's mission is to develop a regional strategy for the conservation of birds within their respective regions by developing Bird Conservation Plans that identify problems, synthesize

information, and generate solutions to be used by resource professionals and the general public. Regional working groups foster communication, coordination, and cooperation among agencies, organizations, academic institutions, and individuals interested in conserving birds within their respective regions.

[Map of PIF Organizational Regions](#)

Regions are defined by the states and territories listed below; note that some are in two regions by their request.

[Southeast Working Group](#): Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands.

Northeast Working Group: Connecticut, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware.

[Midwest Working Group](#): Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin.

[Western Working Group](#): Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming.

State & Territory Working Groups

These working groups are the level of the Partner In Flight organization that is closest to the ground. They determine their own structure and meeting schedules and there is more variation at this level as each working group seeks to meet those local needs and issues most important in its particular area. Objectives parallel those described above for the regional working groups.

[PIF State Contacts](#)

FUTURE ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTION

Partners in Flight has succeeded partly because it has been a flexible coalition, with various organizational units adapting as necessary to meet new needs and opportunities. We see this continuing into the future and are always open to better ways of achieving the conservation of birds and their habitats.

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