

# 2007 Current Fiscal Year Report: Advisory Committee on the Bird Banding Laboratory

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## 1. Department or Agency

Department of the Interior

## 2. Fiscal Year

2007

## 3. Committee or Subcommittee

Advisory Committee on the Bird Banding Laboratory

## 3b. GSA

## Committee No.

25108

## 4. Is this New During Fiscal Year?

No

## 5. Current Charter

06/27/2005

## 6. Expected Renewal Date

06/27/2007

## 7. Expected Term Date

06/27/2007

## 8a. Was Terminated During Fiscal Year?

Yes

## 8b. Specific Termination Authority

42 U.S.C. 1975

## 8c. Actual Term Date

06/26/2007

## 9. Agency Recommendation for Next Fiscal Year

Terminate

## 10a. Legislation Req to Terminate?

No

## 10b. Legislation Pending?

Enacted

## 11. Establishment Authority

Agency Authority

## 12. Specific Establishment Authority

Agency Decision Document

## 13. Effective Date

03/07/2006

## 14. Committee Type

Continuing

## 14c. Presidential?

No

## 15. Description of Committee

Scientific Technical Program Advisory Board

## 16a. Total Number of Reports

1

16b. Report Date

Report Title

Report of the Federal Advisory Committee on the Bird Banding Laboratory (DRAFT)

## Number of Committee Reports Listed: 1

17a.

Open

1 17b. Closed 0 17c. Partially Closed 0 Other Activities 0 17d. Total 1

## Meetings and Dates

Purpose	Start	End
The task for the entire two days of the meeting was to review the draft report prepared by the writing sub-committee in its meeting on September 12-13, 2006. The goal was to develop a draft that represented as far as possible the consensus of the Committee.	11/07/2006	11/08/2006

## Number of Committee Meetings Listed: 1

	Current FY	Next FY
<b>18a(1). Personnel Pmts to Non-Federal Members</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18a(2). Personnel Pmts to Federal Members</b>	\$2,033.00	\$0.00
<b>18a(3). Personnel Pmts to Federal Staff</b>	\$14,976.00	\$2,000.00
<b>18a(4). Personnel Pmts to Non-Member Consultants</b>	\$23,222.00	\$0.00
<b>18b(1). Travel and Per Diem to Non-Federal Members</b>	\$9,940.00	\$8,000.00
<b>18b(2). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Members</b>	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
<b>18b(3). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Staff</b>	\$1,604.00	\$300.00
<b>18b(4). Travel and Per Diem to Non-member Consultants</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18c. Administrative Costs (FRNs, contractor support, In-person/hybrid/virtual meetings)</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18d. Other (all other funds not captured by any other cost category)</b>	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
<b>18e. Total Costs</b>	\$54,775.00	\$10,300.00

**19. Federal Staff Support  
Years (FTE)**

0.05

0.05

**20a. How does the Committee accomplish its purpose?**

The Committee provides advice and recommendations to the Federal Government, through the Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), on the conduct and activities of the Bird Banding Laboratory (BBL). The purpose of the Committee is to represent the interests of the bird banding community, including both game and non-game birds, in advising the Federal Government on current and future management of the BBL. Through its advice and guidance the Committee assists the BBL in fulfilling its essential and primary role of supporting the needs of regulatory agencies such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Canadian Wildlife Service, and state fish and game agencies, while also addressing the emerging needs of the larger conservation and research communities. The Committee's Report identified a new vision and mission for the BBL and identified six goals that it believes should be integral to the development of a strategic plan to achieve them. Those goals are: 1. Facilitate the identification of individual birds through marking. 2. Create automated, electronic systems that efficiently verify, accept, store, and manage data associated with individually marked birds. 3. Facilitate access to and use of data from marked birds for science, conservation, and management. 4. Administer permits in an efficient, timely, and modern manner, and use them to ensure that bird welfare and data quality remain top priorities. 5. Work closely with national and international partners to achieve the mission of the BBL. 6. Manage the BBL in an efficient, cost-effective manner to

maximize use of available resources. Most of the report is structured around these goals. The Committee made 2 programmatic recommendations and identified 23 objectives and 58 specific recommendations. The programmatic recommendations are: (1) that the primary role of the BBL is and should continue to be to support the use of banding and banding data by researchers and managers engaged in science, conservation, and management of birds, and not to play a lead role in original research; and (2) that the BBL be managed nationally by USGS headquarters as a research and operational support unit and provided with the resources appropriate to its national and international functions and responsibilities; it should continue to be located physically at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center (PWRC). In order to achieve its vision and mission, the Committee believes that the BBL must work towards achieving all of the recommendations in this report. Nevertheless, it identified five objectives that stand out as high priority, and they are as follows: Objective 1.1—to ensure a continuing, adequate supply of high-quality, Federally issued numeric bands of required sizes, materials, and types; Objective 2.1—to improve mechanisms for verifying, accepting, storing, and managing bird-banding data; Objective 2.3—to accommodate recapture data; Objective 4.1—to ensure through the permitting process that banders know how to safely handle birds, collect data accurately, and maintain birds in humane and healthful conditions; and Objective 5.3—to encourage the development of banding programs in Latin America and the Caribbean. Finally, this Committee believes that the BBL will be well served if it continues to support a Federal Advisory Committee, composed similarly to this one, to continue offering guidance

and direction from the broad bird-banding community.

**20b. How does the Committee balance its membership?**

In order for the Department of the Interior to be advised by a broad and balanced spectrum of the bird banding community, the Secretary appointed members to the Committee representing many major Bird Banding Laboratory stakeholder groups. This includes: game and non-game bird banders; Canadian Wildlife Service; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; state wildlife conservation organizations; academia; professional and technical ornithological societies; waterfowl and upland game bird hunting organizations; and nonprofit conservation organizations. The membership has not changed since the Committee was first chartered; however, should the Committee be re-chartered in FY 07 the USGS, with input from the existing Committee members, will seek equally valuable but different guidance/expertise from other stakeholder organizations not now represented, and will likely seek different individuals from currently represented organizations, in a continuing effort to ensure all relevant viewpoints concerning the bird banding enterprise are expressed through the Committee.

**20c. How frequent and relevant are the Committee Meetings?**

The full Committee met 3 times in FY 06 and once in FY 07; the writing sub-group of the Committee met an additional 3 times in FY 06 to integrate and fully develop input from the full Committee into a draft final report. The full Committee met once in FY 07 to review/refine its draft report and to seek consensus on its many recommendations.

**20d. Why can't the advice or information this committee provides be obtained elsewhere?**

In the last 10 years much change has taken place in bird banding. The Bird Banding Laboratory has assumed additional duties and responsibilities, including: administration of a joint USGS/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Reward Band Study and a 1-800 number for reporting band recoveries; implementation of much-needed data management/system upgrades and improvements, and the Web technology revolution for customer service. The composition of the banding community is changing as non-game banders now account for over one-half of all birds banded annually. In view of these changes and because the Laboratory also has a responsibility to address the needs of and solicit advice from its expanding non-Federal conservation and research constituency, it is essential that an Advisory Committee be convened. Many of the Laboratory's cooperators and stakeholders are non-federal. Their interests and needs may not be accurately or adequately portrayed if they are not included as active participants in the process to identify necessary changes and improvements to the Laboratory. A FACA Committee format is necessary to reach a fair and balanced compromise in attempting to meet the diverse banding community's oft-times distinct needs for resources and information products. There is no other existing FACA Committee with responsibility for advising the Federal Government on bird banding activities.

**20e. Why is it necessary to close and/or partially closed committee meetings?**

## 21. Remarks

The Committee provided its final report on the Bird Banding Laboratory to the USGS by its termination date. It included a recommendation to re-charter the Committee, which was rejected by the Agency.

### Designated Federal Officer

Daniel L. James Assistant Coordinator, Status and Trends of Biological Resources Program

Committee Members	Start	End	Occupation	Member Designation
Bales, Bradley	05/05/2005	05/05/2007	International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and The National Flyway Council	Representative Member
Bonter, David	05/05/2005	05/05/2007	Cornell Lab of Ornithology	Representative Member
DeSante, David	05/05/2005	05/05/2007	The Institute for Bird Populations	Representative Member
Doherty, Paul	05/05/2005	05/05/2007	Colorado State University	Representative Member
Francis, Charles	05/05/2005	05/05/2007	Canadian Wildlife Service	Representative Member
Green, Paul	05/05/2005	05/05/2007	National Audubon Society	Representative Member
Haseltine, Susan	05/05/2005	05/05/2007	U.S. Geological Survey	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Lament, Jasper	05/05/2005	05/05/2007	Conservation Program Manager, DU	Representative Member
Lancia, Richard	08/30/2005	05/05/2007	President, The Wildlife Society	Representative Member
Paul, Ellen	05/05/2005	05/05/2007	The Ornithological Council	Representative Member
Ralph, C.	05/05/2005	05/05/2007	Chair, North American Banding Council	Representative Member
Schmidt, Paul	05/05/2005	05/05/2007	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Young, Rick	05/05/2005	05/05/2007	Vice President of Field Operations, Pheasants Forever	Representative Member

## **Number of Committee Members Listed: 13**

### **Narrative Description**

The work of this committee is integral to and directly supports the mission of the Department of the Interior (DOI) and its strategic plan. This is demonstrated through the following description of how the BBL is nested organizationally within the DOI structure and how the mission of the BBL directly relates to and supports the broader mission and goals of the DOI. The BBL is a critically important component of the Status and Trends (S&T) of Biological Resources Program. The S&T Program is one of eight Programs within the Biological Resources Discipline of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), which also includes the Water, Geography, Geology, and Geospatial Information among its science Disciplines. The overarching purpose of the committee, which represents the diverse game and non-game bird banding community, is to provide advice and guidance to help ensure that the BBL achieves its mission "...to provide high-quality banding data in a timely manner for use in developing effective bird conservation and management strategies throughout North America." Bird banding is a universal technique for studying the movement, survival, behavior, and changes in the status and trends of bird populations. The BBL mission and focus nests comfortably within and directly supports that of the S&T Program and its 4 goals: The mission of the S&T Program "...is to measure, predict, assess, and report the status and trends of the Nation's biological resources to facilitate research, enable resource management and stewardship, and promote public understanding and appreciation of our living resources." Goal 1: Develop a Conceptual Model and the Required Infrastructure (A National Monitoring Framework) that Facilitates the Integration of Information from a Variety of Sources, at Multiple Spatial and Temporal Scales, to Describe and Track the Abundance, Distribution, Productivity, and Health of the Nation's Plants, Animals, and Ecosystems. Goal 2: Develop and Evaluate Inventory and Monitoring Methods, Proto-cols, Experimental Designs, Analytic Tools, Models, and Technologies to Measure Biological Status and Trends. Goal 3: Collect, Manage, Archive, and Share Critical, High-Quality Monitoring Data in Cooperation



with Partners to Enable a Determination of the Status and Trends of Biological Resources Goal 4: Produce and Provide Analyses and Reports that Synthesize Information on the Status and Trends of Our Nation's Flora, Fauna, and Ecosystems and Respond to the Needs of the Scientific Community, Land and Resource Managers, Policymakers, and the Public

The USGS is the DOI's principal science agency. As such, it is entrusted to provide unbiased, independent data and information on hydrology, geology, geography, and biology. Included in the USGS mission are requirements to collect natural resource information and conduct systematic analyses and investigations to inform natural resource decision-making. To achieve its mission, the USGS Strategic Plan (USGS, 2002) indicates that it will "...continue to improve the quality and usefulness of its long-term data sets," and, where appropriate, work with partners (other federal, state, tribal, and local governments; academic and research institutions; and private organizations) to acquire the necessary data." The BBL, S&T, and USGS mission/goals statements reflect common themes, including: the value of good science; the need for and importance of status and trends data for birds and other biological resources; and the provision of information/data for conservation and natural resource management decision-making. These themes are largely derived from and directly support the DOI mission statement and the goals and objectives of the DOI Strategic Plan (DOI, 2003):

The mission of the DOI is to protect and manage the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage; provide scientific and other information about those resources; and honor its trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated Island Communities. To meet its stewardship responsibilities, as conveyed by numerous legislative authorities, the DOI is mandated to estimate the availability and abundance of fish and wildlife resources, determine the distribution and abundance of migratory birds, and investigate and report on North American birds. The Department relies upon biological monitoring information to achieve its mission, measure its success in responding to these legislative mandates, and determine its progress toward meeting DOI Resource Protection goals. These include:

- improving the health of watersheds, landscapes, and marine resources that are DOI-managed or influenced in a manner consistent with obligations

regarding the allocation and use of water; and• protecting cultural and natural heritage resources.To fulfill these goals, the DOI Strategic Plan aims to expand its biological information base, improve its data management, enhance technical assistance to resource managers, and improve resource assessment processes in support of these goals. The DOI Plan identifies performance measures for evaluating its success. The availability of scientifically credible monitoring information, including bird banding data, is critical for the DOI to achieve its resource management objectives as demonstrated through established performance measures. The committee was chartered to develop a clear, concise report defining a vision for the BBL over the next ten to fifteen years, and recommending priority actions that should be taken to address the needs of the regulatory agencies, bird conservation, research, and banding communities to ensure BBL excellence into the 21st century. More specifically, it will address, at a minimum, the following topics:• Bands and banding techniques, technologies, and sources;• Data and information acquisition, interpretation, analysis, use, management, and delivery;• Integration of a research component into the operational aspects of the Laboratory;• Opportunities to expand the utility of existing information to better address the needs of researchers, managers, regulators, and policy-makers;• Partnerships nationally and internationally including the scope of an expansion (including the 1-800 telephone number for reporting band recoveries) of the cooperative international program to Mexico, Central and South America;• Enhancement of fiscal resources and human capabilities;• The appropriate roles of the public and private sectors in future BBL planning, advice, and guidance.Each of these topics addresses the aforementioned themes common to the mission statements of the BBL, S&T Program, USGS, and the DOI, and/or the resource protection goals/strategies found in the DOI Strategic Plan. For the reasons outlined in this discussion, it is clear that the BBL Federal Advisory Committee supports the mission and Strategic Plan of the DOI, as well as that of the BBL, the S&T Program which funds and oversees its activities, and the USGS, the bureau in which the BBL resides.

**What are the most significant program outcomes associated with this committee?**

Checked if  
Applies

Improvements to health or safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trust in government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Major policy changes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Advance in scientific research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Effective grant making	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improved service delivery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Increased customer satisfaction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Implementation of laws or regulatory requirements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Outcome Comments**

The Committee is recommending a major paradigm shift in the BBL's business practices to improve the efficiency,priority to customers, and overall effectiveness of its operations.

**What are the cost savings associated with this committee?**

Checked if Applies

None	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unable to Determine	<input type="checkbox"/>
Under \$100,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$100,000 - \$500,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$1,000,001 - \$5,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$5,000,001 - \$10,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over \$10,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost Savings Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Cost Savings Comments**

See note in the Other Comments section directly above.

**What is the approximate Number of recommendations produced by this committee for the life of the committee?**

### **Number of Recommendations Comments**

The Committee made 2 programmatic recommendations and identified 23 objectives and 58 specific recommendations. The programmatic recommendations are: (1) that the primary role of the BBL is and should continue to be to support the use of banding and banding data by researchers and managers engaged in science, conservation, and management of birds, and not to play a lead role in original research; and (2) that the BBL be managed nationally by USGS headquarters as a research and operational support unit and provided with the resources appropriate to its national and international functions and responsibilities; it should continue to be located physically at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center (PWRC).

### **What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Fully implemented by the agency?**

60%

### **% of Recommendations Fully Implemented Comments**

The committee's report is still in draft, although it has been reviewed by the BBL staff and implementation of its recommendations discussed on two separate occasions with USGS Headquarters staff. Several of the report's recommendations were being implemented independent of the report (because new BBL leadership recognized the need for improvements/upgrades in the BBL's performance). Once the Report has been finalized and printed in the USGS Circular Series, and presented formally to the DOI and the USGS Director, it is expected that its recommendations will be largely embraced.

### **What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Partially implemented by the agency?**

25%

### **% of Recommendations Partially Implemented Comments**

The committee was charged with identifying and recommending improvements to the BBL's activities that could be accomplished without large increases to the base budget. As such, it is expected that most of the recommendations can and will be completely or partially implemented. However, there are several recommendations that were rejected by the Agency, others that would require additional resources not now available to fully implement, and still other recommendations that are being implemented iteratively because of other higher priority responsibilities.

### **Does the agency provide the committee with feedback regarding actions taken to**

**implement recommendations or advice offered?**

Yes ☒ No ☐ Not Applicable ☐

**Agency Feedback Comments**

Feedback to the Committee was provided routinely at meetings where recommendations were being developed, as the Committee chairs were sponsoring-Agency officials and so were engaged in discussions regarding each recommendation as it was being developed. In addition, the Agencies provided a formal letter to the Committee upon receipt of its report, stating that most recommendations would likely be implemented but identifying one particular recommendation that the Agencies had no legal authority to implement.

**What other actions has the agency taken as a result of the committee's advice or recommendation?**

Checked if Applies

Reorganized Priorities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reallocated resources	<input type="checkbox"/>
Issued new regulation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proposed legislation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approved grants or other payments	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Action Comments**

The Agency (Bird Banding Laboratory) has completed its Strategic Plan by incorporating many of the Committee's recommendations. As a result, priorities have shifted, resources are being re-directed away from Committee-identified low priorities and towards higher priorities, and temporary funding increases are being used to address needed regulations changes/updates.

**Is the Committee engaged in the review of applications for grants?**

No

**Grant Review Comments**

NA

**How is access provided to the information for the Committee's documentation?**

Checked if Applies

Contact DFO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Online Agency Web Site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Online Committee Web Site



Online GSA FACA Web Site



Publications



Other



### **Access Comments**

The Committee report has been posted on an Agency Website, the GSA FACA database website, and is being published in the USGS Circular Series.