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James Giocomo

Oaks and Prairies Joint Venture

William Vermillion

Gulf Coast Joint Venture, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Stephen DeMaso

Gulf Coast Joint Venture, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Barry Wilson

Gulf Coast Joint Venture, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Jon Hayes

Oaks and Prairies Joint Venture, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

See next page for additional authors

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A Method for Setting Northern Bobwhite Population and Habitat Objectives for Large Landscape Partnerships

Authors

James Giocomo, William Vermillion, Stephen DeMaso, Barry Wilson, Jon Hayes, Kenneth Gee, Jesús Franco, Aimee Roberson, Robert Perez, Jeff Raasch, Bill Bartush, and Benjamin Kahler

A METHOD FOR SETTING NORTHERN BOBWHITE POPULATION AND HABITAT OBJECTIVES FOR LARGE LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIPS

James Giocomo

Oaks and Prairies Joint Venture, American Bird Conservancy, 1141 Renaissance Trail, Round Rock, TX 78665, USA

William Vermillion

Gulf Coast Joint Venture, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, c/o Wetland and Aquatic Research Center, 700 Cajundome Boulevard, Lafayette, LA 70506, USA

Stephen DeMaso¹

Gulf Coast Joint Venture, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, c/o Wetland and Aquatic Research Center, 700 Cajundome Boulevard, Lafayette, LA 70506, USA

Barry Wilson

Gulf Coast Joint Venture, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, c/o Wetland and Aquatic Research Center, 700 Cajundome Boulevard, Lafayette, LA 70506, USA

Jon Hayes²

Oaks and Prairies Joint Venture, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 111 E. Travis, Suite 200, La Grange, TX 78945, USA

Kenneth Gee

Oaks and Prairies Joint Venture, American Bird Conservancy, Ardmore, Oklahoma 73401, USA

Jesús Franco

Rio Grande Joint Venture, American Bird Conservancy, 2400 N. 10th Street, Suite A, McAllen, TX 78501, USA

Aimee Roberson

Rio Grande Joint Venture, American Bird Conservancy, Alpine, TX 79830, USA

Robert Perez

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 95 Post Oak Road, La Vernia, TX 78121, USA

Jeff Raasch

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744, USA

Bill Bartush

Gulf Coast Prairie Landscape Conservation Cooperative, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, c/o Wetland and Aquatic Research Center, 700 Cajundome Boulevard, Lafayette, LA 70506, USA

Benjamin Kahler

Gulf Coast Prairie Landscape Conservation Cooperative, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, c/o Wetland and Aquatic Research Center, 700 Cajundome Boulevard, Lafayette, LA 70506, USA

¹ Email: steve_demaso@fws.gov

² Present Address: Great Plains Landscape Conservation Cooperative, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 1306, Albuquerque, NM 87103-1306, USA.

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ABSTRACT

Population and habitat objectives are the foundation for many conservation actions. Often objectives set at one scale are difficult to translate to larger or smaller scales. Three bird habitat Joint Ventures, Gulf Coast, Oaks & Prairies, and Rio Grande, working cooperatively with the Gulf Coast Prairie Landscape Conservation Cooperative, have a common objective to stabilize northern bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*) populations in four Bird Conservation Regions. We cooperatively developed a method using the North American Breeding Bird Survey trend for several scenarios with different time horizons (10-, 20-, 30-year, or longer), the spring home range size, and the per acre cost of habitat management actions, to set spring population and habitat objectives and projected costs. The spring population objectives can easily be converted to fall population objectives using the percent summer gain. We provide an example of how three Joint Ventures could use this methodology to set bobwhite objectives within their geographies and then scale those objectives up to the next larger geography, a Landscape Conservation Cooperative geography. This methodology can be used by other multi-state partnerships (e.g., Joint Ventures and Landscape Conservation Cooperatives) across the bobwhite range to provide the bobwhite conservation community meaningful objectives at regional and national scales.

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Key words: *Colinus virginianus*, habitat objective, joint venture, landscape conservation cooperative, partnership, population objective, northern bobwhite