



Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture Conservation Delivery Network



Lower Mississippi Valley
JOINT VENTURE
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Charter

Background

The Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture is a self-directed, non-regulatory partnership of private, state, federal conservation agencies and organizations that by virtue of legislated authority or organizational mission are committed to the implementation of state, national, and international wildlife conservation plans within the Mississippi Alluvial Valley and West Gulf Coastal Plain/Ouachitas ecological regions. These plans include the national and international bird conservation plans recognized collectively as the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) and State Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies as they affect the conservation of the region’s avifauna and their habitats. In addition, most conservation agencies and organizations working within the LMJVJ have identified geographic focal areas and/or focal species to help guide their respective conservation programs.

The mission of the LMV Joint Venture is to *“function as the forum in which the private, state, federal conservation community develops a shared vision of bird conservation for the LMV region; cooperates in its implementation; and collaborates in its refinement.”*

Accordingly, the partnership is functionally comprehensive, concerning itself with planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and research. This document speaks specifically to the need of Joint Venture partners to coordinate and leverage their individual efforts as necessary to achieve landscape-level goals and objectives. On the basis of a June 2007 White Paper, “Recalibrating the LMV Joint Venture’s Interagency Private Lands Program” the Management Board is refining its conservation delivery infrastructure and chartering geographically-explicit Conservation Delivery Networks (CDN) as the forum for coordinating its on-the-ground actions.

Purpose and Scope

The Conservation Delivery Networks (CDN) of the LMV Joint Venture are chartered by the Management Board to serve as forums whereby member organizations of the Joint Venture and other appropriate organizations can coordinate on-the-ground delivery of their otherwise independent efforts. The scope of coordination is intended to include not only the implementation of individual projects, but the refinement of programs as partners deal with emerging challenges such as carbon sequestration, climate change, and other issues. CDN members will be guided by the vision that through cooperative coordination, leveraging, and targeting of their actions they may more effectively achieve, at ecoregional scales, the measurable biological outcomes sought by the LMV Joint Venture partnership. A targeted outcome of the CDN partnership would be linking of on-the-ground delivery to the biological goals and objectives that emanate from the Joint Venture’s biological planning and



conservation design activities. It is also the intent of the JV Management Board that network members include in the scope of their coordination, the integration of land protection activities within the full suite of more traditional habitat restoration and management assistance offered landowners. Additionally, the scope of coordination within CDN's is to include the development and implementation of grants through programs such as the North American Wetland Conservation Act, Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act and private foundations, as necessary to accomplish identified objectives as well as leverage the otherwise standalone resources of Joint Venture partners.

Responsibilities and Relationship to the Joint Venture's Partnership Infrastructure

Individually and collectively, the conservation programs of LMV Joint Venture partners form the operational link between the Joint Venture's ecoregional-scale biological planning and its site-scale and project-scale delivery of conservation. The goals, objectives, and biological outcomes the partnership seeks, are expressed at landscape scales; yet, it is at the site-scale that conservation is accomplished. Accordingly, it is essential that CDN members strive for clear and explicit connections between the activity-based objectives of their programs and the biological objectives identified by the Joint Venture. As the biological planning infrastructure of the Joint Venture develops decision support tools that translate landscape-scale objectives into site-scale priorities, it is important that CDN members integrate these tools into their planning and delivery process.

Likewise, biological planning and conservation design are refined only to the degree they are informed by what is happening on the ground. To this end, CDN members individually play a pivotal role in the growth and maturation of the Joint Venture by supporting the monitoring programs used in evaluating biological outcomes (i.e. the "geoRTS", the Joint Venture's spatially explicit reforestation tracking system). Further, CDN members are encouraged to coordinate their information management activities with an eye to maintaining consistent conservation tracking information and assisting the Board in meeting the reporting requirements of our collective organizations and those established by the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Office of Management and Budget that provides funding support to the Joint Venture partnership.

Membership

LMV Joint Venture Management Board Members will designate from among their staff individuals authorized and empowered to represent their agency/organization as related to the above purpose and scope of Conservation Delivery Networks. These members should be individuals whose duties and responsibilities include delivery of their respective conservation programs. While CDNs will be originally established within the context of the LMVJV membership organizations, it is expected that these networks will reach out to other entities who have responsibility for enhancing, managing, and/or protecting natural communities for wildlife, either directly or through indirect support. Each CDN will be charged with developing formal procedures for accepting members, as endorsed by the Management Board.

Priorities for Coordination

- Facilitate a science-based consensus for wildlife priorities across the CDN geography.
- Coordinate the suite of protection, restoration, and management practices offered within the established CDN geography so as to maintain and enhance the synergies of partner programs.
- Coordinate adjustments/refinements of individual partner programs as deemed necessary, to address relevant ecosystem services issues i.e., carbon sequestration.
- Coordinate the terms and conditions, whenever possible, of landowner agreements subject to the policy and legal constraints of individual programs.
- Coordinate the targeting of programs to the most environmentally sensitive portions of the landscape as determined from the biological planning and conservation design activities of Joint Venture partners. This includes but is not limited to linking/coordinating activities on public and private lands.
- Coordinate the land protection activities of one partner with the restoration and management activities of another so as to leverage the resources available for long term protection with those available for restoration and management.
- Coordinate the development of grant proposals in a manner that recognizes the interdependency of partners in achieving Joint Venture goals and objectives and that by virtue of scale, exceed the grasp of any one agency or organization.
- Coordinate as necessary to maintain linkages between the annual objectives of member programs and the longer term biological objectives emanating from Joint Venture planning and state Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies.

Operating Guidelines

The Conservation Delivery Networks will operate under the broad guidance and direction of the Management Board, with operational oversight provided on behalf of the Board from the Joint Venture support office, particularly the Partnership Coordinator.

At their initiation, CDNs will be chaired by a representative of the organization volunteering to lead CDN development. Candidates for Chairmanship should have their organization's support to carry out duties as Chair, such that these duties are included in the spectrum of expected day-to-day job tasks. The Chair will serve a maximum two (2) year term, with unlimited opportunity for re-election. Subsequent Chairs will be selected through majority vote by CDN members. Chairman responsibilities will be to facilitate the development and upkeep of operational guidelines, organize meeting agendas, and work with members to prepare reports. Operational guidelines will include but not be limited to procedures for accepting non-Management Board member organizations/entities, procedures for making formal recommendations, a definitive process for identifying, scoring, ranking and funding delivery projects and other decision-making procedures as deemed necessary and appropriate. These operational guidelines will be submitted to the Management Board for approval.

Chairmen from each Conservation Delivery Network will serve as members of a LMVJV Conservation Delivery Network Steering Committee. The CDN Steering Committee will serve as a forum for communicating experiences and processes among neighboring Joint Venture Conservation Delivery Networks.

Conservation Delivery Networks will establish an annual schedule specific to the needs and interest of the cooperating partners in the network. While there may be a need for a series of meetings at the onset; once established, CDN's will likely meet semi-annually or annually. Schedules can be posted on the Joint Venture webpage to inform Board Members and Network members.

Conservation Delivery Networks will submit a brief annual report through the Joint Venture Coordinator to the LMV Joint Venture Management Board at least 30 days prior to the Board's Spring/Summer Meeting. The report should highlight activities and progress; priorities for the coming year; and any issues or recommendations for action by the Board in supporting the work of the Networks.

Conservation Delivery Networks are Empowered to:

- Establish in the name of the LMV Joint Venture, formal forums for collective decision-making to include the prioritization and approval of projects as necessary to coordinate the otherwise independent programs of Joint Venture partners.
- Develop common or shared cooperative agreements or easement protocols consistent with the legal constraints, provisions, or policies of the individual partners.
- Translate, in coordination with the Joint Venture support office, the biological objectives established for sustaining avifaunal populations into the annual project objectives of individual programs and in so doing represent those objectives as contributing to the implementation of the LMV Joint Venture.
- Represent the LMV Joint Venture in forums and venues pertinent to achieving the partnership's goals and objectives to include advocating the adoption of technical standards as may be established or adopted by the Management Board (i.e. reforestation guidelines of the LMVJV Forest Resource Conservation Working Group.)
- Develop and maintain a registry of the conservation actions that Joint Venture partners collectively make available, as well as post and communicate that registry through the LMV Joint Venture website. CDN members are encouraged to post similar information to their organization's web portals.
- Encourage on behalf of the Management Board the application and use of Joint Venture decision support tools (i.e., MAV Forest Breeding Bird Reforestation Decision Support Tool, Twedt et al., 2004) by partners' conservation programs.
- Negotiate and develop grant proposals (i.e., NAWCA projects) as deemed necessary to accomplish high priority delivery projects identified by the CDN and leverage the financial resources and human capital of Joint Venture partners in delivering their respective programs.