

PSG World Seabird Union Delegate Annual Report

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Committee Name: PSG Delegates to the World Seabird Union (Marc Romano and Anna Vallery)

Date Committee Formed: 2012

WSU Overview

The World Seabird Union (WSU) is a scientific organization founded in 2010, focused on seabird science and conservation. It was established following the first World Seabird Conference, and it serves as a convening body for seabird conservationists, managers, and researchers. and is made up of 20 marine ornithological organizations worldwide. The WSU mission is to place seabird research, management, and conservation into a worldwide perspective. The WSU vision is to create and enhance sustainable, diverse networks and partnerships for fostering and sharing seabird research, knowledge, and ideas on a global level.

The Pacific Seabird Group (PSG) is a founding member organization and has a primary and alternate delegate to the WSU Executive Council. The PSG delegate votes for the Executive Board and Officers and bylaw changes. They do not vote on Board decisions, but attend conference calls, contribute to discussions, participate in committees, and assist in planning the next World Seabird Conference (WSC). Committees to date include financial planning, review of conservation proposals, conference planning, fundraising, communications, early career scientists, awards, elections, and a Committee on Seabirds & Plastic Pollution.

New Delegates

Marc Romano and Anna Vallery began their new roles as delegates to the WSU in 2023. Marc and Anna took over from longtime PSG delegates to the WSU, Kathy Kuletz and Kim Nelson. Marc and Anna began attending the quarterly meetings of the WSU Board in April.

Strategic Plan

Under the leadership of current WSU Chair Lindsay Young and with the help of contractor Eastern Research Group (ERG)/Blue Earth Team, the WSU completed its new Strategic Plan in 2023. The Plan provides an overview of the WSU mission, goals, and operations. The Strategic Plan also includes details regarding the WSU vision/mission, core values, performance measures, governance, staffing, budget, revenue, communications, partnerships, monitoring/evaluation/adaptive management, and other areas.

Communications Coordinator

The WSU Board is very excited to announce that Carrie Kovalik has been brought on as the new communications coordinator! Carrie brings a huge wealth of experience in not only the communications realm, but also non-profit management, large event organizing (she has organized two national conferences of 400+ people), database management and grant writing.

Social media and updating the website (see below) have been Carrie's first priorities, followed closely by working with the Board members to get a better sense of the WSU and the many member organizations they represent.

Anna and Carrie met while Carrie was being onboarded into this new role to share details about PSG's communications and other information related to PSG and its support of WSU.

New WSU Website

Carrie has been hard at work updating the WSU website. The previous site served the WSU well for many years, but it was desperately in need of a refresh and a new vision. The new site is currently available at <https://worldseabirdunion.org/> Please note that this is a new domain (replacing seabirds.net). The WSU is preparing an official unveiling of the new website in the weeks before the upcoming PSG Meeting.

World Seabird Conference #4 Planning

Work has begun on planning the next World Seabird Conference (WSC 4), scheduled to take place in 2026. The Australasian Seabird Group (ASG) submitted a formal expression of interest to host the conference which was accepted by the WSU Board. The hosts intend to hold the meeting in Hobart Tasmania, which was the planned site for WSC 3 before that meeting was transitioned to a virtual platform due to COVID. Discussions are underway regarding the possibility of hybrid in-person/virtual structure for WSC 4.

The WSU Board is working with ASG to schedule WSC 4. A survey was created and sent to Member Organizations, and their individual members, to solicit feedback on meeting timing. The results of the survey indicated preference (difference between most and least preferred) for a January meeting, followed by February or October. However, the ASG Local Committee indicated that January and February could be difficult due to holidays and fieldwork. The WSU Board prepared and distributed a second survey to further refine the timing selection. The results of this second survey highlighted the week of September 7-11, 2026 as a strong possibility. This will likely be voted on at the next WSU board meeting.

Joint Meeting Proposal

WSU Board Chair Lindsay Young would like to get on the agenda for a future EXCO meeting, after the upcoming meeting, to discuss the possibility of making WSC 4 a joint meeting with PSG. Marc and Anna will work with the EXCO to set this up.