

A FRAMEWORK FOR ADDRESSING BIRD CONSERVATION PRIORITIES IN HIGH-ELEVATION VEGETATION COMMUNITIES OF THE APPALACHIAN MOUNTAINS

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The Appalachian Mountains Joint Venture (AMJV) is a self-directed, nonregulatory bird conservation partnership with the mission of restoring and sustaining native bird populations and their habitats throughout Appalachia. In 2008, the AMJV formed an ad hoc “high-elevation” technical working group to identify and address conservation priorities of bird species reliant on spruce-fir, northern hardwood, and other vegetation communities typically associated with the highest elevations of the Appalachian Mountains. We outline specific goals and guiding principles that frame the working group’s activities and discuss initial efforts to spatially and thematically define “high-elevation” bird conservation issues within the Appalachian Mountains. Additionally, we identify conceptual and practical approaches that the AMJV is using to achieve our conservation goals, and define critical data needs that must be fulfilled to ensure success. Finally, we will use this forum to engage new partners in our efforts, and solicit input from on-the-ground managers to gain a better understanding of what information they need to improve conditions for populations of priority birds in the region.

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