

**FEDERAL AID
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

**Alaska Department of Fish and Game
State Wildlife Grant**

Grant Number: T-21 **Segment Number: 1**
Project Number: 9.0
Project Title: Inventory and monitoring of birds (landbirds, shorebirds, seabirds, waterbirds) on state and partner lands.
Project Duration: 16 April 2011 – 30 June 2015
Report Period: July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014
Report Due Date: 30 September 2014
Principle Investigator: David Tessler, ADF&G
Project Location: Regions II and IV - Various state managed lands including: Denali State Park, Chugach State Park, and lands along Petersville Road, Lake Louise Road, and McCarthy Road.

Potential Future Locations: State Refuges, State Critical Habitat Areas, State Sanctuaries, State Parks, State Recreational Areas, other state lands along existing or planned transportation corridors, intertidal state lands. Other non-state lands on a case by case basis when the individual effort addresses the objectives of this project and involves supporting important partnerships.

I. SUMMARY OF WORK COMPLETED ON JOBS FOR LAST SEGMENT PERIOD ONLY

Objectives:

Conduct survey, inventory, and monitoring of landbirds on select Alaska state lands in an efficient and cost effective manner by participating in and/or developing cooperatively executed, statistically meaningful survey protocols.

Objective 1. *Inventory and monitor landbirds on Alaska select state lands subscribing to the established protocols for continental or regional cooperative monitoring programs.*

Job/Activity a.: *Conduct between two and six roadside NABBS surveys per year on state lands with available and long standing roadside routes using sight and sound survey techniques defined by USGS NABBS.*

Job/Activity b.: *Conduct at least two to six off-road bird surveys per year on select state lands using the distance based sight and sound survey techniques of the ALMS (Handel 2004).*

Accomplishments:

Objective 1. Job/Activity a.:

In June 2014 we repeated six (6) Breeding Bird Survey routes: Lake Louise Road, the Glenn Highway near Glenallen, the Petersville Road near Trapper Creek, along the Glenn Highway near Sheep Mountain, along the Nancy Lakes Parkway and Hatcher Pass Road near Willow, and Burma Road near the Goose Bay State Game Refuge. The location of the Breeding Bird Surveys was determined by USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, but WDP staff selected the routes we survey.

Objective 1. Job/Activity a.:

In June of 2014 we repeated two (2) landbird surveys at longterm monitoring sites following Alaska Landbird Monitoring Survey (ALMS) protocols (Handel 2004). One site is in the vicinity of Crow Pass in Chugach State Park. The other site was along the Kesugi Ridge Trail in Denali State Park, near point "Golog." Inventory and monitoring sites were selected at random by the USGS Alaska Science Center.

From September 2013 to April 2014 we planned to undertake our June 2014 ALMS surveys in Chugach and Denali State Parks and our various Breeding Bird Survey routes.

From April to June 2014 we hired and trained a crew of five seasonal technicians to undertake the survey efforts in this project (for Objectives 1 and 3).

Objective 2. Conduct inventories to develop species occurrence lists where none presently exist, especially in areas where State Special Areas Planning efforts require it and in habitat is likely to be significantly altered by natural or anthropogenic change.

Job/Activity a.: Work with ADF&G planners and refuge managers to determine if and where information on bird assemblages is substantially lacking on State Special Lands.

Job/Activity b.: Develop appropriate inventory methods and conduct surveys on an as needed basis.

Accomplishments:

Objective 2. Job/Activity a & b.:

No progress to report on this Job/Activity for this reporting period.

Objective 3. Develop and/or conduct and/or participate in statistically defensible bird survey, inventory, and monitoring projects which are capable of detecting changes in trend (or capable of supporting future change detection) for species of special conservation concern or for species dependant on habitats or locations of particular concern.

***Job/Activity a.:** Work with partners and agency staff to identify and prioritize specific species and/or specific geographic areas that are not well served by existing monitoring broad-scale efforts such as NABBS or ALMS.*

***Job/Activity b.:** Work with partners to develop effective, cost efficient means of conducting monitoring for species or species assemblages identified as priorities.*

***Job/Activity c.:** Partner with other agencies to conduct survey, inventory, and monitoring projects with the appropriate levels of accuracy and precision on species or groups identified as shared high priorities.*

Accomplishments:

Objective 3, Job/Activity a - c:

We participated in multiple meetings and several teleconferences with Chugach National Forest, the National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service Migratory Bird Management, and US Geologic Survey about conducting regular surveys of alpine birds across southcentral and interior Alaska. The surveys would focus on alpine landbirds and shorebirds dependant on these areas for breeding and believed to be in decline (e.g. whimbrels, surf birds, horned larks, etc.). use of the region. Topics of discussion included: were such surveys needed; what such survey data might indicate about the general state of the alpine ecosystem; were surveys actually feasible to conduct and what sort and amount of effort would be required; what potential survey designs/sampling frameworks would be workable; which agencies might participate in such surveys and what roles might each play; and how data might be shared and analyzed.

We coordinated inventory and monitoring of boreal wetland dependent species in the Anchorage vicinity with Alaska Audubon, USFWS, USGS, Department of Defense, and University of Alaska. The work concerned primarily Lesser Yellowlegs, Rusty Blackbirds, Olive-sided Flycatchers, Spotted sandpipers, Solitary Sandpipers, Violet-green Swallows, and American Tree Swallows. Part of the thrust of this work was known “Boreal Birds and Bogs” and included surveys by paid agency staff and coordinated surveys of volunteer citizen scientists. The effort is designed to identify wetlands important to these specific bird species, and determine which wetlands supported high breeding concentrations of these birds in the Anchorage Municipality and in the adjacent Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson (JBER) Department of Defense complex. Among the aims of the project is to compare contemporary data with historical surveys in the Anchorage Municipality to identify how urbanization and development in the study area may have impacted densities of these birds. Comparisons of historical and contemporary bird diversity and density between wetlands on municipal property – where significant development has occurred in recent decades) versus wetlands on JBER property (where virtually no development has taken place) are intended as an oblique measure of the impacts of wetland development on these specific Boreal wetland dependent birds.

SWG T-21-9.0, Inventory and monitoring of birds on state and partner lands.
FY2014 Annual Progress Report

II. PUBLICATIONS

**III. ADDITIONAL FEDERAL AID-FUNDED WORK NOT DESCRIBED ABOVE
THAT WAS ACCOMPLISHED ON THIS PROJECT DURING THIS SEGMENT
PERIOD**

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THIS PROJECT

Prepared by: David Tessler, ADF&G

Date: September 30, 2014