

**FEDERAL AID
INTERIM PERFORMANCE REPORT**

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
PO Box 25526
Juneau, AK 99802-5526

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

Grant Number: T-3 **Segment Number: 1**
Project Number: 10.11
Project Title: Murrelet Watch – A Citizen-based Monitoring Program in SE Alaska
Project Duration: January 1, 2007 – June 30, 2009
Report Period: January 1, 2008 – December 31, 2008
Report Due Date: March 30, 2008
Partner: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Project Objectives:

OBJECTIVE 1: Monitor long-term trends in Marbled Murrelet populations in Southeast Alaska, while building awareness and support for the conservation of nongame wildlife in the region.

JOB/ACTIVITY 1A: Train citizen volunteers to conduct monitoring surveys via a 3-day spring workshop in each community. Workshops will consist of presentations on the ecology of the bird, field trips to train volunteers in standard survey protocols, and a required practicum to qualify volunteers for this work.

JOB/ACTIVITY 1B: Maintain weekly contact with volunteers by reviewing the data they mail, fax or phone in to the regional office. Answer any questions and offer guidance as needed.

JOB/ACTIVITY 1C: Summarize data with a report at the end of the year. Return to each community to thank the volunteers and present a progress report showing the results of the monitoring to date.

JOB/ACTIVITY 1D: Provide publicity for the project by conducting interviews, contributing articles, and giving talks in participating communities.

Summary of Accomplishments:

OBJECTIVE 1:

JOB/ACTIVITY 1A: Train citizen volunteers to conduct monitoring surveys via a 3-day spring workshop in each community.

We gave public presentations and held training workshops in Juneau, Ketchikan, Wrangell and Sitka. From 28 May through 30 July, 30 trained observers conducted 365 flyway surveys, on 52 days, over 5 survey sites. On average, observers counted 9.7 marbled murrelets per flyway survey (SD=16.8, Max = 108). The highest numbers of birds were counted in Sitka, Juneau, and Ketchikan.

Lower numbers were counted in Wrangell and Funter Bay. Counts were generally highest in the morning hours. Overall variance was high.

JOB/ACTIVITY 1B: Maintain weekly contact with volunteers by reviewing the data they mail, fax or phone in to the regional office. Answer any questions and offer guidance as needed.

Survey teams faxed or mailed their survey results on a weekly basis to Kristen Romanoff, who answered their questions and offered guidance as needed.

JOB/ACTIVITY 1C: Summarize data with a report at the end of the year. Return to each community to thank the volunteers and present a progress report showing the results of the monitoring to date.

Data were summarized in a 24 page progress report at the end of the year, and mailed to all of the observers who participated in the program. Observers expressed a high level of satisfaction with the program, and were eager to continue as citizen science volunteers next year. A copy of the report is attached.

JOB/ACTIVITY 1D: Provide publicity for the project by conducting interviews, contributing articles, and giving talks in participating communities.

Radio announcements were aired throughout Southeast Alaska inviting community members to participate. An article about the program was distributed to the Juneau Empire and Ketchikan Daily News and also posted on ADF&G's website in the Wildlife News. We also developed a 45 minute slideshow presentation about Marbled Murrelets, their natural history, conservation, ADF&G research and information about Murrelet Watch and presented it in Juneau and Sitka. Murrelet Watch also reached a large audience at two Friday-night Fireside chats at the glacier visitor center in Juneau. We also created a tabletop display to be used at community events. at the World Oceans Day held out at the NOAA facility in Juneau the display helped to recruit half a dozen new volunteers. The display will be used at future events, where we are likely to find interested volunteers. We also sent out letters of all of our previous volunteers and encouraged them to invite friends to join the program. Certainly word of mouth was our best tool for promotion and recruitment.

Significant Deviations: The only significant deviation from the project statement was under Job/Activity 1C, which indicated we would return to the communities to personally thank volunteers. Given the regular contact throughout the season, we didn't think the time and expense of a personal visit was necessary. We will probably revisit the communities before the start of next summer's season to refresh them, and possibly recruit additional volunteers to survey added sites.

Additional Information: Coefficients of variation (CVs) were high, which reduces the power of this survey technique to detect population change over time. To reduce CV and boost power, surveys next year will be targeted at locations and times of day where counts are high. If necessary, we will transport crews for intensive survey work at some of these known sites.

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