



Addressing Information Needs of DoD to Enhance Migratory Bird Conservation through the Avian Knowledge Network (Year 1)

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Background:

The Avian Knowledge Network (AKN) is rapidly growing as the primary multi-agency clearinghouse for all avian monitoring and research data across the nation. Membership in the Council for the Conservation of Migratory Birds provides the Department of Defense (DoD) the capability to participate in the AKN along with other federal partners. Point Blue Conservation Science, with support from these federal partners, developed the Federal Avian Data Center (FADC)

(<https://data.pointblue.org/partners/fedadc/>). The FADC supports and facilitates increased contributions of data to the AKN to make the growing collection of bird data within the system more accessible and useful for research and decision making purposes. This data provides partners the ability to make important decisions regarding species health, population status, population trends, and specific stressors, as well as the application of best management practices. With access to the AKN through the FADC, DoD has the ready capability to upload, archive, access, and use extensive avian monitoring data to assist with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental reviews, and to assess potential impacts of DoD readiness and non-readiness activities on migratory birds for Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the "Readiness" Rule.

Objective:

The objective of this effort was to allow DoD to leverage the tools and technology of the AKN to upload, archive, access, and use avian monitoring data for NEPA reviews; and to assess potential impacts of DoD activities on migratory birds and to transfer historical DoD monitoring data into the AKN.

Summary of Approach:

To fulfill this objective, we first used project funding, in combination with other federal agency support, to complete the tools (bulk upload and data request) required by the federal partners within the AKN. We created project databases in the AKN for DoD installations, and imported data from the Coordinated Bird Monitoring Database (CBMD, a Legacy-supported project from 2005 to 2012) to these databases.

Benefit:

AKN tools have the power to translate the research and monitoring performed by scientific staff into the needs and understanding for NEPA analysis, providing both qualitative and quantitative information to assess the status of migratory birds. By utilizing the AKN to gain access to monitoring data on local and national scales, DoD can make more informed management decisions to support military testing and training activities.

Data entered into the AKN:

- Ensures data collected from DoD installations are aggregated, archived, and retrievable
- Ensures long-term sustainability of money spent and data collected by removing duplicate efforts and making data/information available
- Empowers data previously collected and increases its usability
- Provides DoD planners and installations with quantitative information on bird distribution and abundance for improved project- or base-wide NEPA analyses. Having answers to environmental planning questions ahead of requested actions saves critical project time and unmeasurable resources.

Accomplishments:

This project, in conjunction with funding from other Federal agencies, created: 1) the Federal Avian Data Center, including the Bulk Uploader, which is now available to all DoD users, and 2) the migration of compatible, historical data from the CBMD to the AKN databases.

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