



Addressing Information Needs of DoD for NEPA and to Enhance Migratory Bird Conservation via Customized Tools and Best Available Data (Year 2)

Project # 18-843

Background:

The Avian Knowledge Network (AKN) continues to grow as the primary multi-agency clearinghouse for all avian monitoring and research data across the nation. With Year 1 funding (Project 17-839), the Federal Avian Data Center (FADC) (<https://data.pointblue.org/partners/fedadc/>) was made available to all Department of Defense (DoD) users. With access to the AKN via the FADC, DoD along with other federal partners has 1) a direct web interface and bulk uploading tool to allow quick and seamless integration between installation data and the national database, 2) access to common standardized protocols, 3) analysis tools for common statistics and monitoring results, and 4) access to National AKN data to supplement DoD-collected data and extend analyses at the regional scale and beyond installation boundaries. With 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 build on the accomplishments and momentum from Year 1. This second year included conducting briefings and webinars to interested DoD staff on the capabilities of the AKN and specific operation of its data visualization tools to accomplish DoD work in support of military readiness.

Summary of Approach:

To fulfill these objectives, we first developed materials for two different webinars—one highlighting the benefits of the AKN and FADC for management, and one for DoD staff engaged in data collection efforts on their installations. Finally, we developed a one-day training course on the instruction of how to utilize the AKN for DoD staff.

Benefit:

DoD faces several issues with their avian data that the AKN solves:

- Data loss during personnel or command shifts
- Lack of central repository organizing all bird data

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- Installations collecting large amounts of data but unable to easily see trends and ask questions of their own data
- No easy way to visualize how DoD is doing on management of birds across the Services
- Irretrievability of data for data calls or environmental analysis.

DoD gains the following avian data solutions from the AKN:

- Secure database for DoD field data
- Tools to expedite Service-wide and species data calls
- Tools to determine state of birds on or near installation properties
- Analysis tools to visualize trends for species on installations
- Ability to see trends across installation, Service Branches, and DoD-wide
- Ability to freely share data with partners or to restrict access to any data point.

Accomplishments:

This second year of funding resulted in 1) migration and formatting of increased volumes of historical DoD avian data within the AKN (a total of 109 individual projects), 2) development of a DoD-specific program within AKN and Service-specific subprograms, and 3) completed the first user trainings, including a hands-on workshop at National Military Fish and Wildlife Association’s Annual Meeting and Training Workshop in Omaha NE, with on-going rollout of other trainings in the future.

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