



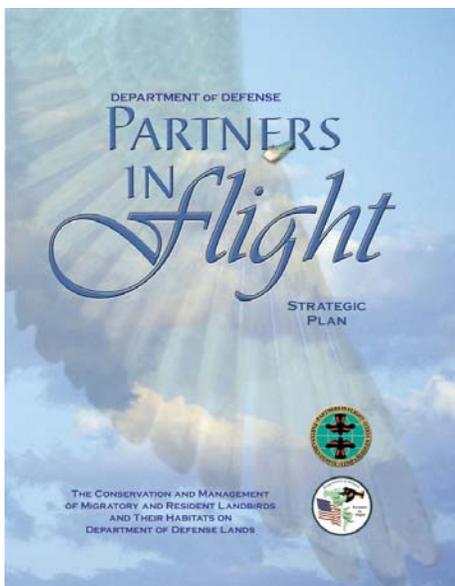
## Department of Defense Partners in Flight

Fact Sheet #12  
May 2007

## Department of Defense Partners in Flight Program

### Mission

*To conserve migratory and resident birds and their habitats on Department of Defense lands.*



The Strategic Plan and detailed Annual Report can be found at [www.dodpif.org](http://www.dodpif.org), or through the contact information on the next page.

# 2006 Annual Report

## *DoD Partners in Flight Program*

### Conserving Birds and Their Habitats

The international Partners in Flight (PIF) program is an umbrella network of agencies, academic institutions, corporations, and non-governmental organizations. Department of Defense (DoD) bird conservation programs are a vital part of this network. The DoD PIF Program works to develop cooperative programs and projects with PIF partner organizations ensuring a focused and coordinated approach for the conservation of resident and migratory birds and their habitats

As signatories to the federal PIF Memorandum of Agreement, the DoD military service branches are part of the national PIF steering committees. A lead DoD representative, appointed by the Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Environment), and a fulltime program manager promote and coordinate PIF efforts within DoD. A network of biologists and natural resource managers represent DoD in the various regional and technical PIF working groups. DoD PIF representatives cultivate and maintain positive working relationships with partners, develop cooperative agreements for implementing bird conservation programs and projects on military lands, facilitate communication and information sharing across geographical and political boundaries, and participate and provide leadership in various state, regional and national PIF working groups and committees.

The DoD PIF Strategic Plan identifies actions compatible with the military mission that achieve the overall PIF goal of maintaining secure populations of priority birds. In addition, Regional and Technical Working Groups work to achieve actions related to their own priorities. A series of Fact Sheets identifies priorities developed subsequent

to the printing of the Strategic Plan. An annual planning workshop of the DoD PIF Representatives provides guidance to Fact Sheet development and ongoing bird conservation priorities for DoD.



*Burrowing Owl is a national species of concern, and a priority for the DoD PIF Program.  
(Photo: Kirsten McDonnell)*

### Partnerships and Leadership

The role of DoD in international bird conservation was very visible in 2005-2006. The structure of the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) has evolved. DoD is now a full participating member of the US Committee of NABCI, making DoD directly involved in tri-national conservation planning involving Canada, the US, and Mexico. The DoD PIF Program Manager concluded a two year term as chair of the PIF Implementation Committee (national steering committee) and was elected Vice President of the National Military Fish and Wildlife Association. Partnerships are active, being formed or explored to address migratory connectivity of breeding and wintering grounds, recording observations of seabirds from Navy ships at sea, movements of the Western Burrowing Owl, Kirtland's Warbler breeding and wintering links, and grassland habitats.

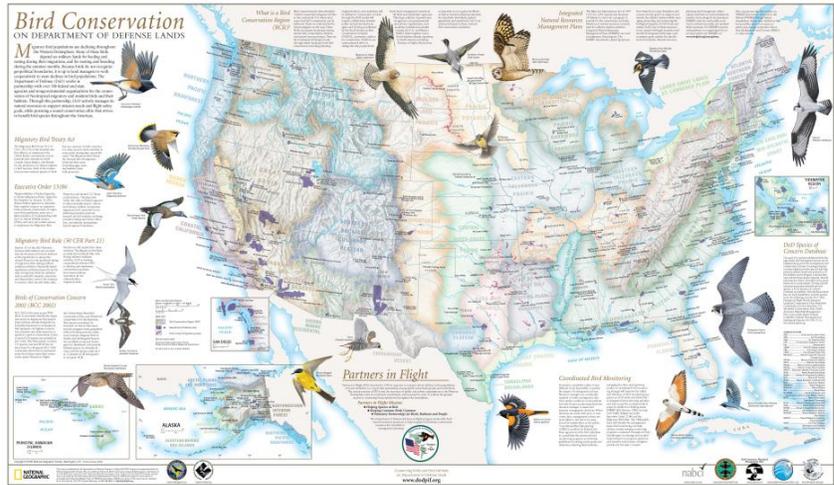
## Accomplishments and Recognition

The network of DoD PIF Representatives is active in state, regional, and national Partners in Flight, Joint Venture, and other bird initiative committees. Some of these individuals also participate in state bird atlas projects, Breeding Bird Survey routes, avian advisory committees, or provide funding to partners in joint projects involving DoD lands. In the past five years, national Partners in Flight awards have been presented to 4 DoD PIF Representatives and 3 DoD installations: Chris Eberly (Leadership), Richard Fischer (Investigations), Joe Hautzenroder (Leadership), Timothy Burr (Leadership), Holloman AFB (Stewardship), Fort Riley (Stewardship), and Fort Hood (Investigations).

The Legacy Resource Management Program 2006 Technical Notes featured the DoD PIF program as a significant Legacy-funded project. One of the major contributions of DoD PIF to the Legacy program is the review process to evaluate all pre-proposal and full proposal submissions to the annual Legacy funding cycle. The network of DoD PIF Reps reviewed an average of 24 bird-related pre-proposals to see if each one meets required criteria to warrant a full proposal submission. An average of 13 full proposals each year were then reviewed in detail and scored in each of 10 criteria developed by the DoD PIF Program. The sum of these scores was presented as a



*Crissal Thrasher, a PIF Species of Continental Importance in the Southwest Avifaunal Biome. (Photo: Chris Eberly)*



*Bird Conservation on DoD Lands map (hard copies available on request).*

ranking to the Legacy review committee. Legacy funding for bird conservation projects has now exceeded \$27 million, and also provides the funding for program management of the DoD PIF program.

## Migratory Bird Legislation

The 2003 National Defense Authorization Act provided that the Secretary of the Interior shall prescribe regulations under authority of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act to exempt the Armed Forces for the incidental taking of migratory birds during military readiness activities. DoD PIF worked in conjunction with the Navy (migratory bird policy lead for DoD) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service on the Final Rule (promulgated in the Federal Register on February 28, 2007) and to develop “appropriate and reasonable conservation measures to minimize and mitigate identified significant adverse impacts” to migratory birds.

Recognizing the role of monitoring on DoD lands would gain significant new visibility and importance, DoD PIF initiated a project idea for improving the efficiency and value of avian monitoring on DoD lands. The project, *A DoD Coordinated Bird Monitoring (CBM) Plan*, is being developed by through the US Geological Survey, under the framework of the North American Bird Conservation Initiative. The CBM Plan will lay out when, where, and how to monitor birds. DoD PIF also worked closely with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology on developing custom DoD interfaces to eBird and Avian Knowledge Network for data entry and analyses.

These internet tools will be of significant value to DoD installation natural resource managers in support of the Final Rule, Endangered Species Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and for other local needs. It will also provide a secure, permanent data repository for DoD monitoring data.

## Getting the Word Out

Educating both the military and the public is a vital function of the DoD PIF program. Outreach materials (see map, above) were produced, presentations and briefings were given, and articles in magazines and newsletters were written. Ongoing support of International Migratory Bird Day links international outreach materials and events with local military communities. Consultations with DoD natural resource professionals on integrating bird habitat conservation into management plans is also a significant contribution of the Program. Initiating and maintaining partnerships is the best way to communicate common goals among partners and increase conservation effectiveness. In the words of Eugene Odum, considered the father of modern ecosystem management, “The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.”

## For more information on the DoD Partners in Flight Program:

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