

DoD Partners in Flight

2017 ANNUAL REPORT



Welcome to bird conservation on DoD lands!

Department of Defense (DoD) lands represent a critical network of habitats for migratory birds, offering migratory stopover areas for resting and feeding, and suitable sites for nesting and rearing their young. A large workforce of dedicated DoD biologists and natural resource managers implement a vast array of initiatives and management actions to conserve and enhance these valuable habitats and public lands in support of the military testing and training missions.

The DoD first partnered with the budding national Partners in Flight (PIF) initiative in 1991. Since then, DoD has been a leader in bird conservation and worked to blend conservation actions with military preparedness on its lands. DoD PIF facilitates a wide variety of bird conservation activities and initiatives that include all species of birds.

A network of DoD natural resource professionals work as DoD Partners in Flight Representatives to support and communicate with installation resource managers, state and regional Partners in Flight working groups, non-government organizations, academic researchers, and natural resource consultants to collectively promote and coordinate bird conservation across DoD lands.

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DoD PIF General Accomplishments



Laysan Albatross — Tim Burr

2017 DoD PIF Steering Committee accomplishments include:

- ◆ Holding the annual meeting at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Montana, during which the Steering Committee toured the installation, met with the installation Bird/Wildlife Aircraft Strike Hazard (BASH) team to provide suggestions for decreasing strike risks on the airfield, and conducted a base-wide avian inventory to supplement information and data for the installation Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP).
- ◆ Reviewing and ranking all avian-related DoD Legacy pre- and full-proposals.
- ◆ Participating in the DoD Conservation Committee to ensure migratory bird related activities and issues were properly communicated to the Military Service and Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) Natural Resources leadership.
- ◆ Providing instruction about the Migratory Bird Treaty Act at two U.S. Navy Civil Engineer Corps Officers School (CECOS) courses.*
- ◆ Contributing articles to the DoD *Natural Selections* newsletter.
- ◆ Actively engaging with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Division of Migratory Bird Management on policy, guidance, and other issues relevant to management and monitoring of migratory birds on military lands.
- ◆ Leading and engaging in a number of Working Groups to further bird conservation across DoD. Priorities and accomplishments for each of the active 2017 Working Groups are summarized below.

*DoD PIF National Program Representative



Blue-winged Teal—Chris Eberly

Working Group Updates

Research and Monitoring

Priorities

- ◆ Identify research-related bird conservation issues of highest relevance to mission requirements and installation needs.
- ◆ Develop ideas and projects to facilitate bird and habitat-related research projects important to DoD.
- ◆ Contribute DoD data to regional bird conservation projects.
- ◆ Encourage appropriate collaboration with research efforts (e.g., Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units, Joint Ventures).
- ◆ Develop partnerships with leaders in emerging fields of research, such as the Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program/Environmental Security Technology Certification Program (SERDP/ESTCP), and others.
- ◆ Provide technical assistance to installation biologists so monitoring programs support both the mission and migratory bird and bird habitat management.
- ◆ Promote the use of Coordinated Bird Monitoring (CBM) Plan Technical Recommendations, including standardized protocols and methodologies for bird monitoring, data entry, and archiving.
- ◆ Provide technical assistance to installation biologists so DoD monitoring efforts provide pertinent data for INRMPS and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents.
- ◆ Identify and resolve questions relevant to avian monitoring on military installations.
- ◆ Participate in the CBM Program, and provide monitoring information to the regional and national databases.



Black-bellied Plover — Paul Block

Accomplishments

- ◆ Helped develop the Collaborative Wildlife Protection and Recovery Initiative, an interagency team that seeks to increase the effectiveness, efficiency, and predictability of conservation, management, and consultation outcomes for federally listed species.
- ◆ Provided general monitoring recommendations to a variety of DoD installations.
- ◆ Helped initiate a DoD Legacy project designed to archive more than 1 million avian monitoring data points from DoD installations into the Avian Knowledge Network (AKN) (www.avianknowledge.net).



Great Egret—Paul Block

Climate Resilience & Adaptation

Priorities

- ◆ Identify bird species that are more vulnerable or already impacted by changing climatic conditions and develop recommendations to mitigate or aid that vulnerability, prevent listing, and enable military readiness to continue unabated.

Accomplishments

- ◆ Working Group chair is conducting research to identify species vulnerabilities. This research is 50% complete.



Energy

Priorities

- ◆ Stay abreast of current trends in renewable energy projects on DoD installations.
- ◆ Share information on bird interactions with energy and associated utilities such as power lines, solar facilities, bright outdoor lighting, and tall towers.
- ◆ Develop and disseminate best management practices to avoid and minimize negative effects of energy utilities and projects on migratory birds.

Accomplishments

- ◆ Facilitated presentations on avian protection on power lines by EDM International at annual National Military Fish and Wildlife Association (NMFWA) and DoD PIF meetings.
- ◆ Developed and submitted Legacy proposal to train DoD personnel on writing avian power line protection plans and implementing avian protection actions.
- ◆ Disseminated USFWS guidelines for tall towers, and information about raptor protection on power lines to the DoD PIF community.
- ◆ Researched best practices for reducing negative effects of bright outdoor lighting on migratory birds.
- ◆ Interacted with DoD PIF community regarding solar facilities on DoD installations, including best management practices.

Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan Guidance

Priorities

- ◆ Ensure migratory birds are sufficiently addressed in INRMPs.
- ◆ Provide up-to-date information on legislative and policy changes affecting management of migratory birds on DoD lands and waters.

Accomplishments

- ◆ Worked with the OSD Natural Resources Program to finalize and disseminate *Addressing Migratory Bird Management in Integrated Natural Resources Management Plans – Guidance*.



Bald Eagle predating Caspian Tern nest — Paul Block

Seabirds

Priorities

- ◆ Identify important seabird conservation issues relevant to mission requirements and installation needs.
- ◆ Coordinate with shore and at-sea operators to minimize impacts of operations on seabirds.
- ◆ Develop ideas and projects that help facilitate seabird-related research projects important to DoD.
- ◆ Encourage collaboration with seabird research efforts.
- ◆ Provide technical assistance to installation biologists ensuring seabird monitoring programs support both the mission and migratory bird management.

Accomplishments

- ◆ Biologists from multiple military branches along the west coast coordinated with researchers to discuss breeding success and threats to the federally endangered California Least Tern, a species that has the potential to impact training and readiness.
- ◆ In an attempt to reduce Bird Aircraft Strike Hazards (BASH), military biologists at Wake Island began using decoys and acoustic attraction techniques to lure seabirds to nest in areas with lower BASH risks.



Atlantic Puffin — Paul Block

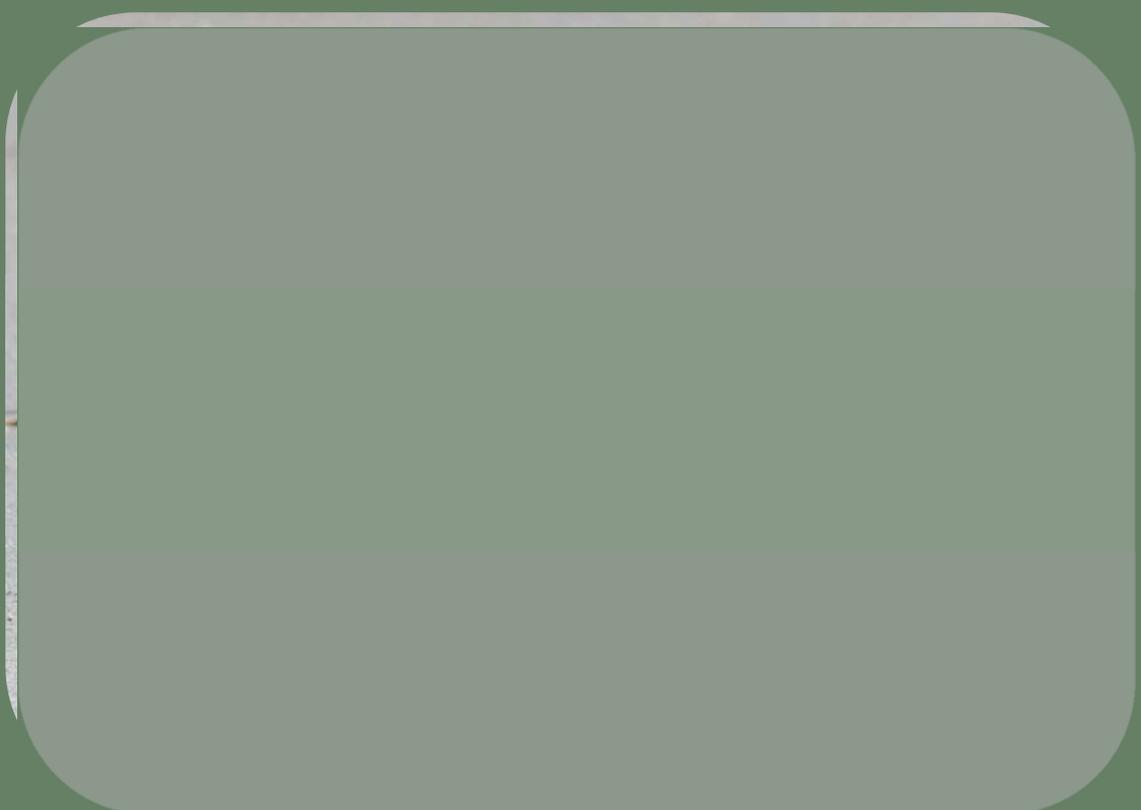
Mission-Sensitive Species

Priorities

- ◆ Updating the list of DoD Mission-Sensitive species, which are at-risk species that, if listed, would have the greatest impact to mission. The list helps installations prioritize monitoring programs and NEPA documents, and guides the development of conservation actions to support EO 13186 (*Responsibilities of Federal Agencies To Protect Migratory Birds*), the associated Memorandum of Understanding with USFWS, and the Final Migratory Bird “Readiness” Rule.
- ◆ Confirming presence of Mission-Sensitive bird species on specific installations, and determining the degree of impact to an installation’s mission should USFWS list the species.

Accomplishments

- ◆ Collected information on presence of at-risk bird species on military installations and degree of potential impacts their listing would have on implementing missions activities.
- ◆ Ranked bird species based on population status and potential sensitivity to listing with frequency of occurrence on military installations and degree of impact to mission if listed.
- ◆ Submitted final ranked list of highest priority birds to the DoD PIF group for review and comment.
- ◆ Provided the draft list to a number of natural resources leads for review and input.



National Environmental Policy Act Guidance

Priorities

- ◆ Develop an information paper on how to address the Migratory Bird Treaty Act within NEPA and other planning documents.

Accomplishments

- ◆ Discussed priorities and progress at 2017 NMFWA meeting.
- ◆ Met with the USFWS to coordinate needed information to develop draft guidance document.
- ◆ Named a new working group chair: Greg Fleming, who succeeded Joe Hautzenroder when he retired in January 2018.



Greater Roadrunner — Paul Block

Invasive Species

Priorities

- ◆ Provide invasive species assistance and information to interested parties, both within and outside DoD, towards the conservation of migratory birds.
- ◆ Catalogue invasive species resources and literature, with an ultimate intent to provide a searchable online bibliography.

Accomplishments

- ◆ Worked with two National Park Service units regarding the control of the invasive plants, *Microstegium* and *Phragmites*. *Microstegium* is a serious issue in the eastern U.S. with landowners starting to see dramatic reductions in Kentucky Warbler, Ovenbird, and to a lesser extent Wood Thrush populations.



Hairy Woodpecker—Dana Bradshaw

Education & Outreach

Priorities

- ◆ Encourage DoD senior leadership awareness of national and regional bird conservation organizations and initiatives, and how they support mission relevant goals.
- ◆ Inform military and installation civilians about complying with migratory bird policy on DoD lands.
- ◆ Promote and distribute educational and outreach materials about important or timely issues.
- ◆ Develop, distribute, and post success stories about conservation and mission interactions.
- ◆ Participate in educational outreach events to installation personnel, the public, and partners both nationally and internationally.
- ◆ Develop and conduct webinars for DoD personnel on bird conservation topics of mission relevance.
- ◆ Post and/or distribute approved migratory bird guidance documents to inform INRMPs, NEPA, and other planning documents.
- ◆ Provide technical guidance to DoD leadership and resource managers on the implementation of Executive Order 13186 (*Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*), the associated DoD/USFWS MOU, and the Migratory Bird "Readiness" Rule.

Accomplishments

- ◆ Contributed to the DoD *Natural Selections* newsletter, including articles about efforts to rehabilitate riparian habitat for the Least Bell's Vireo in California, and the importance of riparian plant communities as a landscape component for both birds and training exercises.
- ◆ Coordinated with U.S. Geological Survey Northern Prairie Research Center to provide a joint DoD NR/ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Environmental Stewardship presentation on the role DoD and civil works projects play in Whooping Crane migration ecology.
- ◆ Significant use of DoD PIF listserv for distribution of timely information on migratory bird issues.
- ◆ Maintained the DoD Bird Conservation Photo "Shutterfly" image library.
- ◆ Instructed on the Migratory Bird Treaty Act at two U.S. Naval CECOS courses.
- ◆ Hosted bird education and outreach events (e.g., World Migratory Bird Day, National Public Lands Day) throughout the country, highlighting DoD's commitment to bird conservation.



Allen's Hummingbird — Tim Burr

Bird Aircraft Strike Hazard

Priorities

- ◆ Explore the newest technologies and management techniques that emphasize non-lethal methods of mitigating Bird Aircraft Strike Hazards (BASH).
- ◆ Improve communication, coordination, and cooperation between Air Operations and Natural Resource programs.
- ◆ Coordinate data collection between BASH and Natural Resources programs including the integration of BASH plans into INRMPS.
- ◆ Train and communicate the importance of reporting all bird strike and "near miss" data.
- ◆ Develop DoD-specific Hazard Scores for the most hazardous species.

Accomplishments

- ◆ Initiated a USDA-led assessment of the most hazardous species to a safe, military-flight environment. This study mirrors the previous USDA study that identified the most hazardous species using FAA data. This study will use Navy and Air Force data for the analysis, and should be completed in 2018.
- ◆ Participated in the vegetation height investigation being conducted by the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC). This study is addressing the most hazardous species (FAA list), and their preferred habitats associated with regional preferences. The study then will recommend regional vegetation heights designed to be used in the airfield environment to decrease the threat these hazardous species pose. This study will be completed in 2018.
- ◆ Looking ahead, the Working Group will help align ERDC to field test the grass height study, and will finalize and distribute the hazardous species assessment.



American Kestrel — Paul Block

National Military Fish and Wildlife Association Bird Conservation Working Group

Priorities

- ◆ To maintain an active Bird Conservation Working Group (BCWG) within the NMFWA.

Accomplishments

- ◆ Held the 2017 Working Group meeting, attended by 76 of the group's 152 members, featuring a presentation on Burrowing Owls at Oregon Army National Guard sites.
- ◆ Published articles in several issues of NMFWA's *FAWN* newsletter, including good news stories from installations, press from DoD PIF partners, and requests from the Working Group. The contact list for the group acted as an open forum, allowing members to discuss issues installation-to-installation and promote best-practice management.
- ◆ Helped establish the AKN federal node and launch the joint venture between Point Blue Conservation Science and BCWG leadership, including formatting existing data in the Coordinated Bird Monitoring Database, developing a bulk upload tool and the configuration of protocols within the AKN for upload crosswalks, and beginning the development of specialized analysis tools.
- ◆ Gathered final recommendations on the eBird White Paper from DoD PIF Steering Committee members. The next phase will be to circulate a draft for Military Service and OSD approval.



Annual Reporting

Priorities

- ◆ Develop a thorough annual report of DoD PIF activities, including summaries of national priority accomplishments, information on all Working Group activities, and details about how these activities supported the mission.

Accomplishments

- ◆ Completed the 2016 annual report.
- ◆ Began developing a more succinct report template for 2017.



Spotlight

JOE HAUTZENRODER



Mr. Joseph (Joe) Hautzenroder retired in January 2018 after 42 years of service to the DoD, including 40 years with the Navy at Naval Facilities Engineering Command. Joe helped found the Navy Conservation Program, and spent his entire career supporting the DoD mission through the conservation and stewardship of over 2 million acres of Navy resources. He spent his career promoting and implementing bird conservation on DoD lands throughout the United States and abroad.

Beginning in the early 1990s, it was Joe's vision to create an internal DoD bird conservation program (DoD Partners in Flight) that would work parallel to the national Partners in Flight initiative and would promote partnerships, funding, and on-the-ground conservation. Joe brought in a number of key partners, and together they built what today is an internationally recognized effort guiding the management and monitoring of birds and habitats on some of the most important lands and waters in North America.

As a leader for the Navy and DoD PIF, Joe helped write legislation for the DoD Migratory Bird "Readiness Rule" and the MOU with the USFWS under Executive Order 13186, both of which help ensure that DoD remains proactive in its migratory bird conservation and management actions. Joe also played a key role in establishing the Navy's Bird/Animal Aircraft Strike Hazard (BASH) program to reduce risks for air and ground strikes from birds and other wildlife, facilitated development and implementation of Navy INRMPS, guided the formation of DoD's Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (PARC) program; and contributed to amending the Sikes Act, advancing policies related to the Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, and Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Joe was and still is a tremendous leader and mentor to hundreds of DoD natural resources professionals. He leaves behind a legacy of leadership, professionalism, and expertise that will continue to inform and inspire migratory bird conservation throughout DoD for the foreseeable future.

We look forward to having Joe continue to provide leadership and guidance as an Emeritus Representative to the DoD PIF Steering Committee.

List of Representatives

Regional Representatives

Jeff Bolsinger, Fort Drum – NY, VT
Trish Cutler, White Sands Missile Range –
West TX, NM, CO
Jackelyn Ferrer-Perez, Fort Hood – East TX,
AR, LA
Greg Fleming, Fort Belvoir – FL
Emily Gaydos, Camp Lejeune – MS, AL, GA,
Marine Corps East
John Joyce, JB McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst – NJ,
DE, MA, CT, RI, ME, NH
Frans Juola, NAVFAC Pacific – HI and Pacific
Islands
Jeff Keating, Fort Riley – KS, NE, SD, ND, MN,
IA, OK
Robbie Knight, Dugway Proving Grounds –
UT
Cindi Kunz, - WA, OR
David McNaughton, Fort Indiantown Gap –
PA, OH, IN
Elizabeth Neipert, USACE ERDC - AK
Elin Pierce, Malmstrom AFB – MT, WY
Kyle Rambo, NAS Patuxent River – MD, WV,
KY
Mike Ravesi, Camp Grayling - IA, IL, MI, MN,
MO, WI
Alan Schultz, Fort Bragg – NC, SC, TN
Bob Schallmann, Naval Weapons Station Seal
Beach - AZ
Tiffany Shepherd, Naval Base Coronado – CA
Diane Walsh, MCAS Camp Pendleton –
Marine Corps West
Kevin Warner, Orchard Training Site – NV,
ID
Michael Wright, NAS Oceana – VA

Program Representatives

Program Manager — Alison Dalsimer
National Coordinator — Joe Hautzenroder
National Coordinator — Rich Fischer

DoD Representatives

Army – Steve Sekscienski
Air Force – Jason Gibbons
Navy – Tammy Conkle, Joe Hautzenroder
Marine Corps – Jacqueline Rice
Army National Guard – Jay Rubinoff
Army Corps of Engineers – Rich Fischer
DoD Natural Resources — Alison Dalsimer

USFWS Liaisons

Migratory Birds – Eric Kershner
Endangered Species – Lew Gorman*
Sikes Act – Jarrad Kosa

*Now retired.





Working Group Members

Monitoring & Research

R. Fischer (chair), T. Burr, T. Shepherd, D. Bradshaw, G. Fleming, M. Wright, D. McNaughton

INRMP Guidance

R. Fischer (chair), T. Shepherd, B. Schallmann, T. Conkle, J. Keating

Climate Resilience & Adaptation

D. Walsh (chair), D. Bradshaw

Energy

T. Cutler (chair), D. Walsh

Mission Sensitive Species

G. Fleming (chair), R. Fischer, J. Bol-singer, J. Rubinoff

Seabirds

B. Schallmann (chair), C. Kunz

Invasive Species

D. Bradshaw (chair)

Education & Outreach

B. Schallmann (chair), J. Ferrer-Perez

BASH

P. Block (chair), K. Rambo, R. Fischer, J. Joyce, M. Wright

NEPA Guidance

J. Hautzenroder (outgoing chair), G. Fleming (incoming chair), J. Rubinoff

Annual Reporting

T. Shepherd (chair), R. Fischer, A. Schultz, D. McNaughton

NMFWA Bird Conservation Working Group

D. McNaughton, G. Fleming, E. Neipert