

Project Summary
Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Sandhill Crane Study, Fort Wainwright, Alaska

Type of Project: Technical Assistance

Project Discipline: Natural

Funding Agency: Department of Defense

Other Partners/Cooperators: Colorado State University

Effective Dates: 9/30/2015 - 9/30/2018

Funding Amount: \$285,500

Investigators and Agency Representative:

Agency:

Investigator: Cal Bagley, Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO; (970)491-3324; Calvin.Bagley@ColoState.EDU

Project Abstract: Sandhill cranes (*Grus canadensis*) are identified as a priority management species in the Fort Wainwright Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan. Up to 1/3 of the world's population of sandhill cranes pass through Delta Junction twice annually. The Delta River and Delta Creek were identified in the Alaska Army Lands Withdrawal Renewal Final Legislative Environmental Impact Statement as important roosting habitat for sandhill cranes. In the interest of conserving this species Fort Wainwright agreed to limit disturbance in these areas from 25 April to 15 May and 1 - 30 September. Landscape management changes that have occurred on Donnelly Training Area, other adjacent federal lands, state managed lands and privately owned lands may have shifted spatial or temporal importance of these areas. The Delta River corridor on Fort Wainwright lands includes 3 heavily used training areas (Small Arms Impact Area, Mississippi Impact Area and Washington Impact Area). Delta Creek includes 2 training areas (Delta Creek Impact Area and Oklahoma Impact Area). Various munitions are fired into these training areas using everything from shoulder fired weapon systems to air to ground ordinance delivered by fixed and rotary wing aircraft. Being able to predict occupancy of these areas by sandhill cranes is important to planning training missions.

Outcomes with completion dates: 9/30/2018

Keywords: Sandhill cranes (*Grus Canadensis*), surveys, habitat use, Fort Wainwright, Alaska, Colorado State University, Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands