Project Summary
Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Satellite Telemetry of Yuma Ridgway's Rail to ascertain local habitat use and long distance movement corridors.

Discipline: Natural
Type of Project: Research/Technical Assistance
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: University of Idaho
Student Involvement: Yes, student technician
Effective Dates: 07/31/2015 – 12/31/2018
Funding Amount: $12,000

Investigators and Agency Representative:
NPS Contact: Josh Hoines, Chief of Resources, Death Valley National Park, P.O. Box 579, Death Valley, CA 92328, Josh_hoines@nps.gov, 760-786-3253

Investigator: Courtney Conway, 208-885-6176, cconway@uidaho.edu, Idaho Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit, College of Natural Resources, University of Idaho, 875 Perimeter Drive MS 1141, Moscow, Idaho 83844-1141

Project Abstract:
Since 2005, the number of Yuma Ridgway's Rail ("Rail") detected through standardized surveys across its range has decreased by 52%, declining to 432 individuals in 2013. The National Park Service is aware of incidental fatalities of the rail at renewable energy facilities adjacent to Joshua Tree National Park within the species range. This study will document the effectiveness of a new solar assist telemetry unit in tracking hatch year rails in short and long dispersal movements. Dispersal movements may be influenced by the "lake effect", with birds mistaking solar fields for lakes. New ground-based conservation efforts will be guided by new information about the dispersal of rails.

Outcomes with Completion Dates:
Final Report – December 2018

Keywords:
Satellite telemetry, Joshua Tree National Park, Yuma Ridgway's Rail, renewable energy fatalities, University of Idaho