

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Peregrine Falcon Survey

Type of Project: Technical Assistance
Discipline: Natural Resources
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: University of Montana
Effective Dates: 5/1/2012 - 2/28/2013
Funding Amount: \$9,320

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract: In the early 1980s there were no known Peregrine falcon eyries (nests) in the state of Montana. Following extensive reintroduction efforts there are now around 100 known eyries in Montana, and peregrines have been removed from the Threatened and Endangered species list. A CESU supported survey in 2008 counted located 12 active eyries in Bighorn Canyon, making it the highest density of falcons in the state.

As part of the post-delisting plan for falcons in Montana, major survey efforts are undertaken every three years. 2012 is a survey year, and a good time to re-assess falcons in the canyon in conjunction with this statewide effort. BICA will work with University of Montana and the Montana Peregrine Institute to compete the survey to the same standards as the statewide effort.

The specific objectives of this project are to

- Conduct a field survey of all recently occupied eyries in collaboration with Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area, the University of Montana and the Montana Peregrine Institute;
- Document the number of Peregrine Falcon pairs that have changed their nesting cliff;
- Record productivity at all active Peregrine Falcon territories;
- Seek, confirm, and consolidate information from all public and private sources on current, reliable sightings of Peregrine Falcons during the breeding and nesting season;
- Develop, in coordination with the Montana Peregrine Falcon Working Group and Bighorn National Recreation area, a long-term monitoring program designed to provide a practical and cost-effective means of determining annual Peregrine status and population trends of Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area; and
- Record activity and locations of confederate cliff nesting raptors: Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*); Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*); and the Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*)

Outcomes with Completion Dates: 31 December 2012, Final report due.

Keywords: surveys, Peregrine Falcons, Bighorn Canyon NRA, University of Montana, Division of Biological Sciences