

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Grassland bird response to land use changes
Type of Project : Research X
Funding Agency: Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA)
Other Partners/Cooperators: None
Effective Dates: January – September 2006
Funding Amount: \$38,000
Investigators and Agency Representative (include name, address, phone, email): Dr. Joseph A. Veech, School of Biological Sciences, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, CO 80639 (970) 217-1882 joseph.veech@unco.edu
Project Abstract: Previous research by the P.I. indicates that grassland-nesting birds may benefit from federal conservation programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program. That is, over a 15 – 20 year period, populations have tended to increase in landscapes that contain a substantial percentage (>10%) of natural grassland or rangeland and restored grassland as in land enrolled in the CRP. To date, the analyses have mostly focused on grassland birds in the Great Plains region (Veech 2006a) and on economically important game species such as northern bobwhites (Veech 2006b). However, other bird species may also benefit from the CRP and other land conservation programs in that CRP land is not always strictly composed of grassland. Some neotropical migrants require habitat of shrubs and small trees that sometimes develops on older CRP land. I propose to expand my analyses of bird response to land use changes and conservation programs by including a larger set of bird species and a greater geographic area (most of the middle and eastern United States). In addition, the research will analyze the concurrent response of entire bird communities and not just single bird species. I will also attempt to identify areas of the United States where increasing the amount of land enrolled in federal programs may yield the greatest benefit in maintaining thriving populations of certain bird species. Overall, this research will facilitate a better and more thorough understanding of how land conservation programs may assist the preservation of bird diversity in the United States. This research supports the objective of the Wildlife Component of the NRCS Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP).
Outcomes with completion dates (reports, publications, workshops, videos, etc.): The P.I. expects to produce 2 – 3 peer-reviewed journal publications from the research. Quarterly progress reports of 2 – 4 pages will also be submitted to Charlie Rewa (NRCS, Washington, D.C.) and other individuals as instructed. A final non-technical report on all the results from the research will be prepared and provided to Charlie Rewa by September 15, 2006.
Keywords: grassland birds, neotropical migrants, landscape, Conservation Reserve Program, wildlife habitat, population dynamics
<u>For Administrative use only:</u> Date Annual Report Received: Date Final Report Received: Publications, etc. on file:

Attach any appropriate supporting materials.