

2017 Conservation Report



Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture

Planning for Birds and People

Planning is a major theme of our 2017 report. One of our overarching goals is to foster collaboration and another is to identify effective conservation strategies for birds. The *Prairie, Oaks, and People* conservation plan does both, and it starts off this year’s Conservation Report.

The Streaked Horned Lark has its own recovery plan. We hit the ground running in January 2017, working with agencies and landowners to help this threatened species. Key planning steps were completed in Hawaii, and preliminary planning work on Pacific Northwest estuaries, involving partners in Canada and the U.S., set the stage for more formal planning efforts in 2018.

What’s Inside

Our Priorities	
Oak and Prairie Habitats	3
Hawaii Waterbirds	5
Estuaries	7
Streaked Horned Lark	9
Communications and Outreach	
Joint Ventures turned 30	11
Stories across Flyways	12
Contact Us	15
Photo Credits	16

Habitats Conserved

To meet our annual, federal U.S. reporting requirement, Pacific Birds compiles data on projects that benefit bird populations. This reporting spans from October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017 and covers the habitat component of our work. The compiled data not only helps generate future funding from Congress, but heralds the collective efforts of conservation work across the flyway.

We compiled 136 projects for the federal report, adding up to more than 20,000 acres restored, put into conservation easements, or acquired. The conserved habitats include estuarine and freshwater wetlands, riparian zones, upland habitats such as oak and prairie, and coniferous forests. Habitats conserved in British Columbia are reported separately.



The Mirror Lake Project in the Columbia River Basin was a 2017 NAWCA project that benefitted many native species.

The 2017 Conservation Report that follows complements our federal report and provides a broader view of the partnerships’s activities.

PRAIRIE, OAKS, AND PEOPLE

Making a Difference



A Comprehensive Regional Plan

Pacific Birds and partners unveiled a key conservation strategy in 2017: *Prairie, Oaks, and People – A Conservation Business Plan to Revitalize the Prairie-Oak Habitats of the Pacific Northwest*. A companion document, *Prairie, Oaks, and People – Profile Projects*, showcases 21 projects that support the goals and objectives outlined in the business plan.

[Download the Plan](#)

[Download the Profile Projects](#)

The plan outlines why significant investments in oak and prairie will make a difference for birds. Monetary investments and people power over the next 10 to 15 years could shore up vulnerable species and maintain habitats for a wide variety of wildlife species. *Prairie, Oaks, and People* was the product of more than a year's work by representatives of the Cascadia Prairie-Oak Partnership, American Bird Conservancy, Center for Natural Lands Management, Klamath Bird Observatory, Willamette Partnership, and Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture.

Prairie, Oaks, and People serves as both a prospectus for potential funders and a blueprint for action through the local partnerships working to conserve oak and prairie habitats across the Pacific Northwest.



[See more about our work in oak and prairie habitats.](#)

Funded Partnerships

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology awarded Columbia Land Trust a small grant in 2017 to support the nascent East Cascades Oak Partnership which will work on oak and prairie conservation. Pacific Birds also provided capacity funds to Columbia Land Trust for this purpose. In California, we provided capacity funds to Northcoast Regional Land Trust to coordinate the Northwest California Oak Network. We continued our support in 2017 for the [Oak Accord](#), a project that works with landowners to maintain or establish oaks on their property. Forty-two landowners have signed on to the Accord, many of them Willamette Valley vineyards.

In Oregon, [three other networks](#) were awarded funding by the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board for oak and prairie work.

HAWAII WETLANDS

Saving Endangered Waterbirds



Planning and Data

Data was on our minds in Hawaii in 2017. Multiple years of bird survey information were uploaded into a comprehensive and quality-assured database, bringing waterbird survey records up-to-date for the first time in years. The improved data set is foundational to the geospatial analysis needed to update the Hawaii Wetlands Strategic Conservation Plan.

The semi-annual waterbird survey is a statewide process orchestrated by the Hawaii Division of Forestry and Wildlife. It lets partners know where the birds have been, and which wetlands are most needed to support them. This knowledge is especially important in Hawaii where the acreage of individual wetlands is generally small, but the conservation threats intense.

Uniting Partners on the Islands

With 33 species of endemic, endangered birds in Hawaii, communication is critical. We prioritize waterbirds, but the need for all-bird conservation is so high that in 2017 we opened our quarterly meetings to people working in all bird guilds.

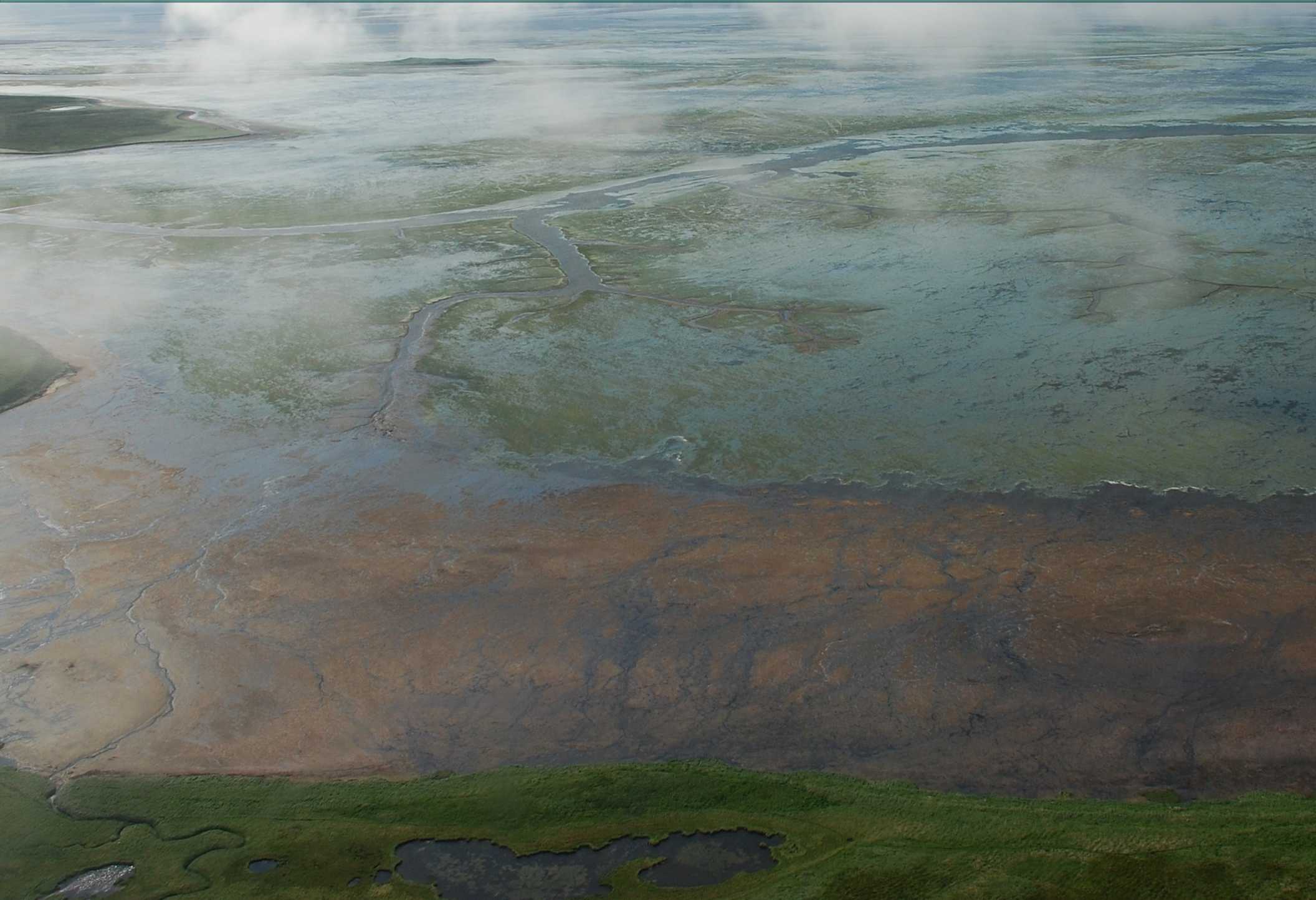
Meetings on the four main Islands each had 20-25 participants. Agenda topics included: the waterbird survey database, restoring seabird habitat on Kure Atoll, forest bird recovery projects, Maui Nui seabird recovery, research updates on Koloa and Nene, mesic forest restoration, the Oahu white tern study, the Save Our Shearwaters Program, and the National Park Service's Aimakapā wetland restoration. Facilitating these meetings is a core service of Pacific Birds on the islands.



Every conserved acre matters in Hawaii. Island environments are especially vulnerable to conservation threats.

WETLANDS AND ESTUARIES

Critical Habitat for Flyway Migrants



Estuaries and Flyways

In 2017, Pacific Birds solicited and evaluated input about how to address habitat conservation of estuaries at the landscape scale. In 2018, partners from the U.S. and Canada will undertake a more formal planning process to raise awareness about the threats to birds and to identify the areas most needed by priority species.

For shorebirds, partners are already moving in this direction. The [Pacific Americas Shorebird Conservation Strategy](#) was released in 2017 by the National Audubon Society and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This conservation strategy spans from Alaska to the tip of South America.



The Botts Marsh project conserved a threatened, high quality tidal marsh on the coast of Oregon.

The Fraser River Estuary

The Fraser River Estuary is internationally recognized for its bird values, but it has long been losing key habitats to industrial, agricultural and urban development. It is a Bird Life International Important Bird Area (IBA), a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) site, and it is on the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance.

In 2016, Bird Life International strengthened the designation to an IBA in danger. In 2017, Bird Studies Canada and Nature Canada, implementing partners of the IBA program in Canada, hired a Fraser Program Manager to make more timely progress on bird and habitat conservation goals.

In 2015, Pacific Birds put a stake in the ground for conserving the Pacific Northwest's estuaries. In 2017, we began to zero in on the Fraser Estuary as an essential flyway link that must get more attention. We will continue to work with and support our partners, as well as engage with new, non-traditional partners, in order to conserve multiple priority species and millions of migratory and resident birds.

Additional activities for the Pacific Birds program in British Columbia are showcased each year in [Habitat Matters](#), which reports on Canada's North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) Program.

STREAKED HORNED LARK

Why our Work Matters



A Focus on Streaked Horned Lark

Pacific Birds hired a Conservation Specialist in 2017 to help reach the Willamette Valley farmers and landowners that are important to the Streaked Horned Lark's recovery. The position was funded by American Bird Conservancy, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the Department of Defense Joint Base Lewis-McChord. A new lark partnership was born, comprised of Pacific Birds, the funding organizations, Oregon Farm Bureau and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

After consultations with conservationists and farmers, the partnership developed habitat conservation recommendations and created outreach materials about best management practices for larks on working lands. The recommendations include a suite of options so farmers can select practices compatible with their farming. Outreach included magazine articles, local presentations, tabling at agricultural and ornithological events, and brochures and mailings.

Also in 2017, the partnership conducted lark habitat evaluations for Willamette University, Portland Audubon and private landowners. NRCS assisted in a conservation mapping effort that revealed the amount and location of potential lark habitat across the Willamette Valley, categorized by jurisdiction as well as state and federal agencies' existing priority areas.



Young Streaked Horned Larks are hard to see!



The Streaked Horned Lark is a federally threatened species. About 80% of the population is found in the Willamette Valley.

COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

Reaching Out for Birds



Many partners are turning to Human Dimensions to help garner support for bird conservation. This young birder might make a difference when she is old enough.

Joint Ventures Celebrate 30 years

Joint Ventures turned 30 in 2017. The JV model has been enormously successful in conserving crucial habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife. See the [Migratory Bird JV Story Map](#) made in celebration of this milestone.

Our long association with partners – agencies, non-profit organizations, and land trusts – have allowed us to make significant contributions to the national Joint Venture program over 26 of those 30 years.

News Across the Flyways

The Pacific Birds website had 15,600 views in 2017, continuing an upward trend. Our 32 web posts included featured birds, habitat success stories, global migrations, and much more.

We sent out 17 email campaigns in 2017, keeping partners abreast of funding opportunities, events, research and other timely news and resources. Our mailing list also grows each year, reaching partners working within our boundaries and interested stakeholders farther afield.

Three of our more popular stories follow.

One of our March stories was about International Migratory Bird Day. The 2017 IMBD theme was migratory stopovers, used by species such as the Western Sandpiper.



The Northern Wheatear winters in Africa, an unusual pattern for a Pacific Birds species.



Our featured December story was about Jack Jeffrey's "aha" moment—seeing endemic forest birds return in Hawaii after twenty years of restoration.

CLOSE GATE
TIGHTLY
TO PREVENT
PIG INGRESS

CONTACT US

U.S. Coordinator

Bradley Bales

503-544-7980

Based in Dayton, Oregon

Canada Coordinator

Tasha Sargent

604-350-1903

Based in Vancouver, British Columbia

[Visit Our Website](#)

Thank you to the agencies, land trusts, conservation organizations, businesses and landowners who made conservation happen in 2017.



Photo Credits

Cover Photo	Pacific Loon	Mick Thompson © Creative Commons
Oak and Prairie	People Hiking Post: East Cascades Partnership	Bruce Taylor, Pacific Birds
Hawaii Wetlands	Nene family Hanalei Refuge	© Bill Hebner © Kris Fister
Estuaries	Eelgrass, Izembek Lagoon Post: Botts Marsh	Kristine Sowl, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service © Broken Banjo Photography
Streaked Horned Lark	Farm Fields Adult Bird Fledgling	Niles Brinton, Pacific Birds © Adrian Wolf © Adrian Wolf
Communications and Outreach	Young Birder Western Sandpipers Northern Wheatear Predator fencing	Sara-Evans-Peters, Pacific Birds Nathan Hamm © Creative Commons Alexandros Gassios © Creative Commons Lynn Fuller, Pacific Birds



PACIFIC BIRDS
HABITAT JOINT VENTURE