OCRF Grant Project Completion Report

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Introduction

Project Name*

Insert the full project name assigned by ODFW, including the unique code before the Project Title that was given in the agreement.

(Example) **OCRF XXXX-XX_ ProjectTitle** OCRF- 2021-28

Character Limit: 200

MOTUS RECEIVING SITE AT ANKENY WILDLIFE REFUGE

Upon completion of the project, please c nt and submit it before the Project Expiration Date in the Agreement. The information you provide will be used for accountability and reporting and displayed to the general public. Please be as clear and concise as possible and avoid jargon or acronyms.

Project Location* ANKENY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE VISITORS CENTER

Actual Impact Measurement Unit

Miles
Acres 144 SQUARE MILES
Number of volunteers engaged 12
Acre Feet

Other (please explain)

Oregon Conservation Strategy Species *

List the Oregon Conservation Strategy Species and Oregon Conservation Strategy Opportunity Areas that the Project benefited.

HABITATS: oak woodlands, wetlands, riparian

SPECIES: Dusky Canada Goose; Common Nighthawk; Chipping Sparrow; Oregon Vesper Sparrow; Snowy Egret; Western Bluebird; Western Meadowlark; Willet; White-breasted Nuthatch; Willow Flycatcher; Wrentit

MOTUS RECEIVER, ANKENY NWR

PROJECT STATEMEMNT: This Motus receiver was the first in the Willamette Valley north of Eugene. The valley is heavily used during migration by birds and bats, so this tower helps fill a void in the data. In 2025 there were 20 signals registered from various species, including a hoary bat.

SUMMARY OF GOALS: The tower picks up data. Volunteer Rich Schramm designed a fine web page for the Ankeny Motus Project: https://motus.org/data/receiverDeploymentDetections?q=&id=9195&f=101&n=100&o=0a1a2a3a4a5a

His work was so fine and ground-breaking that he now designed similar websites for towers across the Pacific Northwest! Ich also maintains the technology of the tower and its nodes.

LESSONS LEARNED: When non-profit and government organizations work co-operatively a complex goal can be reached efficiently. The current (2026) federal administration would likely kill any such future project, too scientific.

NEXT STEPS: Due not the federal destruction of science there will be a further lag between the US using MOTUS and other nations. We are already far behind Canadian biologists.

Motus Tracking System Coming to Ankeny NWR

By Harry Fuller
Birding Author

Salem Audubon Society is working with the US Fish & Wildlife Service to put a Motus receiver on the Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge in Marion County. Currently, there are only six other Motus installations in Oregon.

What is Motus?

The Motus Wildlife Tracking System is an international collaborative research network that uses automated radio telemetry to facilitate research and education for the conservation of migratory animals. A global network of receivers feeds into an online database used to study bird movement, range use, feeding, and roosting behavior.

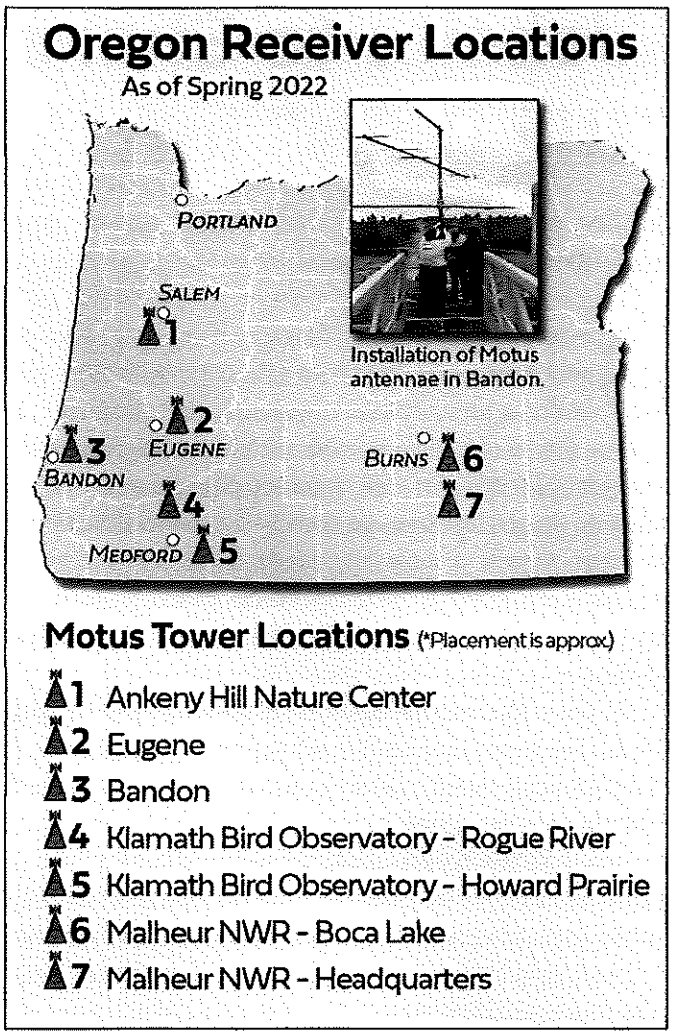
Over 1,350 Motus receivers are already positioned on five continents: North and South America, Europe, Asia (only 2), and Australia. The receivers are in 31 countries. To date, more than 31,000 birds and bats have been tagged.

Tagging a bird begins with capturing a bird carefully. A tiny transmitter is attached to the bird before it is released. Depending on the tag, each time a tagged bird comes within ten miles of a receiver, its presence and movements are recorded and tracked for twenty minutes, during endless months.

Motus receivers eliminate much of the fieldwork previously done to study migration, including visual proof or listening to migratory sounds at 3 a.m. Once the receiver is in place, digital tech does the work to track movements.

Motus Locations in Oregon

The Motus receiver at Ankeny Hill Nature Center will be the first in the north Willamette Valley, a significant migration route and home to many wintering birds. There is a new tower up in Eugene. The Bandon tower is the only one on the Oregon Coast. Klamath Bird Observatory has two. One is north of Medford along the Rogue River. The second tower is east of Ashland in the Cascades at Howard Prairie. Two Motus towers have been installed at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. One is at Malheur Headquarters. The second is at Boca Lake, an area closed to the public.



Graphic by Mike Williams Photo by Cheryl Horton

What are we learning with Motus?

One study using Motus technology found that nearly all Black Terns spent some of their winters off the coast of Panama, something researchers did not know. In another example, a study of migratory Swainson's Thrushes in fall found those still molting would stay 45 days or more at a stopover, longer than any bird-banding data had suggested.

The BC Interior Thrushes project made other discoveries about Swainson Thrush migration. While researchers believed Swainson's Thrushes from Western Canada would migrate south along the Pacific Coast, the Motus tower in Bandon recorded a bird in September 2021. Later that year, another Motus site recorded the same bird at Mackay Island NWR in North Carolina.[1]

For more information visit: https://motus.org/

1) "Monitoring at Malheur Gets a Tech Upgrade," Teresa Wicks, Portland Audubon's Eastern Oregon Field Coordinator. December 2, 2021. https://malheurfriends.org/2021/12/monitoring-at-malheur-gets-tech-upgrade/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=monitoring-at-malheur-gets-tech-upgrade