

2016-2017 PROJECT PLAN SUMMARY

Project Name:	B2-1-5 Monitoring of Whooping Cranes
Type of Project:	Focused Study
Delivery Agent:	ECCC
Project Contact:	Mark Bidwell (ECCC) mark.bidwell@canada.ca/
Budget:	\$ 65,000

Project Description:

This project will advance our understanding of the risk and potential impacts of oil sands mining and development activities on the Wood Buffalo population of whooping cranes (species at risk (SAR), Endangered). Recent data on movement patterns of whooping cranes marked with GPS transmitters has started to provide information to estimate the proportion of the crane population at risk from oil sands development, e.g. landing in tailings ponds. The proposed activities will improve our assessment of potential impacts of oil sands mining by (a) continuing to monitor late season productivity (i.e. juvenile survival) of adult whooping cranes in relation to migration through oil sands areas and (b) continuing to monitor movement patterns and habitat use of banded whooping cranes during migration through the oil sands.

Project Objectives:

- Advance our understanding of the risk and potential impacts of oil sands mining and development activities on whooping cranes
- Provide information to governments, Aboriginal Peoples, industry and NGOs to assist with assessment and mitigation of risk from oil sands activity to whooping cranes

Key Outcomes:

This project will produce information on late season productivity (i.e. juvenile survival) of marked adult whooping cranes in relation to migration through oil sands areas.

Geographic Scope:

The study spans from the southern shore of Great Slave Lake (NWT), throughout the whooping crane nesting area of Wood Buffalo National Park (NWT/AB) and surrounding areas, through the Athabasca, Cold Lake, and Peace Oil Sands Areas (AB) to central SK and ultimately to their wintering grounds in Aransas National Wildlife Refuge (Texas).

Associated Data and Reports:

All georeferenced whooping crane monitoring data for Canada are stored on Environment Canada and Climate Change's (ECCC) InGEO (Geospatial Terminal Services) network environment.

Reports include:

- Quarterly reports as per existing protocols and annual operational report with methods/work completed/basic descriptive results, (e.g. number of birds monitored using remote monitoring, number of marked birds sighted in Aug/Oct, map of annual migration corridor)
- Final, data-based technical report/peer-reviewed publication after completion of project (Q4 2021-2022)