



News

U.S. MARINE CORPS CONSERVATION PROGRAM



SPRING 2014

Perspectives

By: Sue Goodfellow, Ph.D.

First, I want to start by apologizing for the lateness of this edition – we intended to get it out in March, but between having my conservation staff on details and temporary promotions, many STEP validations and budgeting issues to wade through, and the general workload, we didn't make it. On the positive side, the delay in the edition schedule allowed us to get some great articles submitted from folks at MCB Camp Pendleton, MCAS Camp Pendleton, MCAS New River, and MCAGCC Twentynine Palms! Thanks to all of the authors who contributed to this edition.

Second, to give everyone an update on the HQMC/MCICOM personnel front, we say farewell to Laura Muhs, who completed her detail from HQ NAVFAC at the end of March, and we welcome Ryan Orndorff back from his sojourn as the Acting Head of Real Estate. The full-time Head of Real Estate and Asset Management, Ms. Terri Peasley, previously from the U.S. Coast Guard, started work on 21 April. Ron Lamb is still detailed to DASN(E), but has contributed an article to the newsletter covering some of the topics that he's working on while up there. He returns to HQMC/MCICOM on 26 May.

Third, I want to congratulate the winners of the SECNAV and SECDEF environmental awards for FY14! For the SECDEF Awards, MCB Hawaii won for Natural Resources, Small Installation, while MCB Camp Lejeune won for Environmental Restoration. Check out the sidebar on this page for a full list of the winners.

Finally, I want to thank everyone for providing great input into the COLS performance levels and risk assessments. They've been staffed to our G-5, who will be sending them back out to everyone for a final review, prior to us starting the costing phase of COLS development.

Looking ahead, projects that we are currently working on, other than POM-16, FY-15 baseline, and FY14 execution, include updating the Cultural Resources Program Guide, updating and web-enabling the CRM toolbox; updating the MCO 5090.2A (yes, again); a major revision to the MCO on Conservation Law Enforcement; completing some new Natural Resources desktop guides; and focusing on improvements to STEP and the Natural/Cultural Resources Metrics tool.

HQMC NEPA Support to the DASN(E)

HQMC NEPA Specialist Ron Lamb is on temporary detail assignment to the office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Environment) (DASN(E)) to serve as Director for Environmental Planning and Terrestrial Ecology. Ron reports to Mr. Donald R. Schregardus, who is the Department of the Navy's (DoN) principal policy advisor on environmental programs, including conservation

AWARD WINNERS

The winners of the 2014 Secretary of Defense Environmental Awards include two Marine Corps bases:

- ✦ **Natural Resources Conservation, Small Installation:** Marine Corps Base Hawaii
- ✦ **Natural Resources Conservation, Individual/Team:** Eglin Air Force Base, Natural Resources Team
- ✦ **Environmental Quality, Non-Industrial Installation:** Fort Hood
- ✦ **Environmental Quality, Individual/Team:** Environmental Quality Team, Minnesota Army National Guard
- ✦ **Environmental Restoration, Installation:** Marine Corps Installation East, Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune
- ✦ **Environmental Restoration, Individual/Team:** Naval Air Station Cecil Field Base Realignment and Closure Cleanup Team
- ✦ **Sustainability, Industrial Installation:** Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach
- ✦ **Environmental Excellence in Weapon System Acquisition, Large Program Individual/Team:** Air Force Life Cycle Management Center F-35 Environmental, Safety and Occupational Health Support Team, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
- ✦ **Cultural Resources Management, Installation:** Fort Wainwright

Congratulations to all of these installations for a job well done!



of natural and cultural resources, environmental planning, environmental compliance, restoration, and pollution prevention. Similar to his HQMC duties, Ron reviews U.S. Navy (N45) and USMC Environmental Impact Statements (EISs), coordinates the reviews of ODASN(E) legal and subject matter experts, and coordinates briefs to Mr. Schregardus and the Principle DASN (PDASN)—Mr. Roger Natsuhara. The key initiative behind his detail is to lead a Work Group to evaluate DoN NEPA procedures (32CFR 775 and 69 FR 8108) in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) guidance on Categorical Exclusions (CATEXs). The Work Group is charged with evaluating potential changes to DoN CATEXs and Extraordinary Circumstances, developing supplemental guidance on the scope and application of DoN CATEXs, and providing recommendations to the DASN(E). He also coordinates responses to Congressional inquiries on Navy and Marine Corps environmental planning actions, and responses on conservation activities such as National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service requests for information pertaining to threatened and endangered species. Ron will return to his HQMC NEPA duties on May 27th.

MCAGCC Twentynine Palms: Spring 2014

By: Nicholas M. Chamberlain, Collections Manager, Cultural Resources, NREA, MCAGCC Twentynine Palms



Dr. Marie Cottrell shows a mastodon fossil to 5th graders, and speaks to them about paleontology aboard the Combat Center.

As spring comes to the Mojave Desert, yellow haloes of flowers appear around the brittlebush, the desert tortoises stir in their shady burrows, and the Cultural Resources Team at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center begins to face a new season. With over 600,000 acres containing close to 2,000 prehistoric Native American sites, the team already has its hands full monitoring resources in an environment where conservation can be a constant challenge. When the Marines say that they train as they fight, they mean it. Almost every day of the year, access to the Combat Center is restricted by live-fire exercises, tank maneuvers, and air-delivered ordnance at the Marine Corps' premier desert training facility. Providing access to professional archeologists is a seemingly endless process of negotiation and re-negotiation, in order to ensure that clearance surveys are done in support of training, without getting in the way of training.

Luckily, the cultural resources staff at the Combat Center is well-suited to the task. With more than five years working together, the four archeologists coordinate fieldwork and monitor that work to see that it reaches the high standard that has become synonymous with archeology aboard the Combat Center. Over the last five years alone, 55 cultural resources projects have been conducted on the base, including surveys, evaluations, GIS modeling, and rock art restoration. Now, with the acquisition of over 100,000 new acres, the number of cultural resources under the Marine Corps' care has significantly expanded. Training tempo will also amplify and, for the first time, an area of shared use with the Department of the Interior has been added, thereby introducing new management issues. To meet these challenges, the team is already coordinating an archeological survey on the new lands. To date, 75% of the area has been surveyed and 80 National Register evaluations have been completed or are pending completion. An expanded Integrated Cultural Resource Management Plan is also underway.

The Combat Center's curation facility is expanding as well. Last September, a 2,000 square foot annex was constructed to supplement the already existing Archeology and Paleontology Curation Center. The Curation Center currently houses more than 400,000 individual artifacts from four separate installations,



Students participate in an archeological field school at Surprise Spring, one of the Combat Center's oldest and most important sites.



One of many rock art panels at the Foxtrot Petroglyph Site aboard the Combat Center. The Foxtrot Petroglyph Site is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



The Curation Center (background), and a portion of the Cultural Heritage Garden (foreground). The Cultural Heritage Garden is an interpretive garden where visitors can learn about the ways in which native plants are used by native peoples.

but perhaps even more valuable are the vast amounts of data stored there. These include photographs, maps, reports, field notes, and digital files that are all kept organized and ready for quick reference. Good cultural resources management also means being a constant ambassador for the resource: communicating with other Marine Corps elements to remind them that good stewardship is essential for the mission. With its informational displays and open-door visitation policy, the Archeology and Paleontology Curation Center provides a venue for Marines to learn about cultural resources, why they are important, and why an environmentally sustainable Combat Center is critical for future training.

Soon summer will come, along with the oppressive Mojave Desert heat that can reach 120 degrees or more. The flowers will wither on the brittlebush and the desert tortoises will duck back into the shade of their burrows. The mad pace of surveys and excavations will slow and give the cultural resources team some time to catch their breath as the program undergoes fundamental changes – most notably the retirement of Dr. Marie Cottrell. As the base Natural and Cultural Resources officer, Dr. Cottrell has been the architect of the Combat Center’s cultural resources program and a constant advocate for conservation. But the time for reflection will be brief. When fall returns and the temperatures drop, the team will be back at work again discovering new sites, promoting new research, and finding new ways to support the mission while protecting our nation’s heritage.



MCB Camp Pendleton Raptor Relocation Program

By: Sherri Sullivan, Wildlife Management Section Head, Environmental Security

Now in its second of three years, the Raptor Relocation Study on MCB Camp Pendleton is helping biologists understand the local and long-range movements of regionally sensitive and “problem” raptor species. The study is being conducted as part of an on-going effort to support the recovery of the federally endangered California least tern and federally threatened western snowy plover, and focuses on individual raptors that are known to have depredated terns or plovers on base. In 2011, raptors were responsible for depredating 99 chicks and 64 adult terns and plovers during the breeding season.

Relocation of avian predators as a management tool ensures compliance with the base’s existing requirements under the federal Endangered Species Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). Camp Pendleton’s 1995 Estuarine, Beach, and Riparian Programmatic Biological Opinion requires protection of terns and plovers through active predator control. In 2011, the Regional MBTA Division of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) revoked our ability to hold raptors off-site at bird sanctuaries and release them at the end of shorebird breeding season, and significantly limited our ability to use lethal removal methods. Anecdotal evidence from Naval Base Coronado monitoring efforts in recent years suggests that relocating raptors to the mandated USFWS permit distance of 50 to 150 miles has been ineffective as raptors often return to the trap site within a day of release. The fate of relocated birds has not been well studied and the effectiveness of the technique in reducing predation pressure on terns and plovers is unknown.

The base is taking an innovative approach to fill those data gaps by collecting information on raptor return rates and survivorship. Our goal is to determine the most effective approach to avian predator management in tern colonies. Analysis of the data may result in providing long-term cost savings to the military and other government agencies through more effective implementation of predator control techniques.



Marines volunteer to plant a tree at the Cultural Heritage Garden.



Curation Center grounds are supplemented by rainwater collection barrels in order to teach Marines and families about the importance of conserving water in the desert.



Male red-tailed hawk at release.



Male northern harrier at release.



Peregrine falcon (#127463) with solar-powered satellite transmitter.

Believed to be the first of its kind in San Diego County, the program uses solar-powered satellite transmitters to track the fate of select raptor species including; Cooper’s hawk, northern harrier, peregrine falcon, red-shouldered hawk, and red-tailed hawk. Each year, individual raptors identified as “problem” birds are trapped, fitted with satellite transmitters, and relocated to one of three release sites in California. Once released, their movements are tracked and reported back to Camp Pendleton through the ARGOS Satellite tracking system.

A total of 10 raptors have been fitted with transmitters since the start of the program in 2013. The birds have been relocated between 250 to 700 miles northeast of the base. Of the 10 relocated birds, five have returned to Camp Pendleton. There does not seem to be a relationship between relocation distance and likelihood of return; however, analysis will not be complete until September 2015. Examples include a peregrine falcon that was relocated 700 miles north and returned to Camp Pendleton within three months, and a red-tailed hawk that was relocated 250 miles and has not returned. Final results of the relocation study will predict effectiveness of relocation technique using covariates such as species, sex, age, distance of relocation, and breeding status at time of capture.

Acknowledgements:

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Relocation history of relocated peregrine falcon (#127463).



MCIW–MCBCP Wildland Fire — Remote Automated Weather Stations (RAWS)

By: Gabe Goodman, Fire Ecologist, MCB Camp Pendleton

MCI West-MCB Camp Pendleton Land Management Section recently initiated the Remote Automated Weather Stations (RAWS) project: a program created by land and fire management agencies that share a common need for accurate and timely weather data from remote locations for vital operational and program decisions specific to wildland fire and resource management goals. In the mid-1970s, the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management began research, development, and deployment of RAWS utilizing a satellite data transmission system, the Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite, which MCB Camp Pendleton is also currently tied into. The RAWS network has evolved into a valuable interagency resource providing essential weather data from remote locations nationwide for critical fire business support, ecological monitoring, and climate tracking.

A RAW station measures basic observable weather parameters such as temperature, relative humidity, wind speed, wind direction, sky conditions, and precipitation, as well as 10-hour dead fuel temperature and fuel moisture. Data from almost 2,200 stations deployed across the continental United States, Alaska, and Hawaii are now routinely used to calculate and forecast daily fire danger indices, components, and adjective ratings. Fire business applications include the National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS), fire behavior, and fire use. Increasingly, the capacity to measure barometric pressure and solar radiation has been added to many stations, particularly those meeting the new NFDRS standards.

The purpose of this program component is to install and maintain Fire Weather Stations (RAWS compliant with NWCG PMS 426-3) for six locations covering the three major fire regions (Coastal, Valley, and Mountain) at MCB Camp Pendleton; namely the sites at Mateo Ridge, Talega Ridge, Case Springs, Roblar, Las Flores, and Wire Mountain. These RAW Stations will directly support wildland fire management, in particular the Fire Danger Rating System, land resources management, and ecological monitoring. MCB Camp Pendleton is finalizing the fencing contract for the RAWS and will have them up and

operational soon. These stations will join others on line as part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration network. Fallbrook Naval Weapons Station also wishes to participate in the program.

This project is a required element of wildland fire management by contributing to and fulfilling DOD wildland fire policy, Marine Corps Orders, and the MCB Camp Pendleton Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan. In order to correctly manage wildland fire on base, it is essential that we collect the most accurate data possible to drive our fire management decisions. A baseline is essential for determining fire weather and fuel conditions on base. By establishing permanent RAWS stations in strategically placed locations, we are able to predict and plan for emergency wildfire situations, prescription burn operations, and monitor the status of moisture in ecological systems. Once the baseline atmospheric conditions are established, the Marine Corps can measure and plan for immediate and future fire management operations and suppression responses, thereby saving money, time, and natural resources.

Pendleton Button Celery

By: Deborah Bieber, Land Management Section Head,
MCB Camp Pendleton, CA



The Pendleton button-celery (PBC) (*Eryngium pendletenense*) has a geographic distribution limited to coastal Camp Pendleton in Southern California. There have been no PBC found to the north or south of the base, either due to a restricted distribution or, more likely, due to complete urban development on the coastal terraces it inhabits.

The plant currently has no Federal listing; however, the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) deems the plant a

1B.1; meaning the plants are rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere, < 50 extant occurrences in CA, and either endemic to CA or very rare outside CA. It has no State of California status.

Because of the limited distribution within a high use training base, local botanist and environmentalist interests have been piqued and the potential for a federal listing petition is considered to be very high. Specifically, the threats mentioned in the CNPS documentation are: "Threatened by military activities, hydrological alteration, and non-native plants." To help combat a listing petition, the MCB Camp Pendleton Land Management Section (Environmental Security) decided to determine the distribution, abundance, and demographics of the PBC within active training lands and validate actual threats. If Land Management can document that the plant is spread throughout its limited range, is self-sustaining, and threats are minimal, then we can provide evidence that the PBC will not require federal listing.

After several years of inventory, we have found 11 occurrences (PBC within a ¼ mile of each other), 1,103 populations (PBC within 7 meters of each other) covering 90 acres with 64,810 individuals. To date, studies have identified historic agriculture and high fire frequency as the most severe threats. The PBC is absent in coastal mesas that had historic agricultural activity by row crops, except those plants that cling to the bluff edges. Approximately 50% of the coastal bluffs have had agriculture. This threat is considered to no longer be a concern for PBC populations at MCB Camp Pendleton, as all agriculture has been terminated on base.

The second validated threat is high fire frequency. There is one active training range that undergoes almost yearly prescribed burns to reduce the occurrence of igniting a wildfire; this area is void of PBC. The result of the high fire

UPCOMING EVENTS

◆ ACHP 2014 Section 106 Training Schedule

The Section 106 Essentials:

This two-day course is designed for those who are new to federal historic preservation compliance or those who want a refresher on the Section 106 regulations. Through small and large group discussions and a case study, participants learn how to carry out or participate in the four-step process through which federal agencies fulfill their project planning review requirements under the National Historic Preservation Act, which apply any time a federal, federally assisted, or federally approved activity might affect a historic property.

- 10–11 June: Washington, DC
National Building Museum
- 19–20 August: Albuquerque, NM
Hotel Albuquerque
- 9–10 September: Washington, DC
National Building Museum
- 16–17 September: Oakland, CA
Washington Inn
- 11–12 November: Savannah, GA
NTHP Annual Conference

Advanced Section 106 Seminar:

The seminar focuses on the effective management of complex or controversial undertakings that require compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Taught in a smaller, interactive setting, the course encourages group discussion and problem solving. Designed for experienced Section 106 users who are familiar with the regulations, the curriculum focuses on the challenges of seeking consensus, resolving adverse effects to historic properties, and preparing agreement documents. Class is limited to 25 participants.

- 22 July: Washington, DC
National Building Museum
 - 21 August: Albuquerque, NM
Hotel Albuquerque
- ◆ The ACHP is a Certification Maintenance (CM) Provider for the American Planning Association/
American Institute of Certified

frequency is a pristine looking, invasive grass free vernal pool mesa. Areas without fire are dominated with invasive grasses, causing PBC to grow in a contorted fashion to get above the thatch.

Although PBC occurs in active training areas with uncontrolled invasive grass thatch, we do not know if these invasives are impairing PBC demographics. Currently, we are devising the demographic inquires within active training areas, non-training areas, and invasive grass dominated areas. We will compare the percent of plants flowering, fruiting, and producing seed, along with age class distribution within and outside training ranges and dense thatch areas. Although the data isn't in yet, personal observations have led me to think that the biggest threat to this plant is not military training, but annual grass thatch build up.

Although all of the answers are not in, the next question is: how much will we actively manage this plant to assure its continued existence and avoid federal listing?

The Three Cs: Conservation, CERCLA, and Consultations

By Dr. Diane Walsh, MCAS Camp Pendleton

The intent of this article is to provide additional clarity on how to better integrate compliance with federal environmental laws in a situation where the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) also applies. It is true, for example, that one does not need to do a separate National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis on a CERCLA project. That said, a CERCLA project is not inherently exempt from several other environmental laws, such as the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, or the National Historic Preservation Act, despite the 'urban legend' that CERCLA trumps these other laws and that no consultation is required because of the paramount need to clean up the potential contamination that is at the heart of a project with the urgent characteristics CERCLA was put in place to support.

An example of how CERCLA should and shouldn't be used in environmental planning occurred on MCAS Camp Pendleton. A riparian habitat that supports endangered species was selected as the location for a new production well to replace a well on MCB Camp Pendleton that was contaminated with chlorinated solvents. For many years, MCAS Camp Pendleton's wells have supplied much of the drinking water for greater Camp Pendleton. This new well, as would be expected, came with an associated distribution pipeline and utility (electrical and communication) lines to connect it to an existing production well and a pump station. This project was initially evaluated using CERCLA alone, using the contaminated well on MCB Camp Pendleton as the action driver that triggered CERCLA.

The U.S. Navy had the lead for the project (as the Navy is responsible for CERCLA projects on all Marine Corps installations) and emailed the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to request that the project's effects on three endangered species present in the area (southwestern willow flycatcher, least bell's vireo, and the arroyo toad) be addressed as a Class II consultation under MCAS Camp Pendleton's extant Biological Opinion. This request also concluded that the project was not likely to adversely affect the listed species. However, additional consultation concluded that the project design would adversely affect the least bell's vireo and arroyo toad, leading to an additional three months of meetings, conversations, and emails to discuss project details and minimize impacts to these endangered species.

In the end, the Navy, Marine Corps, and USFWS worked collaboratively as a team to re-shape this CERCLA project to minimize the impact on the listed species and bring this project to fruition. As a result, the well was constructed, albeit in the midst of bird breeding season with the assistance of monitors.

Planners (AICP) for The Section 106 Essentials (12 CM) and The Advanced Section 106 Seminar (6 CM). We are registered with the American Institute of Architects Continuing Education System (AIA/CES) for The Section 106 Essentials (12 LUs).

- ◆ Looking for Section 106 topical training in less time? Try our webinar series: www.achp.gov/sec106webinar.html.
- ◆ Complete information and registration procedures can be found at www.achp.gov/106.
Questions? Contact Cindy Bienvenue, Meeting and Event Manager, at cbienvenue@achp.gov or 202-606-8521.

◆ CECOS classes for FY14

Advanced Environmental Management (A-4A-0063)

- 2–6 June 2014 in Pensacola, FL
- 11–15 August 2014 in San Diego, CA

Introduction to Cultural Resource Management Laws and Regulations (A-4A-0070)

- 3–5 June 2014 in Kitsap, WA

Advanced Environmental Law/Strategic Environmental Planning (A-4A-0068)

- 5–9 August 2014 in Bremerton, WA

Advanced Historic Preservation Law & Section 106 Compliance (A-4A-0073)

- 12–14 August in Jacksonville, FL



So, what can we learn from the application of CERCLA to this particular project that might be applicable to similar situations? We can, first and foremost, recognize that time and hassle will probably be saved if consultations start as early as possible in the project, that project schedules are developed in recognition of typical consultation timelines, and that, depending on the specific situation, appropriate regulators, the Army Corps of Engineers, cultural consultations, etc. are involved earlier rather than later.



Bird Aircraft Strike Hazard (BASH): Dog Helps to Enhance Pilot Safety, Reduce Health Concerns from Canada Geese at MCAS New River

By: Robbie Withington, Wildlife Biologist, USDA APHIS Wildlife Services, MCAS New River BASH

Traditionally, Canada geese (*Branta canadensis*), a migratory waterfowl species, spend most of their breeding season in Canadian provinces and Alaska, migrating to the lower 48 states for the winter months. Beginning in the 1940s, many state agencies initiated stocking programs to combat declining Canada goose populations. Stocking efforts consisted mainly of capturing different subspecies of Canada geese from various states and transferring them to the target location. Many of the transplanted geese began to breed near their release sites and were ultimately able to survive without the traditional annual migration, thus becoming “resident geese” (1). Since Canada geese usually mate for life and return to the same nest site annually, populations can become quite concentrated in particular areas.

Urban sprawl has aided in the expansion of resident goose populations across the country, providing the necessary food, water, and shelter for expansion activities. The increased availability of short grasses, ponds, and supplemental feeding, paired with limited hunting and low predator densities in urban areas has also boosted resident goose numbers. Furthermore, the ability of geese to utilize various habitats to survive, long life expectancies, and species hardiness has hastened the population increases.

The resident goose population explosion across the country has created increasing public health concerns. *E. coli* and other bacteria found in goose droppings can contaminate drinking water supply sites, parks, beaches, and other public areas. Additional concerns include damage to lawns and golf courses and nutrient loading, as well as additional contamination of ponds and lakes. Resident geese also create traffic hazards on roadways and flight safety risks at airports nationwide. Aggressive nesting geese pose a threat to human safety when geese and humans live in close quarters in suburban and urban areas. Currently, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) estimates the North American resident goose population has risen from 0.5 million in 1980 to more than 3.8 million in 2012 (2).

Resident Canada geese are of particular concern to military and civilian airfields alike, due to their large size, flocking characteristics, and habituation to humans. The large, often open grazing expanses on airfields, frequency of storm water ponds, and the close proximity of many airports to large bodies of water, conveniently provide the necessary requirements for resident geese to flourish. According to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), there were 1,400 reported Canada goose strikes to civil aircraft reported from 1990-2012, causing 68,301 hours of aircraft down time and costing over \$116 million (3). On September 22, 1995, a Boeing E-3B Sentry 707-300B (AWACS), operated by the United States Air Force at Elmendorf AFB in Anchorage, Alaska, was involved in a fatal crash less than a mile from the runway. Canada geese were ingested into the number 1 and 2 engines on departure, resulting in a catastrophic crash



into the hillside, killing all 24 people on board (4). One of the more notable recent bird strikes was US Airways flight 1549, an Airbus A320-214, which lost both engines from ingesting Canada geese during departure from LaGuardia Airport in New York City, NY. Despite the detrimental bird strike, the pilots remarkably landed the plane in the Hudson River with no fatalities.

MCAS New River has an active BASH program, which entails utilizing a variety of control measures to mitigate wildlife threats to stationed aircraft. Resident Canada geese are frequently encountered during our patrols and surveys, most frequently in the more urbanized portions of the Camp Lejeune complex. Not only are the geese serious BASH safety concerns for aircraft, but they also pose a health risk for the thousands of Marines and the military community members located on the Camp Lejeune complex.

For approximately three years, the MCAS New River BASH program has utilized a personally owned chocolate lab, owned by Robbie Withington, MCAS New River USDA Wildlife Services Wildlife Biologist, to harass geese from training areas, physical training fields, and portions of the base where traditional BASH pyrotechnics and other mitigation techniques cannot be safely used. Our BASH dog, "Timber," has been an essential and versatile program asset. She enthusiastically performs BASH duties by quickly harassing Canada geese from areas in which our team would have no other safe alternative for removing the geese. Multiple training commanders and units have requested the use of Timber due to the dangerous and unsightly accumulation of goose and gull droppings in heavily used training areas. To date, Timber has harassed over 3,000 birds; over one-third of these birds have been resident Canada geese.

1. US Fish & Wildlife Service: Draft Environmental Impact Statement: Resident Canada Goose Management website:
http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/CurrentBirdIssues/Management/cangeese/Draft_EIS/chapter1.pdf
2. USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services New York Canada Goose FAQ website:
http://www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife_damage/state_office/state_web/new_york/CAGO_FAQ.pdf
3. Federal Aviation Administration: Wildlife Strikes to Civil Aircraft in the United States. Dolbeer et. al, September 2013.
<http://wildlife.faa.gov/downloads/StrikeReport1990-2012.pdf>
4. NTSB Safety Recommendations A-96-38 through -42
<http://www.nts.gov/safetyrecs/private/querypage.aspx>

DID YOU KNOW?

Volunteers and site leaders watched for whales for the 2014 Sanctuary Ocean Count project at MCB Hawaii on 22 February.

On Oahu, there are more than 20 different sites designated for whale counting. Two sites are aboard MCB Hawaii: atop the Coast Guard-owned tower at Pyramid Rock Beach and at Mokapu Point near Kaneohe Bay Range Training Facility, both restricted areas.

The annual Sanctuary Ocean Count project, coordinated through the NOAA's Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, monitors the endangered humpback whale, which migrates to Hawaii between November and April. The counts occur during the last Saturday in January, February and March, which NOAA considers the season's peak.