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Whooping Crane Conservation Association

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WCCA Assists in Purchase of Prime Winter Habitat for Whoopers

Aerial view of the Newcomb Point area on Lamar Peninsula, Texas. Photo courtesy of J. Z. Giessel and J. Francell.

Since 2012, WCCA has contributed $326,700 to help protect more than 1,200 acres of wintering habitat through perpetual easements or direct purchase. In May of this year, your Association contributed $35,000 toward purchase of 214 acres, known as the Newcomb Point Tract, on Lamar Peninsula on the central Texas coast. This area includes the winter territory of a successful Whooping Crane pair and has also been used by groups of subadults. It was one of the last remaining unprotected properties regularly used by whoopers in winter.

The middle coast of Texas has undergone considerable conversion to crops or rangeland. However, Newcomb Point contains relatively undisturbed plant communities, including coastal marsh, wetlands, mud flats, and uplands. Local foods for Whooping Cranes include blue crabs and razor clams in the wetlands. Also important in some years are wolfberry fruit and acorns found in the uplands. A portion of the uplands borders a road and would have been ideal for housing development. Fortunately, that possibility has now been

1966–2018

52 Years of Whooping Crane Conservation

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eliminated by the Newcomb Point property acquisition.

Former Aransas National Wildlife Refuge biologist Tom Stehn noted, "After the whooper flock first expanded onto the east side of Lamar Peninsula in 1971, a third territory was added in winter 2007-2008 on the Newcomb Bend marshes on the west side of the peninsula. With proposed boat-canal housing developments on Lamar, it is very important to protect lands in that area to limit disturbance and provide wetland and upland food resources that the cranes need as well as areas that will become marshlands as sea level continues to rise."

Whooping Cranes on Lamar Peninsula. (Steve Sykes)

WCCA joined with WildAid and Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD) to purchase the property for $1.5 million. The major cost of the purchase came from RESTORE ACT funds as a grant to TPWD. RESTORE ACT funds are administrative and civil penalties charged against British Petroleum as a result of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010. WildAid, an international nonprofit conservation group, provided $200,000 from a wealthy Canadian donor. Texas Nature Conservancy took care of costs, other than the purchase price, by providing earnest money, property surveys, and closing costs.

"With proposed boat-canal housing developments on Lamar, it is very important to protect lands in that area to limit disturbance and provide wetland and upland food resources that the cranes need as well as areas that will become marshlands as sea level continues to rise."

— Tom Stehn

TPWD will own and manage the property, which is less than 2 miles from the Lamar Unit of the 55,000-acre Aransas National Wildlife Refuge. Other nearby conservation areas that provide habitat for Whooping Cranes include the 57,000-acre Matagorda Island National Wildlife Refuge and State Natural Area, the 16,000-acre Welder Flats/Falcon Point conservation complex, the 5,500-acre Guadalupe Delta Wildlife Management Area, and the 17,000-acre Powderhorn Ranch State Park and Wildlife Management Area.

This purchase illustrates the teamwork, and time commitment, required to purchase such habitat. In 2016, WCCA ranked the Newcomb Point property as the number one site we would like to help purchase. Texas Nature Conservancy was negotiating with the landowner and needed funds from other sources to help acquire the property. Joe Duff, CEO of Operation Migration, became aware of a wealthy Canadian who was interested in benefiting the Whooping Cranes. Joe contacted Walter Sturgeon, President of WCCA, who also has been an active participant in Operation Migration. Several WCCA Board members gave Joe information about Newcomb Point and put him in touch with Texas Nature Conservancy. Joe met with staff of Nature Conservancy, visited Newcomb Point, and reported back to the Canadian donor, who made his very substantial contribution through WildAid. The closing date was June 13.

An Opportunity for Association Members

You can help us as we continue to cooperate with other conservation groups in preserving winter habitat for Whooping Cranes! Coastal properties are expensive. The cost of the 720 acres acquired in Texas in November 2016 (see *Grus Americana* vol. 54. no. 2) was slightly over one million U.S. dollars or $1,389 per acre. We welcome any amount of money that you are able to donate toward purchase of habitat. When you donate, please indicate that you are contributing for the purchase of habitat. Funds can be donated through our website http://whoopingcrane.com or by sending a check to the Whooping Crane Conservation Association, 2139 Kennedy Avenue, Loveland, Colorado, 80538. WCCA is an all-volunteer, nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation with the purpose of advancing conservation, protection, and propagation of Whooping Cranes. The Association is able to receive funds by gifts, bequests, legacies or transfers and to administer such funds for the benefit of cranes. Donations from U.S. citizens are tax deductible. Thank you for your help for these marvelous birds.

The WCCA wishes to acknowledge the following persons for their special donations for the benefit of Whooping Cranes these past six months: **Doris Applebaum, Jill Bee, Carolyn Cogburn, Daniel Fantore, Michael Helsel, Glenn McCormick, Dennis Murphy, and Carl Racchini**.

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WCCA Membership for 2018

Joining the WCCA is easy and your membership directly benefits North America's tallest bird. With your membership, you will also receive the WCCA newsletter, and we provide you with up-to-date comprehensive news and other items of interest about Whooping Cranes by way of our web site (www.whoopingcrane.com).

Membership Levels, USA and Canada

Annual — $20.00

Sustaining — $50.00

Lifetime — $300.00

Payment can be made online by credit card (via PayPal) through our web site (www.whoopingcrane.com); you do not need a PayPal account to pay by credit card.

For payment of Canadian dues, please send your cheque (payable to *Whooping Crane Conservation Association*) to:

Whooping Crane Conservation Association, Box 995, Indian Head, Saskatchewan, S0G 2K0

For payment of US dues, please send your check to: Whooping Crane Conservation Association, 2139 Kennedy Ave, Loveland, CO, 80538

Did Hurricane Harvey Really Affect Whooping Cranes in the Coastal Texas Wintering Grounds?

The International Crane Foundation is happy to report that despite the devastating effects from Hurricane Harvey to coastal communities within the central Texas coast, the coastal marsh that is essential habitat for the Aransas Wood Buffalo population (AWBP) of Whooping Cranes and other wildlife appeared productive and healthy eight months after making landfall directly through the wintering range of the AWBP. Hurricanes are a natural phenomenon that play an integral role in natural coastal ecosystems. While they cause varying impacts, including coastal marsh erosion, this loss may be outweighed by an increase in productivity subsequent to an influx of sediments, nutrients, and rainfall into the system. These processes appeared to be the case for coastal marsh within the Whooping Crane winter range, as the birds arrived to an abundance of their primary food resources, blue crabs (*Callinectes sapidus*) and Carolina wolfberries (*Lycium carolinianum*) as well as other estuarine organisms.

Beyond the health of the coastal marsh and abundance of food resources, biologists from the International Crane Foundation were also concerned about the availability of freshwater resources to wintering Whooping Cranes after Hurricane Harvey. Whooping Cranes winter along the Texas coast where rainfall deficits and prolonged drought conditions are common. Warm temperatures, little rainfall, and upstream water diversions result in reduced freshwater inflows into coastal bays which increase salinities in the bays and coastal marsh. Higher salinities have been correlated with a decrease in available blue crabs and wolfberries, and impact freshwater availability to wildlife. Whooping Cranes can drink water with salinities up to about 23 parts per thousand (ppt), which is often exceeded within the bays and coastal marshes during the winter season. Thus, Whooping Cranes rely heavily on freshwater ponds located further inland from the coastal marsh for drinking water. Hurricane Harvey produced an incredible 3-4 m (10-13 ft) storm surge throughout the core wintering range that swept across the low-lying coastal marsh and further inland, inundating many freshwater ponds and wetlands, and destroying multiple water wells that usually provide drinkable water essential to Whooping Cranes and other wildlife (**Figure 1**).

Figure 1. Solar panel damage at a freshwater pond following Hurricane Harvey, August 2017. Note the storm surge wrack line in foreground.

How have freshwater resources been restored? Multiple organizations and agencies have recognized the importance of inland freshwater resources to wintering Whooping Cranes and other wildlife. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) resource managers and biologists at the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) initiated the *Water for Wildlife* program and have created and managed existing freshwater ponds for wildlife use within their boundaries, as well as supporting the creation of ponds strategically located on private lands throughout the Whooping Crane winter range. In 2013, the San Antonio Bay Partnership began to lead the program effort to improve existing water wells that provide freshwater resources for Whooping Cranes and other wildlife, and install new water wells at freshwater ponds that would be most beneficial to Whooping Cranes. Partners of this initiative have included FWS coastal programs, Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, Texas State Aquarium, Friends of Aransas and Matagorda Island, San Antonio Bay Foundation, with the International Crane Foundation assisting in developing a decision-support tool for site selection and multi-

year monitoring of selected sites. Through multiple funding sources, the *Water for Wildlife* initiative to date has resulted in 13 working solar-powered water wells, with funding in place to install two to three new solar-powered water wells and/or repair five to seven existing water wells by the end of June 2018.

What were conditions like immediately following the hurricane? As part of the *Water for Wildlife* initiative, the International Crane Foundation received funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Hurricane Assessment, Recovery, and Restoration Fund to assess the recovery of freshwater wetlands and ponds at ANWR and Johnson Ranch and Welder Flats conservation easements. As part of this assessment, the International Crane Foundation's Texas team initially sampled salinity levels in 36 ponds two months following the hurricane and 18 ponds for three months within the last half of the winter season. Presented here are the preliminary data from Blackjack Peninsula, while the complete dataset from all three peninsulas and one barrier island within the wintering area is being analyzed. Although the closest salinity station adjacent to Blackjack Peninsula was not functional until 20 September, salinities were relatively homogeneous throughout the bay system two weeks after the storm (~11 ppt). In the October sampling of 18 ponds on Blackjack Peninsula within ANWR, salinities in 14 ponds ranged 8.8-13.7 ppt, all below the presumed threshold of 23 ppt satisfactory for dietary drinking water for Whooping Cranes and similar to the surrounding bays. In three ponds, salinities were <1.0 ppt and were located within the higher elevations at the southern portion of the peninsula, indicating they were not inundated by the storm surge.

What were inland pond conditions like during the winter season? Seven ponds selected along a generally north-south extent of the peninsula were monitored from January to early April 2018, including two solar wells which were repaired in natural depressions, one solar well restored in an excavated pond, and one new well drilled on an excavated pond. Overall, pond salinities appeared to follow a north-south increasing salinity trend (pond salinity averages for the total study, 3.0-10.2 ppt), with the exception of the two depression ponds with wells. Average pond salinities of ponds with wells (Mean=6.2, SD=2.6) were lower throughout the study than ponds without wells (Mean=9.1, SD=1.0) when pond type was not considered. A more in-depth analysis with all ponds will be essential to evaluate all the physical characteristics, well parameters, and spatial locations for use in longer-term post-hurricane assessments. However, for the winter 2017-2018 following Hurricane Harvey, pond salinities were sufficiently low enough to provide dietary water for wintering Whooping Cranes on Blackjack Peninsula (**Figure 2**).

How was the Whooping Crane response assessed to evaluate restored conditions? The International Crane Foundation's Texas team also monitored Whooping Crane use of all freshwater ponds in the study by reviewing almost 250,000 images captured from 22 game cameras set up at 18 different ponds from late December 2017 to early April 2018. Preliminary results indicate that Whooping Cranes were present in 1.3% of the images, which is similar to results of other habitat use studies using survey data from 2004-2011. However, use was not uniform throughout the winter range, and preliminary results indicate that Blackjack Peninsula inland ponds were used the least of all four landforms (i.e., the three peninsulas and one barrier island). Four of the seven ponds monitored on this peninsula were never used and are located on the northernmost and southern extents of the peninsula, including three of the four ponds with restored or new wells post hurricane. The depressional pond with a well in the north-central location was used in mid-January, then none of the ponds on Blackjack Peninsula were used in February (**Figure 3**, histograms in rectangle 'D'). The same pond was used in the first half of March and an excavated pond

Figure 2. Whooping Cranes drinking at an inland pond.

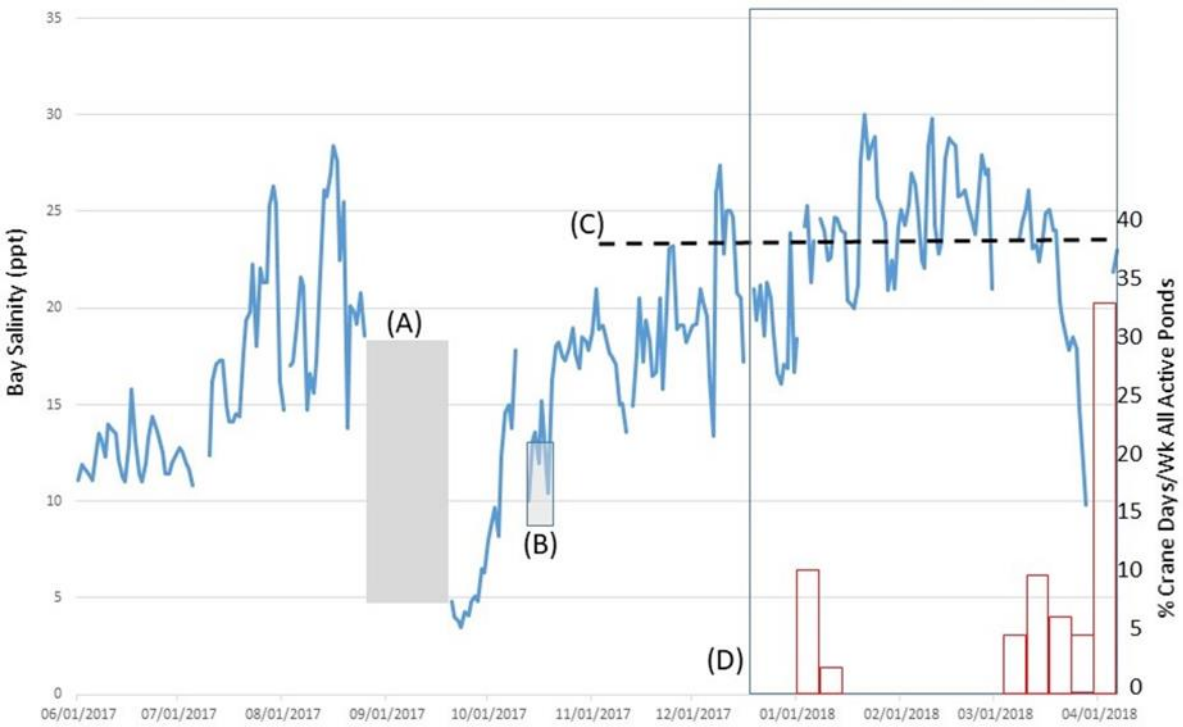

Figure 3. Salinities within the wintering range of Whooping Cranes in coastal Texas and relative use of all ponds on Blackjack Peninsula indicating (A) loss of data following Hurricane Harvey, (B) salinities during initial inland pond assessment, (C) salinity threshold for dietary drinking water, and (D) monitoring period for potential crane use of inland ponds on Blackjack Peninsula.

without a well just to the south was used the most throughout March to early April. Another pond without a well was used further south in late March and early April.

What were the overall environmental conditions this season within the Whooping Crane wintering range? These findings suggest salinity levels in the bay and/or coast were periodically low enough for Whooping Cranes to drink water without moving to inland ponds, although levels continued to increase through February (**Figure 3**). Bay salinities from the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority monitoring station were characterized as being relatively low prior to and immediately following hurricane landfall in August 2017. Salinities within the wintering range were generally below the 23 ppt drinking threshold when AWBP cranes arrived in November-December. During this study, bay salinities began to increase in January and generally ranged above the threshold, then lower salinities later in the season potentially provided dietary water later in the season.

How did the Whooping Cranes respond to salinity conditions and availability of dietary freshwater? Using the percent of crane use days (at least one image-documented Whooping Crane(s) during one day by number of ponds) as a basic parameter to assess usage at all ponds, crane use was low throughout January-March 2018 on Blackjack Peninsula. Since salinities did not increase in the ponds over time, local rainfall may be ameliorating evaporation, and other freshwater resources may be available to the cranes. The increase in pond usage at the end of the study may indicate that other factors may be influencing these higher values (i.e., less food resources in the coastal marsh, increase in food availability at ponds and/or at a recent prairie burn, more movement of cranes prior to migration). Analyses of the bay salinities and crane pond usage are still ongoing for the entire study area and will be finalized by the end of June 2018. More detailed crane use metrics will incorporate marsh salinity data from other ongoing research as well as local rainfall patterns.

These data will inform recommendations for longer-term monitoring for comparison of crane use of inland ponds during drought-wet cycles and recommendations for future well placement in the Whooping Crane wintering range.

Did Hurricane Harvey really affect Whooping Cranes in the coastal Texas wintering grounds? The destructive impacts of Hurricane Harvey were massive in several local communities and the recovery is slow but steady. For natural communities, conditions appeared to flourish with the influx of fresh water and nutrients from the coastal rivers. Despite introducing bay water to inland ponds from the storm surge, wintering Whooping Cranes were not dependent on inland freshwater ponds; however, the immediate restoration and creation of new wells will provide these essential resources when the next drought cycle occurs. As the winter and spring season comes to a close, the International Crane Foundation is eager to finish pond and bay salinity analyses at the landscape level in regards to its effects on wintering Whooping Crane needs. The International Crane Foundation feels fortunate to be involved in these multiple-partner projects that ultimately benefit the continued recovery of Whooping Cranes!

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Another Banner Nesting Season for Whooping Cranes in Wood Buffalo National Park

A total of 86 Whooping Crane nests was recorded during the 2018 nesting survey in Canada's Wood Buffalo National Park (WBNP), according to Rhona Kindopp, Manager of Resource Conservation, Parks Canada.

Kindopp explained: "We have a preliminary count of 86 nests, the second-highest number ever recorded. Last year we set a record with 98 nests. We are encouraged by the significant number of nests established this year."

Prior to the last two nesting seasons, the previous record was 82 nests, set in 2014.

Added Kindopp, "We are seeing a large, relatively stable number of nests over the past few years, and the variance in the numbers of nests is within the normal range. We believe this bodes well for the ongoing health of the Wood Buffalo-Aransas Whooping Crane flock and we look forward to seeing the results when we count fledged chicks later in the season (in August)."

Sharon Irwin, WBNP Resource Conservation Officer, WBNP Ecologist Lori Parker, and John Conkin of the Canadian Wildlife Service took part in the survey, which was conducted May 25-29.

Kindopp described the survey procedure: "The survey is carried out by flying in a helicopter in a grid pattern over last year's nest locations. (Whooping Crane pairs are territorial, they tend to nest in the same general area as in previous years. – Ed.) If we don't find a nest on a grid search, we then fly to the old nest site and fly ever-widening circles around the site. We also have recent locations for satellite-

banded birds to check."

"The water levels in the ponds of the nesting area are good and overall habitat conditions look very positive this year. Clearly, the cranes have found nesting conditions very favorable. Nesting started a bit later than usual this year because of cold temperatures," said Kindopp.

See the back cover (page 12) for an aerial photo taken during this year's nest survey.

We thank Chester McConnell and Friends of the Wild Whoopers (https://friendsofthewildwhoopers.org) for allowing us to reproduce the content of this report.

Aransas—Wood Buffalo Whooping Crane Population Summary 2015-2018

	2015	2016	2017	2018
No. of nests detected at WBNP (May)	68	78	98†	86††
No. of fledged chicks detected (August)	23	45*	63**	
Average no. of chicks per nest#	0.34	0.57	0.64	
Additional territorial pairs (non-nesters)	20-24	18	?	
Estimated total no. of birds at Aransas NWR within the primary survey area‡	329 (95% CI 293-371)	431 (95% CI 371-493)	?	
Estimated no. of juveniles at Aransas NWR	38	50	?	

†The most nests ever recorded; ††Second-highest number of nests recorded.

*One family with twins; **Four families with twins.

#20-year average is 0.48 chicks per nest.

‡Estimated numbers of birds **outside** the primary survey area in 2015 and 2016 were 9 and 6, respectively.

Wood Buffalo National Park (WBNP) 2015 data are from Bidwell and Conkin (March 2016), *Recovery and Ecology of Whooping Cranes: Monitoring of the Aransas-Wood Buffalo Population during the Breeding Season 2015 Report*. WBNP 2016 breeding data are preliminary results from the Canadian Wildlife Service, with thanks to Mark Bidwell. 2017 nest survey data are from Mike Keizer, Parks Canada. 2017 fledgling data are from CBC News, August 16, 2017 (www.cbc.ca/news). 2018 nest survey data are from Tim Gauthier, Parks Canada. Aransas NWR winter data are from 'Whooping Crane Updates' at the ANWR website.

Eastern Migratory Population Update

Hillary Thompson, North America Program Crane Analyst, International Crane Foundation

Parent-reared juvenile 38-17 (foreground) with an injured Sandhill Crane near Horicon National Wildlife Refuge in early December 2017.

Photo — Doug Pellerin

Current population size and status

As of 15 April 2018, there are an estimated 103 (48 F, 52 M, 3 U) Whooping Cranes in the Eastern Migratory Population. This past winter, the distribution was approximately 7 cranes in Florida, 4 in Georgia, 33 in Alabama, 2 in Louisiana, 6 in Tennessee, 8 in Kentucky, 32 in Indiana, 3 in Illinois, and 1 in Wisconsin. Most Whooping Cranes have returned to Wisconsin; however, as of mid-April there are also cranes in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, and Michigan. The weather in Wisconsin has been cold and variable, but a few pairs have initiated their first nests and are sitting through rain, snow, and hail! *(Complete nesting results for 2018 will be available in the next issue of Grus Americana— Ed.)*

2017 cohort

The two wild-hatched chicks made it through winter. W3-17 wintered in Kentucky with its parents (24-09 and 42-09) and was last seen in Adams Co, WI with 31-16, 29-16, and 39-16. W7-17 wintered in Morgan Co, AL with her parents (14-08 and 24-08), and was last reported in Edwards Co, IL by herself.

The parent-reared juveniles wintered in Jackson Co, AL (19-17 and 25-17), Okeechobee Co, FL (28-17), Randolph Co, IL (24-17), Hendry Co, FL (72-17), Plaquemines Parish, LA (30-17), LaPorte Co, IN (39-17), Madison Co, FL (36-17), and 38-17 spent the entire winter in Dodge Co, WI. We believe 38-17 stayed in Wisconsin this winter because she was associating with a Sandhill Crane with a broken wing who could not migrate **(see photo)**. We captured the Sandhill Crane and brought it to a rehab center, then after capture attempts for relocation of 38-17 were unsuccessful, we supplementally fed her over the winter. She is currently associating with Sandhill Cranes in Dodge Co, WI. Parent-reared bird 26-17 migrated to southwestern Indiana, where her remains were collected on the border of Indiana and Illinois in December 2017.

The costume-reared cohort was released at White River Marsh SWA in fall 2017; however, in early December it appeared they were not going to migrate south. They were divided into three smaller groups to encourage migration. Two of these groups were translocated to the Wisconsin River area in Sauk County, where they migrated south with Sandhill Cranes. 3-17 and 7-17 spent the winter at Wheeler NWR in Alabama, and 4-17 and 6-17 spent the winter in Fulton Co, KY. The last group of costume-reared cranes (1-17, 2-17, and 8-17) was translocated to Goose Pond FWA in Indiana, which they left to spent the winter in Talladega Co, AL.

Louisiana Whooping Crane Update

Eva Szyszkoski, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

Autumn 2017 – As of 1 November 2017, the Louisiana non-migratory population consisted of a maximum of 49 individuals (24 males, 25 females).

2017 Cohort – Twenty-three captive-reared juveniles were released into the Louisiana population in the winter of 2017/18. The first shipment of 11 cranes (6 males, 5 females) arrived at the White Lake Wetlands Conservation Area from the International Crane Foundation in Wisconsin on 8 November. They received their permanent bands and transmitters on the evening of their arrival and were placed in the top-netted portion of the release pen. They were released on 21 November.

The second shipment of 12 cranes (7 males, 5 females) arrived at the Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge from the Freeport-McMoRan Audubon Species Survival Center in New Orleans on 14 November. They were banded upon arrival and placed in the top-netted section of the release pen. They were released on 6 December. Cranes in this group consisted of 3 parent reared juveniles and 9 costume reared. They had been hatched and raised at the Calgary Zoo (2), the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Maryland (7) and the Audubon Species Survival Center (3) before being shipped to and socialized together in New Orleans.

Supplemental food was discontinued at both release pens after 31 January.

Captures – Six free-flying cranes were captured for banding and transmitter replacement between 25 October and 28 November, including wild-hatched juvenile LW3-17.

Removal – Male L10-11 suffered an injury to his left wing, from an unknown cause on the afternoon of 2 March; however, he continued to incubate his nest with mate L11-11. On 20 March and after full term incubation, L10-11 was captured and transported to the Freeport-McMoRan Audubon Species Survival Center in New Orleans for evaluation. An initial exam did not show any broken bones or evidence of foul play; however, there was significant damage to blood vessels that prevented a more thorough exam at the time. Despite treatment, the damage to the blood vessels and the radial nerve could not be repaired and a decision was made to amputate the distal end of the wing the following week. His wing is healing and he is adjusting well to captivity. He will remain in New Orleans until permanent placement at a captive facility.

Travel in other states – Six 2-year-old cranes spent the winter of 2018 in Jefferson County, Texas and five yearlings arrived in late February (one died in early March). Some of these cranes made short trips back to Louisiana before returning to Texas. Two additional cranes made short trips into eastern Texas, but did not stay for more than a couple days in a row.

Juvenile female L4-17 left the White Lake WCA in Vermilion Parish shortly after her release and spent time in SE Louisiana before traveling into Bullock County, Alabama. She returned to Louisiana on 31 January (see map on next page).

After summering in Canada, male L3-16 returned south to winter in Lynn County, Texas where he was observed with Sandhill Cranes and an un-banded Whooping Crane likely from the Aransas-Wood Buffalo flock. He returned to Louisiana in early April, nearly a year since leaving (see map).

Reproduction – As of 20 April 2018, seven pairs initiated nine nests with eggs during this fifth year of nesting. Five nests were completed by 3 April with no hatches. Three nests (one first nest and two renests) are currently active. One young pair may have potentially begun incubation on a first nest in late March; however, they were not sitting just a few days later and no egg fragments were found, so it is not clear if they ever had an egg.

Left: Map showing out-of-state travel of female L4-17 (red) and male L3-16 (yellow). Right: Female L6-12 and one of her two newly hatched chicks in Jefferson Davis Parish on 20 April 2018. Photo: LDWF/Eva Szyszkoski.

One pair hatched out two chicks. This pair (female L6-12 & male L8-13) is the same pair that hatched out two chicks in 2016 and reared one of them to fledging.

Mortalities – Mortalities from November to mid-March included one juvenile male in Texas and one juvenile male, one adult male, and one adult female in Louisiana. Two long-term missing cranes (a breeding pair) were also removed from the population totals.

Current population size – As of 20 April 2018, the Louisiana non-migratory population consisted of a maximum of 67 individuals (32 males, 33 females and 2 newly hatched chicks).

Update from Eva (19 June): This year the Louisiana flock produced 13 nests by 9 pairs (9 first, 3 second, and 1 third nest attempt).

The two siblings, **LW1-18** and **LW2-18**, produced by L6-12 and L8-13 are still alive!

LDWF biologists swapped a pipped, captive-produced egg into the nest of a pair on 1 May; **LW3-18** hatched later that day. One of the pair's eggs was infertile, the other egg was fertile but the chick died while hatching at the captive center in New Orleans.

A captive-produced, newly hatched chick (**LW4-18**) was placed into another nest on 3 May and the pair quickly accepted it; their own two eggs were infertile.

One additional pair hatched out their own egg on 9 May (**LW5-18**).

Two cited for shooting endangered whooping cranes, obstruction of justice

BATON ROUGE, La. (10 April 2018) – Two Acadia Parish residents have been cited for violating the Endangered Species Act in connection with the shooting of two endangered whooping cranes in May 2016, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries announced today.

Citations were issued on April 3 to Kaenon Constantin, 25, and a juvenile who allegedly shot the cranes with .22-caliber rifles from an all-terrain vehicle, according to the department. They were also cited for hunting from a public road and obstruction of justice.

Agents seized the rifles and ATV, according to the department. Further penalties were not specified, but the combination of alleged violations could result in more than 11 years in jail and fines of up to $65,000.

Adapted from an article by Ben Myers, *The Acadiana Advocate*.

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Return Service Requested

Members—please update your address if the one shown above is incorrect. Send to the return address above.

Pair of Whooping Cranes and nest with two eggs in Wood Buffalo National Park. See page 7.
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