FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Bird Strike Committee USA (BSC-USA) members,

It’s that time of the year—preparations are under way for the 2018 North American Bird Strike Conference to be held in Baltimore, Maryland: August 21 – 23

Before we talk about this year’s conference, I would first like to take the opportunity to thank all the folks who made our 2017 conference in Dallas such a success. Thank you to all who attended, presented, coordinated, and helped behind the scenes. None of it could have happened without the outstanding support provided by the staff of Dallas Fort Worth International Airport and ongoing conference support from AAAE—you contributions were invaluable.

Our 2018 conference will be hosted by the Maryland Aviation Administration and Baltimore/Washington International/Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI). The theme of this year’s conference will be “Migration Nation – When Birds Collide.” We encourage all stakeholders in the bird strike industry to submit presentation ideas so that we can offer our attendees a diverse range of topics and viewpoints. Details pertaining to the conference hotel, call for presentations, photo/poster contests, and early bird training are available at: https://aaae.org/birdstrike?_zs=pubNc1&_zl=lskg4.

Committee News

The BSC USA Steering Committee welcomed several new Steering Committee members in 2018 and we look forward to working with these newly elected members:

- Travis Guerrant, Assistant State Director, Illinois USDA APHIS Wildlife Services (USDA)
- Troy Levanen, Maintenance and Safety Manager at Alaska Airlines (Airlines)
- Russ Odell, Staff Biologist/Airport District Supervisor, California USDA Wildlife Services Program (USDA)
- Conway Boyette, Air Traffic Control Specialist, FAA Headquarters (FAA)

Several Steering Committee positions remain open for nominations, and voting will occur prior to the 2018 annual conference. Open positions, requirements, and the voting schedule are provided on pages 2-3 of this newsletter. Please contact a current Executive Committee member or email us at Birdstrike.usa@gmail.com if you are interested or would like more information.

Thank you again to all who participated in and supported last year’s conference in Dallas—we appreciate you and all those who are working so hard to plan our upcoming 2018 conference. See you in Baltimore.

Sarah Brammell
Chair, Bird Strike Committee USA
sbrammell@ersenvironmental.com
STEERING COMMITTEE UPDATE

By John Weller, FAA

The BSC USA Steering Committee is as strong as ever with participation from representatives throughout the aviation industry. The subject-matter-experts comprising the Committee come from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), Smithsonian Institution, Airports, Airlines, the Aerospace Industry, Private Sector Services, and that catch-all group, General. An active Emeritus group allows our exceptional past members to continue sharing their wide-ranging knowledge.

Participation on the Steering Committee requires a two-year term commitment with the option of a second similar term if elected. The overlap of two-year terms for Committee members means that representatives are always immigrating to/emigrating from the Steering Committee.

As Sarah reported in her opening letter (page 1), the Steering Committee recently welcomed several new members. On the reverse side of the coin, we would like to recognize and offer sincere appreciation to those who have departed the Committee during the last two years:

- Steve Jangelis (Airlines)
- Jay Higgins (DOD)
- Dave Paulsgrove (DOD)
- Mike Stephens (FAA)
- Ron Singletary (FAA)
- Martin Lowney (USDA)
- John McConnell (USDA)
- Roger Nicholson (Chair of Research and Development Standing Committee)
- Rick Jones (Private Sector Services)
- Chris Demers (Aerospace Industry)

Nominations are Open

There are currently one (1) Executive Committee, ten (10) Steering Committee, and two (2) Standing Committee Chair positions open for nominations. Nominations can be directed to the current Executive Committee Members or through the BSC general email at Birdstrike.usa@gmail.com. Nominations will be accepted until June 29, 2018.

Craig Quick was recently elected to the position of Chair of the Research and Development Standing Committee, while Mike Stephens was elected to Chair of the Education and Outreach Committee. The Chairs of the Communication Committee (Cathy Boyles) and Membership Committee (Amy Reed) have done an absolutely amazing job, and we have been reluctant to replace them. Both positions are open for nomination. Also, it should never go without saying that we are indebted to Lisa Harmon and Mary Griego, who have worked tirelessly (with Cathy) to produce our newsletter! With very special respect and recognition, we are grateful, and we thank you! Special recognition must also be extended to Laura Francouer and Phyllis Miller who have assiduously assumed/maintained the roles of Treasurer and Secretary—thank you!

And finally, the BSC officers will be rotating at the BSC annual conference. Sarah Brammell will step down as the Chair of the Committee and assume the role of Past-Chair. I will accept the gavel from Sarah, and Mike Begier will step down from the role of Past-Chair. The rotation of Steering Committee members and officers has worked exceptionally well to balance continuity with new ideas and energy—let’s keep it going!

Join the Steering Committee—you can make an impact!
Standing Committee Chair positions open for nominations. Nominations can be directed to the current Executive Committee Members or through the BSC general email at Birdstrike.usa@gmail.com. Nominations will be accepted until June 29, 2018.

The open positions include:

**Executive Committee**

*Vice Chair*

*(must be a member of Steering Committee to be nominated)*

**Steering Committee**

*(must be a member of BSC USA)*

Airports – 2

Private Sector – 1

Aerospace Industries – 3

Airlines – 2

General – 2

*(positions include eligible 2nd term openings)*

**Standing Committees Chair**

*(must be a member of BSC USA)*

Communications Committee

Membership Committee

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2017 Poster Contest Winners

1st Place: John Ostrom

2nd Place: John Weller

3rd Place: John Ostrom

4th Place: Tanya Drapeau

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Bird Strike Buzz – News from Bird Strike Committee USA

Volume 5, No. 1
2017 marked the fourth year for the Sandy Wright/Richard Dolbeer Excellence in Strike Reporting Award. Established in 2014 to recognize one certificated and one General Aviation (GA) airport that have developed a noteworthy strike reporting program, the award has recognized several outstanding airports.

Determining the winners for 2017 proved challenging for two very specific reasons: First, there is a noticeable increasing number of high-quality wildlife mitigation and strike reporting programs throughout the country. Second, as if the expected challenge wasn’t enough, the National Wildlife Strike Database had acquired a large backlog of data resulting from the FAA’s attempts to launch an updated strike reporting system. Rather than cancel the 2017 awards or base the decisions on six months data from 2016, additional factors were considered.

As seen every year, the finalists were extremely close in providing the highest quality strike reports. The top five certificated airports were:

- Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA)
- Portland International Airport (PDX)
- O’Hare International Airport (ORD)
- Dallas Fort Worth International Airport (DFW)
- Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR)

Honorable Mentions must be recognized for three additional airports: Charlotte Douglas International (CLT), Minneapolis-St. Paul International (MSP) and Orlando International (MCO).

The category of GA airport was modified in 2017 to include an airfield that operates fewer aircraft than all others (about 50 scheduled operations/ year) yet diligently submits quality strike reports to better understand its wildlife hazards. The top five GA airports were Morristown Municipal (MMU), Centennial (APA), Van Nuys (VNY), DuPage (DPA) and Henderson Field Midway Atoll (MDY). Honorable mentions went to Fort Lauderdale Executive (FXE) and Jacksonville Executive (CRG).

And the winners are....

For their commitment to the identification and documentation of wildlife / aircraft strike information, the FAA proudly recognizes the superior strike reporting programs at Portland International Airport (PDX) and Henderson Field Midway Atoll (MDY) as the winners of the 2017 Sandy Wright / Richard Dolbeer Excellence in Strike Reporting award.
Operated by the Port of Portland, PDX maintains one of the highest rates of positive identifications for birds involved in strikes for civilian airports (85%). Strike reports and innovative solutions involving the federally-threatened Streaked horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris strigata*) at PDX have enabled its conservation without conflict to safe airport operations or constraints to industrial development now and in the future. PDX utilized an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) issued under section 10 of the Endangered Species Act to allow the Port to proceed with an otherwise legal activity that would cause incidental “take.” The Port also developed a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) that provided an alternate conservation strategy to minimize and mitigate for the “take.” Ultimately, cooperative efforts and strong data from monitoring and strike reports produced compatible goals from a species-at-risk conflicting land-use in the airport’s high-risk environment.

Midway Atoll (MDY) is technically a Part 139 certificated airport due to its 48 scheduled flights per year. However, this scarcity of operations plus its designation as an ETOPS (extended operations) emergency diversion point for 38,000 flights per year and its unique wildlife challenges each add up to an airfield deserving of special recognition.

MDY is located on the Midway Atoll Refuge, approximately 1,425 miles northwest of Honolulu, Hawaii. It is located on Sand Island, which is one of three small islands totaling 1,468 acres. Managed and owned by the USFWS, MDY is home to 20 bird species. These 3 million birds nest on virtually every square foot of available habitat on Midway’s three islands. The airfield has documented about 1 strike for every 11 operations during the last 25 years. It has modified its mitigation and flight operations based on this data; allowing only nighttime arrivals and departures for the nine months of the year that nesting occurs to reduce strikes.

PDX and MDY utilize their strike data in valuable and innovative ways to reduce the risk of wildlife strikes. Congratulations!

More than one million Laysan Albatross are located on MDY.

From left to right: the Laysan Albatross (*Phoebastria immutabilis*), Black-footed Albatross (*Phoebastria nigripes*) and the endangered Short-tailed Albatross (*Phoebastria albatrus*).
THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE STRIKE DATABASE: A SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATION TO ENHANCE AVIATION SAFETY

In 1995, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) initiated a project through an interagency agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services (WS), to obtain more objective estimates of the magnitude and nature of the wildlife strike problem nationwide for civil aviation. At this time (1995), the wildlife strikes reported to the FAA, primarily using Form 5200-7, had not been organized into a database suitable for analysis. Most strike reports prior to 1990 had been discarded.

To set up the database, specialists from WS:
1. Edited all strike reports (FAA Form 5200-7) received by the FAA from 1990 forward. (By 1996, data entry was complete to the current year.)
2. Supplemented strikes reported on Form 5200-7 with additional, non-duplicated strike reports from other sources.
3. Entered all edited strike reports in a standardized format containing over 90 data fields into a National Wildlife Strike Database (NWSD).
4. Assisted the FAA with streamlining strike reporting electronically and promoting the strike reporting throughout the aviation industry.
5. Assisted the FAA with adding and improving linked databases on airports, wildlife species, aircraft, and aircraft engines.
6. Assisted the FAA with the production of annual and special reports summarizing the analytical results obtained from the data.
7. Continuously monitored the NWSD to correct errors and update strike events when new information became available.

In 1999, the FAA entered into an agreement with the Smithsonian Institution by which remains of wildlife involved in strikes with civil aircraft in USA could be submitted to the Feather Lab in Washington D.C. for identification at no charge. The Feather Lab uses feather morphology and DNA analysis to identify remains to species. The NWSD also contains a linked wildlife species database that has the scientific name, mean and maximum body mass by gender, and legal status (related to Migratory Bird Treaty Act) of each species reported as struck.

Until 2016, the NWSD was updated and released to the public generally on a monthly schedule that included all strikes from 1990 to about three months from the present month. There was typically a three-month delay in releasing the data because: strikes are often not reported immediately; duplicate reports of the same strike event must be identified and consolidated; and many reports require follow-up questions with the reporter to clarify issues to ensure that accurate data are entered.

In 2016, the FAA temporarily stopped releasing monthly updates because they were in the process of having a contractor move the database to a new platform, which would streamline the reporting process and final entry of data into the NWSD. Although all the reports submitted were being stored, these reports could not be entered into the NWSD until the new system was complete. Various issues delayed this transition; thus, as of January 2018, WS began working on backlogged strike reports using the legacy system and will continue to do so until the new system is functional. Personnel are working diligently to clean up the backlog and hope to have the NWSD back to the normal three-month lag time as soon as possible.
Continued from previous page...

Although the NWSD includes about 180,000 reports of civil aircraft collisions with wildlife (97% birds) from 1990 to August 2016, the overriding focus has been and will continue to be providing quality control for data entered to identify more than 90 variables ranging from species and numbers of wildlife struck, location and time of day, phase and height of flight, aircraft type, components struck and damaged, effect of strike on flight, and associated costs. This attention to detail allows the NWSD to be used in multiple ways to document the nature of the problem temporally and spatially for individual airports and nationwide.

The NWSD is used by individual airports and FAA Airport Certification Inspectors to help objectively evaluate and improve Wildlife Hazard Management Plans. The NWSD provides supportive evidence and guidance to state and federal agencies for issuing permits for wetland mitigation and removal of wildlife at airports. Nationally, the NWSD provides a science-based foundation for FAA regulations and Advisory Circulars related to wildlife management at airports and airworthiness standards for engines and aircraft components. The NWSD is a living document, continuously refined with new and revised strike events to enable improvements to aviation safety in an environmentally responsible, science-based manner.

While the NWSD has experienced a bump in the road during the FAA’s attempt to streamline the data entry process, it is up and running with an ongoing effort to process the backlogged data. Keep reporting those strikes. They are very important, and they will be entered into the NWSD!
MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS: BSC USA is Growing!

Amy Reed, Membership Standing Committee Chair

As of February 2018, BSC USA includes 324 members across eight different sectors.

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<th>Membership Classification</th>
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Our members represent 48 states, with Florida, New York, and Ohio in the lead for the most members, and 15 countries worldwide. We are honored to have such a diverse and active group!

BSC USA welcomes new members and looks forward to continued growth. Please “Like” our Facebook page, Bird Strike Committee USA https://www.facebook.com/BirdstrikeUSA/. Be sure to check in at our Facebook page and website www.birdstrike.org regularly to receive news about BSC events, recent bird strikes, and wildlife-related aviation news from around the world.

AC Update!

Amy Anderson, FAA Office of Airports

The FAA Office of Airports continues to work on revisions to Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5200-36, Qualifications for Wildlife Biologist Conducting Wildlife Hazard Assessments and Training Curriculums for Airport Personnel involved in Controlling Wildlife Hazards on Airports, and AC 150/5200-33, Hazardous Wildlife Attractants On or Near Airports. In addition, the Office of Airports is working to finalize Draft AC 150/5200-38, Protocol for the Conduct and Review of Wildlife Hazard Site Visits, Wildlife Hazard Assessments and Wildlife Hazard Management Plans. AC 150/5200-36 is out for public comment and ACs 150/5200-33 and 150/5200-38 are undergoing internal review. All listed Advisory Circulars are anticipated to be issued by the end of FY 2018.