

**Western Ecological Research Center** <http://www.werc.usgs.gov>

## Dixon Field Station

The Dixon Field Station is located near the center of the Central Valley of California. This region winters 60 percent of the Pacific Flyway waterfowl and 20 percent of the waterfowl in North America. Federal, state, and private natural resource managers are challenged with impacts from the loss of 95 percent of California's wetlands, rapid urbanization, and agricultural and industrial contamination.

Dixon Field Station research is primarily focused on movements, habitat use, distribution, abundance, and survival of migratory birds in the Pacific Flyway, combined with a strong emphasis in wetland ecology concentrated in the Central Valley of California. Research on these topics provides needed answers to critical resource management questions. The migratory nature of studied species expands the scope of the research area to regional, national, and international scale. Additional research focus is placed on candidate and listed species under the Endangered Species Act, and evaluating the effects of contaminants in the food chain.

Fieldwork is conducted in the Pacific Flyway states of Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Arizona, and New Mexico, with international work in the Pacific Rim countries of Canada, Mexico, and Russia. Specialized expertise in geographic information systems and global positioning systems provides critical support to the research program. The Dixon Field Station biologists are internationally recognized for standard and satellite telemetry applications in wildlife studies.

Among clients and partners are Department of the Interior agencies (including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, and Bureau of Land Management), California Department of Fish and Game, Grassland Water District, Ducks Unlimited Inc., Grassland Resource Conservation District, California Waterfowl Association, University of California at Davis, Corps of Engineers, and Natomas Basin Conservancy.



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Examples of ongoing research include: waterfowl distribution, movements, and habitat use relative to recent habitat changes in the Central Valley of California; satellite tracking of northern pintails to document spring migration routes, staging areas, nesting regions, and post-nesting dispersal; assessment of the impacts of water management on molting mallards in the Klamath Basin; development of reliable population indices for band-tailed pigeons; giant garter snake habitat conservation planning; evaluation of the effects of mercury in vertebrates and their invertebrate food items in watersheds that have gold and mercury mines; and development of a species conservation plan for sage grouse in Mono County.

See **Lead Scientists** on reverse side of this fact sheet.

### **For more information, contact:**

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*For a list of technical products from this field station, click on the "Products" button on our home page at <http://www.werc.usgs.gov/>*

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## Lead Scientists

**Joseph P. Fleskes, Ph.D.**, Research Wildlife Biologist

- Migratory waterfowl
- Avian Ecology
- Bird capture and handling
- Landscape ecology
- Ornithology
- Telemetry (radio)
- Wetland ecology

**Roger L. Hothem, M.S.**, Wildlife Biologist

- Contaminants
- Ecological implications of contaminants
- Ecotoxicology
- Avian Ecology
- Wildlife management

**Michael R. Miller, M.S.**, Research Wildlife Biologist

- Agro-ecology
- Avian ecology
- Bioenergetics
- Wetland ecology
- Waterfowl population dynamics
- Telemetry (radio/satellite)

**Glenn D. Wylie, Ph.D.**, Research Wildlife Biologist

- Contaminants
- Herpetology
- Restoration ecology
- Wetland ecology
- Telemetry (radio implants)