

Special-status Wildlife – Raptors Study
SUMMARY

Consistent with Section 6.0 of the *Special-status Wildlife- Raptors Study Plan* (Plan) that was filed with FERC on January 9, 2017,¹ the SSWD provides the following summary for the *Special-status Wildlife - Raptors Study* (Study). The summary includes a description of the work completed to date, key findings, variances, and remaining work. Links to associated data files are also included. SSWD considers these data to be public.

Work Completed as of 3/1/18:

SSWD has completed the Study. Specifically, SSWD completed step 1 (Identify and Map Known Nest Sites for three special-status raptor species: bald eagle [*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*], golden eagle [*Aquila chrysaetous*] and Swainson’s hawk [*Buteo swainsoni*]); step 2 (Raptor Surveys); and step 3 (QA/QC) of the FERC-approved Study Plan. Nesting surveys were conducted for the three special-status raptors - bald eagle, golden eagle, and Swainson’s hawk - via boat to survey up to approximately 0.25-mile inland from the edge of the shoreline of Camp Far West Reservoir. Nesting bald eagle surveys were performed according to the *Bald Eagle Breeding Survey Instructions* (CDFG 1999)² and *Protocol for Evaluating Bald Eagle Habitat and Populations in California* (Jackman and Jenkins 2004).³ SSWD conducted nesting golden eagle surveys according to the *Interim Golden Eagle Inventory and Monitoring; and Other Recommendations* (USFWS 2010)⁴ and *Protocol For Golden Eagle Occupancy, Reproduction, and Prey Population Assessment* (Driscoll 2010).⁵ SSWD conducted nesting Swainson’s hawk surveys according to the *Recommended Timing and Methodology for Swainson’s Hawk Nesting Surveys in California’s Central Valley* (SHTAC 2000).⁶

Incidental sightings of other special-status raptors (northern harrier, short-eared owl, long-eared owl, and white-tailed kite) were also recorded during the surveys. Bald eagle surveys were conducted on December 20-22, 2016; January 16-18; February 15, 23-24; March 16; April 6, 25; May 2; and June 16, 2017. Golden eagle surveys were conducted on January 18, February 1, March 8, April 6; and June 16, 2017. Swainson’s hawk surveys were conducted on January 18, February 1, March 23, 31; April 6, 14, 18 and 28, 2017.

¹ The Plan is available on SSWD’s public relicensing website (www.sswdrelicensing.com) under ‘Study Plans.’

² California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). 1999. Bald Eagle Breeding Survey Instructions. November 1999. Sacramento, CA.

³ Jackman, R.E. and J.M. Jenkins. 2004. Protocol for Evaluation Bald Eagle Habitat and Populations in California. Prepared for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Sacramento, CA.

⁴ United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2010. Interim Golden Eagle Inventory and Monitoring Protocols; and Other Recommendations. Carlsbad, CA.

⁵ Driscoll, D.E. 2010. Protocol for Golden Eagle Occupancy, Reproduction, and Prey Population Assessment. American Golden Eagle Research Institute. Apache Jct., AZ.

⁶ Swainson’s Hawk Technical Advisory Committee (SHTAC). 2000. Recommended Timing and Methodology for Swainson’s Hawk Nesting Surveys in California’s Central Valley. Available online: < <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Birds/Swainson-Hawks>>. Accessed September 7, 2016. Last updated May 31, 2000.

Key Findings:

Forty-seven bald eagles (including multiple at the same site), six golden eagles, and three Swainson’s hawks were observed during surveys. A map of these special-status raptor 2017 sightings within the FERC Project Boundary is included with this summary.

Two active bald eagle nests were found within the FERC Project Boundary in 2017. One nest is historic, previously found on the Bear River Arm of Camp Far West Reservoir in adjacent trees. It was previously documented in a 2013 report by Sycamore Associates. A second active bald eagle nest was found on the Rock Creek Arm of the reservoir, east of the North Shore Recreation Area (NSRA) boat ramp. Both active bald eagle nests and the three osprey found within the FERC Project Boundary are on the map included with this summary.

A single incidental raptor sighting was recorded during surveys within the FERC Project Boundary - a northern harrier (*Circus hudsonius*) flying over grasslands across from the NSRA.

Associated Data Files:

SSWD prepared the two data files, which are available on SSWD’s public relicensing website (www.sswdrelicensing.com), listed below in Table 1.

Table 1. Data files associated with Study summary.

File Name	Data Description	File Type and Size
CFW_RaptorSites	Map of observed sightings of raptors within the FERC Project Boundary	Adobe PDF, 2.72 MB
CFW_SS_RaptorNests	Map of observed raptor nests within the FERC Project Boundary	Adobe PDF, 3.43 MB

Variations from Study:

None.

Remaining Work:

None.