



In 2020, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies is increasing the per grid cost of funding **Integrated Monitoring in Bird Conservation Regions (IMBCR)** surveys.

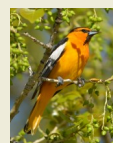
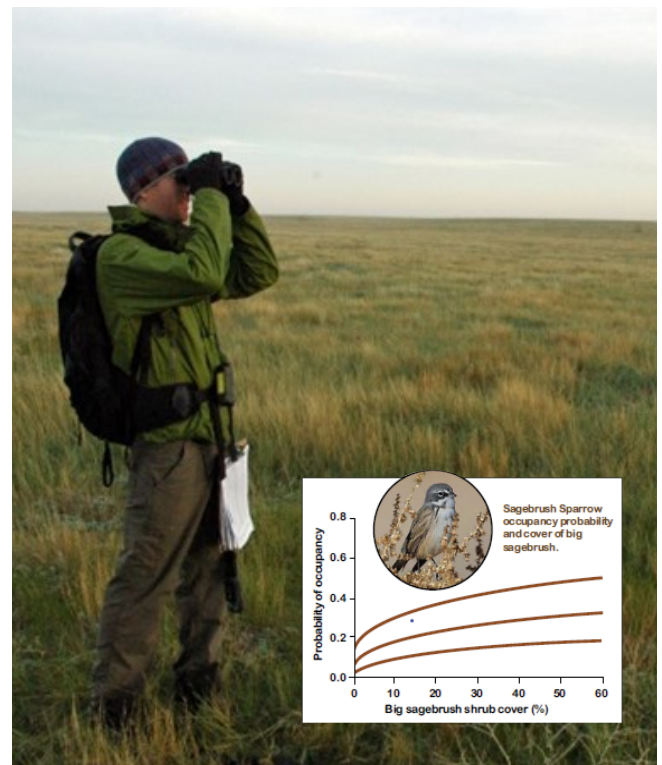
This update outlines why costs are increasing and shares some of the cost saving measures being implemented.

Bird Conservancy is providing this information to facilitate discussions and implementation moving forward

*With total surveys in 2019 soaring above 2,100 and covering 865,000 square miles, IMBCR is the second largest bird monitoring program in North America*

## INCREASED IMPLEMENTATION COSTS

- **Field Staff Pay** - To maintain the ability to hire qualified technicians and comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), field technician salaries have increased by 42% since 2015 .
- **Rental Costs** - The cost to rent the necessary vehicles to access survey locations has increased by 70% since 2015 .
- **Supplies** - The cost of replacing necessary field equipment has increased with inflation and Bird Conservancy has upgraded some of the safety equipment used by technicians for field work.
- **Trainings** - To improve data quality and technician safety we have increased the length of the initial field season training from 5 to 7 days and added a 2 day mid-season training.
- **Data Proofing** - IMBCR data proofing has grown from a 10% check of the data in the initial years of the program to a full proof and query proof of all IMBCR data.
- **Temporary Staff** - As the IMBCR program has grown, Bird Conservancy staff are spending more time on partner coordination and support, requiring additional part-time staff to assist with some implementation tasks for crews.



*IMBCR partners employ highly skilled field technicians to ensure the accuracy and quality of the data collected*

## INCREASED PROGRAM SUPPORT COSTS

- **Coordination** - The IMBCR partnership has grown in complexity and number of partners, requiring more full-time staff and time devoted to coordinating and maintaining the partnership.
- **Additional Capacity** - Bird Conservancy has hired additional staff to increase our ability to deliver relevant information and products to the IMBCR partnership.
- **Bird Conservancy's Role** - At the programs inception, Bird Conservancy was conducting 100% of surveys. As the program has grown, its role has shifted to now include both survey work (51%) as well increased program management and delivery. This shifted a greater proportion of the expenses and work from program implementation to program management and support.



- **Database Maintenance** - Updating and maintaining the Bird Conservancy database requires time and effort, particularly as the current database ages. Additionally, Bird Conservancy covers the cost of off-site data backup, which goes up as the size of the dataset increases.
- **Analyses** - The analyses are increasingly complex and require more time as the dataset has grown. Additionally, Bird Conservancy is investing significant time and effort developing the new Bayesian framework, which will take increased funding to maintain over time.

## COST SAVINGS (IMPLEMENTED & PROPOSED)

- **Staff Positions** - Bird Conservancy cut one full-time staff position and is scaling back other positions to 3/4 time.
- **Technician Workload** - Increasing technician pay to comply with FLSA but requiring technicians to complete more surveys per pay period.
- **Rental Vehicles** - Reducing the number of rental vehicles by assigning the surveys with difficult access to fewer technicians, allowing all other technicians to use personal vehicles.
- **Staff Field Work** - Require full-time staff to conduct more field work, leading to savings by decreasing the number of seasonal technicians.
- **Trainings** - Shortening the length of the initial training and eliminating the mid-season training.
- **Data proofing** - Reduction from a full proof to a partial proof. Based on analyses, this reduction will not bias or influence the quality of the data or subsequent estimates.



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