Recommendations When Using IMBCR Population Estimates at Project Scale

July 2021

1. Identify the habitat types in the project area and the list of associated birds that are likely to be present. When identifying impacts to migratory birds, emphasize FS at-risk species, USFWS conservation concern species, USFWS Species of Concern and negatively trending species in the biennial Regional Monitoring Report.

2. Ultimately, the line officer decides the level of analysis and documentation, but the extent of analysis should be commensurate with the intensity and duration of the project and the amount of bird habitat types in the project area relative to the amounts of those habitats on the planning unit. Additional analysis may be appropriate when a species is of extra concern or the project includes relatively large amounts of habitat and/or risk to associated species.

3. Additional analysis, in the form of estimates of the number of a species in the project area based on IMBCR data may be beneficial if the coefficient of variation (CV) for the species abundance estimate for the forest suggests reasonable confidence.

a. CVs less than 50 are considered reliable estimates. If the CV is greater than 50, there is less confidence in the estimate, and if the CV is greater than 100, a quantitative analysis using the IMBCR report is not meaningful and should not be performed.

b. To deduce the number of each species on the project areas, use the forest-wide estimate to calculate expected numbers based on the proportion of habitat in the project area. For example, if there are 100,000 acres of pinyon-juniper on a forest and a projection of 5000 pinyon jays, and the project area has 10,000 acres of pinyon-juniper, then (5000/100,000) * 10,000 = 500 jays are inferred to be in the project area.

4. The final report should clearly and succinctly present to the deciding official the degree of detrimental impacts and risk to downward trending species and provide potential mitigation approaches that will alleviate detrimental impacts and risk.