

Landscape Overview

ORGANIZATIONS PROTECTING SHOREBIRDS IN THE PACIFIC FLYWAY



Western Sandpipers, USA. Photo: Getty Images

Summary

Over 50 organizations collaborate across the Pacific Flyway to protect migratory shorebirds. This landscape overview provides a view into seven key groups: three that work across the Flyway (Audubon, Manomet, and Point Blue Conservation Science) and four that focus on specific countries (Pronatura Noroeste in Mexico, CECPAN in Chile, and Panama Audubon and CIAM in Panama). Essential to success is engagement with all stakeholders – Indigenous and local communities, policymakers, and businesses. Strategies include protecting and restoring habitat; reducing threats posed by developers, aquaculture, agriculture, fisheries, ecotourism, energy, recreation, and climate change; scaling work through national policies and Flyway collaborations; tracking birds, researching threats, and sharing best practices; and communicating impact to build public support. Complementing this landscape overview are 4-page summaries for each of the seven organizations noted above.

"While the funding landscape is changing and this is a really intense time for all partners working on shorebirds, capacity is built in each country across the Flyway, momentum is strong, and we are poised to deliver real impact."

- Point Blue

16 July 2025

Overview of Organizations

Over 50 organizations are working throughout the Pacific Flyway – many coordinate international work across the Flyway and others have a domestic focus. Below, we highlight a few key groups.

GROUPS THAT WORK ACROSS THE FLYWAY

Audubon FLYWAY

Coordinator of the Pacific Shorebird Conservation Initiative, connecting 50 organizations in 13+ countries. Convenes stakeholders, scales solutions, engages businesses creatively, and empowers partners and communities to lead shorebird conservation through threat reductions, habitat protections, and policy advocacy.

Point Blue FLYWAY

Leader of the Migratory Shorebird Project, providing essential flyway-scale monitoring, research, and science with 100 partners across 13 countries to guide conservation locations and actions. Counters threats, such as adapting to climate change and reducing human disturbance.

Manomet FLYWAY

Steward of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network of over 70 crucial sites in the Pacific (125 in total). Provides connective tissue between essential partners in governments, businesses, and communities. Tackles threats including oil, wind power, aquaculture, and development. Scales through national policies and coordinates internationally.

Coastal Solutions Fellows Program FLYWAY

Builds interdisciplinary capacity across Latin America (housed at the Cornell University Lab of Ornithology). Fosters collaboration among emerging conservationists, planners, architects, engineers, biologists, and sociologists. Early career Fellows implement conservation projects with measurable impacts.



Select Others
BirdLife International
Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture

GROUPS WITH COUNTRY-SPECIFIC REACH

Pronatura Noroeste MEXICO (NORTHWEST)

Focuses on 20 priority wetlands that support over 1.6 million migrating shorebirds each year. With 30 years of experience, combines local presence, scientific expertise, monitoring, government partnerships, climate resilience, community action, and site-based management to sustain and restore shorebird populations and the ecosystems that support them.

Panama Audubon PANAMA

Works to protect the critical Important Bird Areas (IBAs), including the Bay of Panama and Parita Bay as anchors. Collaborates with local authorities, communities, artisanal fishers, the national government, academics, and the international community. Reaches thousands of students annually, monitors birds, and scales work through Panama's National Shorebird Conservation Plan. Proactively addresses climate change, overfishing, and water use, considering economics, ecosystem services, culture, and other drivers of change.

Panama Environmental Advocacy Center (CIAM) PANAMA

Protects Panama's coastal, marine, and wetland ecosystems through litigation, guards Indigenous and vulnerable communities, policy advocacy, protected area defense, and citizen engagement. Stops destructive development and curtails illegal fishing while supporting artisanal fishers. Emerging threats demand action and a fight to safeguard biodiversity, empower communities, and advance sustainable livelihoods.

Center for Study and Conservation of Natural Heritage (CECPAN) CHILE

Anchored in the ecologically rich Chiloé Archipelago, and recently the arid shores of Atacama and Antofagasta regions in the north. Combines spatial planning, monitoring, and community engagement to protect high-value habitats. Addresses threats generated by the lack of territorial planning on the coast. Solutions include establishing protected areas, which include spaces managed by Indigenous communities.

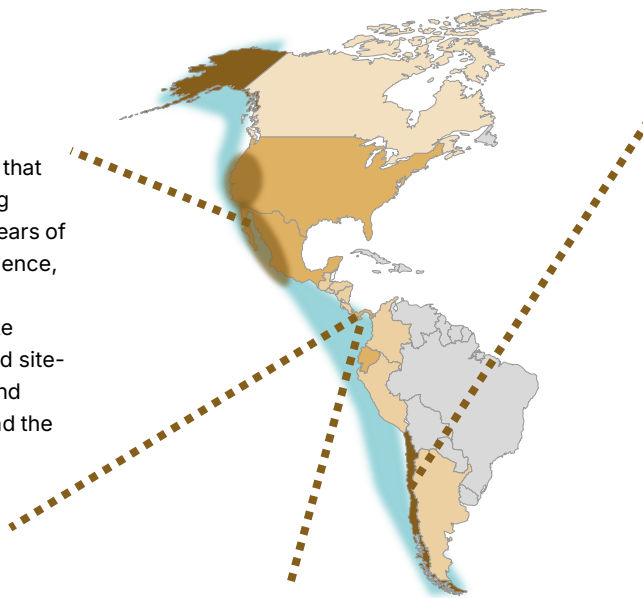
Select Others CANADA: Birds Canada

US: Examples here are based on the *Global Shorebird Assessment and Pacific Flyway Strategy* engagement. ALASKA: Kachemak Heritage Land Trust. CALIFORNIA: San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory, San Francisco Bay Joint Venture, Central Valley Joint Venture. WEST: Ducks Unlimited, Environment for the Americas, Intermountain Bird Observatory, Intermountain West Joint Venture, Sonoran Joint Venture, Ecostudies Institute in Washington, Bird Alliance of Oregon. *Many others.*

MEXICO: Instituto de Ciencias del Mar y Limnología (UNAM), Centro de Investigación Científica y de Educación Superior de Ensenada, México, Pronatura Sur

CENTRAL AMERICA: COSTA RICA: Museo Nacional de Costa Rica, Unión de Ornitólogos de Costa Rica. HONDURAS: Asociación Hondureña de la Ornitología. NICARAGUA: Quetzalil. EL SALVADOR: Salva Natura. GUATEMALA: FUNDAECO

SOUTH AMERICA: COLOMBIA: Wildlife Conservation Society, Asociación Calidris. ECUADOR: Aves y Conservación. PERU: CORBIDI. CHILE: Red Observadores de Aves y Vida Silvestre de Chile, Fundación Refugio, Fundación Cosmos, Fundación Bandada, Universidad Santo Tomás. ARGENTINA: Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas, Asociación Ambiente Sur, and Estepa Viva



Stakeholder Engagement

COLLABORATION IS CRUCIAL

Protecting migratory shorebirds demands coordinated, multi-stakeholder work that leads to long-term environmental, cultural, and climate resilience. Across the Americas, leading organizations are advancing shorebird conservation by engaging deeply with Indigenous and local communities, government policymakers, businesses, and others. Below are examples of such engagement.

COMMUNITY

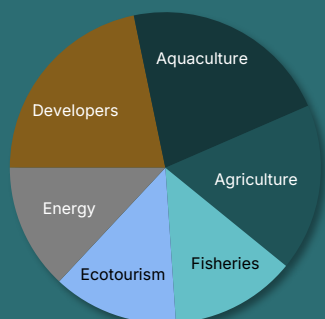
Roles	Where (examples)	Outcomes
• Stewardship of the land • Champion of sustainable resource management and local livelihoods – Agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries • Advocacy for protected areas, such as Marine Coastal Areas for Indigenous Peoples (ECMPOs) and Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) sites • Monitoring of bird population, habitat use, and current and emerging threats	• Mapuche and Chango communities (Chile) – ECMPO designations, securing rights to sustainable fisheries • Ngabe-Buglé communities (Panama) – Farmers for wetland protection, water management, ecosystem services education • Delta del Estero Real (Nicaragua) – WHSRN site designation • Local community stewards (California, USA) – Volunteers protecting Snowy Plovers nesting • Coastal communities in Sinaloa, Nayarit, and Baja California (Mexico) – Volunteers engaging beachgoers to protect nests from vehicles and dogs • Others in Alaska (US), Chile, Colombia, and elsewhere	• Traditional uses sustained • Improved livelihoods, including co-management • Resilient ecosystems rooted in local knowledge • Stronger protections • Improved breeding success

GOVERNMENT

Countries	State	Local
• Mexico – National Commission for Natural Protected Areas (CONANP) helps manage coastal wetlands • Chile – National shorebird plan, habitat protection policies, legal frameworks enabling ECMPOs for Indigenous rights • Panama – Environmental education required, Global Big Day events for bird eco-tourism, national shorebird plan • Others – US Fish and Wildlife policies; Nicaragua WHSRN designations; national shorebird plans; cross-national sharing	• Mexico and California – State environmental agencies step up enforcement • Chile – Support pollution mitigation, territorial planning, and conservation projects	• Mexico – Manage development near wetlands • Chile – Support ECMPO nominations • Panama – Incorporate habitat protection into land-use planning and water management

BUSINESS

Diverse businesses are engaged across organizations



Developers	Aquaculture, Agriculture, Fisheries	Energy
• Industry (Americas) – Bird-friendly planning in high-risk areas • Coastal properties (Chile) – Conservation easements, wetland buffers, natural landscape integration • Tourism and resorts (Mexico) – Disturbance minimization, low-impact designs	• Mollusk and salmon harvesters in Chiloé (Chile) – Plastic waste reductions • Rice farmers (California, US) – Management of water on fields seasonally for migration stopovers • Small-scale fishers (Panama) – Sustainable access for local communities, limitations for industry • Local fishers (Mexico) – Dried seagrass platforms for birds resting and roosting	• Oil and gas – Halted drilling in Bahía Lomas (Chile); protected area enforcement, pollution reduction • Renewables – Avoiding migratory paths and wetlands, integration of biodiversity safeguards

Strategies

FOR SHOREBIRDS



Complementing the strategy overviews in the *Strategic Summary – Pacific Flyway Shorebirds* document, the table below presents a snapshot of more specific details on the strategies, plus how the seven organizations are employing them. The heatmap groups the levels of engagement into general categories of higher, medium, and lower. All of the strategies below are needed to work together to achieve the goals. The variation across organizations shows the relative levels of specialties.

Use across groups	Strategy area	Strategy details	Audubon	Manomet	Point Blue	Pronatura Noroeste	CECPAN	Panama Audubon	CIAM
	Protect habitat	Legal protections and defense: Establishing new designations and defending existing ones. Includes nature sanctuaries or parks, protected areas (national and sub-national), refuges, marine sanctuaries, urban wetlands, and Indigenous protected lands/waters Voluntary protections: Creating Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs), WHSRN designations. Often precursors to legal protections Private protections: Conservation easements, land purchases Management plans: Long-term plans, address threats, monitor success Habitat restoration: Restoring critical wetlands, mudflats, estuaries, etc.	H	H	M	H	H	H	H
	Reduce threats	Development: Bird-friendly planning, off-limit areas, road or port siting Aquaculture: Sustainable practices, certification Agriculture: Timed water use or water conservation, low pollution Energy: Stopping projects or directing to low-conflict areas, considering oil, gas, wind, mining, and hydrogen Recreation: Reducing nest disturbance, vehicle access, or beach activities Fisheries: Stopping illegal fishing in marine protected areas Climate resilience, sea level rise: Artificial roosting rafts, nature solutions	M	H	H	M	M	M	H
	Scale	National policies: Comprehensive view, plans, and actions for shorebirds Flyway collaboration: Working together in the Pacific Shorebird Conservation Initiative and other cross-national platforms and convenings Share information: South-South sharing of best practices Capacity: Multi-disciplinary teams, local capacity, community leadership	H	H	M	M	L	L	L
	Track and research	Monitoring: Long-term bird populations (status and trends), existing and emerging threats, habitat use and change over time Best practices: Sharing successful actions to mitigate threats Research: Climate (sea level rise, ocean acidification, food impacts, flood, drought), industrial fishing impacts, management actions, other	L	L	H	H	H	M	L
	Build support, engage public	Volunteers: Engaging at sites (cleanup, restoration), educating beachgoers, Global Big Day bird tracking, monitoring Education: Elementary to high school programs, site visits, teacher training Public engagement: Eye-catching and strong stories across the flyway, incorporating photos and maps through social and other media Events: Bird festivals to engage local communities	M	L	L	L	M	H	M

More Information

For more information on each organization, please see their [detailed profile](#).

