Peer Review Summary Document

(05/12/2025)

Peer Review Plan

Tree swallow demographics and metal(loid) concentrations from Koocanusa reservoir [271 KB PDF]

Title and Authorship of Information Product Disseminated

Tree swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*) demographics and metal(loid) concentrations in egg contents from the Kootenai River basin, Montana nest box colonies, By Brian C. Balmer, Joseph P. Skorupa, Katherine B. Adams, Bridger M. Creel, Gregory C. Hoffman, Megan A. Fylling, Stephanie Le, Jacob M. Martin, Theresa L. McBride, Jacob T. Williams, and Travis S. Schmidt.

Peer Reviewers Expertise and Credentials

Reviewer 1: The reviewer is a is a Research Wildlife Biologist with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), based at the Upper Midwest Environmental Sciences Center (UMESC) in La Crosse, Wisconsin. With a career spanning over five decades, she has been a leading figure in avian ecotoxicology, focusing on the impacts of environmental contaminants on bird populations across North America.

Reviewer 2: The reviewer is a Biologist with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), based at the Columbia Environmental Research Center (CERC). His research is focused on modeling oil spill effects on birds, as well as scientific writing and data analysis support for a variety of CERC Quantitative Ecology Section projects.

Reviewers 3, 4 and 5: These three reviewers were anonymously selected by the journal *Environmental Monitoring and Assessment* for their expertise in the subject matter.

Charge Submitted to Peer Reviewers

The reviewers were asked to make an objective evaluation of the research, with emphasis on the interpretation and discussion of results.

Summary of Peer Reviewers Comments

Reviewer 1: The reviewer made several suggestions for improving readability of the manuscript, specifically on the Results section to make the text of this section more higher-level statements and generalizations and then refer to the tables for the specific data.

Reviewer 2: This reviewer suggested additional details to the Methods, specifically statistics and presentation of the Results.

Reviewers 3, 4, and 5: Two of the three reviewers (Reviewers 3 and 4) recommended the publication with minor revisions. Their comments were focused more on style of the publication with some additions/removals of certain sections of the Introduction and Discussion to improve publication clarity. The third reviewer (Reviewer 5) was critical of previously peer-reviewed studies cited in the publication and requested more detail regarding interpretation of Results in the Discussion.

Summary of USGS Response to Reviewers Comments

In response to Reviewer 1, the publication's Results section was greatly modified to highlight the Results' summary in the text and refer more to the Tables/Figures for in-depth summaries/statistics. For Reviewer 2, additional details on the methodologies for statistical analyses were included. For Reviewers 3 and 4, minor stylistic edits were incorporated to provide additional clarity throughout the manuscript. In response to Reviewer 5, a much higher level of detail in the Methods, Results, and Discussion were provided to address the reviewer's concerns over previously published studies and the interpretation of data reported in the current publication in the context of management applications.

The Dissemination

The product will be published in the journal *Environmental Monitoring and Assessment* (https://link.springer.com/journal/10661).