

Bird Field Note
Compiled by Kate Stone
6/19/15

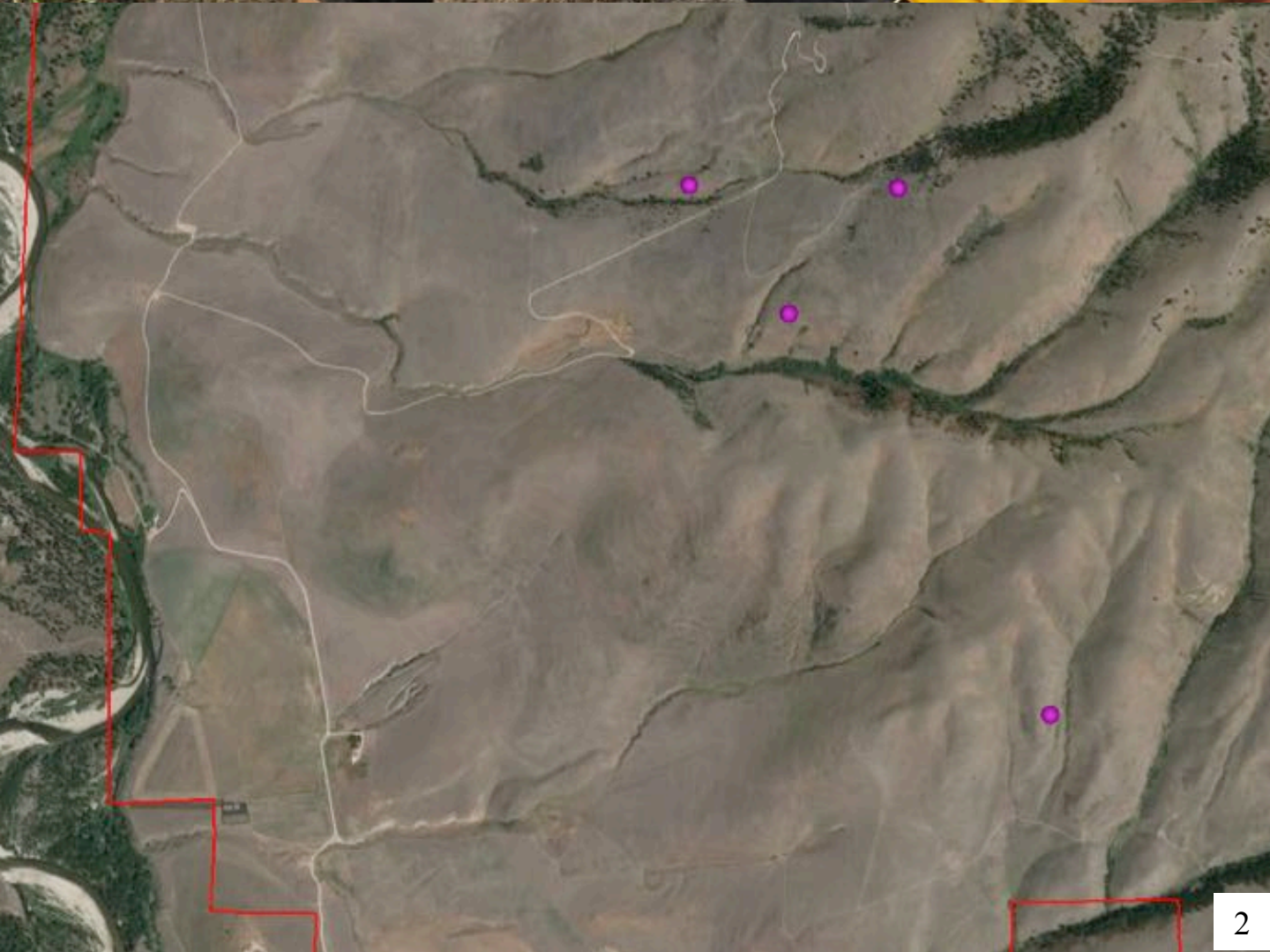


Common Poorwills.....2-8
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Raptors.....18-25

Common Poorwill nestling

Common Poorwill Research Update

We've captured 10 poorwills: eight males and two females. We've located four nest sites (●).



This female was the first to attempt biting her handlers. Poorwills may hiss and lunge a few times in response to capture and handling, but most were docile.



Poorwills lay eggs directly on the ground, with no evidence of a constructed nest. Two of our nest sites were sheltered by sagebrush. The other two were sheltered by arrowleaf balsamroot, with deciduous shrubs nearby.



Both male and female poorwills incubate. The timing varies by pair and from day to day. We identified both of these incubators as males at time of capture. Males react aggressively to call-backs and display white tail tips.



Poorwill young develop quickly. Because they are moved or move themselves often, we have a hard time tracking them once they leave the original nest. Given their tiny size, the thickness of the vegetation at roost sites, and the risk of stepping on them, we do not intensively search for nestlings once they leave the original nest area.



6/8



6/14

Bitterbrush and balsamroot provide shade to a young poorwill. Sometimes we find the adults brooding the young, other times they are on their own with a parent roosting nearby.



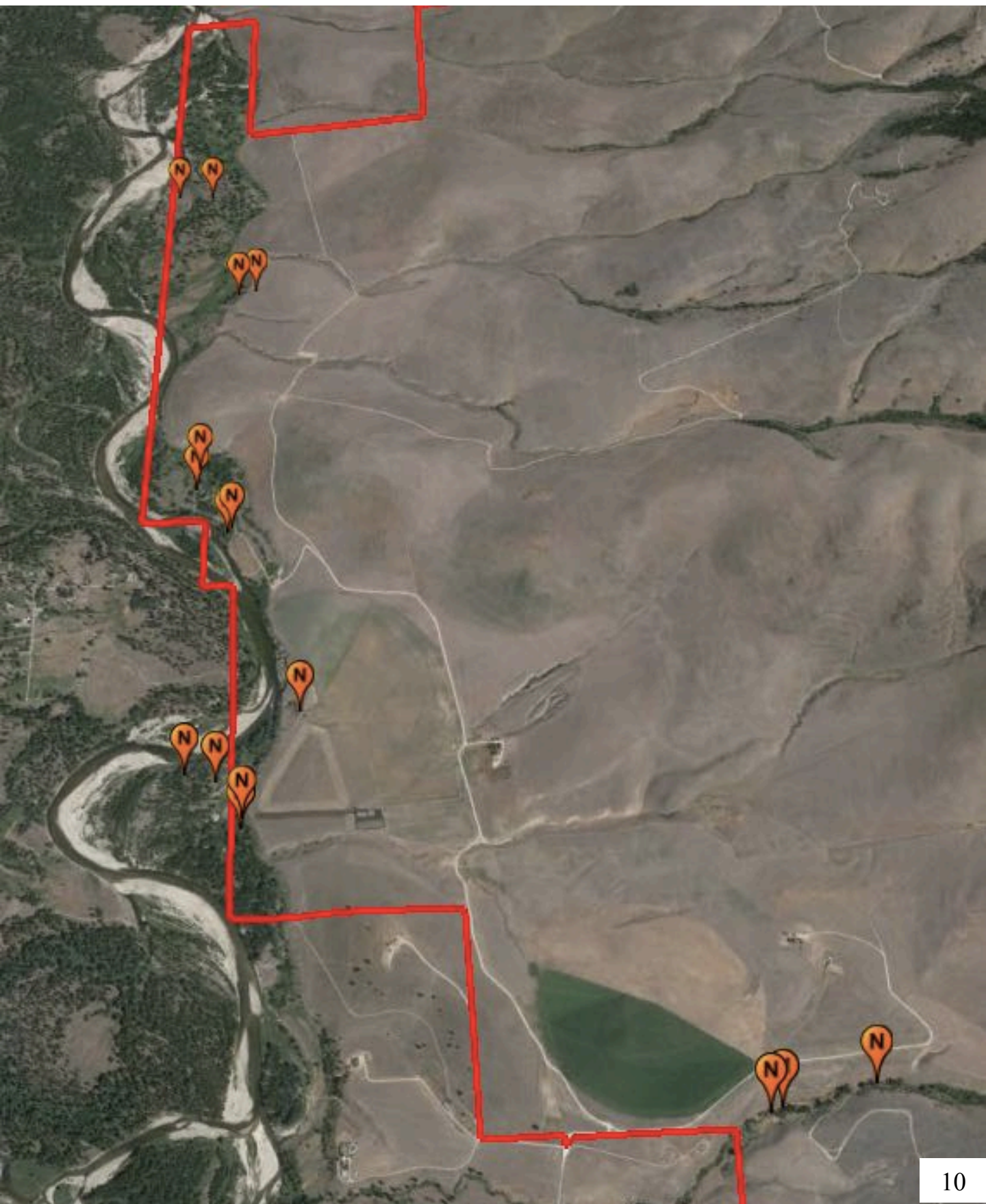
We'll continue to track known nests, look for evidence of second nests, and trap new individuals in the coming weeks.



Lewis's Woodpecker Research Update
William Blake



We have 16 active Lewis's Woodpecker nests on the MPG Ranch. Many of them are in the same trees as last year, or in nearby locations. Most of the MPG Ranch nests hatched by June 19 and average six nestlings per brood.



To compare nest success between habitat types, we also monitor nests at four other sites, including other floodplain sites like the Sapphire Ranch (SAP) and Lee Metcalf National Wildlife Refuge (LEE), and two burned sites on the Bitterroot National Forest: Skalkaho Creek (SKA) and Laird Creek (LRD).

	FLOODPLAIN			BURNED		TOTAL
	MPG	SAP	LEE	SKA	LRD	
Active Nests	16	5	13	11	13	58
-with eggs	6	1	7	10	10	34
-with nestlings	8	4	5	0	1	17
-unknown stage	2	0	1	1	2	6



We monitor nests three to four times each week. We use a peeper camera to determine the number of eggs and age of the nestlings. Jennifer and Isaac “peep” a nest in a burned Ponderosa Pine snag.



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We also use camcorders to record parental investment during the incubation and nestling stages. Sometimes we capture unexpected behavior. After video review, we saw that a female Bufflehead usurped a woodpecker nest by the Clubhouse Pond. She stayed in the nest for over two hours. We aren't sure who, if anyone, is currently using the cavity.



As more nests hatch and parents scramble to feed nestlings, we'll learn more about parental investment behavior.



We captured 45 birds of 16 species on our second day of summer banding. House Wrens and Gray Catbirds were our top captures. We captured our first juvenile birds of the season, which represents the earliest date for capturing juvenile birds at this site.

Bird Species captured and banded during the June 13 th session	
Species Name	Captures
House Wren	12
Gray Catbird	10
Yellow Warbler	3
American Goldfinch	3
Lazuli Bunting	3
Cedar Waxwing	2
Black-headed Grosbeak	2
Common Yellowthroat	2
Black-capped Chickadee	1
American Robin	1
Swainson's Thrush	1
Red-naped Sapsucker	1
Downy Woodpecker	1
Western Tanager	1
Brown-headed Cowbird	1
Calliope Hummingbird	1
TOTAL	45

This Black-capped Chickadee is the first hatch-year bird captured in 2015. It still has a patch of yellow at the base its bill, a remnant of its gape. A fluffy, disheveled, look to its plumage and lack of complete skull ossification also characterizes this as a juvenile.



This hatch-year American Robin also showed remnants of a gape.



Raptor View Research Institute
Breeding Season Update
6/19/15



All three Osprey territories are active this season, and are well on their way to producing young. Scooter nested with a new female at an alternate nest location just off ranch property. Since the nest is on a live power pole, we will not be able to safely trap the adult female during incubation as we have in the past. We will do our best to capture her while she forages after her chicks hatch.



Helen returned to her nest on the Sapphire Ranch, and nested with a new male. We will attempt to capture and outfit him with a GPS transmitter in July, when the Bitterroot River returns to a lower flow. Here, Helen takes a break from incubation to sit on a favorite perch.



Egbert and Olive successfully hatched three chicks this season after an unsuccessful breeding effort in 2014. Here, Olive feeds the chicks a fish that Egbert delivered. The young will remain in the nest for about 50 days. When they reach their full size, we will access the nest and outfit the nestlings with GPS units.





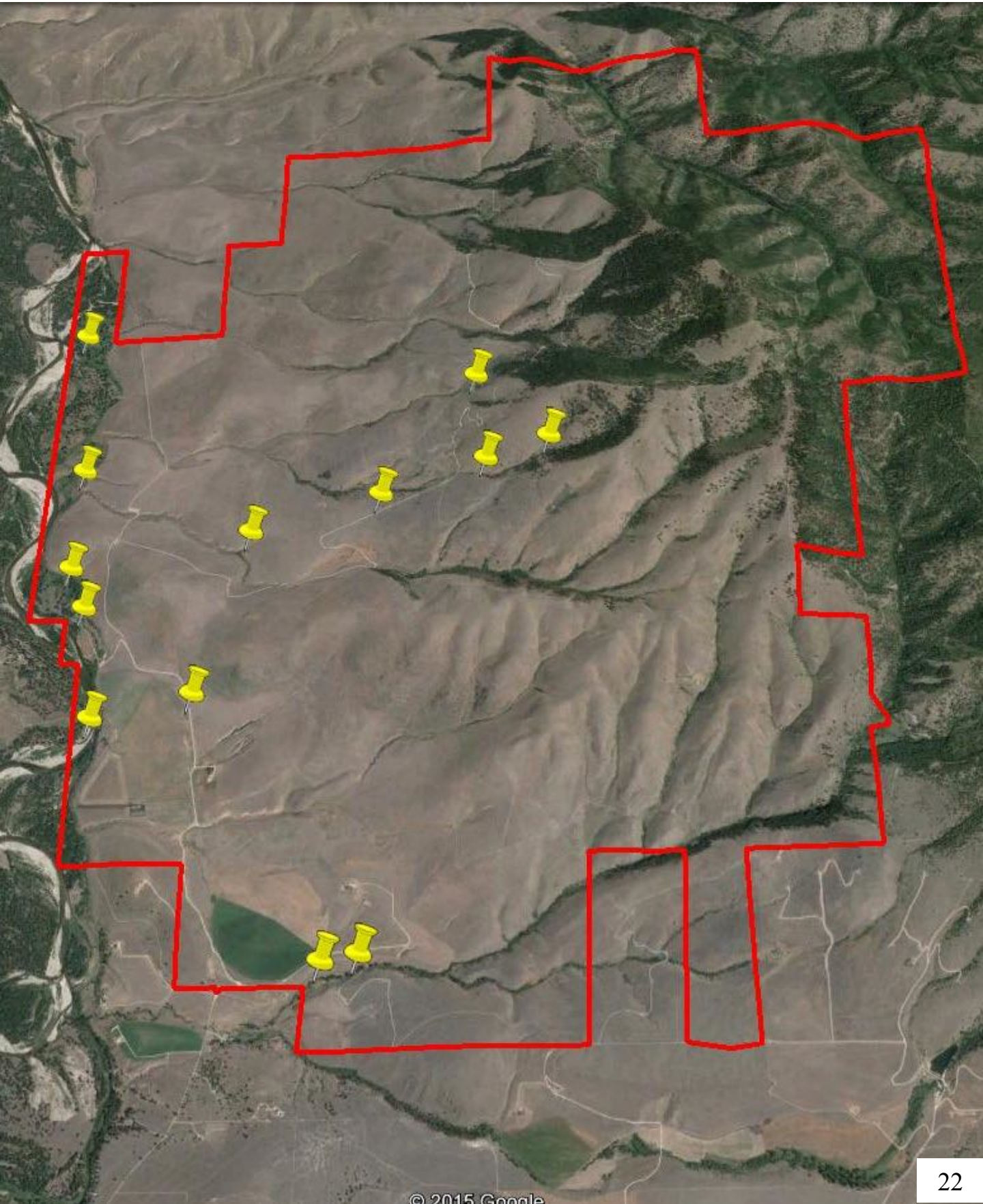
All three of the known Red-tailed Hawk nests successfully hatched young. We will attempt to color band the north floodplain chicks.



The young from this Red-tailed Hawk nest on the south floodplain were less developed the week of June 18. We attempted to capture both adults from this territory and outfit them with GPS transmitters to learn how they use the MPG Ranch and surrounding areas. Our first attempts to capture them were unsuccessful.



The map shows 13 active American Kestrel territories on the lower elevations of the ranch. We will band as many adults and nestlings from these territories as possible, and outfit 15 individuals with PinPoint GPS units.





We captured the female from each active nestbox by simply climbing up and removing them while they incubated.



So far the American Kestrels seem to handle the PinPoint units well. All six individuals still wear the transmitters, and none abandoned their nests.



Transmitter antennae