



Dog Patrol to Control Nuisance Birds at CELRL Lock and Dams

ERDC Dredging Operations Technical Support Program (DOTS)

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG®

Response Summary:

In 2015, ERDC developed a dog patrol program to control nuisance birds at USACE lock and dams. The U.S. military has been using dog patrols for 15 to 20 years to control nuisance wildlife on airfields. The first dog used by the USACE to control nuisance birds was Ellie, a border collie, at the Robert S. Kerr Lock and Dam in Sallisaw, OK. In 2017 and 2018, Ellie was also used to control nuisance birds at the Chicago Lock. Since the success of Ellie in deterring nuisance birds at these two USACE facilities, efforts have been underway to identify other lock and dams throughout the USACE which would benefit from this technique. A survey was done to identify lock and dams with significant nuisance bird problems and the species of birds involved. Information was also gathered to determine if the operational aspects of each facility were conducive to allowing a dog to safely work at the site. The USACE District Louisville (CELRL) submitted this DOTS Request for assistance in assessing their locks and dams for potential implementation of a dog patrol for their nuisance bird issues. Consultations and a site visit were done to evaluate this potential. ERDC determined that four of the CELRL lock and dam sites could benefit from implementing a dog patrol for nuisance birds. These lock and dams included: Cannelton in Cannelton, Indiana; John T. Myers in Mt. Vernon, Indiana; Markland in Warsaw, Kentucky; and McAlpine in Louisville, Kentucky. The nuisance bird issues identified included: 1) vultures destroying the concrete expansion joints along the dam creating structural weakness; and 2) thick layers of acidic bird droppings from pigeons and Canada geese creating health hazards to employees and visitors and equipment damage.



Breeze, border collie dog patrol used at Cannelton Lock and Dam.

ERDC assisted the CELRL in securing a dog to initially test the technique at Cannelton Lock and Dam. On 18 September 2018, CELRL acquired Breeze, a border collie, from Fly Away Farms in North Carolina to start work. As of November 2018, Breeze had been extremely successful in deterring the nuisance birds from the Lock and Dam and efforts were underway to implement a dog patrol at the other CELRL lock and dams identified by ERDC.

Period of Performance:

DOTS Response - 23 April - 18 September 2018

Benefits of the Response to the USACE Dredging/Navigation Program:

The implementation of a dog patrol program for nuisance bird control provides an environmentally-friendly, low cost, and reliable method to deter birds from navigation structures. This method of bird control saves the USACE hundreds of thousands of dollars PER lock and dam over other methods of bird control, improves health and safety to employees and visitors, and reduces the need for equipment and structural repairs. Dog patrol for nuisance bird control is an effective, low cost technique which should be evaluated and/or tested at other USACE lock and dam facilities with nuisance bird issues.

Deliverable:

Dog patrol (Breeze, border collie) implemented at Cannelton Lock and Dam, Cannelton, Indiana with three additional lock and dams identified for additional dog patrols.



Providing environmental and engineering technical support to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Operations and Maintenance navigation and dredging missions

POC: Dena D. Dickerson

DOTS-18-R47

ERDC Environmental Laboratory, Dena.Dickerson@usace.army.mil