



Avian Knowledge Network (AKN): the Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How

DoW AKN Regional Training, Camp Ripley, MN July 14 – 16, 2026

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Agenda

Tuesday, July 14

All times Central Daylight Time (CDT)

0800 (65 min) — Welcome, Introductions, and the Avian Data Lifecycle

Welcome to the DOW / AKN workshop on using the AKN technologies for managing and utilizing avian data in the AKN.

- Welcome and introductions
- Review the workshop agenda
- Logistics and facilities
- What to do if you encounter technical problems
- The Avian Data Lifecycle

0905 (40 min) — AKN Project Data 101: project database, programs, protocols, and sampling units

We will cover how the AKN represents observational data and how to find the best way to organize and curate your data in a project database.

- How the AKN organizes data
- What is a Program?
- What is a Project Database?
- STRETCH BREAK
- What is a Protocol?
- Choosing and managing protocols (DEMONSTRATION of Project Leaders

(https://www.dodakn.org/manage_data/#test_data_in) for configuring protocols, linked from the DOD AKN

(<https://www.dodakn.org/manage-data/#get-data-in>) for configuring protocols, linked from the DOD AKN Portal)

0945 (60 min) — Managing Project Metadata – Protocols and Sampling Units

We will continue to cover how to create and manage metadata in our Project Database.

- What are Sampling Units?
- EXERCISE 1: Creating the Point Count sampling unit hierarchy (PDF (Exercise1-CreateSamplingUnits.pdf))
- Download the sampling units into a GIS file (DEMONSTRATION of Project Downloader (<https://www.dodakn.org/manage-data/#discover-data>) for downloading sampling units, linked from the DOD AKN Portal)
- What are Researchers?
- Demonstration – Adding researchers (DEMONSTRATION of Project Leaders (<https://www.dodakn.org/manage-data/#get-data-in>) for adding researchers to your project, linked from the DOD AKN Portal)

1045 (35 min) — Entering Observation Data

We will cover how to enter observation data into the Project Database that is defined by the metadata we created.

- EXERCISE 2: Enter and proof a point count field survey (PDF (Exercise2-EnterPointCountObservations.pdf))
- Downloading your point count data (DEMONSTRATION of Project Downloader (<https://www.dodakn.org/manage-data/#discover-data>) for downloading observation data, linked from the DOD AKN Portal)

1125 (30 min) — Bulk loading data to a Project

We will cover how to bulk load data into the Project Database.

- Templates for uploading, and batch processing
- EXERCISE 3: Bulk loading sampling locations (PDF (Exercise3-BulkLoadingSamplingUnits.pdf))

1155 (5 min) — Editing Observation Data

1200 (60 min) — Lunch Break

1300 (120 min) — Local Presentations

- Local bird survey efforts at Camp Ripley
- Overview of Camp Ripley conservation program – Katie Retka
- WOTH/MOTUS project – Andy Forbes, USFWS
- Kestrel/MOTUS – Kristin Hall, MNDNR
- Forest management for birds – Mike North, MNDNR
- Northern Forest Birds Network overview – Jayme Strange, ABC Birds

1500 (30 min) — Introduction to field exercise and logistics for Wednesday

- Field Exercise and Data Entry (Part 1)
 - Introduction to field protocol and datasheets
 - Volunteers can upload Google maps

1530 (30 min) — Day 1 Wrap-up

- Plus, Delta
- Setting the stage for Wednesday

1600 — Adjourn

Wednesday, July 15

All times Central Daylight (CDT)

0800 (30 min) — Meet at the classroom

- Divide up into groups for each transect, hand out field forms as needed
- Bring clipboards, pencils, binoculars, and a timer (e.g., your phone or watch).

0830 (3 hrs) — Point Count and Area Search surveys in small groups

- See “Field Exercise and Data Entry” for an example filled out field form.

1130 (120 min) — Data entry and lunch

- Field Exercise and Data Entry (Part 2)
 - Upload Sampling Units
 - Enter data

1330 (30 min) — Day 2 Wrap-up

- Plus, Delta
- Setting the stage for Thursday

1400 (120 min) — Office Hours

1600 — Adjourn

Thursday, July 16

All times Central Daylight (CDT)

0800 (20 min) — Data Sharing Levels

We will give an overview of what data sharing levels we have and how the project leader controls them.

- What data sharing levels are available?
- Motivations for sharing data.
- Setting data sharing levels (DEMONSTRATION of Project Leaders (<https://www.dodakn.org/manage-data/#get-data-in>) for setting sharing levels, linked from the DOD AKN Portal)

0820 (25 min) — AKN Warehouse Data 101

We will cover how data flows and is made available to other tools and users across DoW and the AKN.

- What is a Data Warehouse?
- Case Study: USFS Region 8
- Downloading data from a Warehouse using Data Download (DEMONSTRATION of Data Downloader (<https://www.dodakn.org/manage-data/#discover-data>) for downloading Level 5 data from the Warehouse, linked from the DOD AKN Portal)

0845 (5 min) — Data Ownership, Sharing, and Contractors

0850 (55 min) — Discovering observation data

We will cover how to discover other projects using the AKN.

- (DEMONSTRATION of R.A.I.L. Tool (<https://www.dodakn.org/manage-data/#make-decisions>) for exploring avian species regionally, linked from the DOD AKN Portal)
- EXERCISE 4: Create a species list with RAIL Tool (PDF (Exercise4-CreateSpeciesListWithRAILTool.pdf))
- 15-min BREAK

0945 (50 min) — Looking for trends

We will explore solving some of the specific problems that are faced by DOW facilities.

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- Looking at data in Analyst (DEMONSTRATION of Analysts (<https://www.dodakn.org/manage-data/#explore-data>) for data review, linked via DOD AKN Portal)
- EXERCISE 5: Using the Analyst and Observations Map (PDF (Exercise5-ExploreSpeciesAndTrendsWithDataCatalogAndObservationsMap.pdf))
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1035 (10 min) — Avian Data Life Cycle Roundup

1045 (60 min) — DOW AKN Update

We will cover plans and updates for DOW and the AKN.

- DOW AKN Program Overview
- AKN Tools and Resources
- Case Study: Colonial Waterbird

1145 (15 min) — Next Steps for You

We will show how you will add new users as a Project Leader.

- Creating a new log-in for a User or Project Leader (DEMONSTRATION of steps to register and approve a new user)
- Assigning roles to project personnel (DEMONSTRATION in ProjectLeaders (<https://www.dodakn.org/manage-data/#get-data-in>))
- Creating a new unregistered researcher (DEMONSTRATION in ProjectLeaders (<https://www.dodakn.org/manage-data/#get-data-in>))

1200 (30 min) — Wrap-up, Pluses and Deltas

We will evaluate the day and make sure everyone is clear on Office Hours.

- Pluses and Deltas

- Parking lot review
- Reminder of office hours
- Final questions

1230 (60 min) — Lunch/Adjourn

You are free to leave at this time if you are not signed up for office hours after lunch.

1330 (2 hrs) — Office Hours

1530 — Adjourn

Exercises

- PRINTABLE PACKET: (ALL EXERCISES (https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/DoWAKN_ExercisePacket.pdf))
- EXERCISE 1: Create sampling units for point count (PDF (<https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/Exercise1-CreateSamplingUnits.pdf>))
- EXERCISE 2: Enter point count observations (PDF (<https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Exercise2-EnterPointCountObservations.pdf>))
- EXERCISE 3: Bulk loading sampling locations (PDF (<https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Exercise3-BulkLoadingSamplingUnits.pdf>))
- EXERCISE 4: Create a species list with RAIL Tool (PDF (<https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Exercise4-CreateSpeciesListWithRAILTool.pdf>))
- EXERCISE 5: Using the Observations Map and Analyst (PDF (<https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Exercise5-ExploreSpeciesAndTrendsWithObservationsMapandAnalyst.pdf>))
- Exercise 5 Answer Key (PDF (https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/Exercise5_Answers.pdf))

Field Exercise (optional extra credit for virtual training)

- EXERCISE: Download exercise (PDF (<https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/Field-Exercise-Data-Entry-and-Analysis.pdf>))
- Link to site map (Google map (https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1dRJEECeCtLsTn7xDtbVp9_N3mNDdqzQ&usp=sharing))

Extra credit:

- EXERCISE A: Download sampling units (PDF (https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/ExerciseAExtra-Credit_DownloadSamplingUnits.pdf))
- EXERCISE B: Create and use area search sampling units (PDF (https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/ExerciseBExtraCredit_SpeciesChecklistsAndAreaSearch.pdf))
- EXERCISE C: Using the protocol search tool (PDF (https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/ExerciseCExtraCredit_UsingTheProtocolSearchTool.pdf))
- EXERCISE D: Setting data sharing levels (PDF (<https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/Exercise-D-Extra-Credit-Setting-Data-Sharing-Levels.pdf>))
- EXERCISE E: Comparing data downloads (PDF (https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/ExerciseEExtraCredit_ComparingDataDownloads.pdf))

Slides

- Workshop slides (PDF (https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/MNARNG_WorkshopSlides.pdf))

Resources

This page contains helpful resources for after training, such as field data sheets, overview videos, and additional ways to get help

Helpful Documents

- Registering for an AKN account How to register in AKN for DoW (<https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/RegisteringInAKNSystem-PointBlueScienceCloud-ForDoD.docx>)
- Point Count Survey data sheet PDF (https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/PointCountForm_Simplified.pdf)
- Species Checklist data sheet PDF (https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/SpeciesChecklistgeneric_no_breeding_codes.pdf)
- Area Search data sheet PDF (<https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/AreaSearchForm.pdf>)
- Demo data sheet PDF (<https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/DemoDataForm.pdf>)
- Plus/Delta exercise PDF (<https://www.dodakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/PlusDelta.pdf>)

Post-training support

- Office Hours sign-up here (<https://www.dodakn.org/office-hours-booking-page/>)
- Need technical support with the tools? Send an email to support@pointbluehelp.zendesk.com to submit a ticket. Please include your installation/project, what tool you are using, and any error messages or screenshots that would help!
- Have a DoW-specific question about your project? Email Liz and Zoe at dodakn@erdc.dren.mil

Videos

- Overview of Point Blue Science Cloud (<https://youtu.be/nVwawFpocz4>)
- Protocols in Point Blue Science Cloud (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XJ7rYE9w_98)
- Researchers in Point Blue Science Cloud (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zv1l1zqruSM>)
- Sampling Units in Point Blue Science Cloud (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4GdWI0rVbg>)
- How to Register for the Point Blue Science Cloud (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C0JY7Zo9ddk>)