



## **Eagle Country**

*Studying the Golden Eagles of South  
Central Montana*

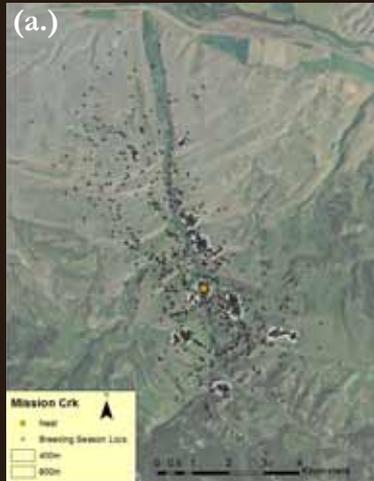
2012

## Current Direction

With great landowner support we have had success in finding both historical and new nests. Our recent data has shown an increase in the number of eagles nesting in Eagle Country. We have begun using tracking transmitters to continue Golden Eagle ecology research in south-central Montana. The transmitters will help determine if the eagles are migrants, where they go, how long they spend with their young, and where their hunting grounds are.

(a.) Hourly GPS locations from an adult breeding male in Mission Creek.

(b.) Migratory route of an adult breeding male from Adair Creek to Central Colorado.

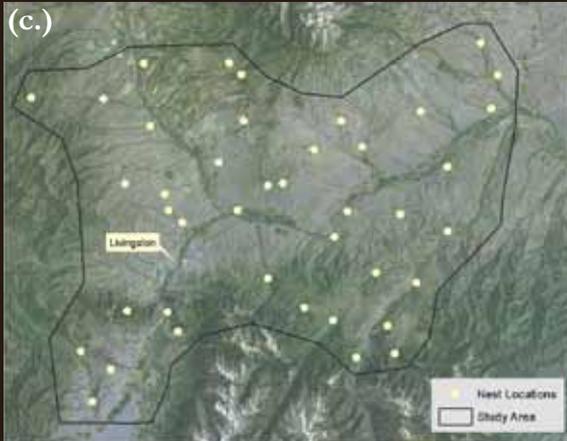


Golden Eagle Facts:  
Can live up to 40 years old  
Have a 6-7 foot wingspan  
See a rabbit up to 2 miles away  
Reach speeds of 180 mph

In addition to using transmitters we will use miniature video cameras at the nest sites to document prey selection to compare with historical data.



# Nesting



## 2011 Summary

- 43 active eagle nests found in 2011
- 13 new territories located
- Several nests active in 1963 were still active during this past year
- Productivity was down in 2011 with 0.5 chicks fledged per territory
- Overall there are more eagles nesting in eagle country but the same number of young produced as the 1960's

(c.) Nest locations in the study area

## History of The Study

Beginning in 1963, a seven-year study was initiated under the direction of raptor biologist and falconer Dr. John Craighead from the University of Montana to investigate the nesting ecology of a Golden Eagle population near Livingston, Montana. The focus of the study was to determine nesting density, productivity, prey selection, effects of pesticides, and to provide general information about Golden Eagle ecology. In the 1990's, Dr. Craighead's son Derek returned to this study site to see if any changes had occurred in eagle ecology over the past 30 years.



## *Who We Are*

Craighead Beringia South is a wildlife research and education institute dedicated to putting science to work for wildlife. As a non profit organization founded in 1997 by Derek Craighead we provide unbiased scientific data on wildlife and ecosystems. One of the most active independent scientific organizations in the West, Craighead Beringia South has been gathering data on keystone species, such as the Golden Eagle, to increase knowledge of the natural world. Our organization is independently supported by grants, donations and partnerships.

## *Field Crew*



**Derek Craighead** Founder of Craighead Beringia South, Derek has been studying wildlife his entire life. One of the first projects he was involved in was data collection in Eagle Country in the early 1960's.



**Ross Crandall** This year Ross began his Master's degree focusing on the Eagle Country study. Ross has been a biologist with Craighead Beringia South since 2008. His specialty is birds of prey and his interests include hunting, playing banjo and skiing.



**Bryan Bedrosian** Avian Program Director, Bryan has been with Craighead Beringia South since 2000. His main focus has been research on bald eagles, golden eagles, sage grouse and ravens. He currently serves as the President of The Wildlife Society Wyoming Chapter and sits on the Montana Golden Eagle Advisory Panel.

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