APPENDIX D:Band Recoveries and Observations

As part of the Loon Ecology Project (2003-present) and previous research (1996-1997), Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and several collaborators have banded approximately 160 common loons (adults, juveniles, and chicks) on lakes in Montana. This was conducted in an effort to gather the necessary population, habitat, and other data essential for completing the comprehensive management plan. Over the years we have recovered seven birds along the Pacific Coast and three birds inland, but outside of Montana. We have observed three banded birds alive on the coast as well. Our Lower Stillwater Lake female returns from her wintering area of Morro Bay, California every year. She has shown both winter site fidelity and breeding territory fidelity for 11 consecutive years. A Murphy Lake juvenile has called the same oceanic bay home since leaving Montana in 2006. Hopefully we will observe this bird back in Montana soon. A Dickey Lake juvenile was rehabilitated and released in Santa Cruz, California. In addition we have many local recoveries and observation of our banded birds that are too many to display or list. Two examples are given in the following page (Figure B and Figure C).

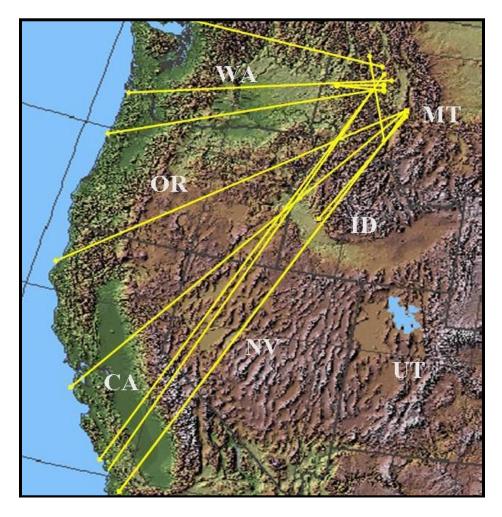


Figure A. Band recoveries and observations for common loons banded in Montana.

Our first documented adult banded as a chick that established a territory and successfully fledged young was a chick banded on Rogers Lake in 2003 west of Kalispell. This male bred with the banded territorial female on Upper Thompson Lake's east lobe in 2008. The banding observations were also used to estimate adult survival and territory fidelity. Adult male (90.1%) and adult female survival (89.9%) were essentially the same. However, territory fidelity was much higher in females than in males at 94% and 60%, respectively. Continued observations will allow biologists to estimate the recruitment of chicks into the breeding population.

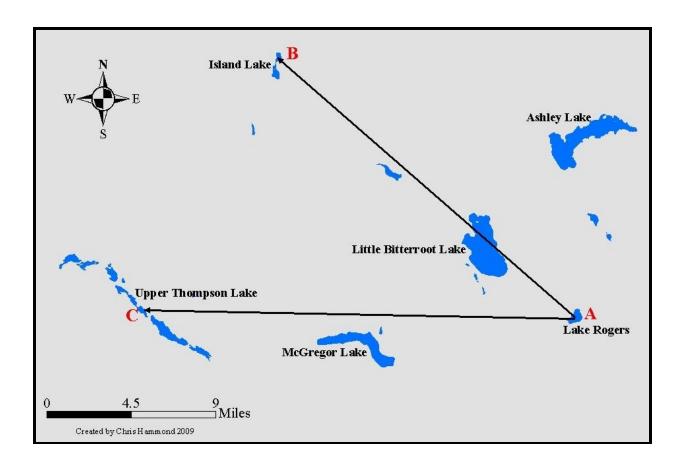


Figure B. Map of Lake Rogers male common loon movements. This bird was banded as chick on Lake Rogers (A) in 2003. In 2005, he was observed as an intruder on Island Lake (B). He was not observed in 2006 or 2007. Then in 2008 he paired with the banded territorial female on Upper Thompson Lake (C). The pair successfully fledged one chick. The Rogers Lake chick was the first banded chick recruited into the breeding population.

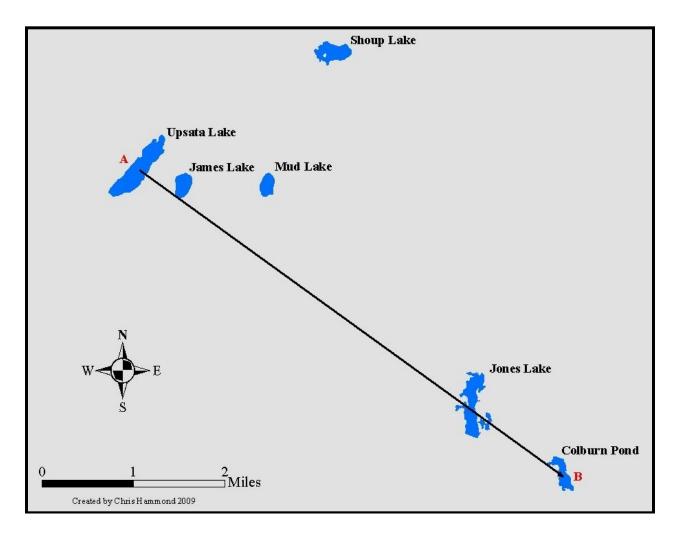


Figure C. Map of Upsata Lake breeding female common loon dispersal. This bird was originally banded in 1996 on Upsata Lake (A). She returned to her territory in 1997, but was not observed in 1998 or 1999. Then in 2000, she was observed with a new male on Colburn Pond (B) in 2000. No observations were reported since 2005 where she was last observed nesting on Colburn Pond.