

Data Sharing Policy

Borderlands Avian Conservation Data Center (BADC) is a regional node of the Avian Knowledge Network (AKN). It provides data on birds and the environment for scientists, natural resource managers, and others interested in conservation in the southwest United States and northern Mexico. BADC seeks to advance ecosystem conservation by providing knowledge about birds and their habitats from comprehensive and current datasets. BADC is a consortium of conservation partners (federal and state agencies and non-governmental organizations) with the goal of helping resource managers make multi-scale habitat management decisions for all bird species in a structured, transparent, and defensible fashion. The following policy governs data collected by partners and/or used by interested parties.

This policy recognizes the data “Owner” as the investigator and/or institution responsible for data collection or compilation, development of tools, and generation of results. Publication of descriptive or interpretive methods, and results derived directly from the data or tools, by the Owner or a third party, are a privilege and responsibility that primarily belongs to the Owner. Although the Owner may have one purpose in mind while collecting ecological data, sharing the data in a system such as the AKN provides a mechanism for other investigators to access the data with the Owner’s approval. Such access to data can greatly enhance our ability to understand patterns and dynamics of bird populations.

In BADC, Owners securely control access to their data and tools. When Owners add their data to BADC, they specify which level of access is to be granted; they can also change access levels as desired. BADC has the following data access levels and sharing options:

Level 1 — Data Owners request that their data are not exposed to the public in any form at all. BADC and the AKN act only as an external repository.

Level 2 — Data can be used in certain publicly-available, predefined visualizations (i.e. maps and graphs – not for publication) by the AKN, BADC, or a partner AKN node, but direct access to the primary data is restricted to only the data Owner.

Level 3 — Data can be used in certain publicly-available, predefined visualizations (i.e. maps and graphs), and the complete data set is available for download directly via the Internet with prior written consent from the data Owner. The data Owner sets terms for cooperation, such as acknowledgement or co-authorship in publications.

Level 4 — Data can be used in publicly-available, predefined visualizations (i.e. maps and graphs) or are available for download with prior written consent from the Owner. The data Owner must be acknowledged in any publications or analyses where the data were used.

Level 5 — Data can be used in publicly-available, predefined visualizations (i.e. maps and graphs) and are available to existing bioinformatic efforts. The data Owner must be acknowledged in any publications or analyses where the data are used.

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A critical component of data preservation is complete documentation of the methods, location, and effort used in the taking the data (that is, the metadata). These metadata ensure the data can be properly understood and their quality and potential usefulness evaluated. It is BADC's policy that data, including metadata, should be shared whenever possible, while keeping in mind the tradeoffs between widespread distribution of datasets, the need to assure data quality and validity, and the privacy rights of landowners. BADC encourages its partners to anticipate that most data collected will eventually become part of the public domain, and recommends that procedures be put in place to facilitate this sharing, such as concurrent metadata generation, standardized data entry, data verification, data backup, agreements, and procedures for prompt data transfer and curation by BADC. Data for which there are no associated metadata have limited utility, and generally will not be shared. BADC encourages members to share data 10 years old or older without restrictions (Level 5 above).

Borderlands Avian Data Center encourages and facilitates the ethical and courteous use of data within its archives. All those who wish to access data from the Borderlands Avian Data Center, regardless of the sharing level of the data requested, will be required to explicitly agree to these data sharing terms and policy.

The Borderlands Avian Data Center seeks to promote knowledge generation by encouraging widespread and unrestricted tool development and use, allowing collaborators to build upon existing tools. BADC encourages all tools to be developed as "open source." Developers are encouraged to use a general public license, specific data and tool sharing agreement, or other means to allow for the opportunity to request acknowledgement (e.g., in the form of citations) in publications using distributed copies or modified versions of an analysis tool, or to restrict any use of their products. It is BADC's policy that new analyses and data visualization tools should be always shared as soon as possible.

By contributing data via the BADC portal, I agree with the Data Sharing Policy statements in this document.