



SIBERIAN CRANE WETLAND PROJECT

Education and Raising Public Awareness in Russia

Program Overview

In Russia, the main focus of the SCWP is on the breeding and northern staging areas of the western and eastern Siberian Crane populations.

In Western Siberia, education and public awareness activities have had a significant impact on school children, local communities and government decision-makers through the efforts of the Sterkh Foundation supported by the SCWP. Through this program, several videos aimed at increasing awareness of Siberian Cranes and wetland conservation have been produced and broadcast on Russian central TV and Western Siberia regional TV channels.

Project staff have also distributed Siberian Crane posters to representatives and heads of national and regional governmental agencies, schools, and Hunting and Fishing Departments. In addition, three booklets on the “Flight of Hope” Project, an effort to reintroduce Siberian Cranes into the eastern population, were produced by the All Russian Research Institute for Nature Protection (ARRINP) and Sterkh Foundation.

Project consultants are currently compiling Russian and indigenous folklore on migratory birds, including stories from the Khanty and Yakutian people of Siberia. The folklore will be published in Russian and English in two collected volumes entitled “Migratory Birds in Russian Arctic Folklore”.

The very successful Crane Celebrations were first held in Russia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine in 2002. Today, the celebrations have grown into a regional program and are held at more than 100 sites in eight countries. In Russia, **Crane Celebrations are held along both the eastern and western Siberian Crane flyways, involving students, teachers, community leaders and nature reserve staff.** The celebrations aim to increase public awareness of the Siberian Crane and wetland conservation, while providing community members an opportunity to showcase art, performances and writing focusing on cranes.

New activities in western Russia include “From the Egg to Flight,” an online education project in which Siberian Cranes will be monitored over six months at the Oka State Biosphere Reserve, a captive breeding center in northwestern Russia. Project staff will post regular video clips of the cranes as they raise their young on a national birding website (www.birder.ru), further reaching a diverse audience interested in birds and conservation. This project was introduced in April 2008 at a celebration involving over 100 local school children, teachers and project and reserve staff at the Oka Reserve.



Student artwork



*Crane celebration in Western Siberia.
Photo by Alexander Sorokin*

The UNEP/GEF Siberian Crane Wetland Project (SCWP) is a six-year effort to protect a network of globally important wetlands in Asia that are of critical importance for migratory waterbirds and other wetland biodiversity. The project uses the globally threatened Siberian Crane (*Grus leucogeranus*) as a flagship species, linking activities at 16 key wetlands along the species' western and eastern flyways in Russia, Kazakhstan, Iran and China.



Logo designed for Siberian Crane education activities in Moma Ulus, Yakutia, Russia. The design was developed by local art educator Aitalina Golikova.

In 2007, Yakutian classrooms in eastern Siberia became involved in **Three White Cranes, Two Flyways, One World**, an international education project linking schools in eastern Russia and China with classrooms in the United States along the eastern Whooping Crane flyway, an endangered species that shares many conservation challenges with the Siberian Crane.

Project educators and researchers visit site schools to share information about cranes and the region's importance to the continued survival of the eastern Siberian Crane population. Russian students also participate in the Children's International Art Exchange centering on the theme of cranes and wetland conservation, as well as online project activities through the Tracking Cranes education website (www.trackingcranes.org), which provides additional resources for teachers and students and highlights project activities.

Program Highlights

- As a result of the public awareness program, informed scientists, officials, and community members contributed to the removal of an oil exploration drilling platform that was too close to a Siberian Crane breeding site in western Siberia.
- Crane Day Celebrations involve diverse audiences, including students, teachers, local community leaders, and nature reserve staff. This model program, which began in 2002 in Russia, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, has become a regional program, spreading to over 100 sites and eight countries along the Siberian Crane flyways.
- National education activities in eastern Russia are linked to a broader international education program involving students in China and the United States, linking classrooms along the entire Siberian Crane eastern flyway and between east Asia and North America.
- Sterkh Foundation organized a major exhibition and conference on the Siberian Crane in Salekhard in November 2005, attracting over 300 student art entries and a wide range of participants from across this remote region.



For more information on the SCWP, visit www.scwp.info or contact the International Crane Foundation, E11376 Shady Lane Rd, Baraboo WI, USA +1-608-356-9462 scwp@savingcranes.org

Russia National Coordination Unit
 "Yabloko" Office
 20 Novokhoroshevsky Proezd.
 123308 Moscow, Russia
 +7-499-946-22-38

