



GREAT BIRDING PROJECTS



An approach to bird-related editing, education, tourism, and marketing

1 April 2015

Congressional Land Considerations

New opportunities or not?

Following a flurry of votes during last week's Congressional budget deliberations, the House and Senate passed a measure that would facilitate the sale or transfer of federal public lands, including national forests, wildlife refuges, national parks, and BLM lands to help in a budget-tightening measure.

What followed this morning, 1 April 2015, are a number of offers - some without total verification - by corporate interests to take up the challenge and, in one verified statement that seemed to sum up the general attitude, "patriotically help the U.S. treasury and the American public through creative federal-to-private acquisitions."

Zaperra Corporation, which runs many National Park lodges and associated facilities, in conjunction with Halliberton, has reportedly made a combined offer for large sections of the Grand Canyon National Park. The offer includes a line-up of realistic-

looking cliff-like condominiums to be located on the attractive North Rim and a series of zip-lines to be constructed across the canyon itself so that visitors could "soar with the condors" there. (California Condors in the canyon region are part of a "nonessential experimental population," a special exemption under the Endangered Species Act.) The project is being called "Condos and Condors," according to some sources.



California Condors over the Grand Canyon

Two small federally-owned islands in New York Harbor, could easily fetch \$2 billion each, according to undisclosed sources at the Disney Corporation. These small properties are Liberty and Ellis islands.

Bids are already expected from Sanibel Developers to build a gated community - to be called "Spoonbill's View" - on what is today Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge in southwest Florida.

Mt. Rushmore, a national monument (NPS), has not been drawing the tourists it used to, and it, too, is considered too expensive in terms of upkeep, yet still valuable enough to sell to an appropriate buyer at a good price. Some anonymous foreign investors have been looking

into the property. One is said to want to alter only the smallest of the four images - that of Theodore Roosevelt - to resemble the face of a current Middle-eastern leader. (The country in question, source were told, is a current ally of the U.S., so there is little need for any concern.)

Finally, among the prospective buyers are both Purdue and Tysen Foods, both looking at large swaths of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land in the interior West. Senate offices were also assured that these new prospective buyers would resolve the perplexing issues surrounding the region's sage-grouse.

Questions continue to swirl over the eco-tourism aspects of these offers and the lack of access to communities of diversity, but the appeal of resolving some persistent budget issues appears to be compelling. Those organizations raising doubts are being dismissed as nay-sayers, if not enviro-terrorists.

New Breakthrough Backyard Feeder

Northern spread of species raises new demand



Coragyps Cafe

Over at least the last two decades, Black Vultures have been spreading northward. These birds, previously thought to be characteristically "southern," are now ranging well into New England, sometimes throughout the year. It is no longer a rarity to see Black Vultures perched on lightposts along highway corridors in New Jersey or Connecticut, waiting for an accidental meal.

At the same time, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in their "National Survey on Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-associated Recreation" has determined that over 50 million Americans are engaged in some form of bird feeding in their backyards.

This fortuitous overlap of bird and human phenomena has resulted in a new type of backyard feeder, specifically designed to attract these relatively new arrivals to the Northeast.

The design of the feeders - see the image above - is proven effective, and field testing has been gratifying. They are, essentially, very large sheet-metal mega-hoppers with firm edges. The feeder-unit, called "Coragyps Cafe," was actually designed by European physicist, [Stronzo Bestiale](#), and New York novelist, [Melvin Udall](#). Both men are enthusiastic bird watchers. Their creative teamwork produced surprising results.

At the same time, there is broad interest in providing specialized contents for the feeder.

Some Iowa meat-processors are ready to make "residue surplus" meats available for these special feeders. These will resemble extra-large meat pellets.

The STAR corporation, with large markets in three south Asian countries, is another potential source for specialized food for this feeder. STAR has previously produced "all meat" canned and packaged products for special Asian markets. Detractors of the effort suggest that STAR spelled backward is "RATS," although no comment was available from the STAR

headquarters in Columbo.

Still, the contents for this specialized feeder could actually come from traditional table scraps from the American kitchen, admit the feeder designers.

Funders for the unique feeder have not been disclosed, although some indications are that the activity could be backed by a joint venture between Zaperra Corporation and Halliberton.

Are GMO waterfowl next?



Experimental Mallard - Mon. Labs

In an effort to address the spread of Asian carp in the Mississippi River System, researchers have arrived at a creative solution: splice some specific fish-loving bird genes into waterfowl. This would make these waterfowl more "hungry," in short, likely to consume the invasive fish.

Already, genetic material in Mallards has been artificially manipulated.

Scientists at Monsanto Laboratories are looking into genes from Osprey as the likely source for the next step, although other researchers at the lab prefer the genes of a different avian fish-eater, such as Wood Stork or American White Pelican.

Dismissive researchers at rival Dupont regard this particular GMO effort as a scientific dead end. Mallards would never work, they insist. They are working on Hooded Mergansers.

Important News Items... Optics and Conservation

Late-breaking news from this morning

First, there is a new product from those always-creative folks at Eagle Optics. It's just the thing to bring birds up close to you, especially designed for the backyard scene. You can truly [reinvent your backyard experience](#).

And, the latest news from one of the truly effective migratory bird joint ventures, the Playa Lakes Joint Venture, with some surprising announcements about [branding, public outreach, and partnerships](#).

Words to Consider:

"Are the birds going to eat us, mommy?"

- Little boy in the diner in Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds*



For More Information:

If you wish, you can contact GBP concerning your avitourism interests, site and trail/byway evaluations, psychic channeling sessions for extinct bird species, and group presentations. More details [here](#).

