

APPENDIX B: SFBBO September 2010 Report



SAN FRANCISCO BAY
BIRD OBSERVATORY

Gull Abatement Surveys at Newby Island

Interim Report, September 2010

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From June 2008 to January 2009, Republic Services, Inc. (formerly Allied Waste) implemented a multi-approach gull abatement program at the Newby Island Landfill, Milpitas, California. The multi-approach abatement program included a mix of pyrotechnics, falcons, propane cannons, and paintball guns and was conducted by hired abatement specialists. Beginning in January 2009 and continuing through December 9, 2009, Republic Services conducted its own abatement efforts at Newby Island Landfill using pyrotechnics fired by one or two individuals stationed around the active disposal area. Republic Services hired Airstrike Bird Control, LLC to conduct abatement from December 10, 2009 until present. The San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory (SFBBO) conducted gull surveys to determine the effectiveness of abatement programs in reducing the numbers of breeding California Gulls (*Larus californicus*) and wintering gulls feeding and roosting at the landfill since 2007. In this interim report, we present a brief summary of the data collected since January 2007, and evaluate the current abatement program.

From July through August 2010, we recorded an increase from earlier this year in the total number of gulls at the landfill (Figure 1). The number increased from an average of 54.75 gulls observed per hour in June and peaked in August at 113.12 gulls observed per hour. By September the numbers had dropped to an average of 14.63 gulls observed per hour. The majority of the gulls were roosting in the non-disposal areas such as the compost area. We observed an increase in abatement activities in the compost area in September which led to the decrease in numbers roosting in non-disposal areas. In addition, the majority of the gulls we observed were California Gulls, who were presumed to be breeding in the South Bay (Figure 2). In July, we began to observe immature California Gulls at the landfill. These immature gulls

were most likely dispersing from colonies in the South Bay, and the increase in numbers may partly reflect these birds as well as dispersing post-breeding adult California Gulls.

The abatement regime implemented by Airstrike Bird Control LLC during January – September 2010 has resulted in few gulls using Newby Island Landfill. The abatement measures have been especially successful in keeping gulls from foraging on the active disposal area. In September, the increase in abatement measures we observed in the non-disposal areas, such as the compost area, has further reduced the number of gulls at the landfill. We recommend continuing the abatement program with Airstrike Bird Control LLC during the coming months as the wintering gulls arrive back in the Bay Area.

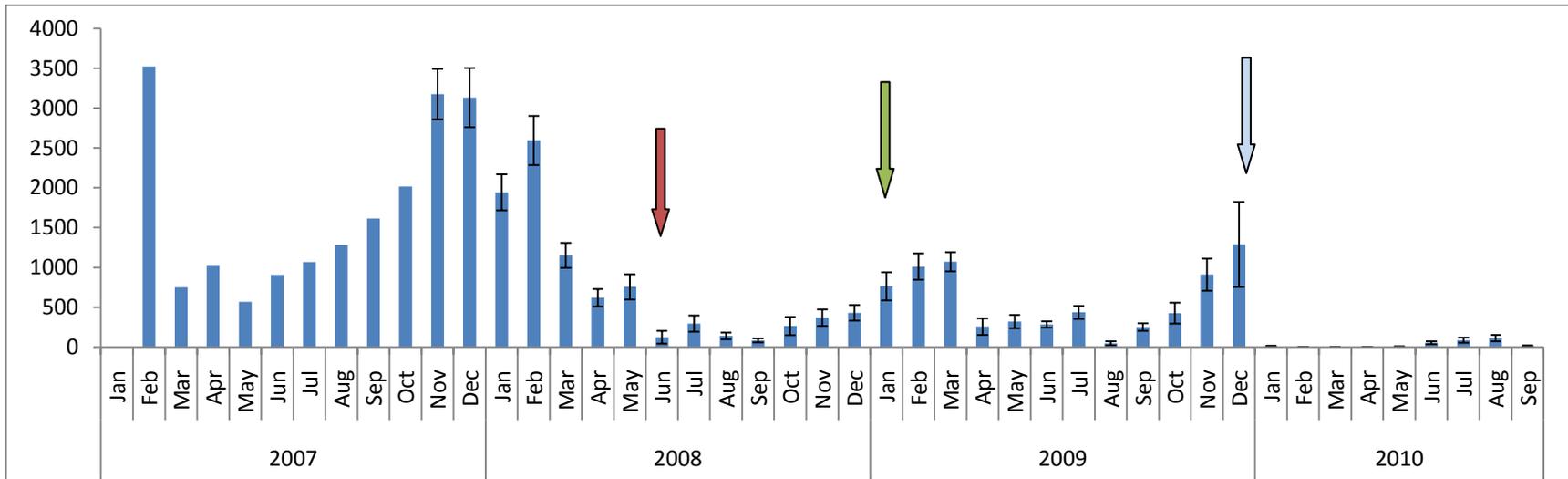


Figure 1. The average number of gulls observed per survey at Newby Island Landfill, Milpitas, CA, from February 2007 through September 2010. These numbers represent all the gull species counted in the three landfill sections (active disposal area, recent disposal area, and non-disposal area). Error bars represent the standard error for the data. Months without error bars represent months when we did not conduct enough surveys to calculate standard error. The red arrow at June 2008 indicates when the multi-abatement approach started at Newby Island Landfill and was continued through December 2008. Newby Island Landfill started its own abatement program in January 2009, which is illustrated by the green arrow. The blue arrow indicates when Airstrikes Bird Control, LLC began conducting abatement at Newby Island during the month of December 2009.

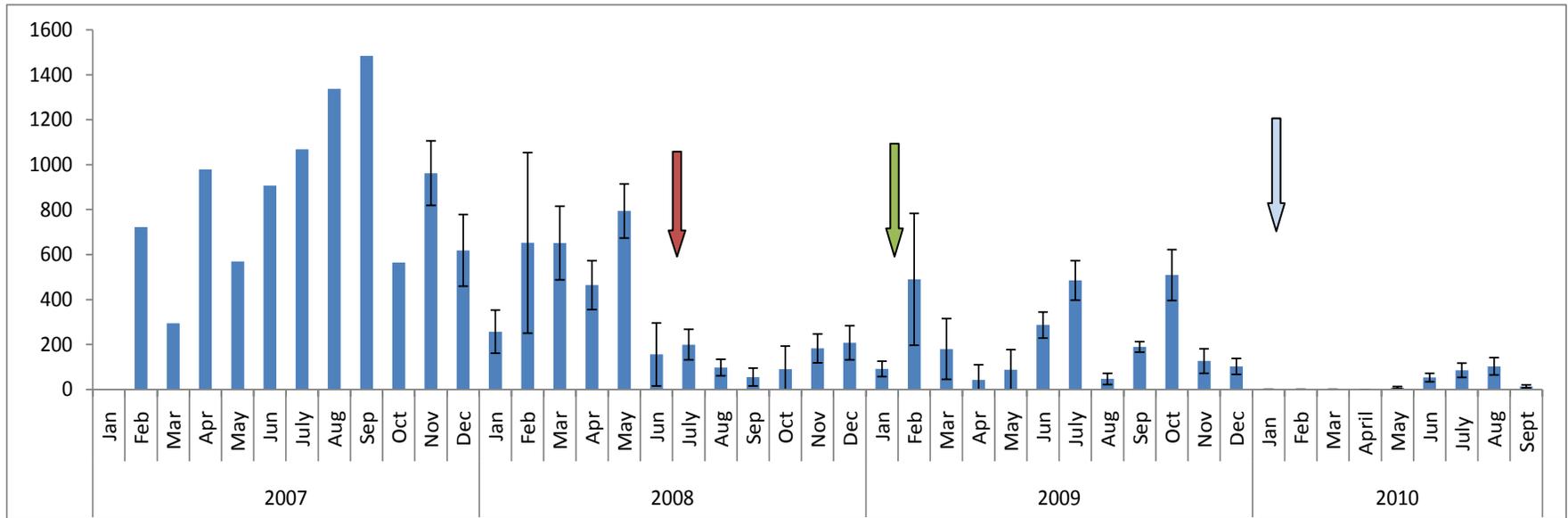


Figure 2. The average number of California Gulls observed per survey at Newby Island Landfill, Milpitas, CA, from February 2007 through September 2010. These number represent California Gulls counted in the three landfill sections (active disposal area, recent disposal area and non-disposal area). Error bars represent the standard error for the data. Months without error bars represent months where we did not conduct enough surveys to calculate standard error. The red arrow at June 2008 indicates when the multi-abatement approach started at Newby Island Landfill and was continued through December 2008. Newby Island Landfill started its own abatement program in January 2009, which is illustrated by the green arrow. The blue arrow indicates when Airstrikes Bird Control, LLC began conducting abatement at Newby Island during the month of December 2009.