

Homer is in south-central Alaska, southwest of Anchorage, on the Kenai Peninsula.

Every April, Lesser Sandhill Cranes return here for the summer from wintering areas in California. Their behavior is unique in that they are fairly tame, often feeding in people's yards, and sometimes even looking into their windows.

Crane Banding

In August 2008, we captured ten cranes near Homer to learn more about their migration paths and winter areas. Satellite transmitters were placed on the crane's legs to track their locations, as well as unique color bands for visual identification. Location data were downloaded to a computer and opened in Google Earth to display the crane's movements.



This study was conducted by Gary L. Ivey of the International Crane Foundation and his assistant Caroline P. Herziger. We are grateful to the people of Homer who kindly granted us permission to trap on their land. Funding was provided primarily by Kachemak Bay Crane Watch, with additional support from Oregon State University, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, in Corvallis, OR, and U.S. Geological Survey, Western Ecological Research Center, in Dixon, CA.

*For more information about cranes visit:
International Crane Foundation
www.savingcranes.org*

*Kachemak Bay Crane Watch
www.cranewatch.org*



INTERNATIONAL CRANE FOUNDATION
E11376 Shady Lane Road P.O. box 447
Baraboo, WI 53913-0447, USA
608-356-9462 • 608-356-9465 fax
www.savingcranes.org

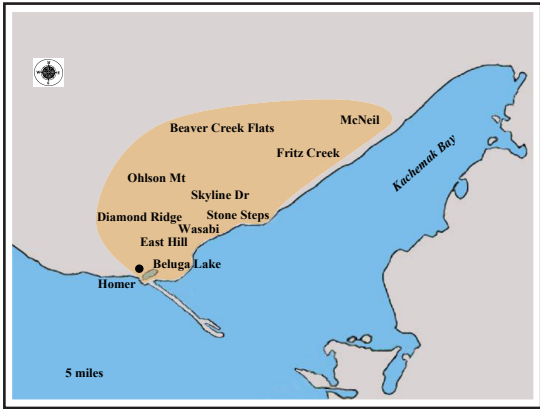
Annual Travels of Sandhill Cranes from Homer, Alaska



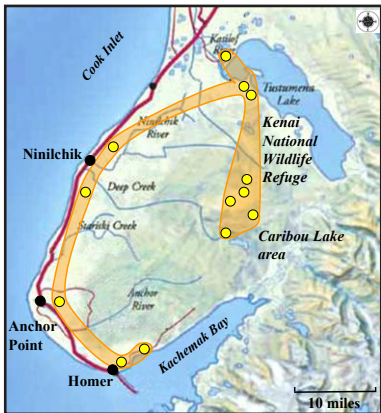
Inspiring a Global Community

Crane Movements

Nine cranes continued to use the Homer area after capture. Some selected only one site, while others were wider-ranging. Most roosted at night at the Beluga Lake site. Feeding areas extended from Diamond Ridge in the west to the north-east end of Kachemak Bay.



One crane traveled further north to the Anchor Point, Ninilchik, Kenai National Wildlife Refuge and Caribou Lake areas (see orange shaded area on figure). It moved about 120 miles in 40 days around the southern Kenai Peninsula before migrating.



Migration

After leaving Homer in September to migrate to their winter areas, the cranes flew northeast, to the upper Kenai Peninsula. Most staged (rested) at the Chickaloon Bay and/or Portage Valley areas for a couple days.

The cranes continued south along the Alaska coast and through British Columbia and the western U.S. to winter in four areas south of Sacramento, California.

