

Why LightHawk Exists

LightHawk exists because we recognize the profound impact aviation can have on conservation efforts. We understand that conservation is essential for preserving biodiversity, ensuring climate resiliency, and enhancing the quality of life for future generations. Knowing that aviation resources are often too expensive for conservation efforts, we provide scientists, conservation groups, media, and other stakeholders access to an aerial perspective to enhance crucial conservation work.

What LightHawk Does

LightHawk is a 501 (c)3 non-profit conservation flying organization. Our mission involves identifying impactful projects and collaborations with partners to design customized flight campaigns aimed at achieving meaningful conservation outcomes, educational goals, and effective outreach strategies. Flights are provided at no cost to partners thanks to the generosity of our volunteer pilots and donors.

Climate Resilience

The effects of climate change are changing the environment in many ways. Today, community planners and wildlife biologists must account for changing environmental conditions as they develop long-range plans for growth and sustainability. LightHawk flights aid them in accomplishing these goals.

Conserving Wild Places

Healthy landscapes are crucial to our well-being and nature's ability to thrive. We fly to conserve critical and sensitive landscapes, their ecosystems and the wildlife that call them home both now and in the future. We address threats that could cause damage, advocate for science-based land management and seek to increase the amount of public and private land conserved for current and future generations.

Protecting Oceans and Coastlines

Healthy oceans and coastlines are home to incredible life and provide a bounty of food and wellness for humans.

LightHawk missions fly to protect sensitive coastlines, estuaries, oceans and sea life. The flights monitor the health of marine protected areas, work to increase safeguards, show the existing and potential impacts of climate change and shine a light on pollution or other damage to these life-sustaining areas.

Ensuring Species Survival

Protecting endangered animals from extinction is our enduring responsibility. We fly to restore threatened and endangered species to sustainable populations. We allow scientists to gather data critical to their survival and support captive breeding programs.

Safeguarding Waterways

Rivers and wetlands form a network of life that flows through our lands and communities. We fly to keep those waters and their natural ecosystems healthy, and keep human communities thriving. We work to restore altered river systems to their native states, protect them from pollution, sedimentation and diversion, and safeguard the integrity of our drinking water.



Flight Types

Hearts & Minds

Outreach/education – The primary purpose of these flights is to educate passengers about the area, conservation priorities and connectivity. They are often used as a first flight to help an organization become more familiar with using aviation in conservation.

Donor or Foundation – This covers flights where the primary purpose is to fly key donors or supporters in an effort to further engage and/or educate them about a vital area.

Media – These flights typically involve a member of the media as a passenger to inform them about a conservation issue. These flights usually result in an article or other type of publication that is intended to bring awareness to the issue.

Wildlife Transport

These flights are used to transport threatened and endangered animals for captive breeding and release to the wild.

Science and Monitoring Flights

- **Research** – Flights support gathering new information or supporting an existing body of research to include radio telemetry flights and other survey flights.
- **Management** – These flights are used for survey/monitoring project areas. These can include flights to monitor conservation easements, identifying priority conservation areas for acquisition/project development, or to get a better perspective on project areas and their connectivity.
- **Photography/Videography** – On these flights, taking photo or video imagery for scientific and monitoring purposes is the primary objective. These flights differ from the Hearts and Minds missions because the photographer is not a member of the media.
- **Legal (e.g. litigation, enforcement)** – For flights whose primary purpose is gathering information that will inform or be used in arbitration/litigation or that is intended to monitor/enforce regulations.



Betsy Daub Program Manager

Betsy Daub has dedicated 35 years to ecological conservation, combining field research with environmental policy and advocacy. She holds an M.S. in Resource Ecology and Management from the University of Michigan and has a rich background working with non-profit conservation organizations and the state's natural resource agency in Minnesota. In her leisure time, Betsy is a writer and an art enthusiast. She resides in Jemez Springs, New Mexico, where she and her wife are restoring a historic house, and they have two adult children.

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Visit our website to learn more and request a flight!

