Cactus Wren © Mark Wagner/Wikipedia (Creative Commons Attribution 2.5 license)

Western Meadowlark

Western Flycatcher

Mountain Bluebird

Ladder-Backed Woodpecker

Request to Mining Claimants on Federal Land

Help Eliminate Hazards to Birds and Other Wildlife

BLM/WO/GI-13/001+3800+REV15
P-470

A Student Conservation Association volunteer pulls a PVC mining claim marker on Nevada public lands in July 2012.

This dead mountain bluebird was found in a PVC mining claim marker in late November 2011 near Virginia City, Nevada. A law in Nevada enables anyone to pull up claim marker stakes that are improperly set.

Open-Pipe Mining Claim Markers Pose a Threat to Birds and Other Wildlife

Open-pipe mining claim markers, such as polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipes, can be lethal to migratory birds and other wildlife. Small animals, particularly birds, mistake the openings of these markers as hollow areas suitable for roosting, nesting, or a way to gather together to pool body heat. Once inside, these animals become trapped by the smooth, narrow wall of the pipe, which prevents them from grappling their way back up or extending their wings to fly out. Death from dehydration or starvation follows. Cactus wrens, mountain bluebirds, western meadowlarks, flycatchers, and woodpeckers have all been found within open-pipe mining claim markers. While not all mine claims are marked with pipes, the existing open-pipe markers pose a threat to birds and other wildlife in many states.

Replace Markers to Prevent Unnecessary Deaths of Birds and Other Wildlife

The BLM and its partners request the help of mining claimants to prevent the death of wildlife, including some birds that are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. You can prevent unnecessary deaths of birds and other wildlife by removing, replacing, or remediating all open-pipe markers on your active mining claim or site. Even if you did not use open-pipe markers to locate your mining claim or site, these markers may have been left on your claim by previous mining claimants.

What You Can Do to Help

- REPLACE all open or PVC pipes marking your active mining claim or site with wildlife-safe markers. All of the markers in Figure 1 are wildlife-safe. Be sure to consult state law to verify which wildlife-safe markers are allowable where your mining claim or site is located.
- REMEDIATE open-pipe markers, if immediate replacement is not possible and your state still allows this type of marker. To remediate open-pipe markers and reduce the chances of wildlife deaths, fill or plug the open pipe or firmly cement a cap on the end.
- REMOVE and properly dispose of any open-pipe markers on your claim or site left by previous mining claimants.

Thank you for your help in our effort to reduce the number of unnecessary bird and other wildlife deaths.

For more information, please visit http://www.blm.gov/rlkd.
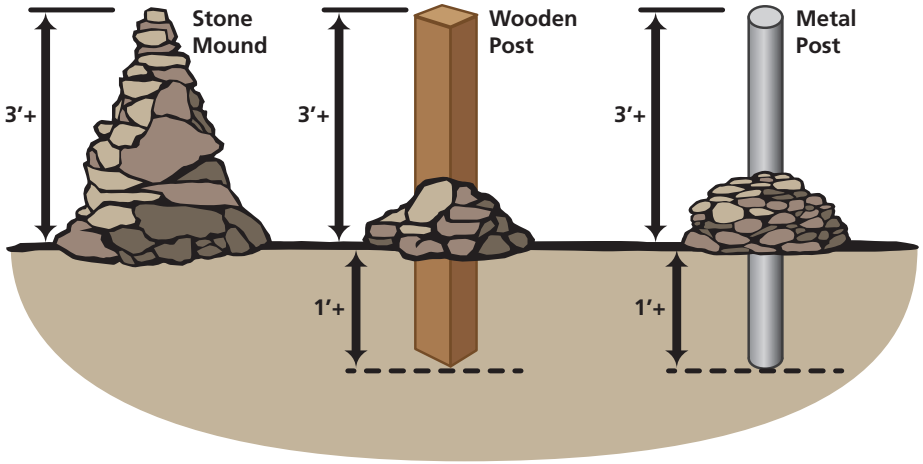
Figure 1. Stone mounds; wooden posts; and solid, capped, or crimped metal posts are wildlife-safe. Consult state law to make sure your wildlife-safe marker complies with the posting requirements in your jurisdiction.