

# Reach Report for Songscape: Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge

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## Introduction

Songscape: Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge sent indie artist, Conner Youngblood, out to the Bear River MBR on the shores of the Great Salt Lake in Utah. The retreat occurred in October 2017, and the song Youngblood created to honor the refuge, titled *Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge*, was released January 1, 2018. The music video was released January 5, 2018.

Sustain's Songscape program mission is to create new audiences for public lands through music. Through a band's fan bases, and the press garnered for Songscapes, we expose new people to public land areas. We feel the emotional pull of music, paired with the moving footage of music videos, makes an especially strong impact on audiences. Through Songscapes, we also hope to increase exposure for musicians, through the audiences of our public land partners, Sustain's followers, and through associated Songscape press.

I also would like to apologize for incomplete data- I had a full-time job up until March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018, and was unable to devote sufficient time to Sustain to record everything. I am now working on Sustain full time as of March 11, 2018.

## Results

There are multiple platforms that exposed readers, listeners, and viewers to the Songscape Project. These platforms include print, radio, social media, streaming music, YouTube, e-mail, performance and Sustain's website.

### Print

#### **Southwest: The Magazine**

By far, our largest source of exposure for the Songscape project was a feature-length article in Southwest: The Magazine (Jan 2018), the in-flight magazine for Southwest Airlines. The article, written by Michael Graff, who was on location during the Songscape retreat, delves into the story of Conner, the refuge, and Sustain. It includes stellar photography by Trevor Paulhus, and is the cover story for the January 2018 issue. URL: <https://www.southwestmag.com/conner-youngblood/>



Readership of the January 2018 issue was **6.3 million** travelers.

Response was incredible! Sustain received dozens of emails and calls from people who mentioned learning about us via the Southwest article. An investment banker in California donated two microphones to us, so we plan on starting a podcast series this Spring. Multiple musicians reached out to us about participating in future Songscaapes. A recording studio in North Carolina joined our Green Roster program for sustainable music industry initiatives, and we are now working with him to organize beach clean ups with his clients. We connected with the University of Washington Doris Duke Conservation Scholars program, which engages diverse students in conservation fields. Tentatively, we are planning on partnering with the Olympic National Forest, the Quinault Tribal Nation, U of WA students, and Nahko and Medicine for the People, for a future Songscape. We also connected with the largest carbon credit reforestation company in the US and are discussing potential

collaborations with Red Light Artist Management, breweries, and a Mississippi Delta Songscape series. Many other land trusts and wildlife refuges have reached out to Sustain about arranging future Songscaapes. While these connections and projects are still in progress, we feel like this article was a life changer for Sustain. It also served as the inspiration for Sustain co-founder, Betsy Mortensen, to pursue Sustain on a full-time basis.

#### Relevant Comments:

*On FB to Conner: I was introduced to you and your recent journey to Bear River Bird Refuge just a few days ago while on a Southwest Airlines flight to New Orleans - another community you may want to consider to be still, observe and create. You are a very special and extraordinarily gifted young man. Much applause to your parents for giving you the space to be authentically Conner Youngblood. Continued success and MORE Blessings.*

*[Conner Youngblood](#) do you have the lyrics to the song posted somewhere? I read about your work on this song in the Southwest Magazine when coming back from a trip to Las Vegas this past weekend. It was a beautifully told story and I was excited to hear the song once I was off airplane mode! (I just bought it on iTunes!) I love the song's feel and would enjoy seeing the lyrics. Thank you for your work on this project*



*I really enjoyed watching this after reading the wonderful article about the making of this song and video in Southwest magazine. Beautiful!*

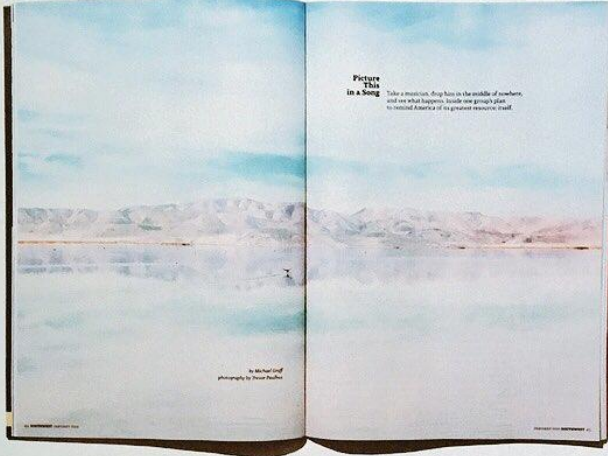
*Read the article in the Southwest magazine on a flight to Phoenix this weekend and was intrigued. I love this song and am excited to discover more of your music.*

## Talk to Us

For comments or questions directed at Southwest Airlines that don't pertain to the magazine, visit [Southwest.com/contact-us](http://Southwest.com/contact-us).

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## Dear Editor,

I was on a Southwest flight going back to college when I looked through the magazine and stumbled upon Michael Graff's article on Conner Youngblood ["Picture This in a Song," January 2018]. I really enjoyed reading it, especially the part when Conner was categorizing the birds he saw on a lake. It made me smile. Thank you again for taking time to explore this man's story.

Alexei Billings  
REDLANDS, CALIFORNIA

*/ Conner's adventures and his song, "Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge," made us smile, too. Thanks for reading, Alexei.*

### SEEN ON SOCIAL

Saw @Conner\_YoungBlood at a @sofarounds show in Dallas back in 2015. Catching up on his recent adventures in nature & music on my @SouthwestAir flight—full-circle moment. 🙌 (PS: His new song from the trip is 🎵🎵🎵 Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge) Great story, @michaelgraff @ericazazo

The new Conner Youngblood track is just ... one of the most beautiful indie/acoustic tracks we've found in a while ❤️.

📘 Stereofox

I really enjoyed the January cover article. It felt both big and intimate. Like a short flight at sunset.

🐦 @MonicaBaumann

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A screenshot of letters to the editor regarding the Songscape article.

### Apple Music & Beats One

Track added to *Best of the Week* pop playlist.

### MTV TRL

Track added to *Morning Bop's Top 5 Music Videos* (<http://trl.mtv.com/news/3056348/morning-bop-january-8-2018/> )

### PAPER

Video added to *Best New Music Videos of the Week*, alongside Nicki Minaj and Bruno Mars: (<http://www.papermag.com/the-best-new-music-videos-of-the-week-2523060911.html> )

## **Impose Magazine**

Video added to *Week in Pop* top video list: <http://www.imposemagazine.com/bytes/chatter/week-in-pop-phem-scallops-hotel-ditches-warpark-terri-terri-ess-ford-janice/8>

## **Northern Transmission**

Video deemed Video of the Day: <http://www.northerntransmissions.com/video-of-the-day/bear-river-migratory-bird-refuge-conner-youngblood/>

## **National Audubon Society**

A writer for the National Audubon Society reached out to us for an interview and created a post for the National Audubon Society's news blog. ( <http://www.audubon.org/news/the-songs-great-salt-lake> )

## **Partners in the Sage**

We were invited to submit an article about the Songscape and our partnerships to this sagebrush conservation outlet. (<https://www.partnersinthesage.com/blog/2018/1/31/partnership-uses-music-for-public-lands> )

## Radio

Utah Public Radio's reporter, Rheesa Ledbetter, was present for the first day of the Songscape retreat. She recorded interviews with participants and created a great radio story! It was released on January 14, 2018. In 2018, 26 website visitors found us directly from UPR's website, and 142 visitors were from Utah (and likely searched for us after hearing the story). This was the first time Sustain had been featured by a public radio station for a story- an important milestone. ( <http://upr.org/post/dynamic-duo-partnership-between-musicians-and-public-land-agencies-inspires-music-nature> )

## Social Media

Social media was an important factor in spreading the news about the Songscape story, song and video. All partners and participants shared the story on their respective social media outlets.

## **Facebook**

Sustain posts reached 13,906 people in January of 2018. On the video premier post alone, 10.6k people saw the post.

Conner Youngblood's Facebook share of the video has garnered 8,000+ views.

Story posted to USFWS- Mountain Prairie's 250,000 followers.

### Highlighted Comments

*"Amazing artistry at a stunning public resource. I'm sure Bob [Refuge manager] discussed Bear River issues, and your work will help showcase to citizens and leaders the benefits of our renewable resources on the river and on the GSL. Ducks Unlimited thanks you as well on your efforts for conservation."*

*"What a cool way to give back! Definitely worth it. Really inspired by you!"*

## Facebook Follower Numbers: Before Release vs. After Release\*

Partner	Facebook Followers 12.31.17	Facebook Followers 3.15.18	% Change
Sustain	660	716	+8.5%
Conner Youngblood	43,503	43,469	-0.07%
Bear River MBR	5,269	5,425	+2.3%

\*Note that not all followers use Facebook. Does not include twitter/YouTube/Instagram. Other factors besides Songscape press may have influenced follower totals.

## Additional Sustain Followers Gained in January 2018:

Twitter: 22

Instagram: No data available.

YouTube: 27

## Twitter

On Twitter, in January 2018, Sustain got 18.5k tweet impressions. Notable re-tweeters include National Wildlife Refuge Association, Denali National Park, SCI Foundation, Baffin Footwear, Northern Trans, Kera's Art & Seek, and others.

### Highlighted Comments

*"The only thing I love more than @conner\_yngblood music is public lands. This track and "Badlands" put to music the sort of intangible awe that can only be contained in the majesty of this green earth we walk upon. Thank you so much Conner"*

*"I loved this article on my recent flight to #BajaCalifornia on @SouthwestAir! What a cool foundation sending musicians on adventures to find inspirado!"*

## Instagram

Youngblood's video cut has 2,359 views on Instagram. The national account for US FWS posted about the project and garnered 2,671 likes.

### Highlighted Comments

US Olympic Team pole vaulter: *"sandicheekspvl just read your article in SW magazine... love it! You're awesome and unique. I'll be following your story as you fly with the birds"*

*"What a cool way to give back! Definitely worth it. Really inspired by you!"*

*"Conner, this might be your best song ever. Complete dulcet."*

*"Beautiful song and beautiful video. My mom found you on a flight magazine a few days ago and we looked you up. Glad we did. :)"*

*"Beautiful work. This collaboration led me to your music, and I'm so glad it did!"*

*“Just read this on the plane today. Such a great article, glad I got introduced to you.”*

## Streaming Platforms

### Spotify

March 15, 2018: 172,389 plays, which means the song was streamed enough times to last 528 days straight.

\*Track was added to Spotify’s **New Indie Playlist (800,000 followers)** and the Indie Folk Playlist.

### Soundcloud

Youngblood is followed by 8,870 listeners. No data on track plays.

## YouTube

The music video on Sustain’s YouTube channel has 4,638 views.

### Highlighted Comments

*“So beautiful it makes my heart ache.”*

*“southwest magazine brought me here and I’m so glad it did”*

## Email Lists

Story included in 12,000 person e-newsletter list for USFWS- Mountain Prairie Region, as well as 150 person list for Sustain.

## Performances

I believe Youngblood has performed the song while on tour in Europe this winter.

## Website Hits for Sustain

We received 1335 visitors in January 2018, vs 331 in December 2017. The majority were 25-34 years old.

## Conclusion

This Songscape has reached more people than any other previous Songscape! A rough estimate of viewers (unknown readership for many publications and unknown views on other social media accounts) put this project at 7,148,412 people exposed to the Songscape story. There were 14,997 views of the music video on YouTube/Facebook/Instagram, a total of 46 days’ worth of video streaming. For track plays, considering Spotify and Soundcloud, we estimate 555 days’ worth of audio streams.

**Conservative Grand Total Exposure** (known readership, views, and streams): **7,344,668 people**.

This is an incredible accomplishment - that’s 7.3 million people who learned about Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, Conner Youngblood, and Sustain Music & Nature. For future Songscapes it would be useful to do awareness surveys on band audiences pre-and-post project, to see how awareness of public land

partners changes specifically. Additionally, Sustain may consider negotiating with future band and land partners to report their social media viewership.

Thank you to everyone who believed in this Songscape project and devoted their time and resources! Thank you especially to Southwest: The Magazine for covering our story, to Conner Youngblood for making a beautiful song, to Bear River MBR and USFWS for hosting this motley crew and taking a risk, to UPR for creating an exciting radio piece, and to Great Salt Lake Audubon for their major grant and to KUHL for contributing products for our crowdfunder. As a startup nonprofit, having such established partners believe in our mission is an honor. Thank you.