***Aechmophorus* Grebe Conservation Project**
Almanor, Eagle, Davis, and Antelope Lakes

October 1 - December 31, 2013

Quarterly Report Date: January 7, 2014

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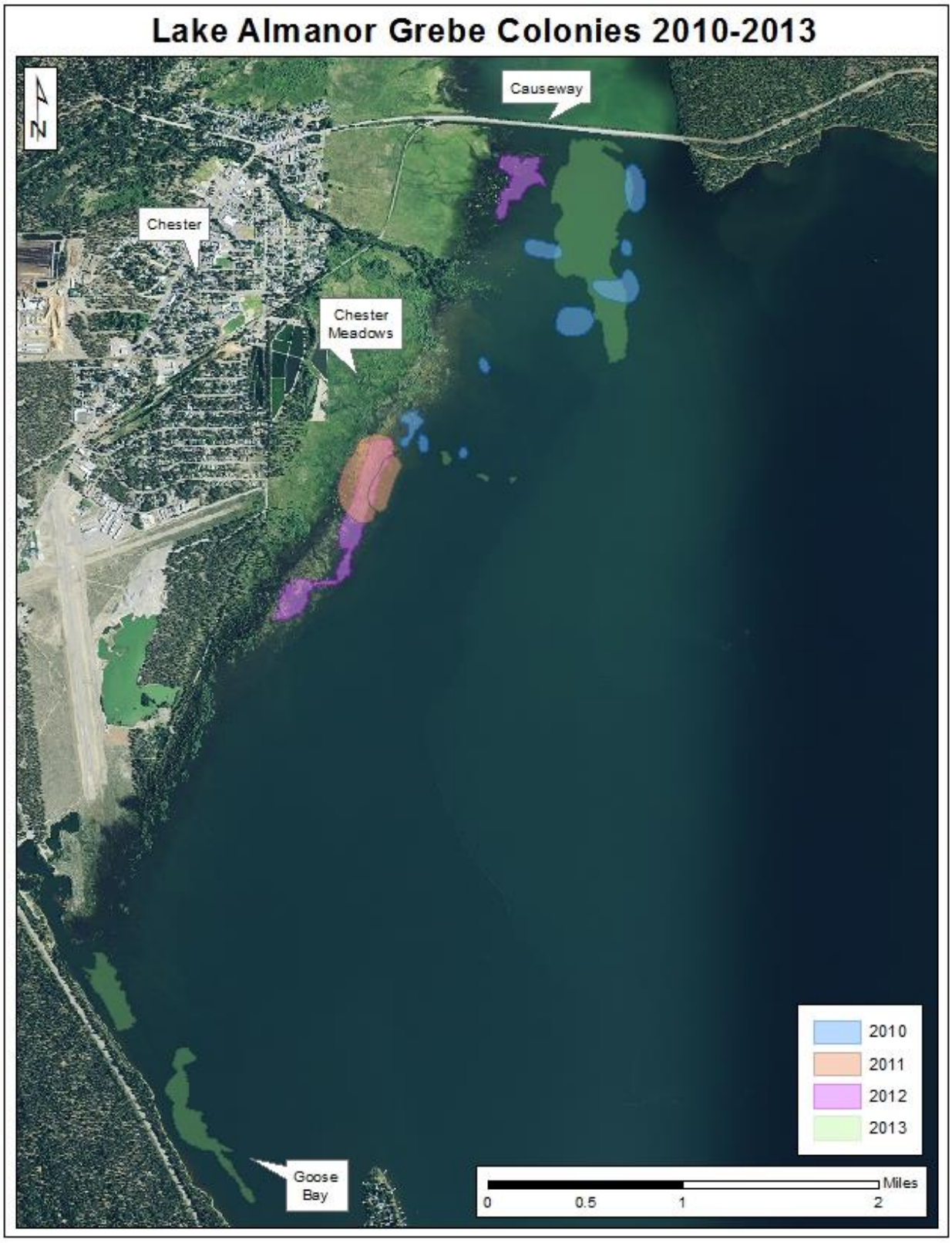
Summary

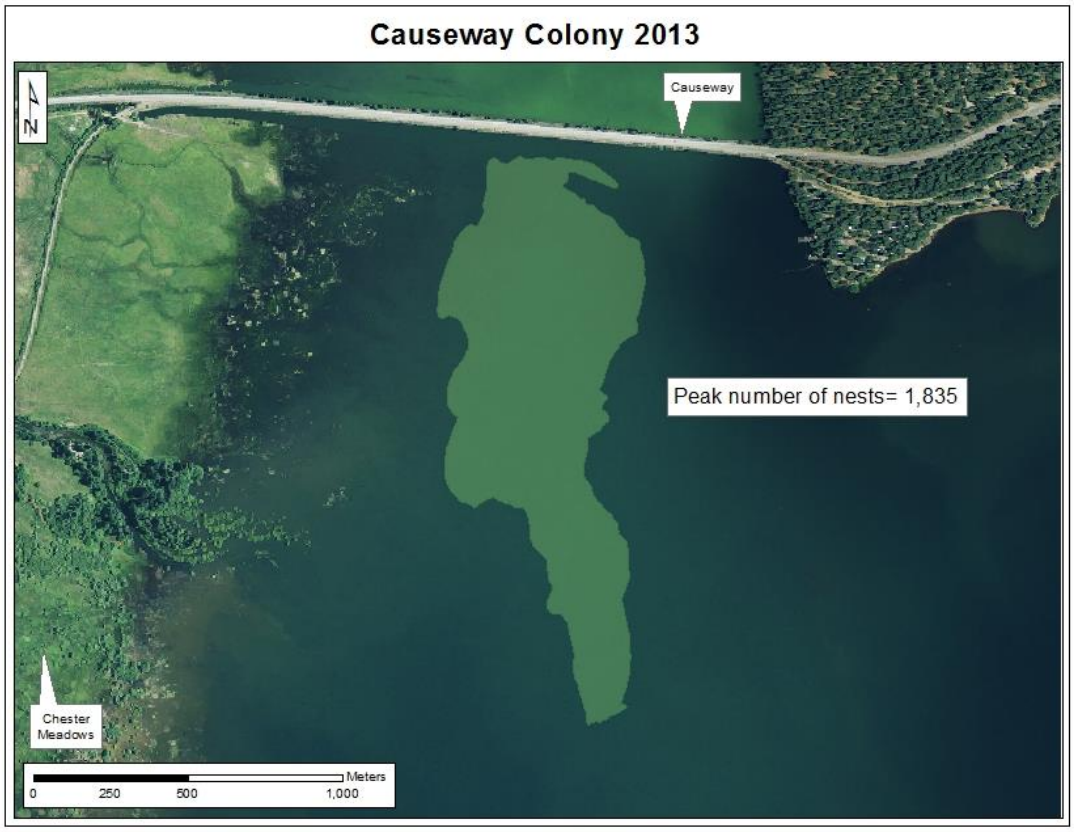
During this quarter, the Plumas Audubon Society helped Audubon California complete a comprehensive report of Grebe Conservation Project activities over the last four years. It was a satisfying exercise to reflect on the project by summarizing and reviewing our accomplishments. As a chapter, we have grown a lot while working on the project's grebe conservation efforts and we value the opportunity facilitated by Audubon California. The partnerships and camaraderie the project has afforded with Audubon California and the Altacal and Redbud Audubon chapters has been invaluable. We have continued to analyze the extensive data we collected over the last four breeding seasons, which has been a tedious process. Our aim is to complete this analysis during the current quarter (by the end of March) so that we have the best possible analysis of the effect of water levels and grebe nesting success as well as a summary of other aspects of their nesting biology and natural history. We have also continued our outreach and education efforts including community presentations and school programs.

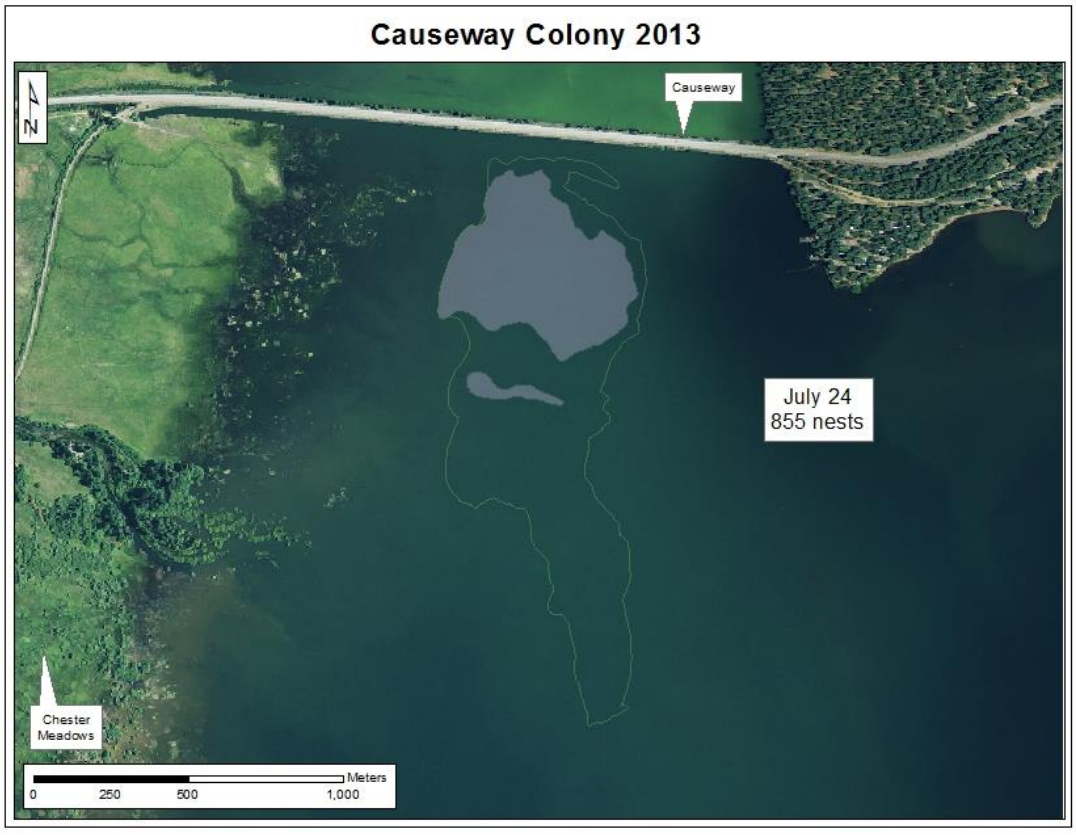
Monitoring

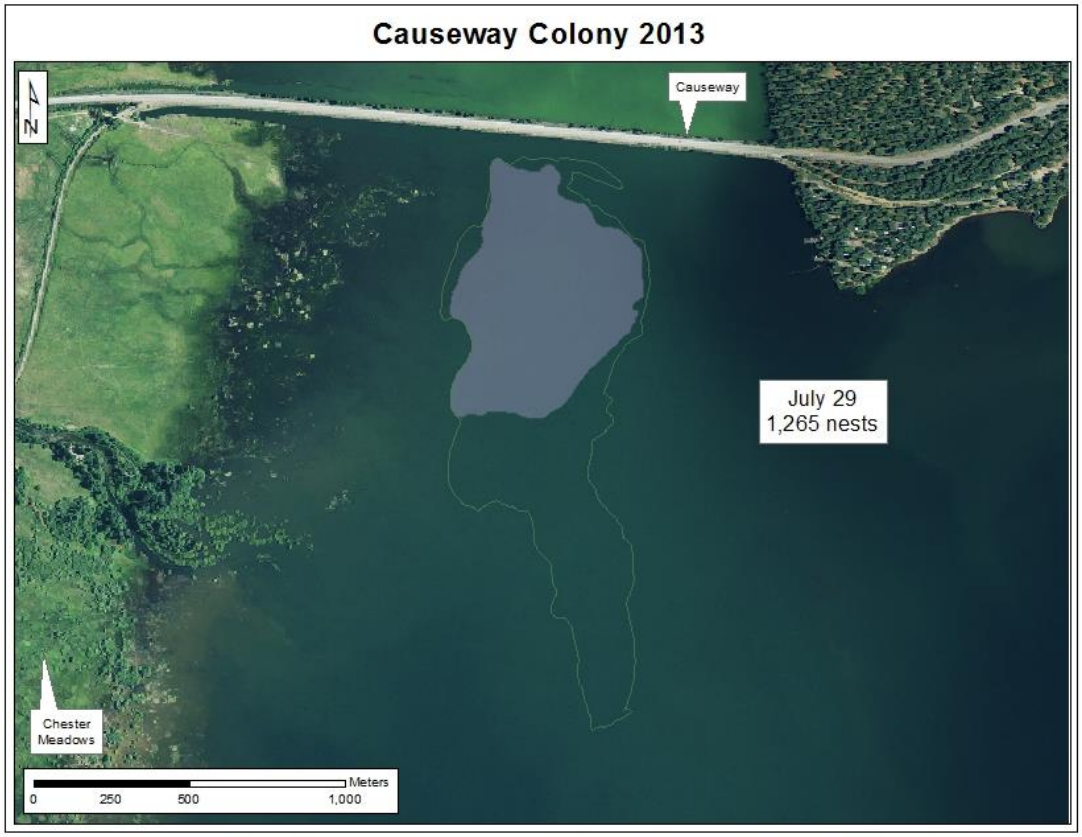
The incredible amount of data we have collected over the last four breeding seasons on grebes breeding at Almanor, Eagle, Davis, and Antelope Lakes is invaluable to help us understand the effect of water levels on grebe nesting success and other aspects of grebe biology and natural history. It has been a tedious task to compile and analyze this data, a process that is not yet complete. However, we are on track to finalize our comprehensive monitoring report with a detailed analysis of grebe nesting biology by the end of March. This report will be used to work with PG&E and other reservoir managers on strategies to conserve populations of nesting grebes. The following figures are an example of the detailed colony GIS mapping that we finalized this quarter, which is being used to analyze the relationship between water level, colony location, and

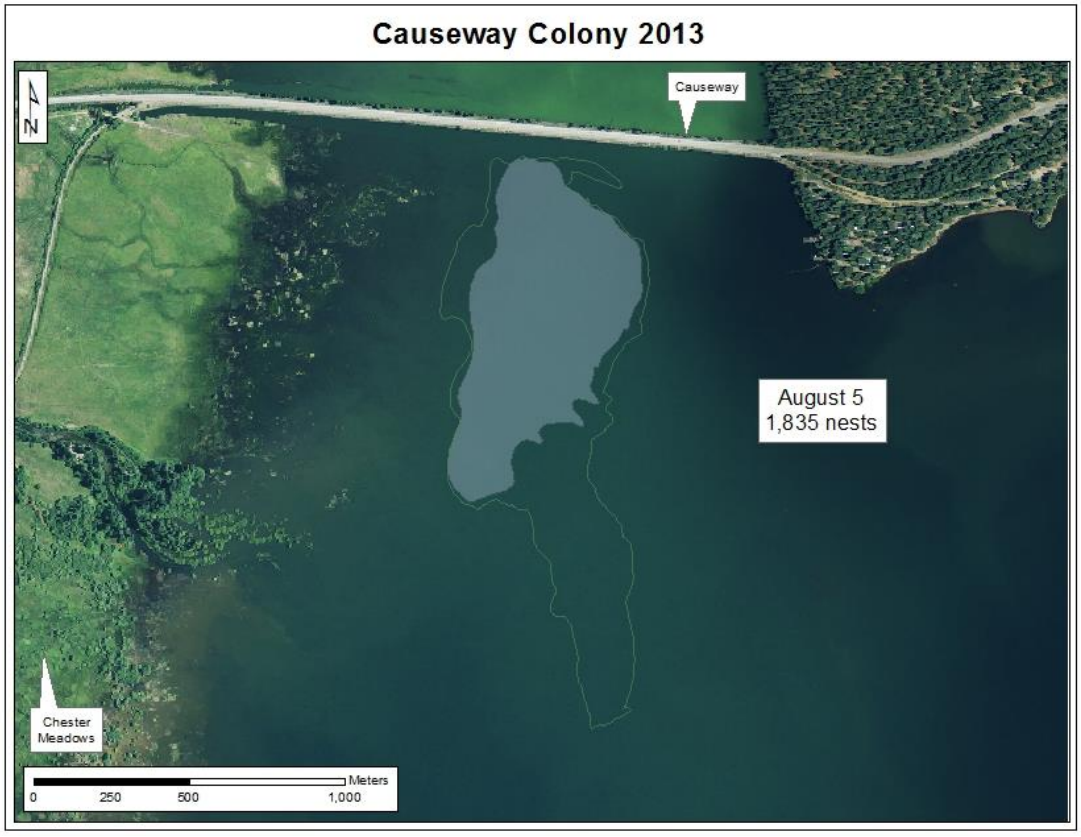
nesting success for our comprehensive monitoring report. The following figures show how Lake Almanor's causeway colony changed continuously over the course of two months.

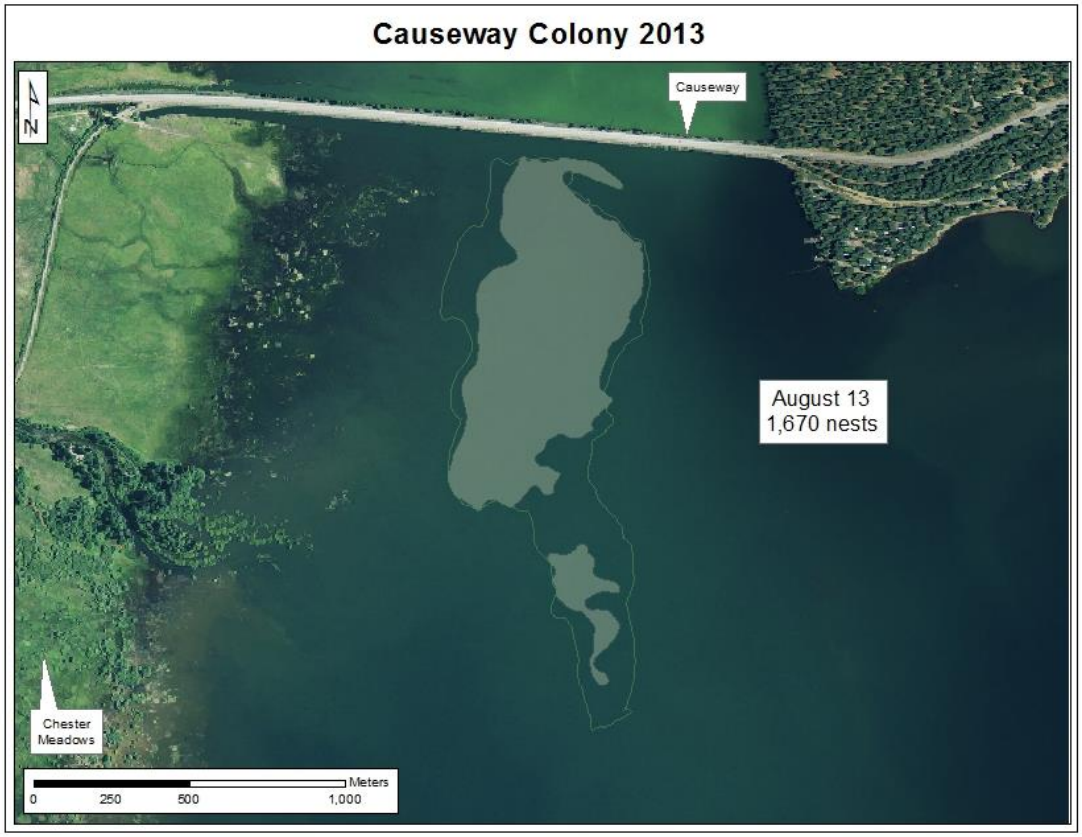


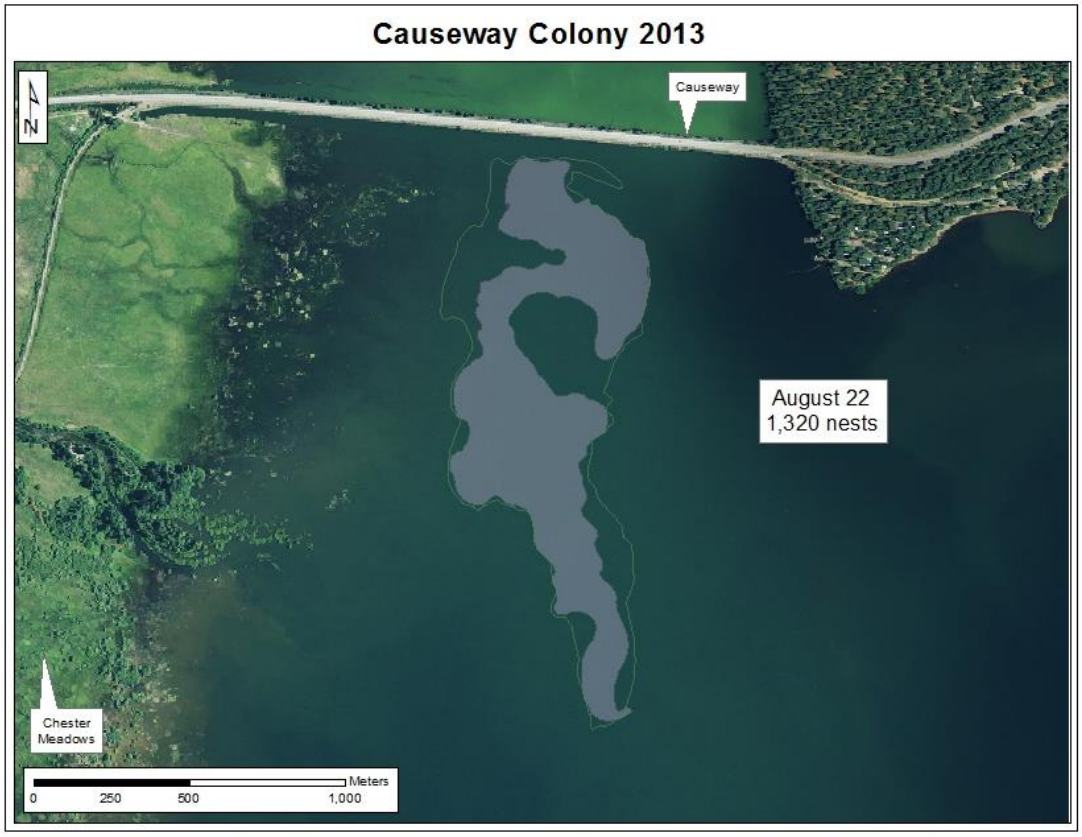

Causeway Colony 2013
N
Causeway
Peak number of nests= 1,835
Chester Meadows
Meters
0
250
500
1,000

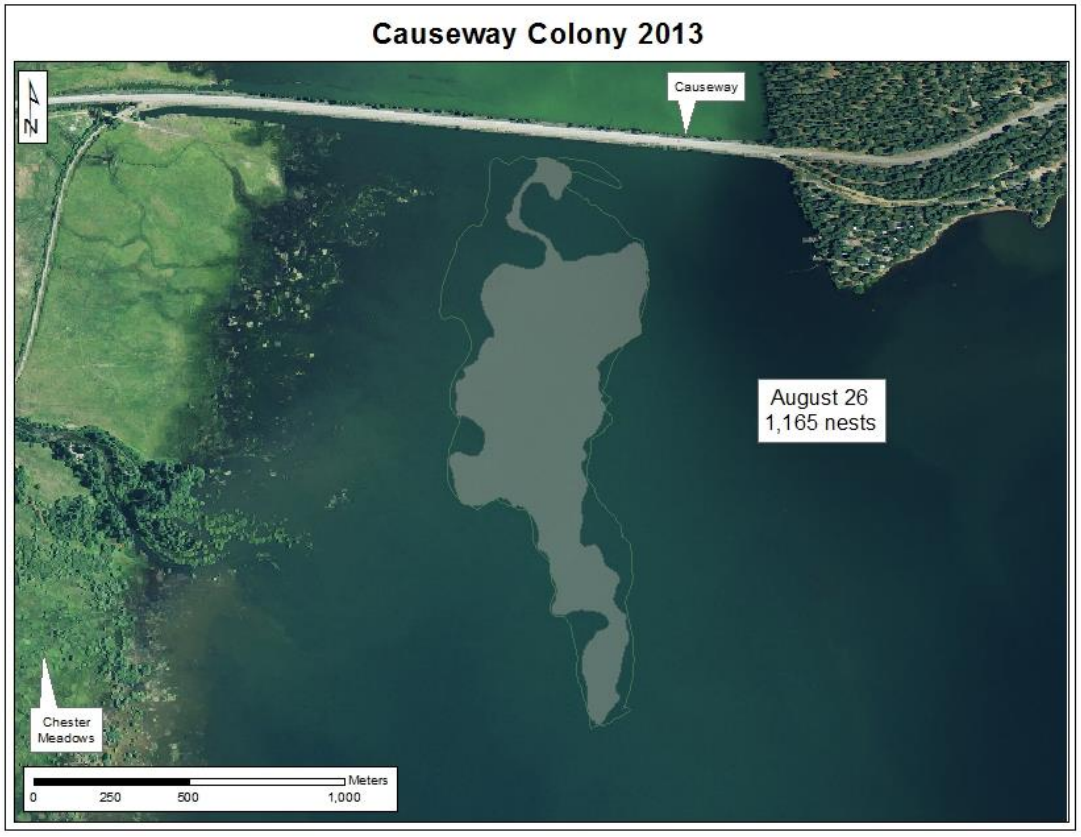

Causeway Colony 2013
N
Causeway
July 24
855 nests
Chester Meadows
Meters
0
250
500
1,000

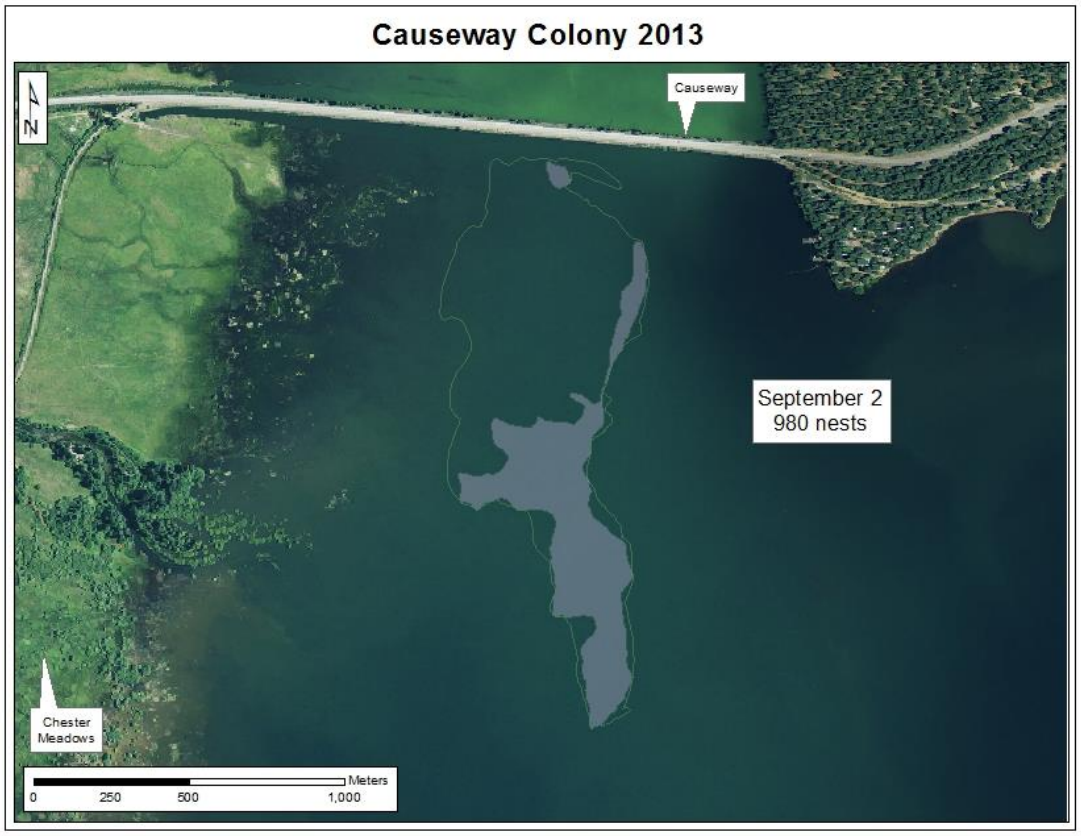

Causeway Colony 2013
N
Causeway
July 29
1,265 nests
Chester
Meadows
Meters
0
250
500
1,000

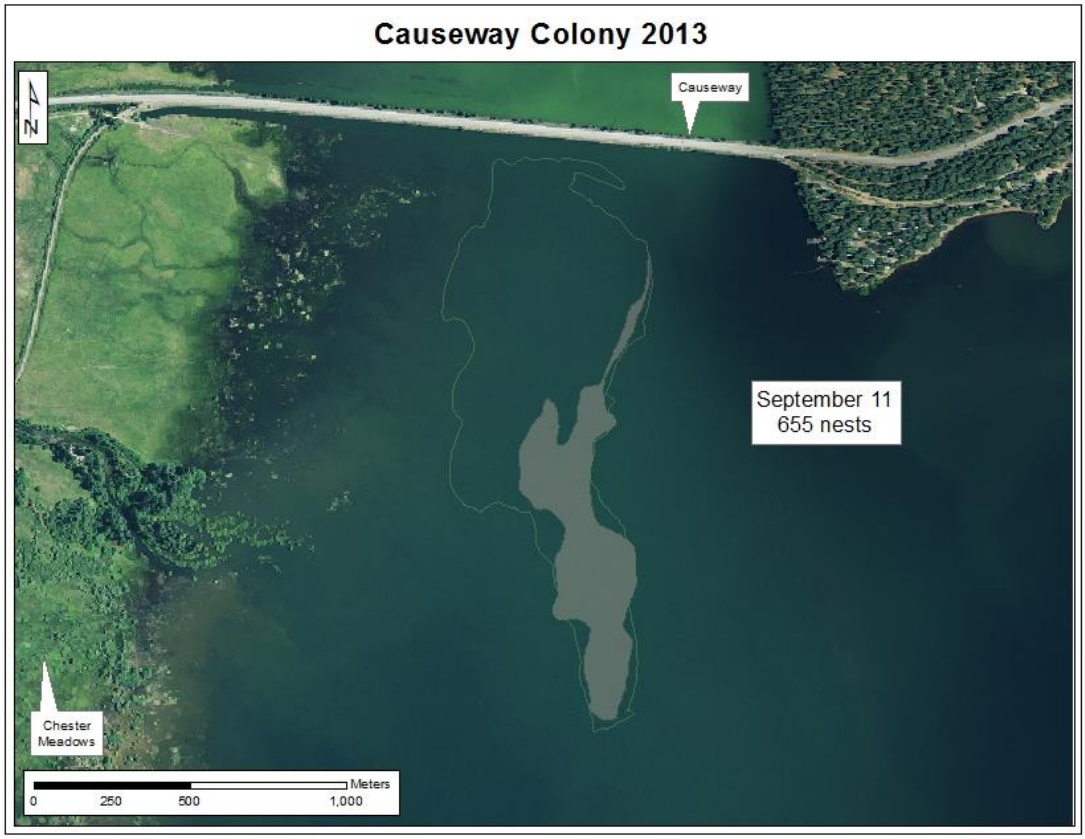

Causeway Colony 2013
N
Causeway
August 5
1,835 nests
Chester
Meadows
Meters
0
250
500
1,000

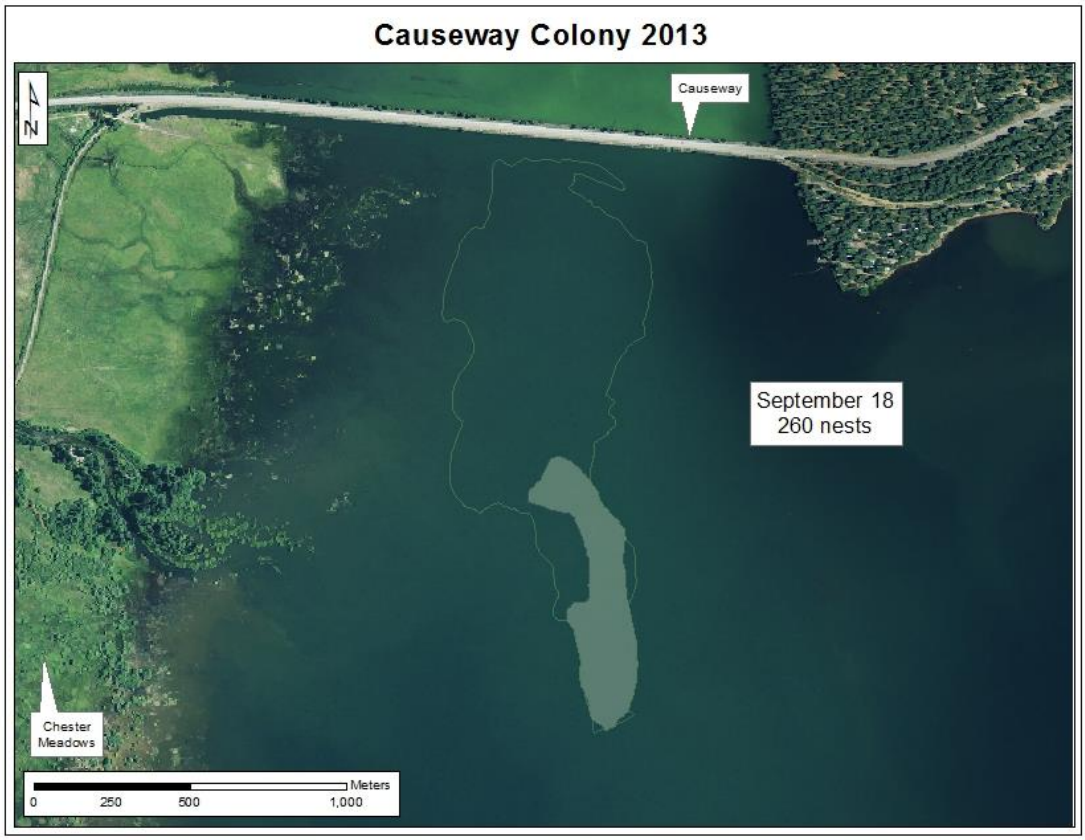

Causeway Colony 2013
N
Causeway
August 13
1,670 nests
Chester
Meadows
Meters
0
250
500
1,000


Causeway Colony 2013
N
Causeway
August 22
1,320 nests
Chester
Meadows
Meters
0
250
500
1,000


Causeway Colony 2013
N
Causeway
August 26
1,165 nests
Chester
Meadows
Meters
0
250
500
1,000


Causeway Colony 2013
N
Causeway
September 2
980 nests
Chester
Meadows
Meters
0
250
500
1,000


Causeway Colony 2013
N
Causeway
September 11
655 nests
Chester
Meadows
Meters
0
250
500
1,000


Causeway Colony 2013
N
Causeway
September 18
260 nests
Chester
Meadows
Meters
0
250
500
1,000

Outreach and Education

On October 18, the Audubon Grebe Conservation Project team met in Chico. Team members from the Plumas, Altacal, and Redbud chapters met with Audubon California to help compile information for the comprehensive project report. The meeting provided us with an opportunity to summarize our outreach and education efforts to date and to share our successes with our collaborators.

On November 21, we presented to approximately 30 attendees at a regional gathering called the Forest Forum. The Forest Forum is comprised of natural resource professionals who are interested in the management of public and private lands in northeastern California. This group was interested in the California Grebe Project and they were very engaged with our presentation. Many of the attendees were fascinated by the grebes, a genus with which most were familiar. We were able to share many of the interesting details that we have learned about the grebes during our four years of monitoring them on our local lakes.

On November 26, we presented to five classes at Portola High School. The classes included two junior high natural resource management classes, two high school biology classes, and an AP environmental science class. These classroom presentations were well received and each class asked us numerous questions about the grebes that nest on Lake Davis and other lakes in Northern California. All classes combined, we connected with 112 students.

Plumas Audubon has been developing a plan for engaging interns to assist with monitoring efforts for the 2014 season and beyond. We have been drafting a list of contacts at local universities; our goal is to integrate students from these schools into the California Grebe project in order to increase awareness of grebes and to provide opportunities for young scientists to gain valuable experience studying *Aechmophorus* grebes on lakes in Northern California. This project is early in its development and we are excited about how it may influence the future of the California Grebe Project. We are also working to engage local high school students with this effort.

During this quarter we have begun to develop an Outreach and Education Guidebook. Drawing from our experiences and from the lessons that we have learned during the past four years of the grebe project we hope to publish a thorough, but concise resource that other organizations can draw upon in order to increase their effectiveness at engaging the public. This guidebook will be available to any interested organizations, including Audubon California and other state offices as well as chapters nationwide.

Other outreach activities that we conducted during this quarter included updating our website (www.plumasaudubon.org) with current grebe information.