

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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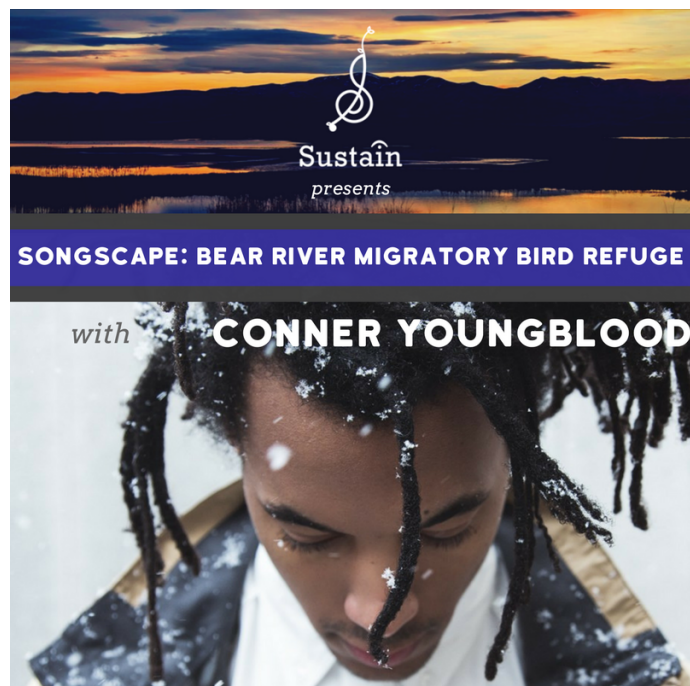


Sustain Music and Nature joins forces with Musician Conner Youngblood to Promote Public Lands in Utah

SALT LAKE CITY, UT -- This October, Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge (Bear River) will be the recipient of its very own serenade. Conner Youngblood, a Dallas-born and Yale-educated musician, will be visiting the national wildlife refuge for a week long songwriting retreat. The retreat is part of nonprofit, Sustain Music & Nature's, Songscapes program. Songscapes partner bands with public land areas, in order to create new music inspired by these protected landscapes. It's an effort to generate new audiences for public lands and the issues that face them.

Youngblood will spend October 14-18th at the Bear River, which is located just north of Salt Lake City. He'll just be finishing up a comprehensive fall tour on both coasts, and the wild beauty of Bear River will be a well earned reward. Bear River protects nearly 80,000 acres of freshwater marshes on the northeast arm of the Great Salt Lake. The oasis provides critical habitat to millions of migratory birds, including priority species such as white-faced ibis, American white pelican, snowy plover, tundra swan, and many others. One of the best birding areas in the country, the Refuge is designated as a globally important shorebird area.

Conner Youngblood was a natural choice for this partnership between Sustain Music & Nature and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. His introspective lyrics often draw from the natural world, and when he's not in the studio, collaborating with other bands (like Linkin Park) or on tour, he's out rock climbing or hiking. Youngblood has a longstanding appreciation of public lands, evident in *The Badlands*, a music



video shot at Badlands National Park. This retreat at Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge is something he's really excited for, "I've dreamt of going bird watching for years now and have even written songs about the migration of shovelers. America's public lands offer endless possibilities of inspiration and Bear River seems to be the perfect place to explore."

Following the October retreat, Youngblood will create a song inspired by his experiences and the Bear River Refuge landscape. The song will be released alongside a music video in early 2018, supported by an exclusive feature in Southwest Airlines' in-flight publication, Southwest: The Magazine, widely known for its rich storytelling of "the people and places that make this country special." Proceeds from song sales will help support Friends of Bear River Refuge, Sustain, and the artist.

"National Wildlife Refuges provide not only critical habitat for wildlife, they provide us with incredible beauty and opportunity for adventure. But not enough people know about them, even though they are *our* lands. That's why we're using music as a way to get Youngblood's fans to realize these places are out there, and that they're important to support," explains Sustain's co-founder, Betsy Mortensen.

Songscape: Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge is the second Songscape to be held at a National Wildlife Refuge, following last year's retreat at Seedskaadee NWR with folk-rock band, River Whyless.

Please contact Sustain's co-founder, Betsy Mortensen, with any questions and to arrange interviews with Conner Youngblood and/or Sustain. E-mail: sustainmusicandnature@gmail.com or Cell: 860-462-3038

To learn more about the project visit the Sustain website:

<http://www.sustainmusicandnature.org/songscape-bear-river-migratory-bird-refuge>

We've launched a crowdfunder to finance this project, available at

<https://www.generosity.com/volunteer-fundraising/songscape-bear-river-migratory-bird-refuge/>

Project Page: <http://bit.ly/2vGp84s>

Sustain Music and Nature Website: <http://bit.ly/2veGpBi>

Conner Youngblood Website & Tour Tickets: <http://bit.ly/2vFFmNi>

Bear River Website: <http://bit.ly/2dyf8CR>

Crowdfunder: <http://bit.ly/2w3yHuu>

About Conner Youngblood

From growing up in Dallas, wrestling at Yale, and eventually moving to Nashville, music has always been a big part of Conner's life. Influenced early on by artists like Elliott Smith, Gorillaz and Sufjan Stevens, Conner's music focuses on the beauty in intricate instrumentation, simplicity in song structure, and mostly introspective lyrics. Conner's debut label release in 2016, 'The Generation of Lift,' on esteemed Ninja Tune subsidiary, Counter Records, garnered media coverage and song premieres in tastemaker publications such as Noisey/Vice, The Fader, and Stereogum. He will be on tour across the east and west coasts this September and October. Tickets through: <http://www.conneryoungblood.com/>

About Sustain Music and Nature

A new nonprofit working to elevate the music industry's role in promoting environmental responsibility and awareness. Sustain has two programs: Songscales and Green Roster. Songscales pair bands with public land areas to create music inspired by protected landscapes. Green Roster is a community of bands, luthiers, and recording studios that pledge to uphold environmental practices in their businesses. Learn more at: <http://www.sustainmusicandnature.org>

About Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge

Bear River MBR is one of the over 550 refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System - a network of lands set aside and managed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service specifically for wildlife. The Refuge and other wetlands associated with the Great Salt Lake provide critical habitat for migrating birds, over 250 species moving through this area annually by the millions to rest and feed. As part of the Bear River Bay, the Refuge is designated as a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network site, a globally important shorebird area.

Today, Bear River MBR contains nearly 80,000 acres of marsh, open water, uplands, and alkali mudflats. The Refuge is an excellent place to observe wildlife along a 12-mile auto tour route, as well as enjoying hunting, fishing and wildlife photography.