

50-4. COEUR D'ALENE RIVER WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA (WMA; CHAIN LAKES)

Boundaries and ownership:

Boundaries: Boundaries are clearly marked, although sections are not contiguous

Ownership: Idaho Department of Fish & Game

Focal species using the site and timing of use:

During the breeding season, waterfowl (primarily Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Green-winged Teal), waterbirds (American Bittern, Virginia Rail, Sora, Wilson's Snipe, plus colonial nesters listed below), Osprey, Bald Eagles, and Belted Kingfishers are present. Waterfowl and Bald Eagles are also present during migration and winter.

Colonies: Great Blue Heron, Black Tern (Harrison Causeway, Killarney Lake, Rose Lake, Swan Lake), Western Grebe (Cave Lake)

Location of type 1 and 2 habitat within the site:

Functional Group	Type 1 Habitat	Type 2 Habitat
waterbirds	open water on lateral chain lakes, emergent vegetation at Lane Site, Thompson and Marshes, Black Rock Slough and Moffit Slough	none
large waders	breeding colonies, emergent vegetation adjacent to bike path along the river	rest of shoreline
secretive marshbirds	water's edge of Thompson, Bare, and Porter Marshes, and Black Rock and Moffit Sloughs	marshy areas throughout site
waterfowl	open water, marsh areas during breeding season	none
shorebirds	seasonally exposed mudflats	rest of shoreline
gulls and terns	breeding colonies, all areas	none

Access to the type 1 and 2 habitat and visibility of the birds:

Some areas (Moffit and Black Rock Sloughs, Thompson Marsh and Lake, Bare Marsh, and the Lane Site) may be surveyed with scope and binoculars using road access, but this is a very small portion of the entire wetland area. Boat access will give more options for survey areas but may disturb the birds during breeding/ nesting/ rearing. A new bike path also allows access to additional marshy areas and river habitat along the CdA River, and parallels some agricultural fields as well. Some areas easily accessible to the public, particularly those along the bike path. There are also numerous recreation access sites, although boaters may disturb survey areas and impact where birds are viewable. Visibility varies, but there is a lot of emergent vegetation throughout the summer (particularly on Thompson and Bare Marshes, and the sloughs).

Conservation issues:

- Heavy metal contamination is a serious issue. Dead swans and geese are found every year in the spring, so safety measures will need to be taken by surveyors to minimize exposure to contaminated soils.
- Noxious weeds are also an issue, particularly purple loosestrife. Other noxious weeds present include orange hawkweed and spotted knapweed.
- Disturbance to migratory waterfowl

Conservation measures taken, in progress, or proposed:

- Several clean-up efforts currently are under study and in progress
- Ongoing noxious weed (purple loosestrife) control program, using both chemical and biological methods
- Thompson Lake is closed to waterfowl hunting to provide a security area for migrating ducks and geese

Past and current surveys:

- Waterfowl breeding pair/brood counts every spring and summer, including monitoring of wood duck nest boxes
- Eagle and Osprey nests are monitored each year
- Owl surveys along upland portions of WMA have been initiated in 2004

Potential survey methods

Description:

- a. Nest searches for grebes and other waterbirds nesting in the emergent vegetation in small colonies.
- b. Colony counts for nesting Great Blue Herons, and Black Terns.
- c. Census for waterfowl on the open water from land in some areas, and from boat in others. Late summer or winter counts may be better than breeding season counts, as waterfowl are more easily detected during this period and would cut down on disturbance.
- d. Area searches for migrating shorebirds from observation points near Type 1 habitat.
- e. Systematic sampling, probably including the use of playback calls, for secretive marshbirds.
- f. Census for gulls and terns during waterfowl counts.

Selection bias: It may be preferable not to use a boat in some areas in order to not disturb nesting birds, which may therefore present some selection bias.

Measurement error and bias: Emergent vegetation in marshes and sloughs could be a substantial issue, for both visibility and access. Use of an airboat may decrease the access problem.

Needed pilot studies: Aerial photos could help in sample site determination and access logistics.

Contact:

NAME: Carrie Chalcraft - IDFG
ADDRESS: 2750 Kathleen Ave., Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815
PHONE: 208-689-3453
FAX: 208-769-1418
EMAIL: cchalcraft@idfg.state.id.us