

51-15. DEER PARKS WILDLIFE MITIGATION UNIT (WMU)

Boundaries and ownership:

Boundaries: Boundaries clearly marked

Ownership: Bureau of Land Management

Focal species using the site and timing of use:

Waterfowl (Canada Goose, Trumpeter Swan, Mallard, Northern Shoveler, Ruddy Duck, Northern Pintail, American Wigeon, Green-winged Teal, Cinnamon Teal, Gadwall, Canvasback, Redhead, Scaup), waterbirds (Sandhill Crane, American Coot, Pied-billed Grebe), and Bald Eagles are present during breeding season. Gulls, terns, herons, and rails may also be present, but surveys have not noted this in the past. During migration, the same species are present, with the addition of Snow Geese. During the winter Canada Geese, Trumpeter Swans, Common Goldeneye, Mallards, Great Blue Herons, and Bald Eagles are present.

Location of type 1 and 2 habitat within the site:

Functional Group	Type 1 Habitat	Type 2 Habitat
waterbirds	open water & emergent vegetation	none
large waders	emergent vegetation	rest of shoreline
secretive marshbirds	water's edge, emergent vegetation	none
waterfowl	open water, edges during breeding season	none
shorebirds	exposed mudflats during spring/fall migration	rest of shoreline
gulls and terns	all areas	none

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

The majority of this area is easily accessed by ground personnel. There is a dirt access road along the entire canal, and the Butte Slough can be viewed in its entirety from various observation points. However, there is ample bulrush and cattail that may limit visibility. The Butte Slough can also be accessed by canoe. There are many vantage points from land to the Snake River, but it must be accessed by boat if it is to be done in its entirety. There is a public boat ramp ½ mile south (upstream) of the property. Internal waterways are well isolated and protected by tree cover of the cottonwood bottoms, but foot access is available.

Conservation issues:

- There is no imminent change to adjacent areas that will impinge upon the conservation of species, however increased pressure on public lands does appear to affect short term use.
- As this is mitigation land, there is a strong effort to improve habitat for wildlife.

Conservation measures taken, in progress, or proposed:

- IDFG has begun habitat improvements by creating permanent cover, controlling noxious weeds, improving native biodiversity of plant species in lands to improve nesting habitat, and creating food and cover areas for increased wildlife use.

Past and current surveys:

- Weekly waterfowl surveys during fall and spring migration, and bimonthly waterfowl surveys the rest of the year
- Nest searches and brood counts for waterfowl
- Nest drags for nesting waterfowl have been conducted in the past
- Nesting Bald Eagle surveys

- Point counts for passerines during breeding season

Potential survey methods

Description:

- a. Nest searches for grebes and other waterbirds nesting in the emergent vegetation in small colonies.
- b. Census for waterfowl and other waterbirds on the open water from shoreline, and from canoe along river. Use pre-established waterfowl observation points (4 total) for Butte Slough area.
- c. Area searches for migrating shorebirds from observation points near Type 1 habitat.
- d. Systematic sampling, probably including the use of playback calls, for secretive marshbirds from shoreline.

Selection bias: N/A - with proper planning and development of studies, all areas are accessible

Measurement error and bias: As with selection bias, with proper planning, all areas will be similarly visible. There is potential personnel bias. This area is monitored by a wildlife technician, and there is routine turnover with no overlap. Due to this, observer bias is always a risk, and there is no opportunity for training or coordination between incoming and outgoing employees.

Needed pilot studies: None may be needed, as waterfowl surveys are done routinely. Surveys of other waterbirds likely can be incorporated into current waterfowl surveys.

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