

51-17. FORT BOISE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA (WMA/IBA)

Boundaries and ownership:

Boundaries: West – Snake River; North – Snake River/Old Fort Boise Rd.; East – Snake River/Old Fort Boise Rd./railroad tracks); South (roughly) – Boise River/Sharp Lane

Ownership: Idaho Department of Fish and Game

Focal species using the site and timing of use:

During the spring and/or summer, waterbirds (Pied-billed Grebe, Western Grebe, American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron, Great Egret, Sora, Virginia Rail, American Coot, Forster's Tern, Caspian Tern, Ring-billed Gull), waterfowl (Canada Goose, Snow Goose, Greater White-fronted Goose, Mallard, Gadwall, Wood Duck, Common Goldeneye, Northern Pintail, American Wigeon, Canvasback, Redhead, Ruddy Duck, Northern Shoveler, Cinnamon and Blue-winged Teal, and others), shorebirds (Killdeer, American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt) are present; most of which breed on the WMA. Common and Black Tern species have been seen in ponds north of Old Fort Boise Rd. Additional shorebirds seen during migration include: Marbled Godwit, Long-billed Curlew, Willet, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Long- and Short-billed Dowitcher, Stilt Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, and Dunlin (The Intermountain West Regional Shorebird plan lists this as a shorebird site).

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, open water	rest of shoreline, uplands
secretive marshbirds	water's edge, emergent vegetation	none
waterfowl	open water, edges during breeding season	uplands
shorebirds	exposed mudflats in creeks, channels, and wetlands during spring/fall migration	rest of shoreline, and uplands
gulls and terns	all areas, especially shallow water areas; terns particularly in ponds N of Old Fort Boise Rd. during migration	none

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

This site is open to the public, although certain areas are closed from Feb 1 – July 31. Access permission may be granted by the area manager (Clair Kofoed). Birds can be viewed quite well from dike roads adjacent to the wetlands during the early part of the breeding season. Visibility is difficult once the vegetation, particularly phragmites, grows up. Vehicle viewing is preferred to surveys on foot, to decrease disturbance to nesting birds.

Conservation issues:

- Recreational development/overuse
- Excessive or irresponsible hunting
- Disturbance of birds
- Drought and water quality (silt and chemical pollution)
- Residential/commercial development

Conservation measures taken, in progress, or proposed:

None known at this time.

Past and current surveys:

- Waterfowl brood counts conducted by area manager
- Upland bird brood counts conducted by area manager
- An area bird list has been compiled

Potential survey methods*Description:*

- a. Census for waterfowl on the open water from shoreline. Late summer or fall counts may be better than breeding season counts, as waterfowl are more easily detected during this period. However, largest number of waterfowl present in March and April
- b. Area searches for migrating shorebirds from observation points near Type 1 habitat, particularly in March and April.
- c. Systematic sampling, probably including the use of playback calls, for secretive marshbirds from shoreline.
- d. Census for gulls and terns during waterfowl counts.

Selection bias: N/A – should be able to survey all areas fairly well

Measurement error and bias: Vegetation along edges of impoundments can make visibility quite difficult. There are a few open areas around each impoundment that provide only viewing spots for these impoundments.

Needed pilot studies: None may be needed

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