

51-30. OXFORD SLOUGH (IBA)

Boundaries and ownership:

Boundaries: Boundaries are clearly marked with signs.

Ownership: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Cooperative farmer farms and has the area

Focal species using the site and timing of use:

Nesting site for numerous waterfowl, particularly redheads. Northern Harriers and Long-billed Curlews breed in the area. Also a minor staging area for Common Loons and Sandhill Cranes (300-400 cranes may be present in the fall). Trumpeter Swans are occasionally observed. Good rail habitat.

Colonies: Eared Grebe, Great Blue Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron, Snowy Egret, Cattle Egret, White-faced Ibis, Franklin's Gull, Black Tern

Location of type 1 and 2 habitat within the site:

Functional Group	Type 1 Habitat	Type 2 Habitat
waterbirds	breeding colonies, open water & emergent vegetation	flooded fields
large waders	breeding colony in center of area, emergent vegetation, White-faced Ibis can be found in flooded fields	none
secretive marshbirds	water's edge	none
waterfowl	open water, edges during breeding season	none
shorebirds	exposed mudflats during spring migration	flooded fields
gulls and terns	breeding colonies, all areas	none

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

Interior of the marsh is accessible via a series of channels. Canoe is definitely necessary to survey this area. There is a good vantage point on the west side of the slough in the town of Oxford. Flight counts could be made from this point.

Conservation issues:

- Introduced noxious weeds.
- In 1996 someone shot about 50 Franklin's Gulls and White-faced Ibis. The shooting did not occur during the waterfowl season or during any other hunting season.

Conservation measures taken, in progress, or proposed:

- Boundary has been fenced and signed.
- Grazing has been discontinued.
- A cooperative farming program provides short grass foraging areas for geese and cranes, tall grass areas for nesting waterfowl, and grain crops for fall staging geese and cranes.

Past and current surveys: A few surveys from road N of Slough. May be going now.

Potential survey methods

Description:

- a. Nest searches for grebes and other waterbirds nesting in the emergent vegetation in small colonies. Canoe is necessary for access.

- b. Colony counts for nesting herons, egrets, ibis, gulls, and terns Flight counts can be done from an observation point in town, or direct counts can be made by entering the marsh either on foot (from west side) or by canoe.
- c. Census for waterfowl on the open water by aerial survey. Boat may be possible, although visibility is not good for a large portion of the site.
- d. Area searches for migrating shorebirds from observation points on road near Type 1 habitat. Alkaline ponds attract lots of shorebirds if they are flooded in spring.
- e. Systematic sampling, probably including the use of playback calls, for secretive marshbirds. This will probably need to be done from a canoe.
- f. Census for gulls and terns during waterfowl counts

Selection bias: None if aerial surveys used.

Measurement error and bias: N/A

Needed pilot studies: Aerial survey design.

Contact:

NAME: Rob Bundy - USFWS
ADDRESS: Bear Lake National Wildlife Refuge
370 Webster, Box 9, Montpelier, ID 83254
PHONE: 208/ 847-1757
FAX: 208/
EMAIL: rob_bundy@fws.gov