

## 51-12. CHILLY SLOUGH (IBA)

### Boundaries and ownership:

*Boundaries:* East – U.S. 93; South – Trail Creek Rd, country roads border both north and west edge of slough; ; some boundaries are clearly marked; IDFG is working on a GIS of this site to show ownership boundaries

*Ownership:* Bureau of Land Management, Idaho Fish and Game, private

### Focal species using the site and timing of use:

Supports breeding populations of waterfowl (Mallard, Northern Pintail, American Wigeon, Gadwall, Redhead, Lesser Scaup, Cinnamon Teal, Ruddy Duck), waterbirds (Pied-billed Grebe, Eared Grebe, American Coot, Sora, Sandhill Crane), shorebirds (Killdeer, Willet, Long-billed Curlew, Wilson's Snipe, Wilson's Phalarope) and Northern Harriers. American Bitterns are also present. During migration species present include waterfowl (those listed above plus Canada Goose, Tundra Swan, Trumpeter Swan, and additional ducks) and other species present during the breeding season.

### Location of type 1 and 2 habitat within the site:

Functional Group	Type 1 Habitat	Type 2 Habitat
waterbirds	cattail marshes, sedge, open water	none
large waders	cattail marshes	grasses
secretive marshbirds	cattail marsh	Water's edge
waterfowl	open water, marshes	none
shorebirds	marshes, sedge, surrounding upland habitat	rest of shoreline

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

Canoe access for the South and North Units may be best for surveying waterbirds (has been done in the past). The South Unit may also be viewed by driving or walking the two-track road running from the southern boundary of the South Unit to the visitor pullout from Highway 93 near Whiskey Springs. Many areas of the site can be seen from the shoreline. Visibility of birds varies throughout the site, as emergent vegetation can be an issue.

### Conservation issues:

- Overgrazing by livestock on private lands.
- Potential diversion of water from headwater springs which would be a serious issue with spawning rainbow trout.

### Conservation measures taken, in progress, or proposed:

- Acquisition of private lands has led to an additional 1,082 acres to BLM and IDFG, for a total of 1,820 acres.

### Past and current surveys:

Long-term point count study being established – check with Jerry Gregson

- Five-year (1997-2001) bird inventory of site included point counts and waterfowl brood counts. See "Yeo, J.J. 2002. Avian Community Status in the Chilly Slough Wetland Conservation Area, East Central Idaho 1997-2001. Idaho BLM Technical Bulletin: 02-6."

- Informal surveys and bird-sightings for Chilly Slough over a 20-year period (prior to 1994) reported in "Barnes, L.J. 1994. The birds of Chilly Slough, Idaho. Unpublished report to The Nature Conservancy, Ketchum, Idaho".

### Potential survey methods

#### *Description:*

- a. Nest searches for grebes and other waterbirds nesting in the emergent vegetation in small colonies using a canoe for access.
- b. Census for waterfowl on the open water from either canoe or from shoreline. Point count transects are described in Yeo 2002, and it may be desirable to use same transects if possible.
- c. Area searches for breeding shorebirds in surrounding upland vegetation and cattail marshes (from either shoreline or canoe).
- d. Systematic sampling, probably including the use of playback calls, for secretive marshbirds using a canoe to access marshes.

*Selection bias:* N/A

*Measurement error and bias:* Species using cattail marshes can be hard to detect because of vegetation. Variation in observer ability could be an issue as an observer may become more skilled over time in detecting birds in the emergent vegetation or identification skills may improve.

**Needed pilot studies:** None needed. Yeo's study provides a good place to start a monitoring plan for this site.

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