

## 51-13. C.J. STRIKE RESERVOIR (IBA)/WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA (WMA)

### Boundaries and ownership:

*Boundaries:* From C.J. Strike Dam to end of two arms of reservoir – 24 miles down Snake River arm, and 6.6 miles down Bruneau River arm. Also includes Ted Trueblood area, which is clearly marked.

*Ownership:* Idaho Power Company, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, Private

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

*Reservoir:* Breeding area for waterbirds (Western and Clark's Grebes [up to 900 adults], Pied-billed Grebe, Great Blue Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron, Double-crested Cormorant, Virginia Rail, Sora, American Coot, Ring-billed Gull, California Gull) waterfowl (Canada Goose, Mallard, Cinnamon Teal, Redhead, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal, Blue-winged Teal, Wood Duck, Ruddy Duck, Ring-necked Duck) and shorebirds (American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Long-Billed Curlew). American White Pelicans present year-round. Caspian Tern and Forster's Tern present during summer, but not breeding. Large numbers (approx. 100,000) of migrating (particularly spring) waterfowl, as well as shorebirds (Sanderling, Dunlin, Western Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Black-bellied Plover, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Short- and Long-billed Dowitcher, Wilson's and Red-necked Phalarope) and waterbirds (Franklin's Gull, Bonaparte's Gull, Sabine's Gull, Black Tern, White-faced Ibis). Wintering species include waterfowl, gulls (Herring, California, Ring-billed), Great Blue Herons, and grebes (Western, Pied-billed, Horned, and Eared)

*Ted Trueblood:* Attracts thousands of waterfowl (Tundra Swan, Canada Goose, Greater White-fronted Goose, Snow Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Gadwall, Northern Pintail, American Wigeon, Northern Shoveler, Cinnamon Teal, Blue-winged Teal, Green-winged Teal, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Greater Scaup, Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Ruddy Duck), waterbirds (Horned Grebe, Eared Grebe, Pied-billed Grebe, Western Grebe, Clark's Grebe, American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Black-crowned Night Heron, White-faced Ibis, California Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Franklin's Gull, Herring Gull, Caspian Tern, Forster's Tern, Black Tern), and shorebirds (Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Dunlin, Least Sandpiper, Long-billed Dowitcher, Common Snipe, Wilson's Phalarope, Long-billed Curlew, Solitary Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper) during migration and summer. Breeding area for waterfowl, waterbirds (Pied-billed Grebe, American Coot), shorebirds (American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt, Wilson's Snipe, Spotted Sandpiper, Killdeer), and gulls (Ring-billed and California). Yellow-headed and Red-winged Blackbirds are abundant, Northern Harriers are common, and Soras and Virginia Rails are heard occasionally. Wintering species include Tundra Swans, other waterfowl, Pied-billed Grebes, American Coots, Great Blue Herons, Ring-billed Gulls, and California Gulls.

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

Functional Group	Type 1 Habitat	Type 2 Habitat
waterbirds	open water & emergent vegetation	Surrounding grassy banks
large waders	breeding colonies, emergent vegetation, mudflats	rest of shoreline, irrigated pastures
secretive marshbirds	emergent vegetation at water's edge or in shallow water	none
waterfowl	open water, edges during breeding season, mudflats, sand bars	none

shorebirds	exposed mudflats, sand and gravel flats during spring/fall migration. Marshy areas, wet pastures, and irrigated agriculture during breeding season.	rest of shoreline
gulls and terns	all areas – open water, mud, sand and gravel flats, etc.	none

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

*Reservoir:* A boat would be necessary for a thorough aquatic survey. Boating is open to the public. Seeing rails and bitterns would be difficult from any observation area, but other species should be observable.

*Ted Trueblood:* Can be surveyed from shoreline. Large pond (Pond 3) closest to river is easily viewed from the parking area viewing platform at the end of Shaw Lane, either using binoculars or scope. Could also be surveyed from shoreline. Other two ponds (Ponds 1 and 2) are hard to see from parking area, and would require surveying from the banks of the ponds. Ponds are closed to public during waterfowl breeding and brood rearing season (Feb-June). Permission is needed from IDFG and BLM (Lower Snake River District). Rails and bitterns hard to see from any observation area, but other species should be observable.

**Conservation issues:**

- Degradation of water quality from an increased nutrient load from agriculture and food processing.
- Habitat degradation by excessive grazing.
- Pesticide poisoning of area animals.
- Invasion by exotic plants (Russian olive and tamarisk) and noxious weeds
- Recreational development/overuse, contributing to erosion of shoreline as a result of wave action

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

- Proposed: Strictly enforce water quality standards for agriculture and industry.\
- Taken: Only use grazing to improve wildlife habitat.
- Biological and/or chemical controls are being used to control purple loosestrife, Canada thistle, perennial pepperweed, and hoary cress. Idaho Power and BLM have proposed to replace Russian olive and tamarisk with other trees and shrubs.
- The BLM has rip raped a shoreline near a recreation site on C.J. Strike Reservoir, and Idaho Power Company has proposed to riprap some of the eroding shoreline on their land.

**Past and current surveys:**

- Mid-winter waterfowl counts by IDFG and/or USFWS
- John Doremus surveyed Western and Clark’s Grebes in the past, and currently conducts colony counts of Great Blue Heron and Cormorants at one rookery
- IDFG checks goose nest platforms each year
- Idaho Power does/did bird surveys

**Potential survey methods**

*Description:*

- a. Nest searches for grebes and other waterbirds nesting in the emergent vegetation in small colonies. Boat may be necessary for the reservoir, but could be done from shoreline for Ted Trueblood.
- b. Colony counts for Great Blue Herons and Double-crested Cormorants.
- c. Census for waterfowl and other waterbirds on the open water from a boat on the reservoir, and from shoreline observation points for Ted Trueblood. Late summer or winter counts may be better than breeding season counts, as waterfowl are more easily detected during this period.
- 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. Canoe may be necessary to access marshes on the reservoir, but can be done from shoreline for Ted Trueblood.
- f. Census for gulls and terns during waterfowl counts.

*Selection bias:* Unknown at this time.

*Measurement error and bias:* Unknown at this time.

**Needed pilot studies:** Some work may be needed to determine what kind of biases may be present at this site.

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