

51-19. HAGERMAN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA (WMA/IBA)

Boundaries and ownership:

Boundaries: This site includes four parcels (not quite contiguous) along 5 miles of the Snake River: 1) Hagerman WMA, 2) Hagerman National Fish Hatchery, 3) Thousand Springs Preserve, and 4) "Heron Island". Heron Island is on south/west side of Snake River, other three on north/east side of river. All boundaries are well-marked.

Ownership: Idaho Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy

Focal species using the site and timing of use:

Healthy population of breeding waterfowl (Mallard, Cinnamon Teal, Green-winged Teal, Gadwall, Redhead, Ruddy Duck, Canada Goose), Yellow-headed Blackbirds, and Northern Harriers. During spring and summer, waterbirds (American Coot, Pied-billed Grebe, Western Grebe, American Bittern, Virginia Rail, Sora, California Gull, Double-crested Cormorant, Forster's Tern), shorebirds (Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet, Long-billed Curlew), Northern Harriers, and Yellow-headed Blackbirds are common. During migration, Common Loons, Tundra Swans, and other shorebirds can be seen. Large numbers of wintering waterfowl (25,000-55,000; most species), Bald Eagles (15-20), and Northern Harriers.

Colonies(on Heron Island): Great Blue Heron (± 80 pairs), Black-crowned Night Heron (200 pairs), Great, Snowy, and Cattle Egrets (5-10 pairs each)

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	breeding colonies, emergent vegetation	rest of shoreline
waterfowl	open water, edges during breeding season	none
secretive marshbirds	water's edge along creek and ponds	none
shorebirds	exposed mudflats/earthen shorelines and shallow portions of ponds	rest of shoreline
gulls and terns	all areas, but primarily Anderson and Riley ponds	none

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

Hagerman WMA: Access is good. Most areas can be surveyed on foot, by binoculars, from the dikes surrounding ponds. Anderson #2 pond may be best surveyed using a row boat/canoe. Visibility varies by season.

Rest of IBA: Access is good, particularly by boat. Visibility varies by species/season, and emergent vegetation could be a problem in mid-summer. Can also view birds from the Ritter Island shoreline. Canyon rim shoreline should be avoided as it has very heavy brush and poison ivy. Preserve is open to the public, but subject to preserve hours (particularly Ritter Island). Contact preserve (208-536-6797) for hours of operation.

Conservation issues:

- Introduced plants/animals: cheatgrass, European Starling, House Sparrow.
- Recreational development/residential development potential high on adjacent land.
- Springs completely dependent on Snake River Plains aquifer, which is highly susceptible to groundwater contamination, overpumping and drought.
- Invasion of purple loosestrife

Conservation measures taken, in progress, or proposed:

- All the land nominated is in the hands of federal, state and private conservation groups.
- Land is well-protected long-term, so potential for long-term studies is high. TNC will work to protect the cold-water spring systems as opportunity arises.
- TNC will be building a wetland system at the base of Blind Canyon to treat the City of Jerome sewage return water and create wildlife habitat.
- IDFG has initiated a bio-control program (beetles) to reduce purple loosestrife on Hagerman WMA.

Past and current surveys:

- Christmas Bird Counts - conducted annually
- Hagerman WMA has many years of USFWS style waterfowl monitoring
- Hagerman WMA has a general species inventory list that includes species not included in "focal species" section of this description.

Potential survey methods

Description:

- a. Nest searches by canoe for grebes and other waterbirds nesting in the emergent vegetation in small colonies.*
- b. Colony counts for nesting herons and egrets*
- c. Census for waterfowl on the open water using a boat. Late summer or winter counts may be better than breeding season counts, as waterfowl are more easily detected during this period.*
- d. Systematic sampling, probably including the use of playback calls, for secretive marshbirds.*
- e. Census for gulls and terns during waterfowl counts*

Selection bias: N/A

Measurement error and bias: Heavy riparian vegetation may be a problem. It would be best to use a skilled birder or birders. The density of the wetlands/cattail areas would most likely be difficult to assess especially for secretive species such as rails.

Needed pilot studies: None may be needed, although determining best places and times to survey may be helpful.

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