

51-25. MESA MARSH (IBA)

Boundaries and ownership:

Boundaries: Flat marsh located directly east of Highway 47 from Mesa Falls. Approximately 0.25-0.5 miles over land to marsh.

Ownership: USDA Forest Service

Focal species using the site and timing of use:

Breeding waterfowl (Trumpeter Swan, Canada Goose, Northern Pintail, Blue-winged Teal, Cinnamon Teal, American Wigeon, Northern Shoveler, Ring-necked Duck, Common Merganser, Ruddy Duck), waterbirds (Sandhill Crane, Eared Grebe, Sora, Black Tern) and Bald Eagles can be found at this site. Staging area, particularly in spring, for Sandhill Cranes. Common Loons, American Avocets, and Wilson's Phalaropes can be found during migration.

Colonies: Western Grebe, Great Blue Heron

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	none
large waders	breeding colonies in small ponds adjacent to marsh and on marsh island, emergent vegetation	rest of shoreline
secretive marshbirds	water's edge	none
waterfowl	open water, edges during breeding season	none
shorebirds	exposed mudflats during spring/fall migration	rest of shoreline
terns	all areas	none

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

Area is easily accessed, and birds are visible from the shoreline. Birds can be viewed from upland areas along shoreline, which is raised above the marsh, and from the small dam. Access by boat shouldn't be necessary, and likely wouldn't aid in detecting birds. Surveys early in the season, and early in the day, are probably best as lily pads in the marsh make visibility a little difficult later in the season/day.

Conservation issues:

- In extreme dry years, grazing may have negative impact on marsh vegetation, and increase disturbance to birds, however grazing does help keep the vegetation vigorous.
- Past timber harvest has impacted tree nesting habitat and wildlife security around the marsh.
- Waterfowl hunting occurs while there are sensitive species using the marsh.

Conservation measures taken, in progress, or proposed:

- Roads have been closed leading into the marsh.
- The location of the marsh is not advertised nor promoted.

Past and current surveys:

- Trumpeter Swan surveys – (Trumpeter Swan Society)
- Monitoring has been conducted in the past – check with current Ashton Ranger District Biologist for details

Potential survey methods

Description:

- a. Nest searches for grebes and other waterbirds nesting in the emergent vegetation in small colonies from shoreline.
- b. Colony counts for nesting Great Blue Herons.
- c. *Census for waterfowl on the open water from the shoreline.*
- 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. This can be done from the shoreline.
- f. Census for gulls and terns during waterfowl counts.

Selection bias: N/A

Measurement error and bias: Vegetation may be an issue, depending on when surveys are conducted. Overall should not be a problem.

Needed pilot studies: None needed

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