

Project Overview

Is there enough habitat, in the right places, and at the right times for waterfowl, shorebirds, and wading birds (waterbirds) during migration and in winter? The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Joint Ventures, and the Flyway Councils strive to ensure that adequate resting and feeding habitat is available for waterbirds along their flyway journeys. This project combines standardized monitoring and modeling at flyway, regional, and local scales to answer this question and to guide future management decisions about where to focus time and other resources on habitat management and restoration. The project focuses on collaboration among conservation partners located along the Atlantic and Mississippi Flyways, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the states, Ducks Unlimited and other non-governmental agencies.

Program Website

We are pleased to announce a web portal for the program: http://iwmmprogram. ning.com. In addition to providing a repository for protocols and survey forms, there is a forum, through which we will generate discussion on the pilot fieldwork, and provide regular feedback to all participants. The site is public but to participate in discussions, organize groups, or take advantage of the website's other features, please email Katie_Koch@fws.gov or amwilson@usgs. gov for assistance.

Accomplishments

- Held eight workshops to scope the overall project and design decision models (2008 – 2010);
- Made presentations to several key partners (Flyway Councils, Joint Ventures, state agencies, national wildlife refuge staff) to gather information, solicit expertise, and share updates on the status of the project (2009 2010);
- A Project Coordinator has been hired along with 5 seasonal Waterbird Technicians (Summer 2010);
- Teams of biologists with expertise in the three guilds of waterbirds developed habitat and population monitoring protocols (Summer 2010);
 Developed a draft flyway scale model based on energetic needs of the birds
- Developed a draft flyway scale model based on energetic needs of the birds and GIS maps of available habitat (2010); and
- Pilot testing of the bird survey and habitat monitoring protocols throughout the Atlantic and Mississippi Flyways occurred (Fall 2010).





Great Blue Heron

Black Duck



William Majoros

Flock of shorebirds on their way to wintering grounds in Central and South America.

Fall 2010

Pilot Waterbird Surveys Pilot Habitat Surveys Pilot Waterbird Surveys Pilot Habitat Surveys Analyze Pilot Season Data Test Models Modify Protocols

Winter 2011

Spring 2011

Waterbird Surveys Habitat Surveys

Models for Improved Management

The models used in the IWMM link monitoring data with management decisions at three spatial scales. By integrating waterbird movement models with structured decision making, the IWMM models will provide recommendations on how best to distribute financial resources at the regional level and which habitat management strategies are most effective and efficient to undertake at the local level.

Their joint purpose is to guide habitat management to support continental waterbird population goals at the flyway level. The monitoring protocols and models are created jointly to ensure integration and maximize learning, thus allowing monitoring data to directly assess predictions from the models. As new information is learned through monitoring, the IWMM models will be updated to provide revised recommendations reflecting the most current scientific understanding available.

Future Efforts

- Provide a report on the pilot season to local, regional and flyway scale participants and managers.
- Continue to make improvements to waterbird and vegetation monitoring protocols.
- Begin to assess the program's ability to link management and funding decisions to waterbird population responses.
- Continue to expand the geographic coverage and encourage increased participation in the program.
- Promote an adaptive management approach at local, regional, and flyway spatial scales.

Participate in This Pilot Season

With waterfowl migration into southern states extending through to midwinter, there is still time to participate in the pilot season. We will be collecting pilot data October to February. If you would like to participate, you can contribute data anytime during this period. There is a 3 hour training via WebEx to get you started. Please contact one of the people below:

General and methodological inquiries:

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Integrated Waterbird Management and Monitoring Project