

Appendix H

Draft
New York State
Bird Conservation Area Program
Management Guidance Summary

Site Name: Moreau Lake Bird Conservation Area (BCA)

State Ownership and Managing Agency: Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP)

Location: Saratoga County, Towns of Moreau and Corinth; Warren County Towns of Lake Luzerne and Queensbury

Size of Area: 3,368 acres

DEC Region: 5

OPRHP Region: Saratoga-Capital District (Region 11)

General Site Information: The Moreau Lake BCA is within Moreau Lake State Park. The Hudson River divides the Park into a northern portion in Warren County owned by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and managed by OPRHP and the southern portion in Saratoga County owned and administered by OPRHP. Hemlock-northern hardwood forest with associated beech-maple forest dominates the BCA. Much of the terrain is steep and rocky. There are about seven miles of shoreline along the Hudson River.

Vision Statement: The Moreau Lake BCA will be managed to achieve an appropriate balance between conservation of the diverse assemblage of bird species using the area for breeding or during migration, and access to and recreational use of various areas of the BCA. The areas most critical to bird conservation will be designated as a BCA. Other areas that have some conservation value to birds but are less significant will not be included as part of the BCA. While these areas have some suitable habitat, factors such as habitat quality, size or location reduce their significance to bird conservation. The park may seek input from the BCA staff for management recommendations for these areas.

Key BCA Criteria: Migratory concentration site; diverse species concentration site; species at risk site (ECL §11-2001, 3.e, f, h). Moreau Lake BCA is a stopover site for Neotropical migratory songbirds especially forest dwelling migrants during both spring and fall migrations. The site supports a diversity of birds associated with upland forest. It is also a significant wintering site for the state and federally threatened Bald Eagle and regularly supports state threatened Pied-billed Grebe (possible breeder) and Northern Harrier (spring and fall migration); and state species of special concern Cooper's Hawk (possible breeder) and Red-shouldered Hawk (probable breeder).

Critical Habitat Types: The hemlock-northern hardwood forest makes up about two-thirds of the BCA. It is a significant ecological community because of its size, contiguous nature and is an excellent example of this community type in NYS. This combined with other upland forest (e.g. beech-maple mesic forest and Appalachian oak-pine forest) contribute to the diversity of birds and the presence of a wide variety of migrants.

Probable or confirmed breeders found in these forests include Wild Turkey, Pileated Woodpecker, Blue-headed Vireo, and Pine Warbler. Other regularly occurring species during both the breeding season and spring and fall migrations include Golden-crowned Kinglet, Black-throated Green Warbler, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Hermit Thrush and White-throated Sparrow.

The Hudson River supports birds such as Common Loon and Osprey on migration. Songbirds concentrate along major rivers during spring and fall migrations. It is also a significant overwintering site for Bald Eagles.

Pied-billed Grebes regularly occur in Mud Pond from spring through fall and may breed there.

Operation and Management Considerations:

- *Identify habitat management activities needed to maintain site as a BCA.* – The type and extent of recreational activities proposed for the park in the Master Plan will not require any significant alteration of existing habitat. However, it is important to ensure that the large areas of hemlock-northern hardwood, beech-maple and associated habitat are protected from fragmentation and isolation of habitats.
- *Identify seasonal sensitivities; adjust routine operation, accordingly.* – Snowmobiling takes place in the Warren County area primarily by local residents. Bald Eagles winter along the Hudson River below Spier Falls Dam. Any management activities that may lead to an increase in snowmobile use on the north side of the river should be evaluated regarding the potential to disturb the eagles. OPRHP will work with DEC's Endangered Species Unit in this regard.
- *Identify state activities or operation that may pose a threat to the critical habitat types identified above; recommend alternatives to existing and future operations, which may pose threats to those habitats.* – Recreation activity along the shore of the Hudson River could possibly affect roosting areas for Bald Eagles. Special care is required to assure the protection of large trees that can serve as important roosting locations.
- *Identify any existing or potential use impacts; recommend new management strategies to address those impacts.* – The master plan calls for a trails plan for the Warren County section of the park. Any new trails or trail segments will be located and designed so as to minimize impacts on birds and their habitats.

The areas across from the park entrance and Potter's Point were evaluated as having conservation value to birds but not significant enough to qualify as a BCA. The existing campground and day use areas may be important to birds during the off season (mid-October to mid-May). Park and OPRHP's Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) staff will work together on management activities that may impact bird conservation in these areas.

Education, Outreach, and Research Considerations:

- *Assess current access; recommend enhanced access, if feasible.* – The Hudson River provides a corridor for canoeists and kayakers. The current owners of the hydroelectric power generating stations, in accordance with their operating license

from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), has created four water access campsites, two portage trails and two boat launches within the OPRHP/power company agreement area. Improvement and expansion of facilities should not compromise habitats along the river.

There are no connector trails, bridges or routes that connect the Saratoga County portions of the park to the Warren County portions. Crossing can only be done by boat or by driving out of the park to bridges in Glens Falls or Corinth.

There is no formal access to The Warren County portion of the BCA/Park.

The master plan calls for parking and access points to be developed within the Warren County portion of the BCA/park. These areas will be created by improving and upgrading existing cleared areas. Informational kiosks will be used at parking and trailhead areas.

- *Determine education and outreach needs; recommend strategies and materials.* – Update Moreau Lake State Park bird checklist.

Develop interpretive materials that highlight bird and other wildlife viewing. Interpretation and viewing etiquette for wintering Bald Eagles will be developed in conjunction with DEC's Endangered Species Unit as appropriate.

Work with local partners such as the Southern Adirondack Audubon Society to provide bird related walks and programs to supplement the Park's interpretation program.

A BCA Kiosk will be developed and placed in an appropriate location.

- *Identify research needs; prioritize and recommend specific projects or studies.* – Use of the site by wintering (Dec. 1 – Mar. 31) Bald Eagles should be monitored. The impacts of activities along the Hudson River (e.g. snowmobiling) should be studied in relation to their impacts on Bald Eagles.

Breeding birds will be monitored with a focus on the status of Pied-billed Grebe at Mud Pond as well as breeding status of Cooper's and Red-shouldered Hawks. Any new breeding data for any bird species should be forwarded to the Breeding Bird Atlas program.

Contacts: Tom Lyons, OPRHP Albany, Phone (518) 474-0409
Ray Perry, OPRHP Albany, Phone (518) 474-0409
Michael Greenslade, OPHRP Moreau Lake State Park,
Phone (518) 793-0511

Sources:

Date Designated:

Date Prepared: (4/22/04 Draft)