



UPPER MISSISSIPPI VALLEY
& GREAT LAKES

WATERBIRD CONSERVATION PLAN

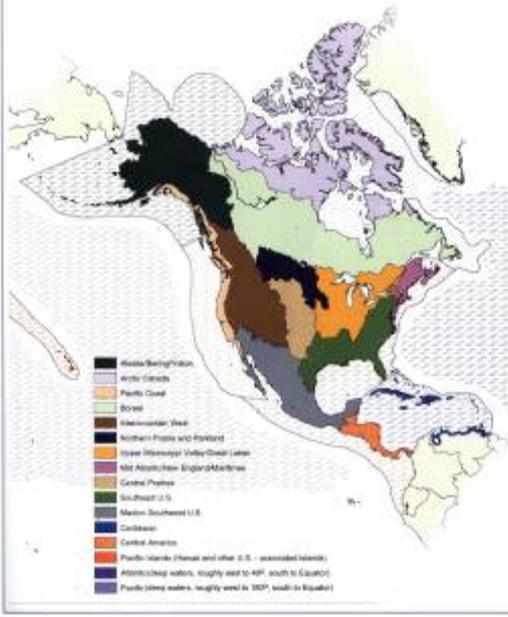


Status of Waterbird Conservation in the Upper Mississippi Valley / Great Lakes Region

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*Regional Plan
Coordinator*

FIG. 1. Geographic Extent of Waterbird Conservation for the Americas: The North American Waterbird Conservation Plan, Showing Waterbird Conservation Planning Regions



Upper Mississippi Valley / Great Lakes Waterbird Planning Region



BIRD CONSERVATION REGIONS

12 – Boreal Hardwood

**13 – Lower Great Lakes /
St. Lawrence Plain**

22 – Tallgrass Prairie

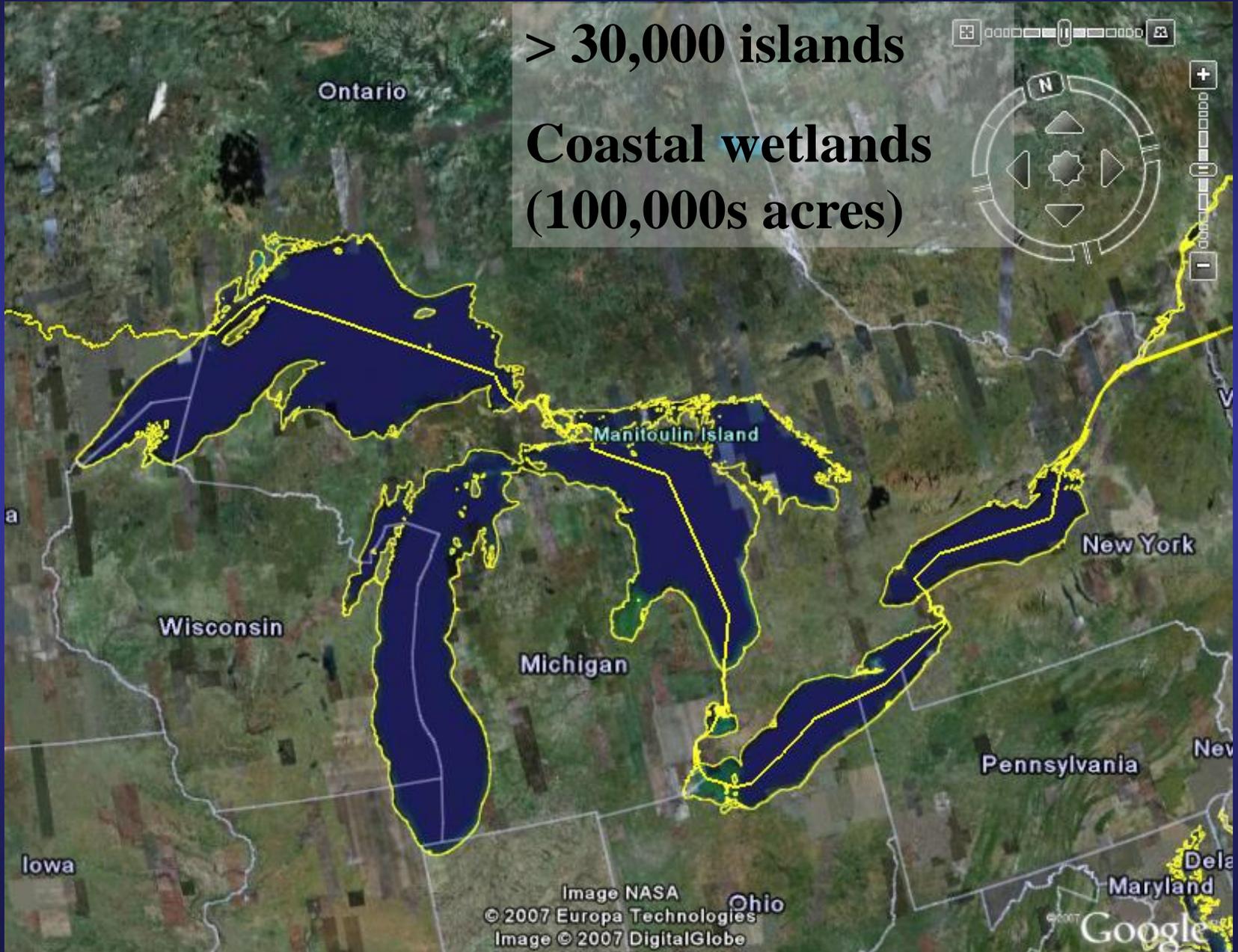
23 – Prairie Hardwood

24 – Central Hardwoods

Wide variety of nesting, roosting and foraging habitats:

> 30,000 islands

Coastal wetlands
(100,000s acres)





Wide variety of nesting, roosting and foraging habitats:

**MS, IL, MO & OH
river floodplains**



Wide variety of nesting, roosting and foraging habitats:



**Deep water lakes &
inland wetlands (non-
Great Lakes)**





46 regularly occurring waterbird species



UMVGL Region especially important for:



RBGU	80 – 94% global
HERG	~ 60% continental
DCCO	~ 28% global
COLO	~ 22% continental
YERA	~ 50% U.S.
WHCR	~ 18% wild, 1 of 3 wild populations



UMVGL Waterbird Issues

Issue/Threat	Priority
Wetland loss/degradation	High
Threats to islands	High
Climate change	High
Human disturbance	High
Contamination/toxics	Medium
Dredging impacts	Medium
Human conflicts*	Medium
Public dislike/dissatisfaction	Medium
Great Lakes H²O level changes (not related to climate change)	Medium
Disease	Medium



UMVGL Plan

Vision:

**Maintain & restore
waterbird
distribution,
abundance and
habitats.**

Goal: Provide science based recommendations that result in robust, self-sustaining populations throughout historical or naturally expanding ranges.

	Conservation Priority in BCR				
<i>English Name</i>	12	13	22	23	24
King Rail	High	High	High	High	High
Least Tern (Interior)	Low	Low	High	High	High
Whooping Crane	Low	Low	Low	High	Low
Pied-billed Grebe	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
American Bittern	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
Least Bittern	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Low
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Low
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium
Yellow Rail	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium	Low
Black Rail	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Low
Sora	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
Common Tern	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
Black Tern	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low

Stewardship and / or Management Priority in BCR

<i>English Name</i>	12	13	22	23	24
Common Loon					
American White Pelican					
Double-crested Cormorant					
<i>Sora</i>					
Virginia Rail					
Common Moorhen					
American Coot					
Sandhill Crane					
Ring-billed Gull					
<i>Black Tern</i>					



CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES

For Highest, High and Moderate Priority species:

- **Population objectives**
- **Habitat objectives**
- **Monitoring objectives**

KEY CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Monitoring - Needs

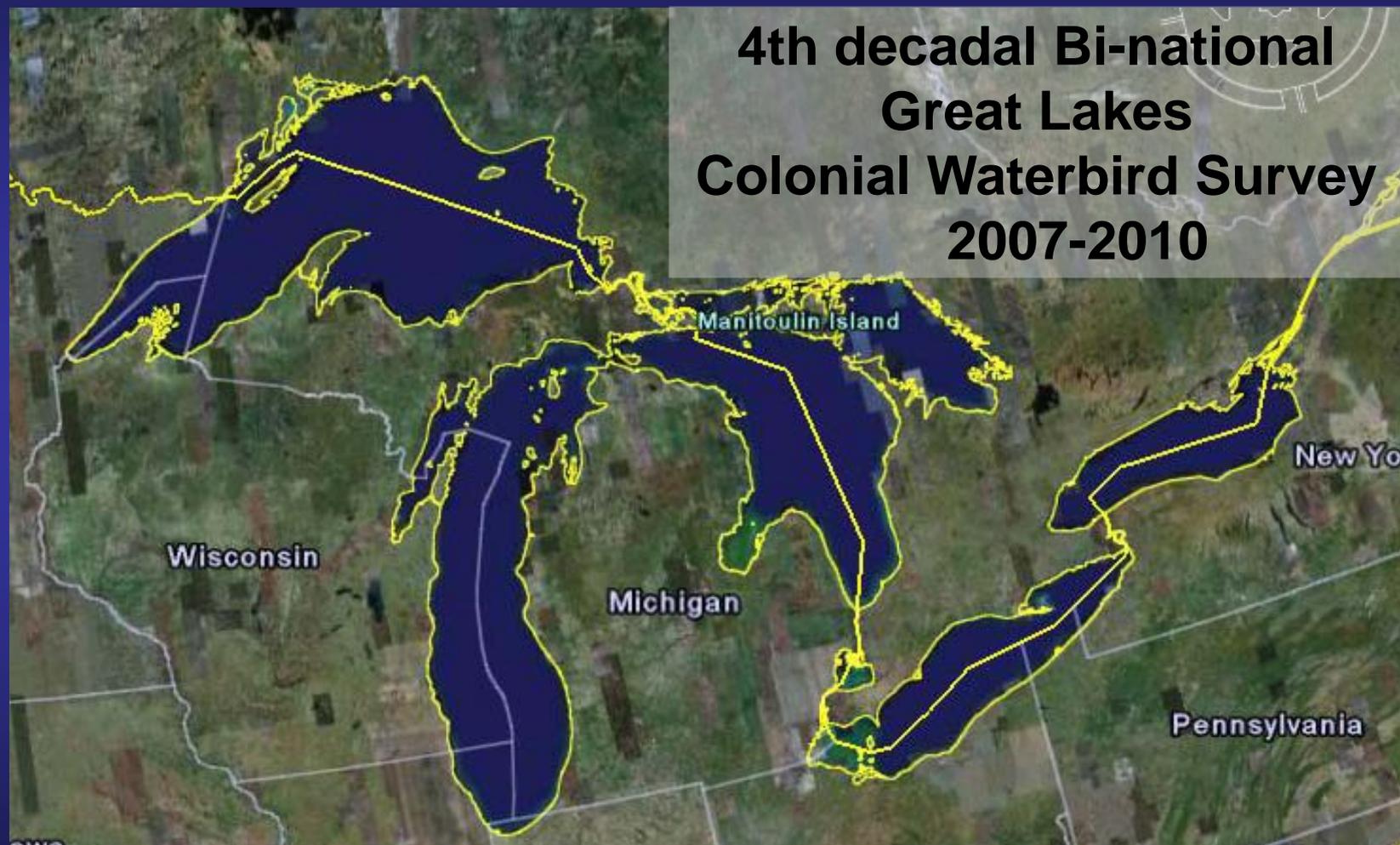
Implement monitoring that uses standard protocols and sampling frameworks to assess:

- Distribution, abundance & trends:
 - high priority for conservation
 - Stewardship species
 - Management species
 - lacking population data

- Demographic parameters / vital rates:
 - select species at select sites

KEY CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Monitoring - Progress



- Use results to redesign survey to be more cost effective and provide better trend estimates

KEY CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Monitoring - Progress

STANDARDIZED NORTH AMERICAN MARSH BIRD MONITORING PROTOCOLS



by
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- Further pilot testing in multiple states
- Make program operational

KEY CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS:

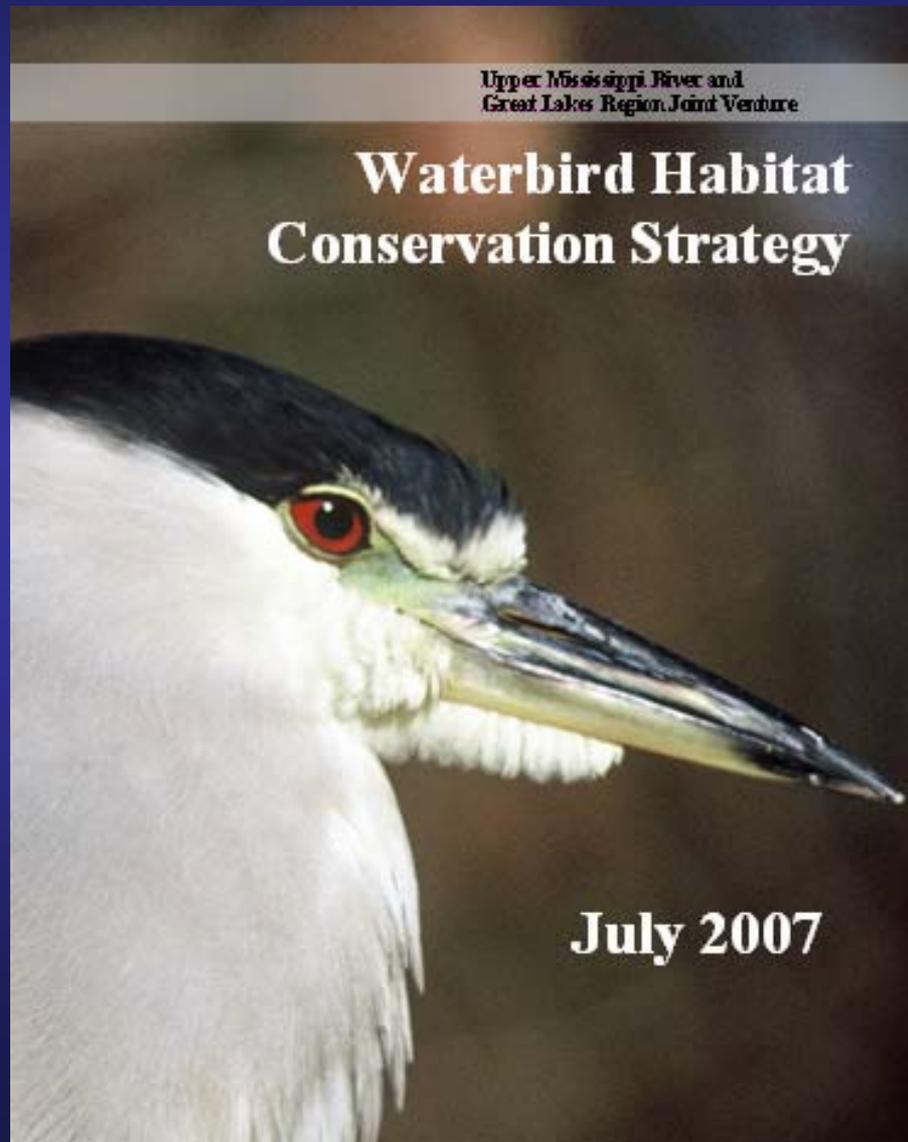
Habitat Protection, Restoration & Management - Needs

- **Identify & prioritize high quality waterbird habitats and sites for conservation.**
- **Work with Upper Mississippi River/Great Lakes and Central Hardwoods Joint Ventures as they implement strategic habitat conservation for waterbirds.**



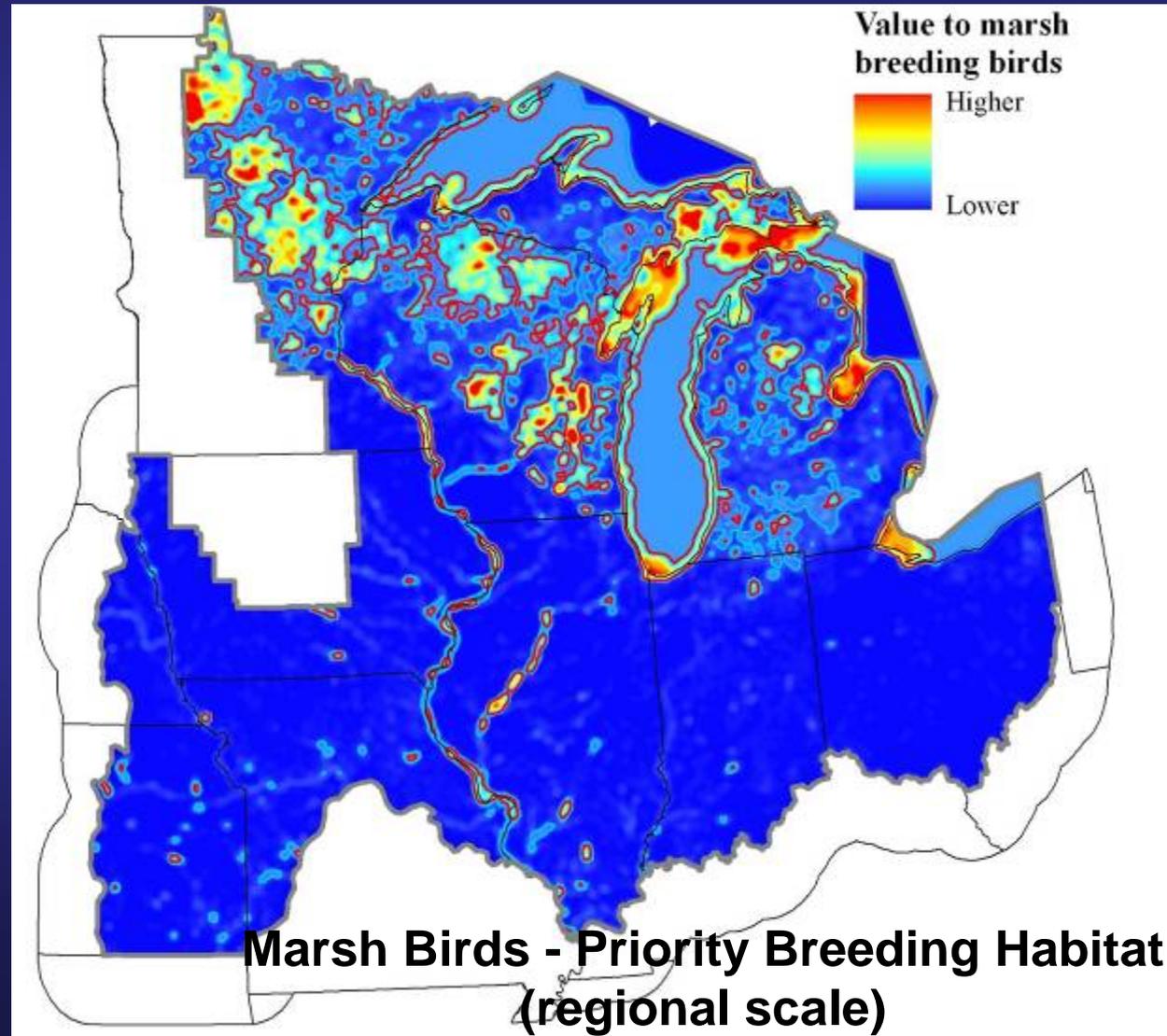
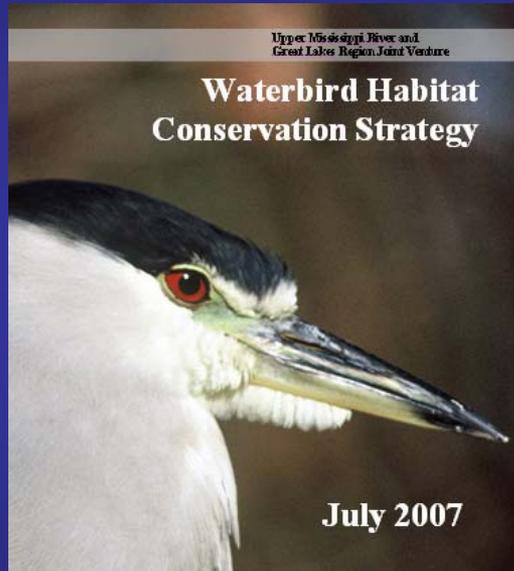
KEY CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS:

Habitat Protection, Restoration & Management - Progress



KEY CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS:

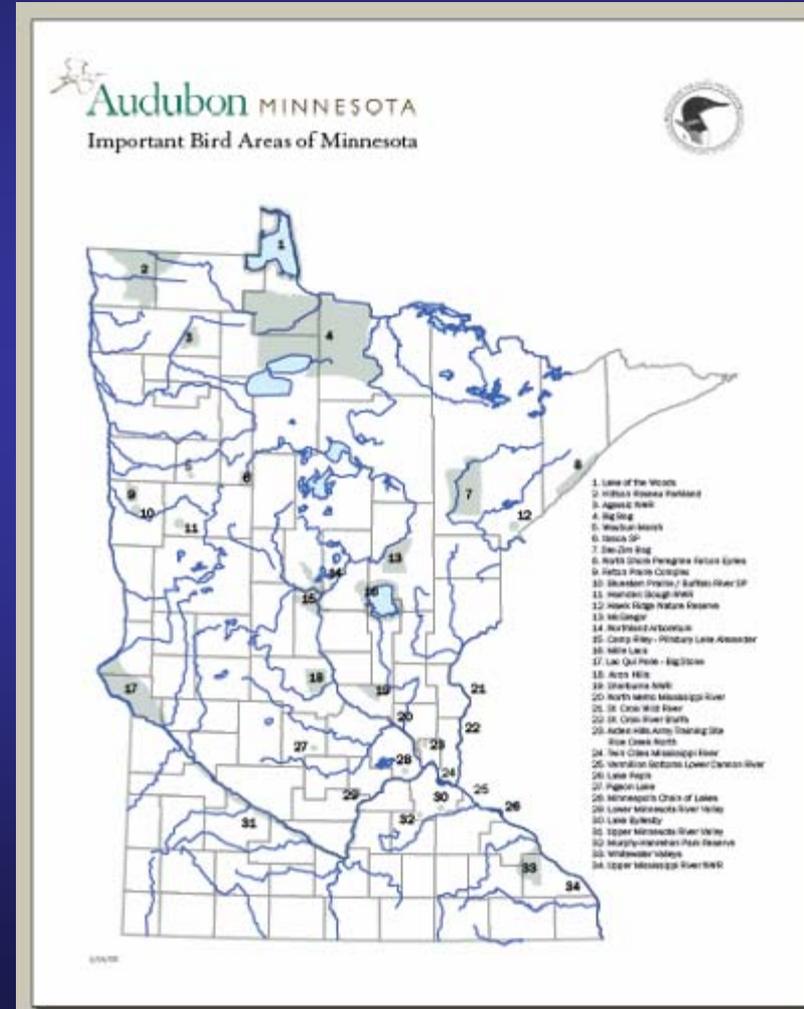
Habitat Protection, Restoration & Management - Progress



KEY CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS:

Habitat Protection, Restoration & Management - Progress

Great Lakes Colonial Waterbird Survey – Priority Sites





KEY CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS:

Habitat Protection, Restoration & Management - Progress

- **North American Wetlands Conservation Act**

KEY CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS:

Population Management - Needs



- Sound science
- Recognize & understand human dimensions component



KEY CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS:

Population Management - Progress

- Migratory bird depredation permits
- Public Resource Depredation Order (DCCO)
 - ✓ NEPA to involve more stakeholders in implementation of orders
- Coordination meetings and scientific symposia
- Research DCCO impacts on fish and vegetation
 - ✓ subject to various interpretations
 - ✓ more is needed
- Study DCCO management impacts on non-target birds
- Human dimensions/education: huge need, little progress

KEY CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Management of Human Disturbance - Needs

Minimize disturbance from:

- Recreation
- Research & Monitoring
- Management activities



KEY CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Management of Human Disturbance - Progress



- **Recreation: Signs, buoys, public education**

KEY CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Management of Human Disturbance - Progress

- Research & Monitoring:
GLCWS via aerial photography



KEY CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Management of Human Disturbance - Progress



- **DCCO management activities: adjusted to minimize impacts on non-target birds**



CONSERVATION ACTIONS FOR PRIORITY SPECIES



• Top conservation needs identified

- Evaluate & improve UMR/GL JV habitat / landscape model

- 2009: investigate migratory pathways & wintering areas of Midwest migratory populations

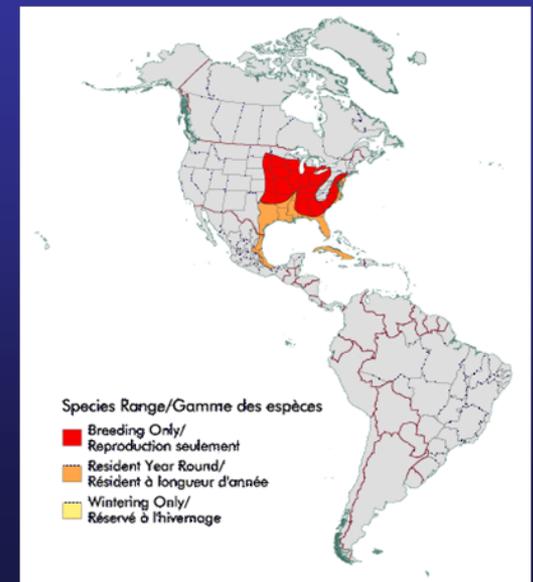
King Rail (*Rallus elegans*) Conservation Plan



Tom Cooper, Plan Coordinator
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Midwest Regional Office
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Fort Snelling, MN 55111



Version 1 – August 2008





Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership:

- Establish migratory eastern population of WHCR**
- Expand distribution of species**



- Population Goal: 125 birds, 25 pairs**
- Current: 68 birds, breeding not well established**



Managing multiple sites throughout GL region to increase productivity & provide more high quality breeding sites



✓ **Research Needs**

✓ **Education and Outreach**





KEY CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS:

Implementation

- Occur at variety of geographic scales, regional to local
- Steering committee to promote and maintain plan
- Working groups to identify and undertake actions
 - Species
 - Geographic areas
 - Issues



Acknowledgments

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Eastern Partnership**