

5.6 Wetlands and Lakes

Area: 3,920,000 acres (1,590,000 ha)

Description and Overall Condition: This landscape component includes all wetlands and lakes distributed throughout the state. There are thousands of wetlands in North Dakota, with densities of more than 150 wetlands per square mile in some areas. The draining, filling, burning, farming, or the complete destruction and alteration of wetlands, especially small temporary wetlands, is extensive and continues to occur. Wetlands located within cropland may be void of emergent vegetation, and those within pasture or range lands are often open to cattle use and degradation. Wetlands are very dynamic according to weather cycles. The key to conservation of many SoCP and other wetland associated wildlife is to provide a mosaic of wetlands and grasslands (see sections 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, and 5.5) integrated to form a landscape. Lakes in North Dakota are particularly susceptible to non-point source pollution, in part due to the great amount of agriculture in the state.

Predominant Natural Vegetation:

Wetlands: fine-textured grasses, sedges, and rushes including common cattail, narrow-leaf cattail, hybrid cattail, Northern reedgrass, prairie cordgrass, phragmites, slender sedge, slough sedge, common spikerush, hardstem bulrush, river bulrush, slender bulrush, marsh smartweed, Baltic rush, sago pondweed, narrowleaf dock, Western dock, marsh cress, silverweed, rough cinquefoil, lanceleaf loostrife, claspingleaf dogbane, germander, marsh hegenettle, Western waterhorehound, wild mint, giant burreed, narrowleaf waterplantain, Western waterplantain, tall mannagrass, whitetop, sloughgrass, water parsnip, muskgrass, horned pondweed, grassleaf pondweed, coontail, white watercrowfoot, common watermilfoil, common bladderwort, Western wigeongrass softstem bulrush, water sedge, sandbar willow

Associated Species of Conservation Priority:

Birds	Distribution	Mammals	Distribution	Reptiles/Amphibians	Distribution
Horned Grebe	East of Missouri River	Arctic Shrew	East of Missouri River	Plains Spadefoot	Scattered
American White Pelican	East of Missouri River, occasionally west	Pygmy Shrew	East of Missouri River	Canadian Toad	East of Missouri River
American Bittern	Statewide			Common Snapping Turtle	Statewide
Northern Pintail	Statewide				
Canvasback	East of Missouri River				
Redhead	East of Missouri River				
Northern Harrier	Statewide				
Yellow Rail	East of Missouri River				
Whooping Crane	Statewide				
Piping Plover	East of Missouri River				
American Avocet	Statewide				
Willet	Statewide				
Long-billed Curlew	West of Missouri River				
Marbled Godwit	Statewide				
Wilson's Phalarope	Statewide				
Franklin's Gull	East of Missouri River				
Black Tern	East of Missouri River				
Short-eared Owl	Statewide				
Sedge Wren	East of Missouri River				
Le Conte's Sparrow	East of Missouri River				
Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow	East of Missouri River				

Other Characteristic Breeding Birds	Fens	Temporary	Seasonal	Semipermanent	Permanent	Permanent Wood-bordered	Alkali	Cropland Ponds	Distribution
Common Loon						X			East of Missouri River, Turtle Mountains
Pied-billed Grebe			X	X	X				Statewide
Red-necked Grebe						X			East of Missouri River, Turtle Mountains, Devils Lake
Eared Grebe				X		X			Statewide
Western Grebe					X	X	X		East of Missouri River
Double-crested Cormorant					X				Statewide
Great Blue Heron					X	X			Statewide
Great Egret					X	X			
Black-crowned Night Heron			X	X	X	X		X	East of Missouri River
White-faced Ibis				X	X				East of Missouri River
Canada Goose				X	X			X	Statewide
Wood Duck									Statewide
Green-winged Teal		X	X	X	X		X	X	Statewide
Mallard	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	Statewide
Blue-winged Teal	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	Statewide
Northern Shoveler	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	Statewide
Gadwall	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	Statewide
American Wigeon		X	X	X	X	X		X	Statewide
Ring-necked Duck						X			East of Missouri River
Lesser Scaup				X	X	X			Statewide
Common Goldeneye						X			East of Missouri River, Turtle Mountains
Hooded Merganser									East of Missouri River
Ruddy Duck			X	X					Statewide
Virginia Rail	X		X	X					East of Missouri River
Sora	X		X	X					Statewide
American Coot			X	X	X				Statewide
Killdeer							X	X	Statewide
Spotted Sandpiper					X	X	X		Statewide
Wilson's Snipe	X								Statewide
Ring-billed Gull					X	X		X	East of Missouri River
California Gull							X	X	East of Missouri River
Common Tern					X	X	X		East of Missouri River
Forster's Tern				X	X				East of Missouri River
Belted Kingfisher						X			Statewide
Willow Flycatcher	X								Statewide
Tree Swallow	X					X			East of Missouri River
Northern Rough-winged Swallow						X			Statewide
Bank Swallow									Statewide
Cliff Swallow									Statewide
Marsh Wren			X	X					East of Missouri River
Yellow Warbler	X								Statewide
Common Yellowthroat	X	X	X	X					Statewide
Yellow-breasted Chat									Statewide
Savannah Sparrow	X	X							Statewide
Song Sparrow	X								Statewide
Swamp Sparrow	X								East of Missouri River
Red-winged Blackbird	X	X	X	X					Statewide
Yellow-headed Blackbird			X	X					Statewide
Brown-headed Cowbird		X	X	X					Statewide

Other Characteristic Breeding Amphibians, Reptiles, and Mammals	Fens	Temporary	Seasonal	Semipermanent	Permanent	Permanent Wood-bordered	Alkali	Cropland Ponds	Distribution
American Toad	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	Eastern 1/3 of state
Great Plains Toad	X	X	X	X				X	Statewide, except extreme northern counties
Woodhouse's Toad	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	West of Missouri River and Missouri Coteau
Gray Treefrog	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	Red River Valley
Chorus Frog	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	Statewide
Wood Frog						X			East of Missouri River
Northern Leopard Frog	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	Statewide
Tiger Salamander	X	X	X	X	X			X	Statewide
Common Mudpuppy									Red River
Painted Turtle	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	Statewide
Common Garter Snake					X	X			Statewide
Plains Garter Snake					X	X			Statewide



One township (6X6 miles) showing the high density of wetlands (black areas) in Kidder County.



Chase Lake, Stutsman County..



Typical wetland with emergent vegetation.

5.6.a Conservation Problems and Actions for Wetland Communities

WETLANDS AND LAKES		
CONSERVATION PROBLEM	CONSERVATION ACTION	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Direct Loss of Habitat		
Draining, filling or other loss of wetlands.	Protect wetlands where possible, particularly those which occur within grassland mosaics (i.e. wetland easements).	NDGFD USFWS NRCS ACOE FAA FHWA PPJV NGPJV NDNRT DU Delta Audubon
	Work with partners to ensure Swampbuster provisions are maintained.	
	Continue to use the Section 404 program to ensure affected wetlands are appropriately mitigated.	
	Continue to work with other federal agencies (i.e. FAA and FHWA) not covered by Section 404 or Swampbuster to ensure affected wetlands are appropriately mitigated.	
	Restore wetlands.	
Habitat Degradation		
Lowering of water tables and associated wetlands/lakes (e.g. irrigation or municipal withdrawal).	Work with NDSWC to include fish and wildlife values in the water permitting process.	NDGFD NDSWC USFWS
Farming, grazing, and burning of wetlands resulting in the loss of vegetation and reduced water quality and quantity (e.g. sedimentation).	Develop or help promote additional incentive programs (e.g. buffer strips, fencing) to minimize impacts to wetland values (i.e. 319).	NDGFD USFWS NRCS PPJV NGPJV NDNRT DU Delta Audubon Private Landowners
Water quality impairment (i.e. non-point source run-off and sedimentation).	Continue to work with ND 319 Task Force in prioritizing projects within impaired watersheds and implementing BMPs.	NDGFD NDDOH 319 Task Force
Invasive and Noxious Species		
Noxious weeds (i.e. purple loosestrife, salt cedar).	Control noxious weeds through biological and chemical methods.	NDSL D
Invasion and expansion of cattails, particularly the hybrid species (i.e. <i>Typha x glauca</i>).	Promote a diversity of cattail stands to provide for a variety of cover types.	NDGFD NDSL USFWS NRCS WS/APHIS ACOE PPJV DU
Aquatic Nuisance Species.	Cooperate with Fisheries Division on state aquatic nuisance species plan.	NDGFD NDDAG NDDOH NDPRD NDSWC Water Users Assoc.

WETLANDS AND LAKES		
CONSERVATION PROBLEM	CONSERVATION ACTION	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Data Gaps		
Lack of baseline information on SoCP.	Survey areas of data gaps. Conduct research/surveys to establish baseline information on SoCP.	NDGFD
Conversion of ephemeral or temporary wetlands to a permanent wetland.	Continue to study the effects of altering ephemeral wetlands on fish and wildlife resources.	NDGFD NPWRC USFS USFWS
Improper fish stocking.	Study the effects of fish stocking on other aquatic SoCP.	NDGFD NPWRC Universities
Conservation Awareness		
Knowledge on the value of wetlands.	Continue to work with partners in promoting and distributing educational materials related to wetland values and good wetland stewardship.	NDGFD NDDOH NDSWC USFWS NRCS NDSUEXT