

**Shoshone-Paiute Tribes
of the
Duck Valley Indian Reservation**

A Proposal to Survey Wildlife and Habitat in the Blue Creek Wetlands for the Development of a
Wetlands Management Plan and Protection of Priority Conservation Sites

Program Summary:

The Blue Creek Wetlands (Blue Creek) complex, approximately 10,864 acres, on the Duck Valley Indian Reservation (DVIR) of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes (Tribes) is a cultural and biological priority habitat supporting several at-risk species. Blue Creek is known as the “Serengeti of the Great Basin” due to its size and the abundance and diversity of wildlife, particularly water fowl and birds, that this giant desert wetland supports. Other than casual observations, however, the Tribes haven’t completed the basic surveys and habitat characterizations from which wildlife-specific planning and management strategies are developed for Tribal ordinances, Tribal management plans, and regional conservation efforts. Management objectives and priority conservation sites for Blue Creek are critical due to the extensive, unmanaged grazing in the area. If awarded, this funding would allow the Tribes to develop a complete wildlife survey and habitat assessment for wildlife species supported by Blue Creek for use as wildlife-specific guidance in Tribal land and livestock management strategies and for use in working with Tribal livestock owners.

The Tribes’ FWP will develop a fine-scale inventory and assessment of wildlife populations and their associated habitats in the Blue Creek complex. This data will be used for population and habitat monitoring, designation of priority conservation sites, design of habitat treatments, expanding Tribal capacity to be more responsive to management needs, and to cultivate alliances with other governmental and non-governmental agencies. To facilitate monitoring and management efforts, data will be stored and evaluated in the Tribes’ GIS database for mapping purposes, the Idaho Conservation Data Center’s database, and the Great Basin Bird Observatory’s regional database for the All-Bird Monitoring effort. All wildlife information will be compiled within the Tribal Wetlands Management Plan, critical for use as guidance in the development of a Tribal Grazing Ordinance and Range Management Plan. Finally, data gathering and land management efforts will be used as an educational tool for the Shoshone-Paiute community.

This project is proposed as part of a longer term 3-year initiative; however, if funding is not available or awarded in future years, this project’s objectives and benefits stand on their own.