

Table 3. Priority species, Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge.

Rank	Priority Species	Life Cycle Activity	Priority Status Noted
1	American Avocet	Breeding, Migration	UT PIF ¹ , IMWSP ² , IMWJV ³ , GSL ⁴
2	Cinnamon Teal	Breeding	IMWJV
3	Black-necked Stilt	Breeding	UT PIF, IMWSP, GSL
4	White-faced Ibis	Breeding	IMWB, GSL
5	Shorebirds	Migration	
6	Waterfowl	Migration	
7	Tundra Swan	Staging/Migration	IMWJV
8	Snowy Plover	Breeding	IMWSP, IMWJV, GSL
9	Marbled Godwit	Staging/Migration	IMWSP, GSL
10	Long-billed Curlew	Breeding	UT PIF, IMWSP, IMWJV, UT List
11	American White Pelican	Feeding	UT PIF, IMWJV, UT List ⁵ , IMWB ⁶ , GSL
12	Redhead	Breeding	IMWJV
13	Wilson's Phalarope	Staging/Migration	IMWSP, GSL, BCR 9 ⁷
14	Long-billed Dowitcher	Staging/Migration	IMWSP, GSL
15	Franklin's Gull	Breeding	IMWJV, IMWB, BCR 9
16	Black Tern	Breeding/Migration	IMWB, BCR 9

 1 Utah Partners in Flight Plan (Parrish et al. 2002); 2 Intermountain West Regional Shorebird Plan (Oring et al. 2000); 3 Intermountain West Joint Venture (Utah Steering Committee 2003); 4 Great Salt Lake Shorebird Management Plan, draft (Paul et al. 1999 DRAFT); 5 Utah Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife Resources, sensitive species list (1998); 6 Intermountain West Waterbird Plan, draft (Ivey *in prep.* 2003); 7 Partners in Flight, Bird Conservation Region 9, Basin and Range (Pashley et al. 2000).

A. Identification of refuge resources of concern.

Effective and efficient management of natural resources on lands within the National Wildlife Refuge System means knowing the species and habitats most in need of our conservation efforts. Our approach to selecting priority species was to first assemble the landscape-scale bird conservation plans. Priority species were identified by comparing lists of priority species and habitats identified in the national plans, stepped down to Intermountain West regional plans, then to the Great Salt Lake basin and finally to the Refuge (Table 3). In this final step we considered the historic, current and potential of the Refuge to contribute toward the conservation of the species and/or species habitat. Information from various conservation plans and published literature on the priority species was assembled and used as ranking factors (Table 4). Species listed under the Endangered Species Act and the Utah Sensitive Species list were also evaluated.

The underlying ecological principle to prioritization is that focused management actions on priority species also benefits other avian species (and other forms of wildlife). In other words, focused action on priority species will extend benefits to most birds utilizing the Refuge.

Table 4. Priority species and ranking factors, Bear River Refuge.

Priority Rank & Species	Ranking Factors
1 American Avocet	* Refuge, as part of GSL hosts up to 14% of continental breeding population (Refuge alone 1%). * Refuge as part of GSL hosts up to 55% of continental population during migration (Paul and Manning 2002).
2 Cinnamon Teal	* Northern Utah marshes host up to 60% of continental breeding population (Bellrose 1980).
3 Black-necked Stilt	* Refuge, as part of GSL hosts 79% of IMW migrating birds (Shurford et al. 2002). * Refuge hosts 2% of continental breeding population (Refuge records).
4 White-faced Ibis	* Refuge, as part of GSL hosts world's largest breeding colony (USFWS 1982).
5 Shorebirds	* Refuge, as part of GSL recognized as WHSRN Hemispheric Site. * Refuge hosts an average spring (April-May) population of 18,000 shorebirds and hosts an average fall (July-September) population of 69,000 shorebirds.
6 Waterfowl	* Refuge hosts an average 11,000 (July 1-14) molting Northern Pintail. * Refuge hosts an average spring (March-April) peak population of 119,000 waterfowl and an average fall peak (1 st week of Oct.) of 263,000 birds. * Refuge can host up to < 500,000 waterfowl in fall.
7 Tundra Swan	* Refuge and adjacent Bear River Club, host up to 30% of Western Population of Tundra Swan (Refuge 15%).
8 Snowy Plover	* Refuge, as part of GSL hosts >50% of continental breeding population (Page et al. 1991).
9 Marbled Godwit	* Refuge and GSL hosts up to 86% of IMW region's Marbled Godwit (Shuford et al. 2002). * Refuge as part of GSL, only known inland staging area in North America (Shuford 1994). * Refuge peak (30,000) is 15-21% of continental population.
10 Long-billed Curlew	* Refuge historic records of 50 breeding pair makes Refuge important breeding site in IMW.
11 American White Pelican	* Refuge is most important foraging site in GSL for Pelican. * The GSL colony is one of three largest in North America (Parrish et al. 2002).
12 Redhead	* Bear River delta noted as having the highest breeding concentration known in North America (Weller 1964).
13 Wilson's Phalarope	* GSL recognized as largest staging area in world (Jehl 1988).
14 Long-billed Dowitcher	* The Refuge, as part of GSL hosts 39% of IMW population during migration which is equivalent to 3% of the continental population. * Refuge fall population is 1% of continental population.
15 Franklin's Gull	* The GSL staging population is 9.2% of continental population. * Refuge breeding population is 0.8% of continental population and 13% of the Utah population.
16 Black Tern	* Historic Refuge records indicate Refuge could host >20 pair which is 33% of Utah objective of 60 pair. * Refuge, as part of GSL may host 9% of Great Basin population during migration