



Oregon Coordinated Aquatic Bird Monitoring:
Description of Important Aquatic Bird Site

Del Norte Coast (Lake Earl and Lake Talawa)

BCS number: 86-2

****NOTE: We were unable to determine all necessary information for this site description. If you would like to contribute the needed information to this description, please contact the Klamath Bird Observatory at kbo@klamathbird.org.*

Site description author(s)

Danielle Morris, Research and Monitoring Team, Klamath Bird Observatory

Primary contact for this site

N/A

Site location (UTM)

Datum: NAD83, Zone: 10, Easting: 401184, Northing: 4631586

General description

“Lake Earl is an important wetland, a natural wonderland that hosts almost 300 bird species, 15 species of fish, at least 50 species of mammals, and nearly 250 kinds of trees, flowers, and grasses. Lake Earl is also a place where wildlife can find refuge. As one of the prime stopover spots along the Pacific Flyway, Lake Earl hosts as many as 100,000 birds during seasonal migrations. The rich diversity of life around Lake Earl also includes coyote, mink, beaver, otter, shrew, the occasional mountain lion, elk, and black bear. The lagoon is a refuge for seven threatened and endangered species, including Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Brown Pelican, Snowy Plover, Tidewater Goby, and Oregon Silverspot Butterfly.” (Sierra Club 2010)

“Lake Earl is the largest lake in Del Norte County, covering 3,300 acres. Lake Talawa [also referred to as Lake Talowa] is joined to Lake Earl by a narrow body of water about 200 yards long and 100 yards wide, and covers approximately 500 to 600 acres.... Many natural ponds and marshes are present throughout the study area. Lake Talawa has a sandy bottom; whereas, Lake Earl, further inland from the sand dune area bordering the ocean, has a more natural bottom of mud.” (Johnson and Yocom 1966)

Boundaries and ownership

Boundaries:

Both of these lakes are located in Del Norte County, California, approximately 5 miles north of Crescent City near/on the Pacific coast.

Ownership:

California Department of Fish & Game

Water levels

Briefly outline historical water levels, since being managed. What causes water level fluctuations? How does water level fluctuate throughout the year?

“Much of Lake Earl varies from 16 to 20 feet deep, whereas Lake Talawa is relatively shallow. A channel, 15 to 20 feet wide, passes through Lake Talawa created by the winter flow of water through these two lakes to the ocean.” (Johnson and Yocom 1966)

“Water levels in Lake Earl fluctuate; when the lagoon is high, it covers approximately 5,000 acres and is nearly 60 miles in circumference.” (Sierra Club 2010)

Focal species use and timing

Please indicate Presence/Absence/Unknown for each species and section of annual cycle. If you feel like adding another guild or species that is important to the area and warrants more interest, indicate it in the blank spaces at the bottom.

Focal Group/Species	Wintering	Breeding	Migration
Secretive Marsh Bird Group	Present	Unknown	Present
Colonial Nesting Bird Group	Present	Present	Present
Migrating Shorebird Group	Present	Present	Present
Ground-based Waterbird Group	Present	Present	Present
American Bittern	Unknown	Present	Present
American White Pelican	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Barrow's Goldeneye	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Black Tern	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Black-crowned Night Heron	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Black-necked Stilt	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Bufflehead	Present	Present	Unknown
California Gull	Unknown	Present	Present
Caspian Tern	Unknown	Present	Unknown
Clark's Grebe	Present	Unknown	Present
Common Loon	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Dusky Canada Goose	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Eared Grebe	Present	Unknown	Unknown
Forster's Tern	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Franklin's Gull	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Great Blue Heron	Present	Present	Present
Greater Sandhill Crane	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Green Heron	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Least Bittern	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Lesser Sandhill Crane	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Long-billed Curlew	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Pied-billed Grebe	Present	Unknown	Present
Red-necked Grebe	Present	Unknown	Unknown
Snowy Egret	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Sora	Unknown	Unknown	Present
Upland Sandpiper	Rare	Rare	Rare
Virginia Rail	Present	Unknown	Present
Western Grebe	Present	Unknown	Present
Western Snowy Plover	Unknown	Present	Present
White-faced Ibis	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Yellow Rail	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

Focal Species information collected from eBird species checklist data (2008-2010)

Location of Type 1 and 2 habitat within the site

Functional Group	Type 1 Habitat	Type 2 Habitat
Ground Based Aquatic Birds	Sand and mud flats, open waters	Unknown
Secretive Marsh Birds	Salt marshes and emergent vegetation	Unknown
Colonial Nesters	Emergent vegetation, wooded ridges	Unknown
Migrating Shorebirds	Sand and mud flats	Unknown

Access to Type 1 and Type 2 habitats

- “At present there are few roads, and no hiking trails. The upland area can be explored on foot where you might encounter quail or grouse moving through the forest of Sitka spruce and pine trees.
- Fishing, boating, and bird watching are allowed. Cutthroat and steelhead are the most popular fish species, and boaters find the Narrows the most accommodating area for boats because of dense vegetation in the lakes.” (California Department of Fish and Game n.d.)

Audibility/visibility of focal speciesz

Describe any issues that would diminish the detectability of birds. e.g Secretive marsh birds are difficult to detect due to hwy noise
Unknown

Conservation issues

The presence of the New Zealand Mud Snail has been confirmed within the Lake Earl Wildlife Area (California Department of Fish and Game n.d.).

“California has already destroyed more than 91% of its wetlands, making permanent protection of Lake Earl all the more important. Yet Lake Earl is threatened by an undeveloped subdivision..... and although no homes were ever constructed, 1,500 lots were created and streets were constructed. Flooding and nonexistent sewage capacity have prevented Pacific Shores from being developed thus far. Today, developers and ranchers are still trying to drain Lake Earl and turn it into a mud puddle.” (Sierra Club)

Conservation measures taken, in progress, or proposed

Unknown

Past and current surveys

Briefly describe past and or current surveys, and how completed. Refer to certain protocols/other documents or persons (list contact info) if survey specifics are unknown
Unknown

Potential survey methods

Description: (describe survey methods that are appropriate for your site and recommend the best means in which to complete them considering the limitations and history above. Include information on suggested standardized or specialized protocols)
Unknown

Selection bias: (Discuss the potential for selection bias when designing a survey in the future, especially when sub-sample of the site will be studied. Point out how bias could be introduced and recommend ways to prevent this)

Unknown

Measurement error and bias:

Unknown

Potential pilot studies

Unknown

Literature cited

- California Department of Fish and Game (DFG). n.d. Lake Earl Wildlife Area – Del Norte County. <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/lands/wa/region1/lakeearl.html>. Accessed April 23, 2010.
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- Google Map. 2010. Map of Del Norte Coast including Lake Earl and Lake Talawa. <http://maps.google.com/>. Accessed April 23, 2010.
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- National Audubon Society. 2010. Important Bird Areas in the U.S. Available at <http://www.audubon.org/bird/iba>. Accessed April 23, 2010.
- Sierra Club. 2010. The Great Coastal Places Campaign; Lake Earl. <http://www.sierraclub.org/ca/coasts/hotbox/lakeearl.asp>. Accessed April 23, 2010.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2010. National Wetlands Inventory website. U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C. <http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/>. Accessed April 23, 2010.

Figure 1: Google Earth (2010) map of Del Norte Coast including Lake Earl and Lake Talawa with the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory (2010) layer.



Figure 2: Google Map (2010) road view of Del Norte Coast including Lake Earl and Lake Talawa.

