

[From Summer 1999]

Shorebird Use Study

The U.S. F&W Regional Office has designated Chincoteague NWR and Bombay Hook NWR as refuges to participate in a one year pilot shorebird use study. The Region-wide study will begin next year and will involve up to 12 refuges. The purpose of the study is to determine if there are geographic differences in shorebird use of managed wetlands at national wildlife refuges within Region 5. The study will also determine if specific management actions within wetland impoundments can influence their use by shorebirds. The results will be used by Region 5 managers to establish shorebird management objectives and improve shorebird habitat.

This year, Chincoteague Refuge has participated by designating two impoundments as shorebird use areas. One managed specifically for the spring shorebird migration (South Wash Flats) and the other (B South or Snow Goose Pool) to be managed as outlined in the Refuge's Water Management Program. Periodic sampling within these impoundments is being conducted for soil invertebrates, water depth throughout the impoundments, vegetation, and shorebird use. The shorebird surveys and impoundment data collection are scheduled to conclude around the middle of June. Once again, Volunteers Ann and Paul Smith are assisting by conducting the shorebird surveys.

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