



Audubon MINNESOTA



**MINNESOTA IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS
Nomination Form**

Partial funding for this nomination was provided through the Minnesota State Wildlife Grants program grant T-23-T-1 in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program.

SITE INFORMATION

TWIN VALLEY – NEAL PRAIRIE		
County (Primary): Norman	Townships: Ida Rockwell, Home Lake	
Approximate Size: 18,417ac, 7,453h	Accuracy of Acreage: Good	
Central Coordinates:	Latitude: 47.214	Longitude: -96.378
Elevation (max – min): 935 – 1,090 ft, 285 – 332m		
BCR Name/Number: Prairie Potholes/11		
ECS Name (to subsection) BIOTICS Fill in: Prairie Parkland Province 251, Red River Valley Section 251A, Red River Prairie sub section 251Aa		
WBDB IBA ID: MNUS044	BIOTICS ID:	

SITE DESCRIPTION

The Twin Valley - Neal Prairie is located approximately three miles southwest of Twin Valley Minnesota or 1 mile west of Syre Minnesota in Norman County. Norman County is located along the Minnesota - North Dakota Border. This prairie area is located in the Red River Valley ECS Section. This prairie area is defined as a core area in the Minnesota Prairie Plan.

The Twin Valley - Neal Prairie IBA includes private land, two Scientific and Natural Areas (SNA's) and several Wildlife Management Areas (WMA's).

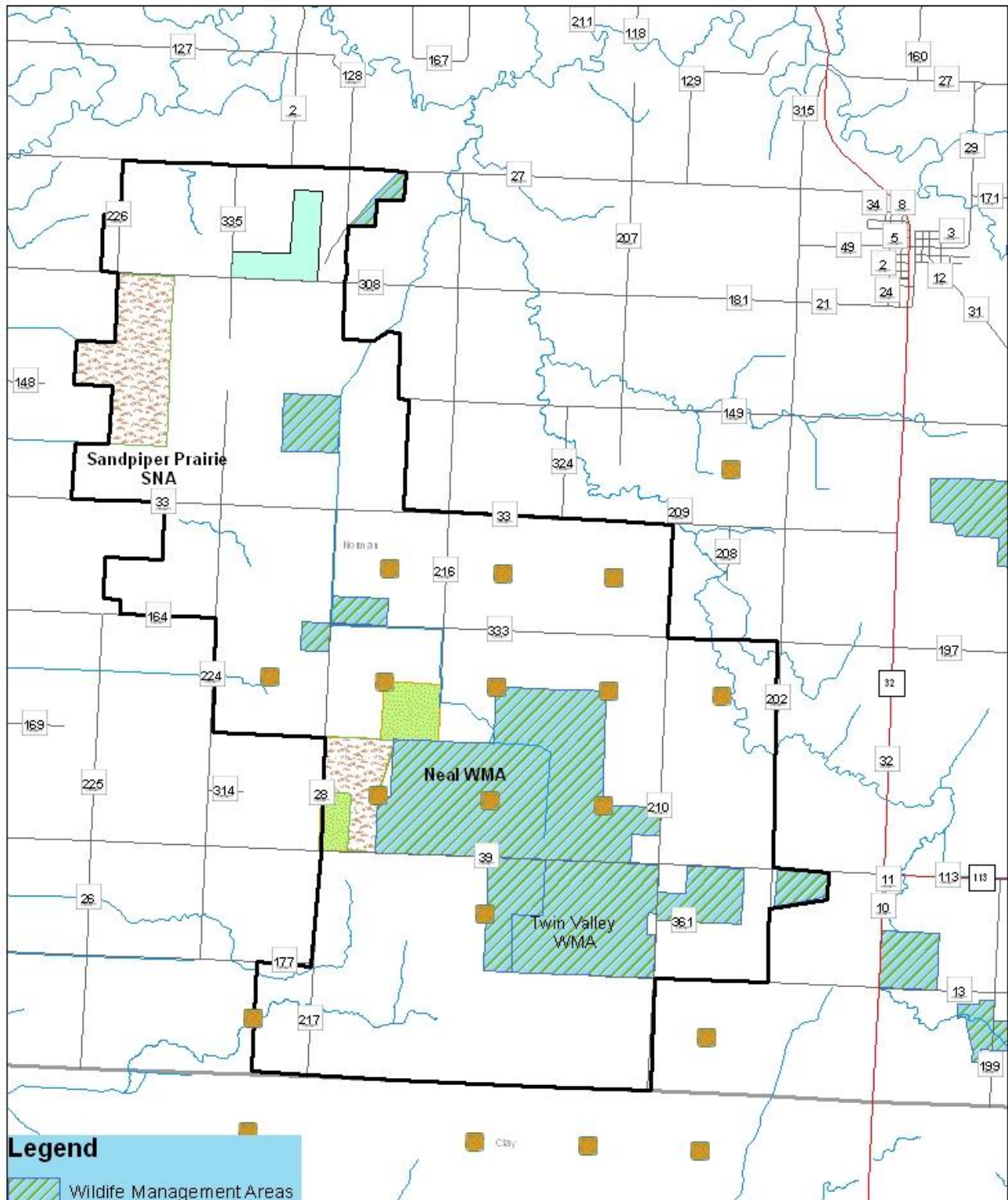
The habitat consists of mesic, wet and dry prairies as well as marsh communities located within an area consisting primarily of agriculture. The upland areas located on the SNA's consist of big bluestem and prairie cord grass along with an assortment of prairie forbs and wildflowers including lead plant, asters, purple prairie clover, needle and thread grass and painted cup. The poorer drained soils and low lying areas consist of wet prairies and shallow marshes with sedges, cattails and great bulrush being the dominant plant species.

The Twin Valley - Neal Prairie is an important site for prairie-chickens as several booming grounds are found here. Two Prairie Chicken observation blinds are available for public during

the spring breeding season. They can be reserved by contacting the Twin Valley Heritage Center at (218) 584-5658.

Historically was important for cranes but they may no longer be using this area in large numbers yet breeding numbers of cranes are increasing.

Map Source: MN DNR Shapefile Status: Done



Legend

- Wildlife Management Areas
- Scientific & Natural Areas
- TNC Preserves
- Waterfowl Production Areas
- Prairie_Chicken_Lek

Twin Valley
Neal Prairie
IBA



SITE JUSTIFICATION

BIOTICS Field Name: Site Significance/Other Values; Comments

MN-1e. Species Diversity

Approximately 106 species of birds have been documented on the two Scientific and Natural Areas located within the boundaries of the Twin Valley - Neal Prairie IBA.

Species Include:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Canada Goose | Long-eared Owl | American Redstart |
| Trumpeter Swan | Red-headed Woodpecker | European Starling |
| Mallard | Red-bellied Woodpecker | Common Yellowthroat |
| Blue-winged Teal | Downy Woodpecker | Cedar Waxwing |
| Green-winged Teal | Hairy Woodpecker | Orange-crowned Warbler |
| Wood Duck | Northern Flicker | Blackpoll Warbler |
| Northern Pintail | Alder Flycatcher | American Redstart |
| Sharp-tailed Grouse | Willow Flycatcher | Northern Waterthrush |
| Greater Prairie Chicken | Least Flycatcher | Wilson's Warbler |
| Wild Turkey | Great Crested Flycatcher | Chipping Sparrow |
| Double-crested | Western Kingbird | Clay-colored Sparrow |
| Cormorant | Eastern Kingbird | Vesper Sparrow |
| Great Blue Heron | Eastern Phoebe | Savannah Sparrow |
| American Bittern | Eastern Wood Peewee | Grasshopper Sparrow |
| Least Bittern | Yellow Throated Vireo | Henslow's Sparrow |
| Bald Eagle | Warbling Vireo | Le Conte's Sparrow |
| Northern Harrier | Scissor-tailed Flycatcher | Song Sparrow |
| Red-tailed Hawk | Northern Shrike | Swamp Sparrow |
| Ferruginous Hawk | Red-eyed Vireo | White-throated Sparrow |
| American Kestrel | Blue Jay | Harris's Sparrow |
| Merlin | American Crow | Nelson's Sparrow |
| Virginia Rail | Horned Lark | Smith's Longspur |
| Sora | Tree Swallow | Dickcissel |
| Sandhill Crane | Barn Swallow | Bobolink |
| Killdeer | Northern Rough Winged | Red-winged Blackbird |
| Lesser Yellowlegs | Swallow | Western Meadowlark |
| Upland Sandpiper | House Wren | Eastern Meadowlark |
| Marbled Godwit | Sedge Wren | Yellow-headed Blackbird |
| Wilson's Snipe | Marsh Wren | Brewer's Blackbird |
| Wilson's Phalarope | Ruby Crowned Kinglet | Common Grackle |
| Red-necked Phalarope | Eastern Bluebird | Brown-headed Cowbird |
| Mourning Dove | Veery | Orchard Oriole |
| Black Tern | American Robin | Baltimore Oriole |
| Rock Pigeon | Swainson's Thrush | Common Redpoll |
| Black Billed Cuckoo | Brown Thrasher | American Goldfinch |
| Yellow-billed Cuckoo | Gray Catbird | |
| Great Horned Owl | Yellow Warbler | |

MN-2a. Endangered, threatened or species of special concern

Seventeen listed species have been documented on the Twin Valley - Neal Prairie IBA. This includes birds, mammals, plants and invertebrates. See listed bird species below.

Endangered	Threatened	Special Concern
Henslow's sparrow	Wilson's phalarope	Marbled Godwit
		Greater Prairie-chicken

MN-2b. Species of conservation concern

The species listed below are known to use the Twin Valley - Neal Prairie area and are considered to be species of conservation concern (MN Audubon).

Trumpeter Swan	Black-crowned Night	Sandhill Crane
Bald Eagle	Heron	Black Tern
Greater Prairie-Chicken	Northern Pintail	Marsh Wren
Marbled Godwit	Northern Harrier	Least Flycatcher
Wilson's Phalarope	Upland Sandpiper	Red-headed Woodpecker
Willow Flycatcher	Sedge Wren	Swamp Sparrow
Henslow's Sparrow	Le Conte's Sparrow	Brown Thrasher
Dickcissel	Grasshopper Sparrow	Northern Rough Winged
American Bittern	Bobolink	Swallow
Least Bittern	Black-billed Cuckoo	

MN-3. Rare, threatened, or unique habitat assemblages

Several remaining prairie tracts within the IBA including both wet prairie and mesic prairie types are located here. Unique plant life such as western prairie fringed orchid, small white lady's slipper, blanket flower and other prairie forbs and flowers exist on these native parcels, as well as a myriad of butterflies.

Sedge Wetland (rich fen, poor fen, wet meadow)

Northern Harrier	Wilson's Phalarope	Le Conte's Sparrow
Sandhill Crane	Sedge Wren	Bobolink

Native Prairie (dry, mesic, wet prairie)

Northern Harrier	Eastern Kingbird	Le Conte's Sparrow
Greater Prairie-chicken	Clay-colored Sparrow	Smith's Longspur
Upland Sandpiper	Vesper Sparrow	(migration)
Marbled Godwit	Savannah Sparrow	Bobolink
Wilson's Phalarope	Grasshopper Sparrow	Eastern Meadowlark
Western Kingbird	Henslow's Sparrow	Western Meadowlark
Brewer's Blackbird		

REFERENCES

BIOTICS Field Name: Documentation/References
 Give citation in following format: year, author, source, page number(s)

1	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Natural Heritage Data
2	Minnesota County Biological Survey
3	Minnesota Audubon
4	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources - Detroit Lakes Area Wildlife
5	DNR/SNA Breeding Bird Surveys
6	MN DNR Upland Lek Surveys
8	
9	
10	

HABITAT AND LAND USE

Major Habitat Types: NOT a BIOTICS field		Major Land Uses: BIOTICS Field Name: Management/Land Use Comments	
	Upland Deciduous Forest (e.g. Maple-basswood, oak, aspen, birch, northern hardwoods)	X	Agriculture
	Lowland Deciduous Forest (includes floodplain forest, ash swamp)		Fisheries/Aquaculture
	Upland Mixed Deciduous/Conifer Forest		Forestry
	Lowland Mixed Deciduous/Conifer Forest	X	Hunting/Fishing
	Upland Coniferous Forest		Military
	Lowland Coniferous Forest (includes tamarack, black spruce, and white cedar swamps)	X	Nature Conservation/Research
	Open bog/poor fen	X	Tourism/Recreation
	Rich fen (narrow-leaved sedges)		Urban/Industrial/Transport
5	Shrub Swamp		Water management
5	Lowland (wet) Native Prairie		Livestock
5	Wet Meadows (broad-leaved sedges)		Mining
5	Marsh (cattail/mixed emergent)		
10	Upland Native Prairie (includes dry, mesic, and brush prairie)	Land Ownership/Management: check all that apply	
	Upland Savanna (includes jack pine savanna, oak savanna, and aspen openings)	X	State
	Grassland (non-native, planted)		Federal
70	Agriculture		Municipal
	Cliff/Talus		County
	River/Stream (includes river shore)	X	Private
	Lake (includes lake shore)		Non-profit
	Sewage Pond		Other (explain)

RE

CONSERVATION AND THREATS

Not a BIOTICS Field

	THREAT		THREAT
	Abandonment/ reduction of land management	H	Invasive or non-native plants
M	Agricultural intensification/ expansion		Natural pests/disease
	Aquaculture/ fisheries (overfishing)		Overgrazing
L	Cellular/Wind Towers/Power Lines		Predators
	Construction/ impact of dike/ dam		Pesticides
	Deforestation		Recreation/ tourism
	Disturbance to birds		Selective logging/ cutting
	Drainage	L	Succession
L	Extraction industry		Unsustainable exploitation
	Groundwater abstraction	L	Wetland loss
	Industrialization/ urbanization		Other
	Introduced animals or feral pets		Unknown

Threats Comments

BIOTICS Field Name: Additional Topics/Additional Topics; enter keyword “THREAT COMMENTS”

Significant changes to the agricultural regions of the state could be on the horizon with the recent interest in biofuels. The need for a more diverse energy source at a local level could cause changes in grassland habitats and agricultural practices. These changes could have a negative impact on species trying to survive on prairie tracts left remaining in northwestern Minnesota.

Recent interest in wind power has resulted in the proliferating wind farms that alter the landscape with large turbines designed to generate alternative energy sources. The large towers can cause bird collisions as well as displace nesting birds. With the construction of the towers other changes can occur such as additional power lines and wires for moving the electricity. All can have impacts on our prairie bird species as well as plants and other animal species. Several wind farms have been developed, and more are in the planning stages for Agassiz beach ridge locations.

The potential exists for gravel mining in or near the Twin Valley - Neal WMA Prairie. Activities associated with mining generally have negative impacts on both the natural landscape and species associated with the process.

Many types of human activities can cause the propagation of invasive or non-native plants. As landscapes get managed more intensely, non-native intrusions are becoming more common. Land managers should attempt to keep new invasive species from their properties as well as monitor their properties for unwanted species already present.

Prairie tracts and grasslands have been maintained by the use of prescribed burning or other techniques to promote native prairie regeneration. In the Twin Valley Prairie SNA gravel pit reclamation, prairie restoration and tree removal has occurred.

The potential for wetland loss or alteration exists, wetlands should be preserved or enhanced to preserve the natural integrity of this site. Several wet prairies are located at here which provide unique habitats for several listed plant and animal species as well as numerous non-listed species.

OTHER RESOURCES

Nonavian Flora and Fauna

Not a BIOTICS Field

Several listed plant and animal species are located within the boundaries of the nominated area these include:

Endangered Plant Species

Western Prairie Fringed Orchid

Species of Special Concern

Small White Lady's-slipper

Northern Gentian

Blanket Flower

Listed Vertebrate and Invertebrate Animals

Special Concern

Regal Fritillary

Powesheik Skipper

Prairie Vole

Cultural Features

BIOTICS Field Name: Site Description/Cultural Features

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

BIOTICS Field Name: Site Design/Designer

NAME: Katie Haws/Bruce Lenning	ADDRESS: 2115 Birchmont Beach Rd.
CITY: Bemidji	STATE, ZIP: MN, 56601
EMAIL:	AFFILIATION: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
PHONE:	FAX: 218/755-4066

PRIVATE LANDOWNER CONTACTS

BIOTICS: Not a BIOTICS field

Name/Group:	Name/Group:
Address:	Address:
City/State/Zip:	City/State/Zip:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:

Have you discussed the nomination of this site with the landowner? Y N

Does the landowner agree to the nomination of this site as an IBA? Y N

MANAGED AREA CONTACTS

BIOTICS: Put names in site description

Managed Area Name: Sandpiper Prairie SNA, Twin Valley Prairie SNA
Managed Area Owner: DNR/SNA Program
Managed Area Manager: Shelly Becklund
Address: 1509 First Ave. No.
City/State/Zip: Fergus Falls, MN 56537
Phone:
Email:

Have you discussed the nomination of this site with the land manager? Y N

Does the land manager agree to the nomination of this site as an IBA? Y N

Managed Area Name: Rockwell WMA, Dalby WMA, Neal WMA, Cupido WMA, Twin Valley WMA

Managed Area Owner: MN DNR/ Wildlife Section
Managed Area Manager: Tom Kucera
Address: 14538 Cty Hwy 19
City/State/Zip: Detroit Lakes, MN 56501
Phone:
Email:

Have you discussed the nomination of this site with the land manager? Y N

Does the land manager agree to the nomination of this site as an IBA? Y N

LOCAL GROUPS WITH A CONSERVATION INTEREST IN THIS SITE

BIOTICS: Not a BIOTICS field

Name/Group: The Nature Conservancy	Name/Group:
Address: 15337 28 th Ave. So.	Address:
City/State/Zip: Glyndon, MN 56547	City/State/Zip:
Phone: 218/498-2679	Phone:
Email:	Email:

Other remarks or comments:

Thank You For Your Help