

# Wyoming Important Bird Area (IBA) Program 2019

## *Frequently Asked Questions*

### **What are the benefits of the IBA program?**

For conservation to be effective, it is essential to allocate effort and resources where they will have the greatest impact. The IBA program identifies those areas that are most critical for birds using objective, science-based criteria that can be used to prioritize conservation actions and areas. Because the IBA program is data-driven (i.e., the IBA designation is contingent upon adequate data about the diversity and abundance of birds using the site), it ensures that a site designated as an IBA truly is important for birds. The IBA program covers all birds, not just a single species or a particular group.

### **Are IBAs alone be enough to conserve birds?**

No. The IBA program is not the be-all and end-all of bird conservation. Areas nominated or designated as IBAs should not be viewed as the only sites that are important for birds or necessary for conservation. The IBA program is not a substitute for good land stewardship. It is an important piece of the conservation puzzle, but it is only one piece.

### **How are global or continental IBAs different from state IBAs?**

The difference is one of scale and relative importance to bird conservation. A global IBA is a site that contains significant numbers of a globally imperiled species. A continental IBA is a site that contains significant numbers of a species that is stable in parts of its range but endangered in North America. A Wyoming state IBA is a site in Wyoming that contains significant numbers of a species that is stable elsewhere in the U.S. but endangered in Wyoming.

### **How were the criteria for Wyoming developed?**

The standard IBA criteria developed by BirdLife International were adapted for Wyoming. In general, IBAs are sites that support endangered or threatened species, high conservation priority species, significant concentrations of birds, and assemblages of birds associated with rare or representative habitat types. The specific species lists and population thresholds for Wyoming were developed using the state endangered and threatened bird list, the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) and Partners In Flight (PIF) planning documents, and in consultation with state bird and habitat experts.

### **Who decides whether a site meets the criteria to be an IBA?**

The Wyoming IBA Technical Committee reviews all nominations to determine whether sites meet the criteria and should be designated as IBAs.

### **What happens to a site once it has been approved by the Technical Committee and is designated as a Wyoming IBA?**

If the site is a neighborhood or a subdivision, a large ranch, a foundation, or public or private land, nothing needs to happen. This designation is “for the birds”. Grants are available, however, through Audubon, to support conservation efforts. Depending on the site, stewardship activities may include habitat protection, active management, habitat restoration, removal of exotic species, physical improvements, etc.

### **Are there any legal restrictions associated with IBAs?**

No. There is no legal status conferred by the IBA program, nor are there any regulatory requirements for management of a site that is designated as an IBA. The IBA designation is a voluntary one that recognizes the importance of a site for birds and encourages conservation to preserve the resources that make the site important. The IBA program can facilitate this by fostering cooperative partnerships among landowners, land managers, and other interested parties.

### **Designated Wyoming Important Bird Areas 2019**

There are over 49 designated IBAs *in Wyoming*, encompassing over 8 million acres or 16% of the state's land area. This includes Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Parks as well as Red Desert. There are 2,758 IBAs *in the U.S.*, encompassing over 417 million acres of public and private lands.

Local IBA designations driven by Bighorn Audubon Society include:

- The Brinton (620 acres),
- Ucross (20,000 acres),
- Valley View subdivision (266 acres),
- Falxa Land Company (41,000 acres),
- Kleenburn Recreation Area (77 acres),
- Amsden Wildlife Management Area (4,000 acres),
- Kerns Wildlife Management Area (5,000 acres),
- Wolf Creek Ranch (8,600 acres),
- Padlock Ranch

For additional IBA success stories link to:

[www.audubon.org/bird/iba/success\\_stories.html](http://www.audubon.org/bird/iba/success_stories.html)

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