

ACTION PLAN *Habitat Restoration Enhancement and Monitoring*

EM-5

Bird Monitoring

ACTION:

Increase migratory bird monitoring and protection in and around Lake Worth Lagoon (LWL).

BACKGROUND:

With the addition of 70 acres of habitat created within the past five years, birds have more options for nesting, roosting and foraging. Mangroves, seagrass beds, spartina and maritime hammocks created by these restoration efforts will promote additional nesting species in the LWL. The State protected American Oystercatcher has been documented nesting within the LWL at Snook Islands Natural Area (SINA). Due to the area's intense human use and potential for disturbance, bird habitat needs to be identified and protected. Some foraging sites have been already identified: Ibis Isles, Boynton Beach/Ocean Ridge Mangrove Preserve, Lantana Preserve, Munyon Island, and SINA. These areas support a variety of bird species including the Wood Stork (federally endangered), the Piping Plover (federally threatened), the Least Tern (state threatened), and Roseate spoonbills (species of special concern).

STRATEGY:

STEP 1 Continue American Oystercatcher nest monitoring by ERM staff and partners.

Potential Partners: ERM, FWC, Audubon, Florida Shorebird Alliance, Universities

STEP 2 Classify roosting, nesting and foraging sites to identify important bird habitat and overall trends of bird utilization.

Potential Partners: FWC, Audubon, Florida Shorebird Alliance, Universities, ERM

STEP 3 Identify partners willing to assist in conducting and expanding the LWL Seabird and Shorebird Monitoring Program using FWC's standardized Breeding Bird Protocols.

Potential Partners: FWC, Audubon, Florida Shorebird Alliance, Universities, ERM

STEP 4 Conduct Seabird and Shorebird nest counts and migratory bird counts in Spring and Fall. Enter data into the Statewide Florida Shorebird Database.

Potential Partners: FWC, Audubon, Florida Shorebird Alliance, Universities, ERM

STEP 5 Evaluate and identify areas based on species diversity, site resilience and public access for nomination to the Great Florida Birding Trail.

Potential Partners: *ERM, FWC, Audubon, Florida Shorebird Alliance, Universities*

STEP 6 Obtain and create public outreach materials to educate the general public.

Potential Partners: *ERM, Florida Shorebird Alliance, FWC*

SCHEDULE:

Established nesting sites of the American Oystercatcher shall be surveyed annually from March to July. Potential shore and sea bird nesting habitat shall be monitored six times per season (February to August) during specified count windows established in the [FWC Breeding Bird Protocol](#), in addition to the Annual Christmas Bird Counts, and bi-annual migratory bird counts (Spring and Fall).

COST:

Fuel, staff time, and outreach materials.

EXPECTED BENEFITS:

Information on migratory birds, seabirds and shorebirds will provide ecological, economic and educational benefits to the LWL. Successful nesting and foraging of a variety of bird species will encourage the enhancement, creation and protection of current and future habitat restoration projects.

MONITORING ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSES:

Site specific bird surveys will be performed on PBC restoration sites. Data on nesting shorebirds can be entered into the statewide Florida Shorebird [database](#).

REGULATORY NEEDS:

None anticipated

FUNDING:

TBD

POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND FUNDING SOURCES*:

ERM, FWC, Audubon, Florida Shorebird Alliance, Universities

*Listed Agencies have not committed funds and are subject to Agencies' budget approvals