

29. Common Terns

Recommended Actions:

The Minnesota and Wisconsin DNRs should continue to provide high quality nesting habitat for common terns and should enhance the quality and quantity of habitat for terns that breed in or migrate through the St. Louis River and Nemadji River watersheds.

- (1) WNDR and MDNR should continue to manage for Common Terns and enhance natural nesting sites.
- (2) Efforts to reduce competition by Ring-billed Gulls should be continued and enhanced.
- (3) Management agencies should seek 1-3 additional nesting areas for Common Terns, including possibility of building islands with clean dredge materials.
- (4) Vegetation control in Common Tern areas should be continued and better methods investigated.
- (5) Common Tern nesting on islands in reservoir lakes should be encouraged. Management activity to control vegetation on these islands should be evaluated; if helpful, it should be continued, and the feasibility of expanding it to other islands evaluated.
- (6) Exposure of Common Terns to contaminants via the food chain should be reduced, through efforts to eliminate toxic contaminants in the watershed.

Implementors:

MDNR, WDNR, the Metropolitan Interstate Committee, USACOE, SPAD, MPCA, USEPA, Minnesota Power, and regional research institutions (UMD and UW-S).

Actions Taken:

4/98: Follow up letters sent to MDNR, MPCA, and WDNR.

12/00: WDNR and MDNR have been managing common tern nests located on Interstate Island in an attempt to increase tern populations. String grid fences are being used to try to prevent gulls from invading the tern nesting areas. Gull nests found within the fenced area are destroyed each year to prevent competition with terns. Counts of nests, number of eggs, number of chicks hatched, and number of chicks fledged are done each year to evaluate how the tern population is doing. Each year juvenile terns are banded to help with the determination of the tern survival rate. Vegetation is trimmed each year to aid the nesting terns and the banding process. Common Tern nesting habitat located on Wisconsin Point Wildlife Management Area was also managed in 2000, but no terns were found nesting there.

Project Status:

The CAC office is in the process of researching the status of this recommendation.