

Des Plaines River is pumped into a series of six man-made marshes bordering the west side of the river. The water flowing into and out of these marshes is carefully monitored to determine the effectiveness of the project in meeting its water-purification and flood-controlling goals.

The effectiveness of the project in meeting its goal of supporting waterfowl during migration is assessed here by comparing avian usage of the site before restoration with that occurring after restoration.

STUDY AREA AND METHODS

I censused migrating waterfowl using the project site in spring 1985 (pre-restoration) and in spring of 1990 and 1991 (post-restoration). Census points were located at sites

within the restoration area that were potentially usable by waterfowl.

In addition, I censused migrating waterfowl in fall of 1989, 1990, and 1991. No pre-restoration fall migration data are available.

'Restoration of wetlands has tremendously increased this site's value to migrating waterfowl.'

All waterfowl visible from predetermined census points were counted once per week for seven weeks, from the beginning of March to mid-April during 1985, 1990, and 1991.

The data gathered from each of these census years were then compared to determine the extent to which the restoration project had improved the ability of the site to support migratory waterfowl.

Budgetary constraints limited the initial pre-restoration censuses of migrating waterfowl to the first seven weeks of spring migration. Therefore, the only post-restoration data used for comparison are also from the first seven weeks of spring migration as described above.

Increased funding for avian research during the post-restoration phase of the project allowed me to census migrants once per week throughout fall migration from late August to the end of November, 1989, 1990, and 1991.

These migrants were censused by the transect-listening

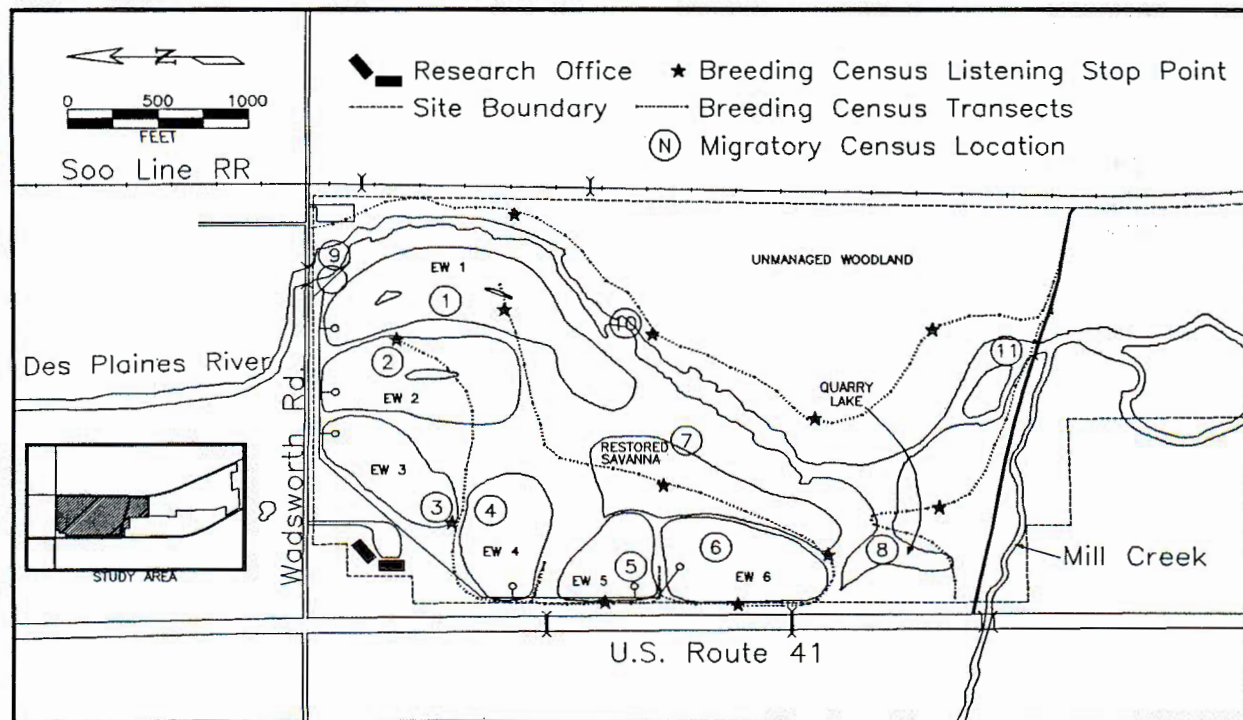


Figure 1. DesPlaines River Wetlands Demonstration Project Site, 1991. EW = experimental wetland.