

Upper Green River Swan Habitat Modeling Project

In the 1990's the WY Game and Fish Department initiated a swan range expansion project in the Green River drainage to fulfill a major goal in the Pacific Flyway Rocky Mountain Population Management Plan and the Wyoming State Wildlife Plan of increasing the summer and winter distribution of swans and the number of nesting pairs in Wyoming. This project has been very successful and the resident swan population in the Green River drainage has been increasing rapidly since 2003. Additional summer habitat is crucial for swans and the many other wildlife species that use shallow water wetland habitat in this arid region of the west. More information is needed to better understand what habitat characteristics are required for the long term viability of the nesting population of Trumpeter Swans.

For this project we intend to do a GIS and field based study on currently occupied nest sites to estimate the amount of potential suitable nesting habitat available for swans in the Green River expansion area. This will allow us to understand what wetland parameters swans require for nesting, how much potential nesting habitat exists, and what parameters are most important for constructing, restoring or enhancing additional wetland habitat for swans. This will result in technical and public publications, reports, and presentations to professional and public audiences. Data will be used to develop future grant proposals to fund wetland conservation work in the Pinedale/Big Piney/LaBarge/Farson areas.

The study would be the first of its kind in Wyoming and it will allow us to set realistic population objectives for state and federal management plans, as well as help prioritize sites where future wetland projects for swans should be focused. This in-depth analysis of swan nesting habitat will be a valuable addition to the previous work and partnerships that have been formed in the Green River Basin. It will help to establish stronger relationships with land owners and funding agencies by providing information to steer future conservation efforts.

Proposed Budget for swan project monitoring 30-35 sites	Cost
TNC Field Coordinator: manage field technician, data collection, data entry, report write-up, (Full time 6 months)	\$29,549
TNC supervisor: data analysis, modeling and report writing (5% time, 5 months, plus 20% time 1 month)	\$7,286
Flight time (1 flight)	\$250
Travel (food, camping, lodging \$30/day for 25 days)	\$750
Supplies	\$500
Car (Rental for 8 weeks)	\$2,500
Total Cost	\$40,835

