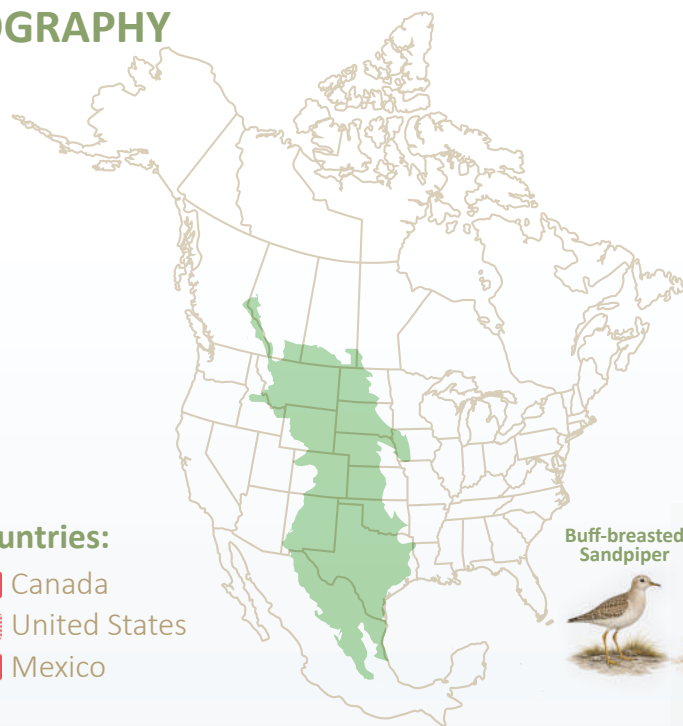




MIDCONTINENT SHOREBIRD CONSERVATION INITIATIVE (MSCI)

FACT SHEET – Great Plains Planning Unit

GEOGRAPHY



Countries:

-  Canada
-  United States
-  Mexico

Major landscapes: Prairie Pothole Region, Playa Wetlands, Chihuahuan grasslands

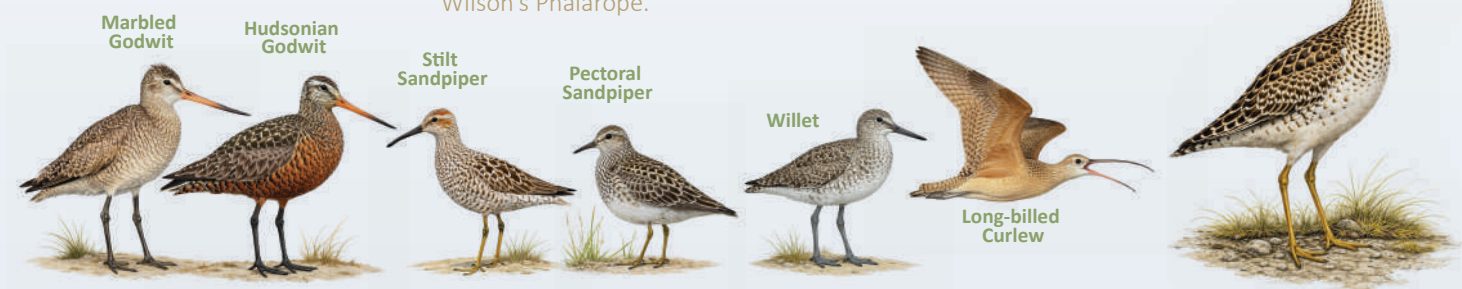
Main habitats: Native grasslands, grasslands-wetland complexes, saline lakes, and wetlands in this region vary across gradients of precipitation, elevation, and latitude, which influences habitat use by breeding and migrant shorebirds.

Other characteristics: Native rangelands provide essential ecosystem services, including soil stability, carbon storage, water regulation, and wildlife habitat.



TARGET / KEY SPECIES

Buff-breasted Sandpiper, American Golden-Plover, Piping Plover, Upland Sandpiper, Mountain Plover, Snowy Plover, Long-billed Curlew, Marbled Godwit, Hudsonian Godwit, Stilt Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Willet, and Wilson's Phalarope.



MAIN THREATS

This list reflects the highest-ranked threats identified for this planning unit. However, it does not encompass all threats affecting the unit. For a comprehensive assessment of threats and their relative importance, please refer to pages 24–36 of the MSCI Strategic Framework.

Threat Ranking in the Great Plains		
Threat	Impacts	Rating
Climate change	Intensifies droughts, altering precipitation patterns, and increases the frequency of extreme weather events across the Great Plains. These changes directly affect the availability, timing, and quality of wetland and grassland habitats that shorebirds depend on throughout their annual life cycle.	Medium
Habitat conversion and incompatible agricultural practices	The Great Plains have experienced extensive conversion of native grasslands and wetlands to intensive agriculture. Remaining habitats are often managed in ways that are incompatible with shorebird needs, including early and frequent tillage, pesticide use, and loss of natural vegetation structure.	High
Incompatible water management	Water management practices in the Great Plains—including drainage, groundwater extraction, river channelization, and reservoir operations—have profoundly altered natural hydrological regimes.	High

PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND MAIN OBJECTIVES

To address the complex and interlinked threats affecting shorebirds and their habitats in the Great Plains the MSCI Strategic Framework identifies a set of complementary strategies that operate across scales and sectors. If you are implementing actions in this geography, please consider these indicators to monitor your progress towards achieving your results, and to better understand how you are contributing to implementing the MSCI Strategic Framework.

Examples of objectives and indicators for the Great Plains (see www.midamericasshorebirds.org for a complete list of objectives and indicators ^{1,2,3})	
Strategy: Increase incentives for habitat protection, enhancement, and restoration¹	
Objectives	Indicators
Prioritize the use of incentives in the most critical sites/areas	Number of critical sites/areas where incentives are used to support habitat conservation for shorebirds
Increase the use of incentive programs to protect, restore, or enhance shorebird habitat	Area (e.g., hectares) of shorebird habitat restored or enhanced through incentive programs
Strategy: Manage existing and acquire new habitats²	
Increase the quantity of habitats providing suitable conditions for shorebirds in conservation or managed areas, including privately owned lands	Area (e.g., hectares) of private/communally owned lands which are managed in ways that create shorebird habitat
Decision and policymakers elevate and prioritize shorebird habitat conservation and management shorebird habitat conditions	Number of policies adapted and developed to elevate and prioritize shorebird habitat conservation and management
Strategy: Develop, expand, and share beneficial management practices³	
Implement demonstration sites for beneficial management practices and measure their benefits for shorebirds and human well-being	Number of demonstration/pilot sites where BMPs are implemented
Conduct extensive outreach to increase capacity and scale up the implementation of beneficial management practices	Number of participants who report an increase in livelihood quality and productivity as a result of applying BMPs

1. See pages 45 and 47 of the MSCI Strategic Framework for a complete list

2. See pages 48 and 50 of the MSCI Strategic Framework for a complete list

3. See pages 51 and 53 of the MSCI Strategic Framework for a complete list