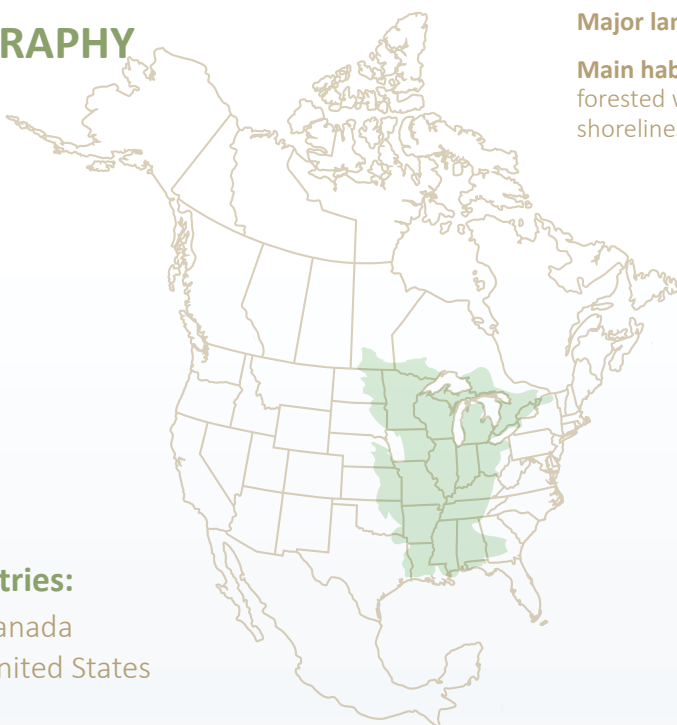




MIDCONTINENT SHOREBIRD CONSERVATION INITIATIVE (MSCI)

FACT SHEET – Mississippi Valley/Great Lakes Planning Unit

GEOGRAPHY



Countries:



Canada



United States

Major landscapes: Mississippi Alluvial Valley, Great Lakes

Main habitats: Natural and managed wetlands, river floodplains, forested wetlands, reservoirs, flooded agricultural fields, grasslands, shorelines.

Other characteristics: Much of the original Mississippi Alluvial Valley floodplain has been drained, leveed, and converted to agriculture, and the river is heavily managed with levees, dams, and channelization structures to control flooding. The Valley experiences dynamic climatic conditions, from floods to droughts, making habitat conditions for shorebirds less predictable when compared to conditions in the Great Lakes.



TARGET / KEY SPECIES

Piping Plover, Pectoral Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, American Golden-Plover, Lesser Yellowlegs, Wilson's Snipe, Upland Sandpiper.



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 Mississippi Valley/Great Lakes		
Threat	Impacts	Rating
Climate change	Alters the hydrology and seasonal dynamics of wetlands across the Mississippi Valley and Great Lakes. Increased precipitation variability, more frequent extreme flooding events, prolonged droughts, and warmer temperatures are reducing the availability and predictability of shallow-water habitats that migratory shorebirds depend on during critical stopover periods.	Medium
Incompatible water management	Water management systems throughout the Mississippi Valley and Great Lakes are primarily designed for flood control, navigation, agriculture, and urban infrastructure, not for ecological function. Levees, drainage networks, and rapid drawdowns have disconnected rivers from floodplains and reduced the extent and duration of shallow-water habitats.	Medium
Residential and commercial development	Urban expansion, infrastructure development, and industrial growth continue to encroach on wetlands, shorelines, and floodplains throughout the region. These pressures are especially acute near major population centers and along the Great Lakes shoreline.	Medium

PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND MAIN OBJECTIVES

To address the complex and interlinked threats affecting shorebirds and their habitats in the Mississippi Valley/Great Lakes 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 Mississippi Valley/Great Lakes (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
Expand incentive programs to include provisions that support shorebird habitat conservation	Number of incentive programs that include provisions for shorebirds
Increase the use of incentive programs to protect, restore, or enhance shorebird habitat	Number of applicants (e.g., landowners) who report using incentive programs to protect, restore, and enhance shorebird habitat
Strategy: Manage existing and acquire new habitat²	
Increase the quantity of habitats providing suitable conditions for shorebirds in conservation or managed areas, including privately owned lands	Number of conservation areas that report managing habitat for shorebirds
Increase capacity and technical knowledge of land managers and key stakeholders where shorebird habitat management can be improved	Number of land managers and key stakeholders who report an increase in number of sites where habitats management for shorebirds has improved
Strategy: Improve knowledge of environmental stressors' effects and address information gaps³	
Collect data for, and develop, integrated population models for conservation targets	Number of conservation targets for which an integrated population model is available
Re-assess conservation targets' population estimates, trends, and key sites at regular intervals as new information becomes available	Number of conservation targets for which robust population trends are available

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 54 and 56 of the MSCI Strategic Framework for a complete list