Council Grove Focus Area

Description: The focus area occupies approximately 650 acres lying along nearly 2 miles of the Clark Fork River. The area consists of Council Grove State Park including a large seldom disturbed island, a U.S. Forest Service parcel, Bi-Lo Foods and other private properties. Important habitats include an old-growth stand of ponderosa pine, a slough with associated hawthorn and alder thickets, a ditch with year around water, a vernal pool wetland surrounded by shrubs and aspen, extensive gallery forests of black cottonwood and scattered pine, agricultural fields, and a few acres of willow vegetation.

Bird Surveys: Breeding surveys were conducted from late May to mid July in 2003 and in early May and June 2004. Surveys were conducted primarily in the State Park and Forest Service parcel. Observers were Janet Hardin (focus area leader), Beth Loehnen, Paul Loehnen, and Larry Weeks in 2003 and Bob Conway (focus area leader), Jeff Marks, and Jim Brown in 2004. Surveys in 2004 were less intensive and covered less of the area than in 2003, thus some species were missed.

Priority Species (minimum number of breeding pairs by year 2003/2004):

Great Blue Heron	25/*
Hooded Merganzer	2/0
Osprey	2/0
Bald Eagle	1/1
Red-tailed Hawk	1/1
Calliope Hummingbird	1/1
Lewis's Woodpecker	4/2
Red-naped Sapsucker	4/0
Pileated Woodpecker	0/1
Willow Flycatcher	3/0
Warbling Vireo	5/0
Red-eyed Vireo	1/0

*not estimated

Other Significant Observations:

Barrow's Goldeneye—observed spring 1999, 2001, 2002; probably occurs regularly
Sandhill Crane—heard near area 6/1/03
Long-billed Curlew—one bird observed flying over area 5/25/03
Solitary Sandpiper—observed in spring 1999, 2002; fall 2001, 2003
Vaux's Swift—often seen flying over area
Black-chinned Hummingbird—at least one nesting pair in 2003 and 2004
Gray Catbird—present 2003-2004
Bobolink—at least three males observed in irrigated field and two males were chasing one female