

### **Critical Habitat Area Wisconsin 7 – Rod and Gun Club Bay**

This Critical Habitat Area encompasses the major portion of a 5-acre bay on the west shore (Figure 6). It includes shallow marsh habitats that support important near-shore terrestrial habitat, shoreline habitat and shallow water habitat (Figure 7, 8). The shoreline at this Critical Habitat Area is composed mostly of wooded cover with a small area of developed lawn and a boat ramp. Large woody cover from fallen trees is common in the shallow water. This woody cover provides important habitat for fish cover and wildlife resting areas.

This site was chosen for its valuable aquatic vegetation and terrestrial vegetation. It provides an audible and visual buffer from road and boat noise and shoreline structures.

#### **The Plant Community:**

The aquatic plant community is composed of 10 species at this site.

The emergent vegetation at this site protects the shoreline and provides important food sources, cover and fish spawning habitat. The emergent community at this site is composed of arrowhead, cattail and wool grass.

Floating-leaf vegetation, white water lilies provide important fish habitat.

The submergent plant community provides many fish and wildlife benefits (Table 4). Slender naiad, elodea, coontail and wild celery occur. The pondweed family is an important food source for fish and waterfowl and is represented at this site by clasping-leaf pondweed and Vasey's pondweed. Eurasian watermilfoil, an exotic invasive species is also present at this site.

Vasey's pondweed is a Special Concern Species at this site. Special Concern species are those species for which are rare statewide and for which there is concern about their distribution and sensitivity to disturbance. The occurrences of these species are being tracked.



**Lake Wissota Critical Habitat Designation  
(Site 7)**



**Figure 6. Lake Wissota Critical Habitat Areas #1, #2, #7, #11, #12, #13**



**Figure 7. Lake Wissota Critical Habitat Area #7; South shore of Rod and Gun Club Bay**



**Figure 8. Lake Wissota Critical Habitat Area #7; North shore of bay**

**Table 4. Wildlife and Fish Uses of Aquatic Plants in Critical Habitat Area 7**

<b>Aquatic Plants</b>	<b>Fish</b>	<b>Water Fowl</b>	<b>Song and Shore Birds</b>	<b>Upland Game Birds</b>	<b>Muskrat</b>	<b>Beaver</b>	<b>Deer</b>
<b><u>Submergent Plants</u></b>							
<i>Ceratophyllum demersum</i>	F, I*, C, S	F(Seeds*), I, C			F		
<i>Elodea canadensis</i>	C, F, I	F(Foliage) I					
<i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i>	F, C						
<i>Najas flexilis</i>	F, C	F*(Seeds, Foliage)	F(Seeds)				
<i>Potamogeton richardsonii</i>	F, I, S*, C	F*(All)			F*	F	F
<i>Potamogeton vaseyi</i>		F					
<i>Vallisneria americana</i>	F*, C, I, S	F*, I	F		F		
<b><u>Floating-leaf Plants</u></b>							
<i>Nymphaea odorata</i>	F, I, S, C	F(Seeds)	F		F	F	F
<b><u>Emergent Plants</u></b>							
<i>Sagittaria latifolia</i>		F, C	F(Seeds), C	F	F	F	
<i>Scirpus cyperinus</i>	F, S, C	F, C	F(Seeds, Tubers), C	F	F	F	F
<i>Typha latifolia</i>	I, C, S	F(Entire), C	F(Seeds), C, Nest	Nest	F* (Entire), C*, Lodge	F	

**F=Food, I= Shelters Invertebrates, a valuable food source C=Cover, S=Spawning**

**\*=Valuable Resource in this category**

After Fassett, N. C. 1957. A Manual of Aquatic Plants. University of Wisconsin Press. Madison, WI

Nichols, S. A. 1991. Attributes of Wisconsin Lake Plants. Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey. Info. Circ. #73

### Wildlife Habitat

Emergent vegetation, floating-leaf vegetation, shoreline shrubs and brush, snag and perch trees and fallen logs provide critical habitat at this site. This site provides:

- 1) shelter, cover and feeding areas for ducks
- 2) shelter, cover, nesting and feeding areas for mink, songbirds, frogs, toads, salamanders, turtles and snakes
- 3) feeding areas for geese

### Fish Habitat

Large woody cover, emergent cattail vegetation, submerged vegetation and floating-leaf vegetation at this site provide critical fish habitat. This site provides:

- 1) feeding areas for walleye, northern pike, largemouth bass, bluegill, yellow perch and musky

### Water Quality

The aquatic plant community at this site:

- 1) provides a nutrient buffer, the plants at the shore and in the water acting as a nutrient sink, absorbing nutrients and reducing algae blooms
- 2) provides a biological buffer, reducing the possibility of invasions by exotic species
- 3) provides a physical buffer that protects the shoreline against erosion

## **Recommendations for Area 7**

### **Recommendations for the terrestrial shoreline buffer:**

- 1) Maintain wildlife habitat at this site, keeping shore as wild and natural as possible
- 2) Maintain snag trees and trees with cavity nesting
- 3) Maintain and increase naturally vegetated wildlife corridor on shore
- 4) Maintain shoreline buffers and minimize removal of any shoreline vegetation to reduce nutrient input and prevent erosion for improving water quality.
- 5) No permits for rip-rap or retaining walls issued. Shoreline erosion control not needed at site.
- 6) No bank grading.

### **Recommendations for the aquatic habitat below the Ordinary High Water Mark**

- 7) Maintain current protection of area for fish habitat
- 8) Do not remove fallen trees along the shoreline
- 9) Do not alter the littoral zone except for improvement of spawning habitat.
- 10) Maintain the aquatic vegetation (emergent, floating-leaf and submergent) for wildlife habitat, fish cover and as a buffer for water quality protection. Limit plant removal to navigation channels and seasonal control of Eurasian water milfoil. Permits required for any vegetation removal.
- 11) Eurasian watermilfoil control should be with a goal of eliminating this non-native species and restoring the native aquatic vegetation.
- 12) Protect emergent vegetation.
- 13) Recommend slow-no-wake in the bay.
- 14) No permit approval for pea gravel beds or sand blankets, except for DNR fishery or wildlife approved projects.
- 15) No dredging or lake bed removal or modifications.
- 16) Pier placement by permit only to minimize number of piers and their size and disturbance; require light-penetrating pier material such as metal grating.
- 17) No additional boat ramp placements.
- 18) No recreational floating devices.