



Chesapeake Bay Island Restoration—Habitat Value of Restored vs. Natural Marshes

Project Number: 2070A7Y
Account Numbers: 2302-A7Y01, 2302-A7YR1
Period of Project: October 1995 through September 2004
Funding Source(s): Wildlife and Terrestrial Resources;
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Principle Investigator(s):

R. Michael Erwin michael_erwin@usgs.gov
USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center
Department of Environmental Sciences
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, Virginia 22904

Collaborators: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Statement of Problem: Islands in Chesapeake Bay have suffered major erosion and loss in the past 150 years, putting a number of nesting waterbirds at risk, including American Black Ducks, Bald Eagles, colonially nesting wading birds, terns, and other species. Habitat restoration would greatly enhance wildlife values.

Objectives:

1. To evaluate restoration practices by USACE and other agencies in island habitats, especially wetlands.
2. To provide technical advice on the overall habitat management of the Poplar Island (and future dredged material island) site to maximize use by a large suite of migratory birds for nesting, feeding, and resting.

Approach: The focus of the study is on emphasizing beneficial uses to wildlife, especially migratory birds. Activities include monitoring of the use of the restored and reference sites by waterbirds for nesting on a periodic basis; assessing productivity for selected species of waterbirds such as ospreys, least and/or common terns; and, where appropriate, applying adaptive resource management experimentation with habitat manipulations.

Selected Reports and Other Products:

Erwin, R.M., Brinker, D.F., and Fruh, B.J., 2003, Poplar Island Environmental Restoration Project—Build it and they (wildlife) will come, but are all welcome? *In: Proceedings, Coastal Zone 03: Coastal Zone Management Through Time*. (CD-ROM available through: www.csc.noaa.gov/clearinghouse/) - July 2003, Baltimore, MD.

Erwin, R.M., Brinker, D.F., and Fruh, B.J., 2003, Poplar Island—Build it and they will come: (Abstract) - Proceedings of the Inaugural Conference on Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration, April 2003, Baltimore, MD.

Relevance and Benefits: This task addresses goal 2 of Wildlife and Terrestrial Resources: Develop restoration strategies on Federal lands and critical environments.