

## Woodcock Singing Ground Survey

**Service Unit:** Seney National Wildlife Refuge

**Species:** American Woodcock (*Scolopax minor*)

### JUSTIFICATION AND OBJECTIVES

This survey is conducted in conjunction with the national and international American Woodcock singing ground surveys. The survey provides an index of the current woodcock breeding population. Seney NWR has data from 1965-present, with four years missing (1977, 1978, 1981, 2000). Route #037 (Driggs River Rd.) is currently surveyed each year. Route #039 (Sub-Headquarters) is still an active route, but has been in constant zero status from 2009-2013. If an observer does not hear woodcock on a route for 2 years in a row, then it goes into a CZ (constant zero status) for 5 years. On the 6th year it is reactivated and if no birds are heard, goes back into a CZ status for another 5 years. However, if an observer hears woodcock on it during that reactivated year, then it reverts back to an active status. This route was reactivated in 2014 and was supposed to be run, but was not. That means, that it will again be active for 2015 and it is expected that someone should run it.

### STATISTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no major statistical considerations.

### DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

**Data forms and route map are provided by the survey coordinator, usually a State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources staff person.** The survey is conducted between April 20 and May 15, depending on local spring conditions and consists of 10 stops spaced 0.4 miles apart (see below). The survey is run along Driggs River Road on the refuge (in the past, there were other routes run as well). The route should be run at the peak of woodcock activity and not wait until the last possible day in the survey period. The observer will need the data sheet, pencil or pen, stop watch, and a vehicle with an odometer. Survey should not be conducted when the temperature is <40 °F, in heavy rain or snow, or when the wind velocity is estimated to be >12 mph.

The observer should be at the starting point shortly after local official sunset. The following procedure should be followed at each stop; 1) shut off the vehicle, 2) step several feet away

from the vehicle, 3) record the time you begin listening before making the count, 4) listen for 2 minutes and record the number of different woodcock peenting, 5) proceed to the next stop and repeat 1 – 4. **Record only individual bird’s peenting, do not record birds you hear performing only the flight song, or the number of peents heard.** When no birds are heard, record “0” in the appropriate column. At all stops, record any disturbances heard according to the data form.

| <b>American Woodcock Survey Route #037 Along Driggs River Rd., Seney National Wildlife Refuge (NAD83)</b> |                 |                  |
|---|-----------------|------------------|
| <b>Stop Number</b>  | <b>Latitude</b> | <b>Longitude</b> |
| 1   | 46.34478131     | -86.11509265     |
| 2   | 46.33859689     | -86.11484690     |
| 3   | 46.33291639     | -86.11466870     |
| 4   | 46.32732181     | -86.11450483     |
| 5   | 46.32206267     | -86.11227265     |
| 6   | 46.31762378     | -86.10692625     |
| 7   | 46.31291952     | -86.10293956     |
| 8   | 46.30729459     | -86.10101106     |
| 9   | 46.30181241     | -86.09753743     |
| 10  | 46.29640742     | -86.09465305     |

| <b>American Woodcock Survey Route #039 Along Robinson Rd. (Sub-Headquarters), Seney National Wildlife Refuge (NAD83)</b> |                 |                  |
|--|-----------------|------------------|
| <b>Stop Number</b>   | <b>Latitude</b> | <b>Longitude</b> |
| 1  | 46.24129        | -85.92794        |
| 2  | 46.24128        | -85.93645        |
| 3  | 46.24135        | -85.94468        |
| 4  | 46.2429         | -85.95282        |
| 5  | 46.24358        | -85.9609         |
| 6  | 46.24122        | -85.96764        |
| 7  | 46.24332        | -85.97516        |

|    |          |           |
|----|----------|-----------|
| 8  | 46.23891 | -85.97443 |
| 9  | 46.23343 | -85.97171 |
| 10 | 46.22816 | -85.97237 |

**DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING**

As soon as the survey is completed, update data on national website, mail a copy to the Migratory Bird Management Office in Laurel, Maryland, and the other copy to the Michigan DNR coordinator (if so asked). One copy is kept in the office files.

**MANAGEMENT ACTION THRESHOLDS**

None required.

**DATA STORAGE PROCEDURES**

A database (Excel file) should be kept and updated at the refuge each year, with a master file managed by the USFWS.

Becky Rau  
 Wildlife Biologist - Data Administrator  
 Population & Habitat Assessment Branch  
 Division of Migratory Bird Management  
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
 11510 American Holly Drive-Merriam Bldg.  
 Laurel, MD 20708-4002  
 301.497.5862 (O)  
 301.497.5871(fax)  
 rebecca\_rau@fws.gov

**SPECIAL CONSIDERATION**

See above re: Route #039.

**LITERATURE USED**

None required.

**EFFORT AND COSTS**

This survey is done by refuge staff and requires approximately 3-5 hr of staff time for preparation, surveying, and reporting. Gas cost = \$25 x 2 = \$50.