MINNESOTA IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS
Nomination Form

The Minnesota Important Bird Areas (IBA) program is an effort to identify, conserve, and monitor sites that provide essential habitat for bird populations. Sites that are nominated must meet at least one of the IBA criteria in order to be considered by the Minnesota IBA Technical Committee. Please refer to the accompanying criteria when filling out this form. Completed forms should be sent to: mmartell@audubon.org or: Mark Martell, Director of Bird Conservation, Audubon Minnesota, 2357 Ventura Drive, Suite 106, St. Paul, MN 55125. If you have questions please email or call Mark at: (651) 739-9332. THANK YOU!

SITE INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name: Arden Hills Army Training Site IBA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County (Primary): Ramsey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townships: Arden Hills</td>
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<tr>
<td>County (Other):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townships:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximate Size (hectares): or acres: 1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy of Acreage: Good</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central Coordinates:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latitude: T30N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longitude: R23W</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elevation (max – min): 1,097-880 ft</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please give a general description of the site (including directions, habitat, location, prominent features, and any other helpful information); attach additional sheets if needed. Please attach a USGS map that clearly delineates the boundaries of the site.

The Arden Hills Army Training Site (AHATS) comprises approximately 1500 acres in northern Ramsey County that are maintained and used by the Minnesota National Guard. It represents more than half of the Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant (TCAAP). See Map below. TCAAP was originally farmland purchased by the U.S. Army in August 1941 for the production and testing of small arms ammunition and grenades. The western part of TCAAP (630 acres) is managed by the Army and in the southern part contains many buildings, paved roads and parking lots. A corridor of 49 acres is situated in the northeastern part of the Army site. The northwestern Army section (113 acres) was purchased by Arden Hills for development. TCAAP is bounded on the north by County Rd. 1, on the east by Lexington Ave., the south by MN Highway 96, on the southwest by U.S. Highway 10, and on the west by U.S. Highway 35W. The AHATS section lies due east of the Army part of TCAAP.

AHATS has a unique and varied habitat. Much of the northern, central and eastern parts consist of marsh, grassland, and woods that support sizeable populations of birds and other animals. Except for clay in the southeastern part, the soil is sand that was deposited at the retreat of the last glaciers.
Significant natural features:

- Grasslands. Extensive grasslands cover much of the central AHATS from north to south.

- Wet prairie and prairie potholes exist on the furthest south and north, respectively.

- Marsden Lake and Marsh are located on the east side of AHATS.

- Sunfish Lake. Located in the southeastern part, this lake is mostly open water, with a small cattail marsh at its northeastern end.

- Glacial Kames. These hills are located in the center of AHATS from the gravel pit southward.
The Gravel Pit. Dug into the northern kame, the pit is surrounded by steep sand walls. The bottom is covered by shallow water that has been pumped from underground and filtered. (Past practices resulted in contamination of ground water beneath the TCAAP). This purified water is being returned to the underground aquifer.

Woodlands. The most significant woodlands consist primarily of mature pin oak, red oak, and white oak, and are located on the kames and on the east side of Marsden Lake. Stands of bur oak, cottonwood, and box elder are located in various parts of the site. In some places, stands of spruce and pine have been planted.

SITE JUSTIFICATION

Why is this site important for Minnesota’s birds? Please provide a detailed written explanation for each category checked below. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

The AHATS site is important because it contains unique bird and other animal habitat in an urban setting and is fenced off from the surrounding community. The varied habitat and large size of the site is quite different from the surrounding urban area. AHATS is maintained by the National Guard, and volunteers from St. Paul Audubon Society help with its maintenance.

AHATS satisfies this application’s Criterion MN-1e in that it supports an exceptional diversity (162 species) of bird species and possesses important habitat for both shorebirds and waterfowl.

This site also satisfies Criterion MN-4b. It is a natural area of over 100 acres in an urban landscape with 162 species of birds. Situated in the center of a densely populated area, it offers a unique opportunity for many birders in the Twin Cities. Below is the AHATS Species List. Various observers cited in the references are responsible for drawing up this list (refs. 1,2 and 3). Long-term avian research and monitoring have gone on over the years.

Craig Andresen, the current president of the St. Paul Audubon Society, installed over 350 bluebird and other larger nest boxes on the site in the early ’90s. Since then he has been monitoring nests for species and number of offspring. The overall probable or possible bird breeding has been evaluated on the basis of behaviors such as pair formation, nest defense, and fledglings. In the Species List below, species for which breeding has been confirmed are marked with an asterisk.

In addition to species diversity, AHATS hosts species of special concern. Trumpeter Swans with their young have been observed repeatedly and a small number of Forster Terns and Red-shouldered Hawks have been seen.
Species List

Common Loon
Pied-billed Grebe
Red-necked Grebe
Double-crested Cormorant
American Bittern
Least Bittern
Great Blue Heron
Great Egret
Green Heron
Black-crowned Night Heron
Trumpeter Swan*
Canada Goose*
Wood Duck*
Green-winged Teal
Mallard*
American Wigeon
Blue-winged Teal
Northern Shoveler
Gadwall
Ring-necked Duck*
Lesser Scaup
Common Goldeneye
Bufflehead
Hooded Merganser
Common Merganser
Turkey Vulture
Osprey
Northern Harrier
Sharp-shinned Hawk
Cooper’s Hawk
Red-shouldered Hawk
Red-tailed Hawk*
Broad-winged hawk
American Kestrel
Ring-necked Pheasant
Ruffed Grouse
Virginia Rail
Sora
American Coot
Killdeer
Greater Yellowlegs
Spotted Sandpiper
Wilson’s Snipe
American Woodcock
Ring-billed Gull
Herring Gull
Common Tern
Forster’s Tern
Black Tern
Caspian Tern
Rock Pigeon
Mourning Dove*
Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Black-billed Cuckoo
Great Horned Owl
Barred Owl
Common Nighthawk
Ruby-throated hummingbird
Belted Kingfisher
Red-headed Woodpecker
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Downy Woodpecker
Hairy Woodpecker
Northern Flicker
Pileated Woodpecker
Olive-sided Flycatcher
Eastern Wood-Pewee
 Least Flycatcher
Willow Flycatcher
Eastern Phoebe
Great Crested Flycatcher
Eastern Kingbird
Horned Lark
Purple Martin
Tree Swallow*
Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Bank Swallow
Cliff Swallow
Barn Swallow*
Blue Jay
American Crow
Common Raven
Black-capped Chickadee*
White-breasted Nuthatch
Red-breasted Nuthatch
Brown Creeper
House Wren*
Winter Wren
Sedge Wren
Marsh Wren
Golden-crowned Kinglet
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Eastern Bluebird*
Veery
Hermit Thrush
Swainson’s Thrush
Wood Thrush
Gray-cheeked Thrush
American Robin
Gray Catbird
Brown Thrasher
Cedar Waxwing
Northern Shrike
European Starling
Solitary Vireo
Philadelphia Vireo
Yellow-throated Vireo
Warbling Vireo*
Red-eyed Vireo*
Nashville Warbler
Northern Parula
Yellow Warbler
Chestnut-sided Warbler
Magnolia Warbler
Yellow-rumped Warbler
Blackburnian Warbler
Palm Warbler
Bay-breasted Warbler
Blackpoll Warbler
Black and White Warbler
Tennessee Warbler
American Redstart
Ovenbird
Common Yellowthroat
Wilson’s Warbler
Orange-crowned Warbler
Connecticut Warbler
Northern Waterthrush
Northern Cardinal
Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Indigo Bunting
Dickcissel
Eastern Towhee
American Tree Sparrow
Chipping Sparrow*
Clay-colored Sparrow
Field Sparrow
Vesper Sparrow
Savannah Sparrow
Grasshopper Sparrow
Fox Sparrow
Lincoln’s Sparrow
Song Sparrow*
Swamp Sparrow
White-throated Sparrow
White-crowned Sparrow
Lark Sparrow*
Dark-eyed Junco
Snow Bunting
Bobolink
Red-winged Blackbird*
Brewer’s Blackbird
Eastern Meadowlark
Western Meadowlark
Yellow-headed Blackbird
Common Grackle
Brown-headed Cowbird
Baltimore Oriole*
House Finch
American Goldfinch
House Sparrow

162 Species
**IBA SITE CRITERIA** - Check all that apply. Please read criteria before completing this section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>SEASON</th>
<th>MAX. NUMBERS</th>
<th>YEAR(S)</th>
<th>ACCURACY</th>
<th>REFERENCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Seasonal</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>A.</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MN-4b</td>
<td>Same as above</td>
<td>Same as above</td>
<td>Same as above</td>
<td>Same as above</td>
<td>A.</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Season (on which quantitative data are based): B=Breeding, W=Winter, SM=Spring Migration, FM=Fall Migration.
2Accuracy: R=Rough Estimate, G=Good Estimate, A= Accurate Count or Estimate
3Cite references by number listed below.

**REFERENCES** - Please list the references used to substantiate the data above. Use the reference number below to fill in reference column above. Give full citation including year, author, source and page number where appropriate. Examples of references would include; Breeding Bird Survey, Christmas Bird Count, articles from the Loon or other ornithological journals, Agency report or data, personal observation.
### HABITAT AND LAND USE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Habitat Types: Please indicate approx. % of the total area for all major habitat types and with an X for minor habitat types.</th>
<th>Major Land Uses: Please indicate all major land uses with an X.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22.1%</td>
<td>Upland Deciduous Forest (e.g. Maple-basswood, oak, aspen, birch, northern hardwoods)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lowland Deciduous Forest (includes floodplain forest, ash swamp)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upland Mixed Deciduous/Conifer Forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lowland Mixed Deciduous/Conifer Forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1%</td>
<td>Upland Coniferous Forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lowland Coniferous Forest (includes tamarack, black spruce, and white cedar swamps)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Open bog/poor fen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rich fen (narrow-leaved sedges)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>Shrub Swamp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.2%</td>
<td>Lowland (wet) Native Prairie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Ecological Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>Wet Meadows (broad-leaved sedges)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>Marsh (cattail/mixed emergent)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upland Native Prairie (includes dry, mesic, and brush prairie)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upland Savanna (includes jack pine savanna, oak savanna, and aspen openings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48.3%</td>
<td>Grassland (non-native, planted)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cliff/Talus</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>River/Stream (includes river shore)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>Lake (includes lake shore)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sewage Pond</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**CONSERVATION AND THREATS**

Please note all threats to the site and if it is of Low, Medium, High, or Unknown importance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Threat</th>
<th>Threat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abandonment/reduction of land management</td>
<td>Invasive or non-native plants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural intensification/expansion</td>
<td>Natural pests/disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquaculture/fisheries (overfishing)</td>
<td>Overgrazing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cellular/Wind Towers/Power Lines</td>
<td>Predators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction/impact of dike/dam</td>
<td>Pesticides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deforestation</td>
<td>Recreation/tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disturbance to birds</td>
<td>Selective logging/cutting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drainage</td>
<td>Succession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraction industry</td>
<td>Unsustainable exploitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groundwater</td>
<td>Wetland loss</td>
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<tr>
<td>abstractation</td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrialization/urbanization</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduced animals or feral pets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please describe the extent of these threats, their seriousness, and any steps being taken to address them. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Land management - Currently AHATS is maintained by the National Guard and by St. Paul Audubon volunteers. The Guard clears the roads and oversees the grounds. Prescribed burns are used to enhance degraded prairie remnants, and prairie replants have been done by Craig Andresen. The burns have been conducted with the prodding of Audubon members over the last 12 years. Some years, funding for the burns has been provided by the U.S. Army or the Minnesota National Guard. Craig Andresen has acquired some Minnesota DNR grants, and other years the prescribed burning has been done pro bono by Andresen and his firm. The future of management activities at the site is precarious without Audubon’s encouragement. There is the risk that the burns, because they are done on a volunteer basis, may not be continued indefinitely.

Urbanization – Due to its size and location, there is always the threat of development. Ramsey County has purchased a 113-acre northwest parcel of TCAAP from the Army and is planning some kind of development for it. Whether there will be future requests for further development of TCAAP is unknown at this time, but there are plans for this on the Arden Hills city web site. The Arden Hills community is working with the National Guard to protect the open space of AHATS.

Invasive plants – There is a continued need for clearing buckthorn, excessive small tree growth, and other invasive species from the site. This is being carried out on a volunteer basis.

Ground water and other contamination - Due to the operations conducted by the U.S. Army over the years, contaminated water in the aquifer is continually filtered and purified. The U.S. Army is conducting this process. There are also contaminated sites that are marked and left untouched by users of the site.

OTHER RESOURCES

Nonavian Flora and Fauna: List important, rare, or unusual plant and animal species and their significance at this site. Information for some sites can be obtained from the MN DNR Natural Heritage Database (contact Mark Martell or Sarah Hoffmann sarah.Hoffmann@dnr.state.mn.us for request form).
Blanding’s turtles are commonly seen in AHATS, and are known to traverse the connection between the Rice Creek corridor to the north and AHATS. The Plains Pocket Mouse, a threatened species, also resides on the site.

There are some rare native plant species on the site as well.

Please describe any social, cultural, economic, or historic issues associated with this site.

The late Congressman Bruce Vento and the Reuse Committee worked out a detailed plan for TCAAP, known as the Vento Plan, in 1995. This plan is available on the Arden Hills city web site.

NOMINATOR

NAME: Ben G. Zimmerman, with participation from Craig Andresen, Julian Sellers, and Joan Galli.

ADDRESS: 2225 Folwell Ave.

PHONE: 651 645 1662

EMAIL: zimme003@umn.edu

FAX:

AFFILIATION: All individuals named are members of the St. Paul Audubon Society.

LOCAL GROUPS WITH A CONSERVATION INTEREST IN THIS SITE

Name/Group: St. Paul Audubon Society
Website Address: www.saintpaulaudubon.net
City/State/Zip: Mpls., MN 55455
Phone: 651 291 2596
Email:

Name/Group: Sierra Club
Website Address: Franklin Ave.
City/State/Zip: Mpls., MN 55455
Phone:
Email:

Have you discussed the nomination of this site with the landowner/manager? Y

Does the landowner/manager agree to the nomination of this site as an IBA? Y
Thank You For Your Help