



Tidal Wading Bird and Waterfowl Habitat



Dataset Use: Natural Resource Protection Act (NRPA)

Keywords: TWWH, Tidal, waterfowl, wading bird, NRPA, significant habitat, mudflat, salt marsh, coastal

DESCRIPTION

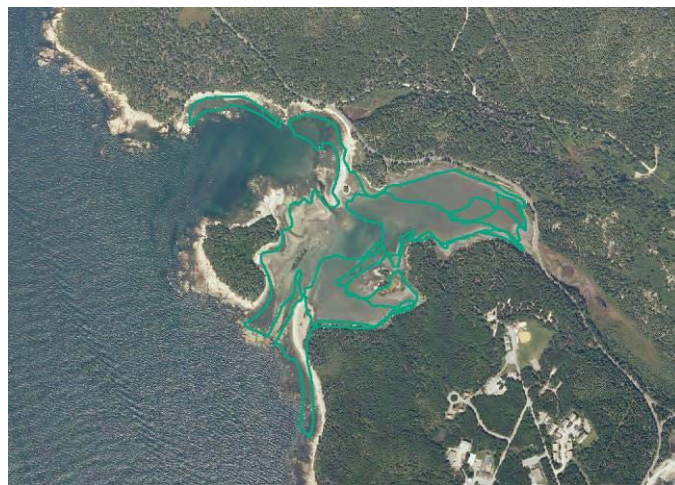
This coastal habitat that supports tidal waterfowl and wading birds is composed of four habitat components: mudflats, salt marshes, eelgrass beds, and mussel bars. Rating of these habitats under NRPA is based on size of the habitat area and proximity to other tidal habitats. This dataset is currently used to depict Significant Wildlife Habitats under NRPA and important wildlife coastal habitats for oil spill response.

PURPOSE

This dataset was developed to maintain and provide protection to important wildlife coastal habitats. In 2006, the habitat component "aquatic beds" was dropped from the layer because it was too generic and extensive for meaningful protection. At the same time, it was recognized that the coastal NWI and the Coastal Marine Geologic Environments (CMGE) disagreed on boundaries and classifications of salt marshes and mudflats (polygons sometimes overlapped). A significant change in purpose is that oil spill may consider habitats that do not rate as SWH under NRPA as still being worth protecting from a spill.

SOURCE HISTORY

Existing polygons were copied from old GIS datasets: Coastal Marine Geologic Environments (CMGE), National Wetlands Inventory (NWI). Eelgrass polygons come from DMR's eelgrass layer, which is updated annually. An effort is underway to remap mudflats and salt marshes from high resolution, low-tide aerial imagery.



EXAMPLE OF TIDAL WADING BIRD AND WATERFOWL HABITAT LAYER AND IMAGERY (NAIP 2009)

ACCESS AND USE LIMITATIONS

Distribution of these data to other users by anyone other than Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW), Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP), or Maine Office of Geographic Information Systems (MEGIS) is NOT authorized. Use of these data for identifying Tidal Wading Bird and Waterfowl Habitat under Maine's Natural Resource Protection Act is the only use that is endorsed by MDIFW; other uses may or may not be valid.

Currently only polygons that have been rated as Significant Wildlife Habitats under NRPA are distributed outside the agency (current NRPA ratings are based on habitat type and acreage). There is ongoing discussion of whether oil spill response should also use habitat polygons that do not qualify as SWH under NRPA.

GEOGRAPHIC EXTENT

Statewide. The data are fairly consistent across the state.

ACCURACY

Unknown. Eelgrass beds and mussel bars are still taken from other datasets but "are believed to be reasonably accurate." DMR has invested a lot of resources into eelgrass mapping and the layer provided to MEGIS may include accuracy specifications. Current mapping of mudflats and salt marshes captures features down to 12' across, given they can be recognized in imagery. There is a field verification component to this mapping update that may eventually provide some estimate of classification accuracy.



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

HABITAT DATASET FACT SHEET

UPDATE STATUS

Updates are rare and extremely labor intensive. Data were last modified in 2006 and the current update project has been in progress since then.

FUTURE PLANS

MDIFW is currently digitizing mudflat and salt marsh habitat polygons. This will replace the current 2006 dataset when it is completed. Please refer to the draft mapping and rating rules for more information on the ongoing update.

NEXT SCHEDULED UPDATE

Ongoing

CITATION

Habitat data layer fact sheet for Tidal Wading Bird and Waterfowl Habitat, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, 650 State Street, Bangor, ME 04401

DATA ACCESS LOCATION(S)

MEGIS Data Catalog, State SQL Server, HMAP, MDEP Website

For more information about this and other habitat data layers, please contact the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Research and Assessment Section's Habitat Group at (207) 941-4466 or visit our website www.maine.gov/ifw/wildlife/habitat_data/requesting_data.htm