



Existing Conditions Fact Sheet: Birds

Issued: October 2023

The study areas associated with the Community Access Road support many land types that provide habitats for bird species, including coniferous, deciduous, and mixed-wood forests, shrubby and sparse areas, and open bogs and fens. The construction of the Community Access Road has the potential to affect birds directly and indirectly. For example, important habitat may be directly impacted by construction activities (like tree removal for example). Indirect effects include where changes in one environmental discipline causes a change in another (such as changes in surface water could indirectly affect birds).

Our Studies

Our studies looked at bird species located close to the footprint of the proposed routes, plus an additional 3 km buffer along the proposed route options to determine local effects, and an 11 km buffer along the proposed route options to determine the indirect effects.

Our Findings

Six categories of birds were identified as valued components, meaning they are of particular interest to the public, Indigenous peoples, federal authorities, and / or other interested parties. They include the following:

Forest Birds

- Forest birds include songbird, woodpecker, and grouse species that breed in upland coniferous, deciduous, and mixed-wood forests. Sixty-four of the 65 forest bird species that may be found in the study areas were detected during surveys from 2018 to 2022.



Study Areas

Study areas identify the geographic limit where potential effects of the road may occur. The existing conditions are documented for three study areas:

- Project Development Area (PDA): the area of direct disturbance
- Local Study Area (LSA): the area where direct effects of the road are likely to take place
- Regional Study Area (RSA): the area where indirect effects are likely to occur





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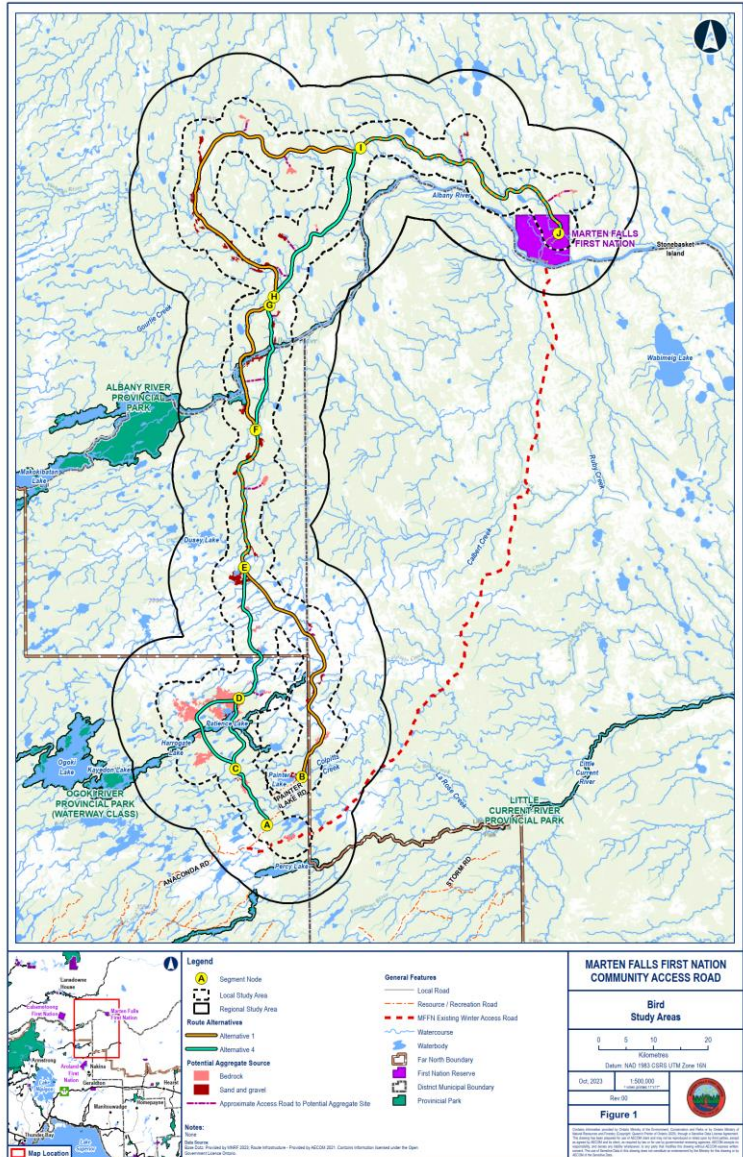
- Three forest bird species were chosen to represent each type of forest habitat:
 - **Red-eyed vireo** – represents deciduous forest species.
 - **Ovenbird** – represents mixed-wood forest species.
 - **Dark-eyed junco** – represents coniferous and disturbed forest species.

Raptors

- Raptors are birds of prey that hunt using their strong talons such as hawks, eagles, falcons and owls. Fifteen of the 17 raptor species that may be present in the study area were detected during surveys from 2018 to 2022.
- Two types of raptors were selected to represent different hunting styles:
 - **Osprey** – represents diurnal (day-time hunting) raptors.
 - **Boreal owl** – represents nocturnal (night-time hunting) raptors.

Shorebirds

- Shorebirds feed and nest on shorelines of waterbodies, watercourses, and wetlands and include plovers and sandpipers. Eleven of the 22 shorebird species that may be present in the study area were detected during surveys from 2018 to 2022.
 - **Wilson’s snipe** was selected as a species to represent shorebirds within the study areas.





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Waterfowl and Waterbirds

- Waterfowl and waterbirds include loons, grebes, swans, geese, ducks, herons, and gulls which nest or feed in and around open water. Twenty-five of the 30 waterfowl and waterbird species that may be present in the study area were detected during surveys from 2018 to 2022.
- **Mallard** was selected as a species to represent waterfowl and waterbirds within the study areas.

Bog / Fen Birds and Other Wetland Birds

- Bog / fen birds and other wetland birds nest in bogs, fens, swamps, or marshes which are abundant in Canada's boreal forest. All of the 15 bog / fen and other wetland bird species that may be present in the study area were detected during surveys from 2018 to 2022.
- The following species were chosen to represent each habitat type:
 - **Palm warbler** – represents bog species.
 - **Common yellowthroat** – represents fen species.
 - **Northern waterthrush** – represents swamp species.
 - **Sora** – represents marsh species.

Species at Risk Birds

- The following species at risk birds were selected for their ranking as threatened, endangered or extirpated under the federal *Species At Risk Act* and provincial *Endangered Species Act*. Nine of the 16 species were detected during surveys from 2018 to 2022:
 - **Bald eagle**
 - **Eastern wood-pewee**
 - **Bank swallow**
 - **Evening grosbeak**
 - **Barn swallow**
 - **Lesser yellowlegs**
 - **Black tern**
 - **Olive-sided flycatcher**
 - **Canada warbler**
 - **Peregrine falcon**
 - **Chimney swift**
 - **Rusty blackbird**
 - **Common nighthawk**
 - **Short-eared owl**
 - **Eastern whip-poor-will**
 - **Yellow rail**

Contact Information

You are welcome to contact the Project Team at any time with questions or comments.

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