Control of Gulls in the Upper St. Lawrence River

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Abstract

The enormous increase in the breeding population of Ring-billed Gulls on the Great lakes and upper St. Lawrence River (USLR) since the early 1960s resulted in the decline of the breeding population of Common Terns because the larger gulls arrive earlier on the colony sites and usurp traditional tern nesting areas. Natural nesting sites are lost and often the birds move to small artificial sites. Management action at Ice Island near Mallorytown Landing has proven successful in excluding the gulls and restoring the island as a tern colony. The gulls also impact the natural vegetation of the nesting sites through acidic defecation, trampling and pulling. These actions lead to the death of most of the natural vegetation and a tendency for the islands to lose their thin layers of soil. The come-back of the Double-crested Cormorant was first hailed as a post contaminant period success story, only to become one of the most controversial species in the Great Lakes region. The cormorants now nest on several islands in the USLR between Cornwall and Kingston. Colonization of further islands will likely occur leading to the further displacement of colonial waterbird nesters such as gulls and terns, and the disappearance of some of the island's vegetation within a few years. In order to maintain Common Tern colonies at natural vegetated sites in the USLR, an on-going program to control or discourage nesting of both Ring-billed Gulls and Double-crested Cormorants may be needed.

Tall Grass Prairie and Savannah ANSI Theme Study

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Abstract

The OMNR Parks and Protected Areas System is designed to ensure the long-term sustainability of Ontario's ecological diversity. In southern Ontario, this is accomplished through of the establishment of provincial parks with representative natural heritage features, and indirectly through the designation of Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSIs) for those areas not represented in parks. It is recognized that this system has under-represented some types of biologically diverse, specialized habitats, including Tallgrass Prairie and Savannah. After conducting a background review of existing information along with supplementary fieldwork, a gap analysis of Tallgrass Prairie and Savannah remnants was conducted for southern Ontario. Occurrences of prairie and savannahs were stratified by Ecological Site District, and further