

USACE Natural Resource Management

Non-migratory Birds



Streaked Horned Lark

FAST FACTS

REASONS FOR CURRENT STATUS: Endemic to the Pacific Northwest, this is a subspecies of the wide-ranging Horned Lark. In 2001 this subspecies was added to the Candidate species list. Then in 2013, it was officially listed under the Endangered Species Act and granted the Threatened status.

The Streaked Horned Lark has been extirpated from much of its historical range. This has been the result of habitat conversion, loss, and degradation. Habitat has been degraded due to fire suppression and the subsequent invasion of non-native species, poor dredge deposition timing and placement on Columbia River Islands, and improperly timed mowing and burning operations. (USFWS)

MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION: In addition to listing the Streaked Horned Lark as Threatened, the USFWS also designated critical habitat for the subspecies in 2013. An interagency group, the Streaked Horned Lark Working Group has been active for over 10 years. This working group includes research biologists, federal, state, and local government agencies, non-governmental organizations and industry groups.

Members of the working group engage with land owners and managers throughout the subspecies' range to encourage measures which improve habitat quality and minimize activities that could reduce nesting success. Measures to protect Streaked Horned Larks have been incorporated into the Comprehensive Conservation Plans for the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex and the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge, and the Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan at Joint Base Lewis-McChord. (USFWS)

HABITAT NEEDS: These ground dwelling birds occupy wide open spaces with no trees and few or no shrubs. Nests are built on the ground in sparsely vegetated sites dominated by grasses and forbs. Wintering habitat is very similar to breeding habitat.

- Maintaining open habitat is critical, particularly areas of 120ha (300 acres) or more.
- Open patches with appropriate characteristics may be smaller if there are adjacent fields to provide an open landscape. (USFWS)

Size: This small bird grows to be approximately 6 to 8 inches in length. This small size helps to distinguish it from other Horned Lark subspecies. (USFWS)

Color: This bird has a dark brown back and yellowish underparts. The throat and eyebrow stripe are also yellow. The nape is walnut brown. This subspecies is more yellow beneath and darker on the back than most other subspecies. (USFWS)

Photo Credit:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Natural Resource Management (NRM)

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USACE ROLE: According to the Threatened & Endangered Species Team cost estimates database, the USACE has expended over \$1,827,000 on efforts related to the Streaked Horned Lark. These funds have been expended by multiple business lines including Flood Risk Management, Navigation, and Regulatory. Expense types include Coordination and Determination, Site Visits and Inspections, Habitat Protection, and Inventory, Survey, and Monitoring. As the Streaked Horned Lark has a small range restricted to the Pacific Northwest, all funds have been expended within Portland and Seattle Districts within the Northwestern Division.

WHAT IS USACE DOING: In 2018 construction began on a \$19.9 million federally-funded dune repair project. The goal of the project was to repair a sand barrier dune in Willapa Bay near the Shoalwater Bay Indianan Reservation. Three major storms occurred between December 2015 and October 2016 which destroyed the northern portion of the sand pit and significantly eroded the remaining dune. Repair work included dredging approximately 750,000 cubic yards of sand from a borrow site to provide the materials to rebuild the 12,500 foot-long protective berm. This work helped to maintain viable nesting habitat for the Streaked Horned Lark. Additionally, the dune restoration protects the culturally and ecologically significant wetland areas of the Shoalwater Bay Indian Reservation and maintains habitat for another listed bird species, the Western Snowy Plover.

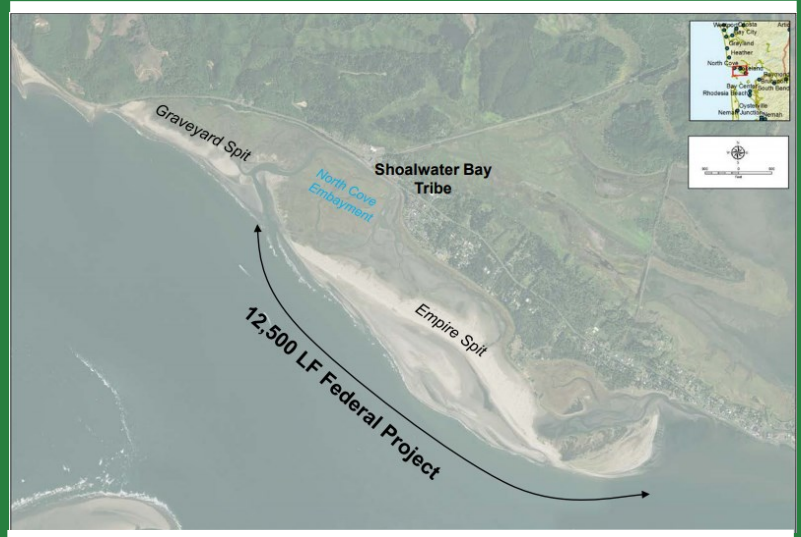


Photo: An aerial image of the dune restoration project.

