

BC IBA Annual Report Form

IBA Name: Douglas Lake Plateau

Caretaker Name: Alan Burger (Nicola Naturalist Society); Rick Howie (Kamloops Naturalists)

Date: 15 January 2015

Summary of Site Visits:

Date(s)	Description of Monitoring (e.g. Casual, Coastal Waterbird Survey, BBA, CBC, etc.)	Area of IBA Covered (%)	Notes (location monitored, how IBA navigated, etc)
See attached appendix for e-Bird extracts – visits in 2014 by Nicola Naturalists and Alan Burger	Casual surveys by car and on foot	Mostly <10% per visit	Along public roads through private ranchland and Indian Reserves. Routes covered: Pennask Lake Road Minnie Lake Rd (Douglas Creek Rd) Douglas Lake Rd (from Hwy 5A past Douglas Lake to Chapperon Lake) Separation Lake & Knutsford.
Rick Howie made 12 trips into the IBA during 2014.	Some were casual birding while enroute while others were intended as investigative field trips. 3 trips were taken from Feb 11 - Apr 21 and 9 trips were made from June 12-Nov 27. See attached summary.	<5% per visit	Public roads including Hwy 5a south to Nicola lake and Merritt occasionally, Goose Lake Rd, Knutsford.

1. Did you enter all of your bird observations into an online database, such as eBird, Coastal Waterbird Survey, Breeding Bird Atlas, etc? Y N X If not, you are welcome to provide us a copy of your observations by completing the Bird Observations Form for each visit (available from <http://bit.ly/IBA-forms>).

Nicola Naturalist Society data and those from Alan Burger are all on e-Bird (see appendix). Only a few of Howie's sightings are on E-bird but will be uploaded in the near future. The rest are stored in his personal database.

2. Were any IBA trigger species or other species of interest observed this year? Y X N If yes, please summarize.

Sandhill Cranes were observed:

21 April 2014 3 on Douglas Lake Ranch (we missed the main migration this spring)

2 at Separation Lake

3. Are you aware of any other datasets or monitoring programs underway for the IBA trigger species or other species of interest? Y N X If yes, please list:

None that I'm aware of (Alan). Ditto from Rick Howie

4. Has the land use, ownership and/or conservation status (e.g. management plans, protected areas) of the site changed since your last report? Y N If yes, please describe.

Some changes in ownership but no changes in management at the southern end of the IBA. Quilchena Ranch was bought by Douglas Lake Ranch. Not sure if deal was completed in late 2013 or early 2014. The Nature Conservancy of Canada has negotiated a conservation arrangement with the Napier Lake Ranch property which is a positive change within the IBA.

A large mining company has purchased land in the area just south of Kamloops and is in the planning stages for a large open pit mine. If it proceeds, there will be significant changes to the grasslands and mixed forest in the area west of Knutsford and Hwy 5a.

5. Has the habitat of the site changed since your last report? Y N If yes, please describe.

No major changes to the grasslands and hayfields. The ponds created by Ducks Unlimited at the junction of Pennask Lake Road and Minnie Lake Road (Flume Ponds) remain almost entirely all year. This is an important breeding site for waterfowl. The cause of the drainage is not clear (a Douglas Lake employee said it wasn't their work and thought a beaver dam had given way).

Construction of a third BC Hydro power line from the substation (junction Lauder Road & Douglas Lake Rd) towards the south and west is almost completed. This new line runs parallel to the two existing power lines. Having a third power line might have a marginal increase in risk of collisions to birds, but since there are already numerous power cables and pylons along this route the change is probably negligible.

Single family dwellings continue to spread slowly in the Knutsford area, with parcel sizes varying. Habitats away from the house footprints have not changed significantly, but any proliferation of horses and livestock kept by inexperienced range managers will result in degraded grasslands. Such areas are currently visible. No significant changes in 2014.

6. a. Have any new or potential conservation threats arisen, or existing pressures worsened? Y N If yes, please describe what, when, where, etc.

No evidence of major changes or threats in the south. The potential Ajax mine is a major threat in the Knutsford area. Other drilling exploration is planned for areas east of Hwy 5a in the Knutsford area but did not occur in 2014 as planned. Field work and studies continue on the Ajax property. If mines were developed in both of those areas, there would be a significant loss of grassland habitat just south of Kamloops.

- b. Have any conservation threats lessened? Y N If yes, please describe what, when, where, etc.

No change at the southern end. No diminishment at the north end.

7. Have any conservation actions/activities been undertaken/initiated? Y N If yes, please describe.

No change at the southern end. Anti-mine protests have been active at the north end. Burrowing Owl releases continue in the Knutsford, Beresford and other areas to the south within the IBA.

8. What conservation actions do you feel would help improve conditions for the trigger species?

Probably best to leave things as they are. No recommendations at this time (Rick).

9. How many hours did you (and your partners) spend on Caretaker related duties this year (e.g., travelling, monitoring, reporting, outreach, conservation, etc)? *[Note: This info helps us leverage funding for the IBA program.]*

At southern end (Nicola Naturalists & Alan Burger) – about 20 hours

At northern end, 40 hours. (Howie)

10. May we include this report in our Annual Report Compendium, which is posted to the BC Nature website? Y N
11. Please include any other comments about the status of your IBA (e.g. assistance required from IBA partners, boundary or site summary changes required, comments about the report form, other species observed, etc).

On 8 October 2013 Rick Howie arranged a meeting with Ian Barnett (Nature Conservancy of Canada) to discuss strategies to approach ranchers in the Douglas Lake Plateau IBA about creating an awareness of the IBA status as well as obtaining permission and support for monitoring of birds in the IBA. Howie, Burger and Barnett met briefly over lunch and agreed that a follow up meeting should be arranged with Dave Haywood-Farmer for additional advice. This meeting has not been held yet. Howie has a personal concern (not verified) that some large land owners may become uncooperative once they learn that the IBA has been created without consultation. Understanding of the legal status and implications is likely low amongst most if not all ranchers. **There has been no movement on meetings with any of the ranchers with respect to the preceding initiative.**

Appendix – Dates of e-Bird data for the Douglas Lake Plateau IBA in 2014

Nicola Naturalist Society e-Bird account:

2014-04-21 17:00	Nicola Lake and vicinity
2014-04-21 10:00	Douglas Lake Plateau IBA
2014-01-04 11:00	Douglas Lake Ranch
2014-01-04 10:00	Nicola Lake--pullout at narrows

Alan Burger e-Bird account:

2014-01-04 15:00	Douglas Lake
2014-11-23 12:05	Douglas Lake - Spahomin I.R.
2014-04-28 13:30	Douglas Lake Plateau IBA
2014-11-01 14:30	Douglas Lake Ranch
2014-11-01 13:30	Douglas Lake Ranch - Chapperon Lake
2014-11-23 12:35	Douglas Lake Road - Hwy 5A to Lake
2014-11-01 10:30	Douglas Lake Road - Hwy 5A to Lake
2014-05-10 21:20	Douglas Lake Road - Hwy 5A to Lake
2014-05-10 23:00	Douglas Lake air strip pond & marsh
2014-09-28 13:00	Guichon Ranch - Beaver Ranch Flats
2014-05-31 12:00	Guichon Ranch - Beaver Ranch Flats

2014-05-15 11:00	Guichon Ranch - Beaver Ranch Flats
2014-04-09 12:00	Guichon Ranch - Beaver Ranch Flats
2014-05-31	Guichon Ranch -Private property
2014-04-09 11:50	Guichon Ranch homestead & ponds
2014-11-23 11:05	Minnie Lake Road (Douglas Cr Rd)
2014-11-01 15:00	Minnie Lake Road (Douglas Cr Rd)
2014-01-04 14:00	Minnie Lake Road (Douglas Cr Rd)
2014-11-23 10:00	Pennask Lake Road 1
2014-06-29 11:50	Pennask Lake Road 1
2014-06-04 14:00	Pennask Lake Road 1
2014-05-30 21:40	Pennask Lake Road 1
2014-01-04 12:30	Pennask Lake Road 1
2014-05-11 22:30	Planet Mine Road
2014-09-28 11:50	Separation Lake, Knutsford
2014-09-25 12:40	Separation Lake, Knutsford
2014-05-15 13:30	Separation Lake, Knutsford

Field Trips by R. Howie

2014 - 02 - 11	Merritt to Kamloops along Hwy 5a
2014 - 03 - 16	Knutsford - Separation Lake area
2014 - 04 - 21	Knutsford - Separation Lake area
2014 - 06 - 12	Knutsford - Separation Lake area
2014 - 07 - 17	Knutsford to Stump Lake
2014 - 08 - 08	Kamloops - Merritt along Hwy 5a
2014 - 08 - 11	Separation Lake area
2014 - 08 - 14	Separation Lake area
2014 - 09 - 22	Merritt - Kamloops Hwy 5a
2014 - 10 - 03	Knutsford - Separation Lake area
2014 - 10 - 05	Knutsford - Separation Lake area
2014 - 11 - 27	Merritt - Kamloops Hwy 5a
2014 - 12 - 21	Knutsford - Rose Hill area visited during Christmas Bird Count by 6 observers.