

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

*Environmental Assessment  
Appendices*

*Fort Norfolk Pier Rehabilitation and Expansion Project  
USACE, Norfolk District, Fort Norfolk, Virginia*

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# APPENDIX H

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Self-Certification Package



## United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
Virginia Ecological Services Field Office  
6669 Short Lane  
Gloucester, VA 23061-4410  
Phone: (804) 693-6694 Fax: (804) 693-9032

In Reply Refer To:

October 21, 2022

Project Code: 2023-0007536

Project Name: Fort Norfolk Pier Rehabilitation and Expansion Project

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

The enclosed species list identifies threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project and/or may be affected by your proposed project. The species list fulfills the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*). Any activity proposed on National Wildlife Refuge lands must undergo a 'Compatibility Determination' conducted by the Refuge. Please contact the individual Refuges to discuss any questions or concerns.

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more current information or assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. This verification can be completed formally or informally as desired. The Service recommends that verification be completed by visiting the ECOS-IPaC website at regular intervals during project planning and implementation for updates to species lists and information. An updated list may be requested through the ECOS-IPaC system by completing the same process used to receive the enclosed list.

The purpose of the Act is to provide a means whereby threatened and endangered species and the ecosystems upon which they depend may be conserved. Under sections 7(a)(1) and 7(a)(2) of the Act and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 402 *et seq.*), Federal agencies are required to utilize their authorities to carry out programs for the conservation of threatened and endangered species and to determine whether projects may affect threatened and endangered species and/or designated critical habitat.

A Biological Assessment is required for construction projects (or other undertakings having similar physical impacts) that are major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment as defined in the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2) (c)). For projects other than major construction activities, the Service suggests that a biological evaluation similar to a Biological Assessment be prepared to determine whether the project may affect listed or proposed species and/or designated or proposed critical habitat. Recommended contents of a Biological Assessment are described at 50 CFR 402.12.

If a Federal agency determines, based on the Biological Assessment or biological evaluation, that listed species and/or designated critical habitat may be affected by the proposed project, the agency is required to consult with the Service pursuant to 50 CFR 402. In addition, the Service recommends that candidate species, proposed species and proposed critical habitat be addressed within the consultation. More information on the regulations and procedures for section 7 consultation, including the role of permit or license applicants, can be found in the "Endangered Species Consultation Handbook" at:

<http://www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/pdf/TOC-GLOS.PDF>

**Migratory Birds:** In addition to responsibilities to protect threatened and endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), there are additional responsibilities under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) to protect native birds from project-related impacts. Any activity, intentional or unintentional, resulting in take of migratory birds, including eagles, is prohibited unless otherwise permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)). For more information regarding these Acts see <https://www.fws.gov/birds/policies-and-regulations.php>.

The MBTA has no provision for allowing take of migratory birds that may be unintentionally killed or injured by otherwise lawful activities. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to comply with these Acts by identifying potential impacts to migratory birds and eagles within applicable NEPA documents (when there is a federal nexus) or a Bird/Eagle Conservation Plan (when there is no federal nexus). Proponents should implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize the production of project-related stressors or minimize the exposure of birds and their resources to the project-related stressors. For more information on avian stressors and recommended conservation measures see <https://www.fws.gov/birds/bird-enthusiasts/threats-to-birds.php>.

In addition to MBTA and BGEPA, Executive Order 13186: *Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*, obligates all Federal agencies that engage in or authorize activities that might affect migratory birds, to minimize those effects and encourage conservation measures that will improve bird populations. Executive Order 13186 provides for the protection of both migratory birds and migratory bird habitat. For information regarding the implementation of Executive Order 13186, please visit <https://www.fws.gov/birds/policies-and-regulations/executive-orders/e0-13186.php>.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. The Service encourages Federal agencies to include conservation of threatened and endangered species into their project planning to further the purposes of the Act. Please include the Project Code in the header of this

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letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List
  - USFWS National Wildlife Refuges and Fish Hatcheries
  - Migratory Birds
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## **Official Species List**

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

**Virginia Ecological Services Field Office**

6669 Short Lane

Gloucester, VA 23061-4410

(804) 693-6694

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## Project Summary

Project Code: 2023-0007536  
Project Name: Fort Norfolk Pier Rehabilitation and Expansion Project  
Project Type: Boatlift/Boathouse/Dock/Pier/Piles - Maintenance/Modification  
Project Description: Fort Norfolk is located along the shore of the Elizabeth River in Norfolk, Virginia. The Elizabeth River is a tributary of the Chesapeake Bay. Fort Norfolk is one of nineteen historic coastal forts authorized by President George Washington to protect America's harbors. Fort Norfolk was constructed in 1794, encompassing a total of four acres of land, including eleven structures. Fort Norfolk experienced several upgrades over time but was eventually abandoned as a fortification in 1880. Fort Norfolk became the headquarters for the USACE, Norfolk District in 1923.

The proposed action is to rehabilitate and construct various improvements to the existing pier located at Fort Norfolk to allow for the safe mooring of three (3) 65 feet (ft) vessels and protect the mooring location from wave action and severe storm events. This includes constructing a floating dock with two floating dock fingers, a steel breakwater wave screen to the west and perpendicular to the pier, a timber wave fence on the existing timber fender, a boat lift for a Boston whaler, a new sanitary pump out station, adding new utilities, and raising the existing pier deck.

The existing pier, located at the northwest edge of the facility, is comprised of 20 ft long by 3.5 ft wide by 1.25 ft deep precast prestressed concrete planks atop 16 ft long by 2.5 ft wide by 2.33 ft deep precast concrete pile caps which bear upon 16 inches (in) by 16 in precast prestressed concrete piles. There is a 4 in cast in place concrete deck atop the concrete planks that slopes from the centerline of the pier to its edges where it is 3 in thick. A cast in place edge beam exists along the northern and southern ends of the pier with a timber fender system fastened to the edge beam. The pier is approximately 466 ft in length by 16 ft wide. Atop the pier, located on the southern face, is an operations building. The footprint of the operations building is approximately 44 ft by 32 ft. Cleats and bollards exist on the north and south edges of the pier and continue at approximately 20 ft spacing (with the exception of where three bollards are located).

Eleven light posts are located on the northern side of the pier at various spacing and there are seven shore power stations located on the northern and southern sides of the pier. Utilities run along the northern and southern faces of the pier, as well as atop the pier along the northern and southern edge beams. Power for the pier is fed from several electrical boxes located on the east face of the Survey Building (adjacent to the entrance of the pier).

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A concrete boat ramp is located adjacent to the pier on the south side.

Project Location:

Approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@36.8568535,-76.30877780340077,14z>



Counties: Norfolk and Portsmouth counties, Virginia

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## Endangered Species Act Species

There is a total of 0 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries<sup>1</sup>, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

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1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

## Critical habitats

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

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# **USFWS National Wildlife Refuge Lands And Fish Hatcheries**

Any activity proposed on lands managed by the [National Wildlife Refuge](#) system must undergo a 'Compatibility Determination' conducted by the Refuge. Please contact the individual Refuges to discuss any questions or concerns.

THERE ARE NO REFUGE LANDS OR FISH HATCHERIES WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA.

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## Migratory Birds

Certain birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act<sup>1</sup> and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act<sup>2</sup>.

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to migratory birds, eagles, and their habitats should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described [below](#).

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1. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
  2. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
  3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

**The birds listed below are birds of particular concern either because they occur on the [USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern \(BCC\) list](#) or warrant special attention in your project location.** To learn more about the levels of concern for birds on your list and how this list is generated, see the FAQ [below](#). This is not a list of every bird you may find in this location, nor a guarantee that every bird on this list will be found in your project area. To see exact locations of where birders and the general public have sighted birds in and around your project area, visit the [E-bird data mapping tool](#) (Tip: enter your location, desired date range and a species on your list). For projects that occur off the Atlantic Coast, additional maps and models detailing the relative occurrence and abundance of bird species on your list are available. Links to additional information about Atlantic Coast birds, and other important information about your migratory bird list, including how to properly interpret and use your migratory bird report, can be found [below](#).

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, click on the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY at the top of your list to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities.	Breeds Oct 15 to Aug 31
Bobolink <i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.	Breeds May 20 to Jul 31
Chimney Swift <i>Chaetura pelagica</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.	Breeds Mar 15 to Aug 25

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NAME	BREEDING SEASON
<p>Lesser Yellowlegs <i>Tringa flavipes</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.</p> <p><a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9679">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9679</a></p>	Breeds elsewhere
<p>Prairie Warbler <i>Dendroica discolor</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.</p>	Breeds May 1 to Jul 31
<p>Red-headed Woodpecker <i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.</p>	Breeds May 10 to Sep 10
<p>Rusty Blackbird <i>Euphagus carolinus</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA</p>	Breeds elsewhere
<p>Short-billed Dowitcher <i>Limnodromus griseus</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.</p> <p><a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9480">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9480</a></p>	Breeds elsewhere
<p>Wood Thrush <i>Hylocichla mustelina</i></p> <p>This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.</p>	Breeds May 10 to Aug 31

## Probability Of Presence Summary

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read and understand the FAQ "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

### Probability of Presence (■)

Each green bar represents the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during a particular week of the year. (A year is represented as 12 4-week months.) A taller bar indicates a higher probability of species presence. The survey effort (see below) can be used to establish a level of confidence in the presence score. One can have higher confidence in the presence score if the corresponding survey effort is also high.

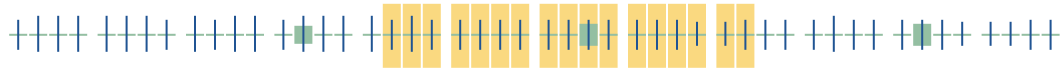
How is the probability of presence score calculated? The calculation is done in three steps:

1. The probability of presence for each week is calculated as the number of survey events in the week where the species was detected divided by the total number of survey events for that week. For example, if in week 12 there were 20 survey events and the Spotted Towhee was found in 5 of them, the probability of presence of the Spotted Towhee in week 12 is 0.25.



BCC Rangewide  
(CON)

Red-headed  
Woodpecker  
BCC Rangewide  
(CON)



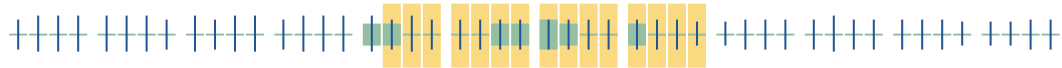
Rusty Blackbird  
BCC - BCR



Short-billed  
Dowitcher  
BCC Rangewide  
(CON)



Wood Thrush  
BCC Rangewide  
(CON)



Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Birds of Conservation Concern <https://www.fws.gov/program/migratory-birds/species>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds>
- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>

## Migratory Birds FAQ

**Tell me more about conservation measures I can implement to avoid or minimize impacts to migratory birds.**

[Nationwide Conservation Measures](#) describes measures that can help avoid and minimize impacts to all birds at any location year round. Implementation of these measures is particularly important when birds are most likely to occur in the project area. When birds may be breeding in the area, identifying the locations of any active nests and avoiding their destruction is a very helpful impact minimization measure. To see when birds are most likely to occur and be breeding in your project area, view the Probability of Presence Summary. [Additional measures](#) or [permits](#) may be advisable depending on the type of activity you are conducting and the type of infrastructure or bird species present on your project site.

**What does IPaC use to generate the list of migratory birds that potentially occur in my specified location?**

The Migratory Bird Resource List is comprised of USFWS [Birds of Conservation Concern \(BCC\)](#) and other species that may warrant special attention in your project location.

The migratory bird list generated for your project is derived from data provided by the [Avian Knowledge Network \(AKN\)](#). The AKN data is based on a growing collection of [survey, banding, and citizen science datasets](#) and is queried and filtered to return a list of those birds reported as occurring in the 10km grid cell(s) which your project intersects, and that have been identified as warranting special attention because they are a BCC species in that area, an eagle ([Eagle Act](#)

requirements may apply), or a species that has a particular vulnerability to offshore activities or development.

Again, the Migratory Bird Resource list includes only a subset of birds that may occur in your project area. It is not representative of all birds that may occur in your project area. To get a list of all birds potentially present in your project area, please visit the [Rapid Avian Information Locator \(RAIL\) Tool](#).

### **What does IPaC use to generate the probability of presence graphs for the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location?**

The probability of presence graphs associated with your migratory bird list are based on data provided by the [Avian Knowledge Network \(AKN\)](#). This data is derived from a growing collection of [survey, banding, and citizen science datasets](#).

Probability of presence data is continuously being updated as new and better information becomes available. To learn more about how the probability of presence graphs are produced and how to interpret them, go to the Probability of Presence Summary and then click on the "Tell me about these graphs" link.

### **How do I know if a bird is breeding, wintering or migrating in my area?**

To see what part of a particular bird's range your project area falls within (i.e. breeding, wintering, migrating or year-round), you may query your location using the [RAIL Tool](#) and look at the range maps provided for birds in your area at the bottom of the profiles provided for each bird in your results. If a bird on your migratory bird species list has a breeding season associated with it, if that bird does occur in your project area, there may be nests present at some point within the timeframe specified. If "Breeds elsewhere" is indicated, then the bird likely does not breed in your project area.

### **What are the levels of concern for migratory birds?**

Migratory birds delivered through IPaC fall into the following distinct categories of concern:

1. "BCC Rangewide" birds are [Birds of Conservation Concern](#) (BCC) that are of concern throughout their range anywhere within the USA (including Hawaii, the Pacific Islands, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands);
2. "BCC - BCR" birds are BCCs that are of concern only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA; and
3. "Non-BCC - Vulnerable" birds are not BCC species in your project area, but appear on your list either because of the [Eagle Act](#) requirements (for eagles) or (for non-eagles) potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities (e.g. offshore energy development or longline fishing).

Although it is important to try to avoid and minimize impacts to all birds, efforts should be made, in particular, to avoid and minimize impacts to the birds on this list, especially eagles and BCC species of rangewide concern. For more information on conservation measures you can implement to help avoid and minimize migratory bird impacts and requirements for eagles, please see the FAQs for these topics.

### **Details about birds that are potentially affected by offshore projects**

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For additional details about the relative occurrence and abundance of both individual bird species and groups of bird species within your project area off the Atlantic Coast, please visit the [Northeast Ocean Data Portal](#). The Portal also offers data and information about other taxa besides birds that may be helpful to you in your project review. Alternately, you may download the bird model results files underlying the portal maps through the [NOAA NCCOS Integrative Statistical Modeling and Predictive Mapping of Marine Bird Distributions and Abundance on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf](#) project webpage.

Bird tracking data can also provide additional details about occurrence and habitat use throughout the year, including migration. Models relying on survey data may not include this information. For additional information on marine bird tracking data, see the [Diving Bird Study](#) and the [nanotag studies](#) or contact [Caleb Spiegel](#) or [Pam Loring](#).

### **What if I have eagles on my list?**

If your project has the potential to disturb or kill eagles, you may need to [obtain a permit](#) to avoid violating the Eagle Act should such impacts occur.

### **Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report**

The migratory bird list generated is not a list of all birds in your project area, only a subset of birds of priority concern. To learn more about how your list is generated, and see options for identifying what other birds may be in your project area, please see the FAQ "What does IPaC use to generate the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location". Please be aware this report provides the "probability of presence" of birds within the 10 km grid cell(s) that overlap your project; not your exact project footprint. On the graphs provided, please also look carefully at the survey effort (indicated by the black vertical bar) and for the existence of the "no data" indicator (a red horizontal bar). A high survey effort is the key component. If the survey effort is high, then the probability of presence score can be viewed as more dependable. In contrast, a low survey effort bar or no data bar means a lack of data and, therefore, a lack of certainty about presence of the species. This list is not perfect; it is simply a starting point for identifying what birds of concern have the potential to be in your project area, when they might be there, and if they might be breeding (which means nests might be present). The list helps you know what to look for to confirm presence, and helps guide you in knowing when to implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize potential impacts from your project activities, should presence be confirmed. To learn more about conservation measures, visit the FAQ "Tell me about conservation measures I can implement to avoid or minimize impacts to migratory birds" at the bottom of your migratory bird trust resources page.

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## **IPaC User Contact Information**

Agency: Army Corps of Engineers

Name: Shannon Reinheimer

Address: 803 Front Street

City: Norfolk

State: VA

Zip: 23510

Email: shannon.j.reinheimer@usace.army.mil

Phone: 7572017074

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