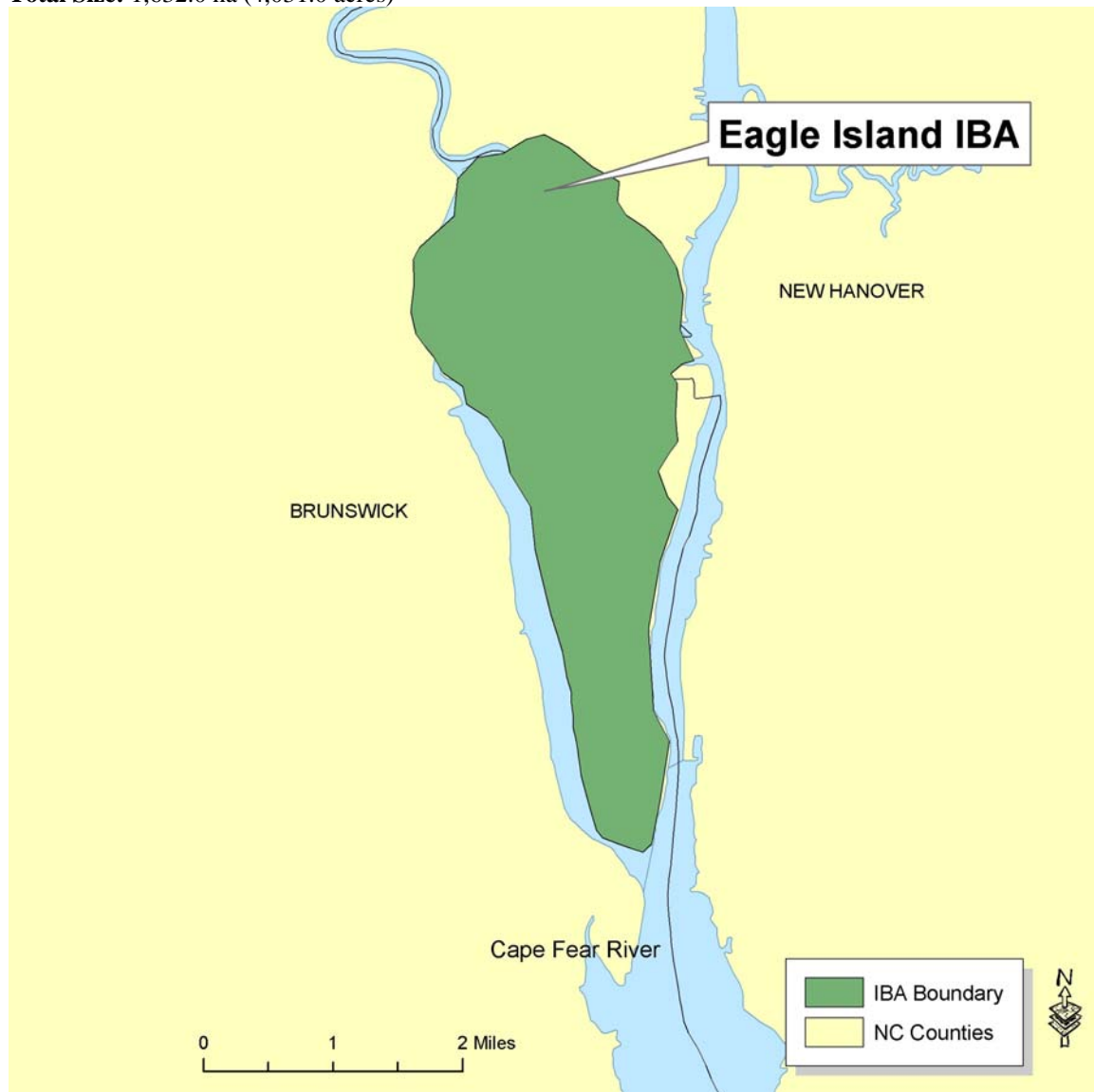


Eagle Island

Location: Brunswick County

Total Size: 1,632.0 ha (4,031.0 acres)



Site Description: Eagle Island is a large expanse of brackish marsh and swamp forest located between the Brunswick and Cape Fear Rivers near Wilmington. The southern half of the island is brackish marsh with a series of diked, dredged-material disposal impoundments. The impoundments vary in depth of surface water and vegetation depending on use of the impoundment during dredging activity. Most often, one or more impoundments will be suitable for shorebirds during migration, and occasionally waterfowl and waterbirds. The diked impoundments comprise approximately 880 acres.

Habitats: Brackish marsh, man-made impoundments, small patches of pine and mixed forest. Interior areas of the diked impoundments consist of a scattered and patchy, monotypic stand of *Phragmites*. The coverage of *Phragmites* depends on the duration between deposits of dredged material. The area outside of the diked area is brackish marsh consisting of cattail, threesquare and cordgrass. Shallow water areas and mud flat are present throughout.

Land Use: disposal of dredged material

Primary Threats: Timing of disposal of dredged material, pesticides from mosquito spraying, control of water levels.

Protection Status: The site is gated and restricted by the US Army Corps of Engineers.

Conservation Issues: Control of water levels in the impoundments is a very significant concern. Water levels should be managed to provide appropriate areas for foraging shorebirds, wading birds and waterfowl. The timing of flooding and drawdowns should be managed to coincide with peak usage by birds. The impoundments are sprayed to control mosquitoes. Other impacts are not known and should be investigated. Furthermore, sediments should be tested regularly for contaminants.

Birds: The site supports great numbers and a great diversity of shorebirds during migration. It is probably the only breeding site for Black-necked Stilts in southern North Carolina and one of only a few breeding sites known in the state for this species. As many as 33 adults and 15 young have been recorded. The site is a good area for winter sparrows; more than 1,000 are present during some winters. Nesting Anhinga, Painted Buntings and Tree Swallows have been recorded. Large numbers of Bobolink (>1,000), mixed flocks of Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles (>10,000) roost in the marsh during winter and migration.

Key Bird Species

Criteria		Season	Number	Year
3d	shorebirds	FM, SM	10,000+	1997
2a	Black-necked Stilt	B	15 pr.	1991
3a	Least Sandpiper	FM, SM	4,000	1997
2b	Semipalmated Sandpiper	FM, SM	9,000	1997
2b	Western Sandpiper	FM, SM	500	1997
2b	Short-billed Dowitcher	FM, SM	4,000	1997
3a	Lesser Yellowlegs	FM, SM	300	1997
3a	Greater Yellowlegs	FM, SM	100	1997
3a	White-rumped Sandpiper	FM, SM	100	1997

B=Breeding FM=Fall Migration SM=Spring Migration W=Winter