HAY-ZAMA LAKES, ALBERTA
Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

Effective Date of Information: The information provided is taken from the List of Canadian Wetlands Designated as of International Importance, May 1982 and updated by the Canadian Wildlife Service in March 1993.

Reference: 4CA008

Name and Address of Compiler: Environmental Conservation Branch, Environment Canada, Twin Atria, 2nd Floor, 4999 - 98th Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T6B 2X3.

Date of Ramsar Designation: 24 May 1982.

Geographical Coordinates: 58°30'N., 119°00'W.

General Location: Located in northeastern Alberta, 100 km west-north-west of High Level.

Area: 50 000 ha.

Wetland Type (Ramsar Classification System): *Inland wetlands:* Type 5 - permanent freshwater lakes; Type 9 - seasonal freshwater ponds, marshes and swamps; Type 10 - shrub swamps.

Altitude: The area is about 320 m above sea level.

Overview (Principal Characteristics): The wetland comprises freshwater eutrophic lakes and the floodplains and interior deltas of a lowland river.

Physical Features (Geology, Geomorphology, Hydrology, Soils, Water, Climate):

Ecological Features (Habitats, Vegetation):

Land Tenure:

    (a) Site: The area is owned by the Government of Alberta.

    (b) Surrounding Area: Mainly privately-held and provincial Crown lands.

Conservation Measures Taken: Hay-Zama Lakes are an Alberta Fish and Wildlife Crown Reservation.

Conservation Measures Proposed: None currently.

Current Land Use/Activities in:

(a) Site: There is no active management practised specifically for waterfowl at present but future management may include the control of water levels. Fluctuations in levels and resultant goose behaviour seem to determine the degree of waterfowl use in the autumn. Existing oil and gas activity on the wetland is strictly controlled by shut down dates in spring and fall, and any further expansion will be restricted.

(b) Surrounding Area: Provincial Crown land.

Threats to Integrity of:

(a) Site: The area is somewhat isolated from major developments, but a potential threat is future expansion of oil and gas activity.

(b) Surrounding Area: None currently.

Hydrological/Physical Values:

Social/Cultural Values:

Noteworthy Fauna: Up to 130 000 Lesser Snow Geese *Anser c. caerulescens*, 47 000 Canada Geese *Branta canadensis* and over 200 000 ducks (up to 90% dabblers) have been known to use this wetland in the Fall.

Noteworthy Flora:

Current Scientific Research and Facilities: None.

Current Conservation Education:

Current Recreation and Tourism:

Management Authority:

Fish and Wildlife Services
Alberta Department of Environmental Protection
North Tower, Petroleum Plaza
9945 - 108th Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2G6

Jurisdiction: Provincial - Alberta Department of Environmental Protection.

Selected Bibliography:

- Environmental Research Associates. 1979. Waterfowl use of the Hay Zama Lakes in relation to oil pumping operations. LGL Ltd. Edmonton, Alberta.

- Hennan, E. and A.J. Macaulay. 1974. Hay-Zama Lakes Project, waterfowl habitat assessment. Special Report No. 1503, Ducks Unlimited Canada. Winnipeg, Manitoba. 55 p.
- Kelland, C.D. 1967. Summarization of goose, vegetation and water level data collected during the summer of 1967 for Hay-Zama Lakes Goose Project. Unpublished progress report, Project 82-4-5-27, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada. Edmonton, Alberta. 70 p.
- Macaulay, A.J. 1969. Job completion report, Hay-Zama Lakes Goose Project. Project No. 82-4-5-78. Unpublished report to Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada. Edmonton, Alberta. 30 p.
- Macaulay, A.J. 1969. Hay-Zama Lakes Project, summer 1969. Unpublished report of Ducks Unlimited Canada. Winnipeg, Manitoba. 34 p. and plates.

Reasons for Ramsar Designation: The wetland is of continental importance to spring and fall migrating ducks and geese. Waterfowl from three of the four North American Flyways (Pacific, Central and Mississippi) utilise the complex. Up to 375 000 ducks and geese use this area during the fall migration period.

Status of Management Plan: A management plan does not exist for this area.