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## Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society

Educating our community about conservation of the natural  
world through member involvement and community outreach

11911 Marne Ave. 216.688.1758 Cleveland, OH 44111

# Dike 14-Doan Brook IBA Avian Survey Project: Phase I

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## 1. **Brief Description of the Project**

*(How this project will help to implement the IBA program).*

**Dike 14-Doan Brook Important Bird Area.** Dike 14 is an 88-acre, man-made peninsula on the Lake Erie shoreline in the heart of Cleveland, Ohio. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began creating it in 1976 by placing dredge from the Cuyahoga River and the Cleveland Harbor within dike walls along the lakeshore. After the Corps closed the site in 1999, nature took hold. With little human intervention, the peninsula filled with plants, trees, and shrubs that attracted diverse species of birds and other wildlife. The National Audubon Society designated Dike 14 as an Important Bird Area in 2000 because it provides essential habitat where birds can breed during the nesting season, rest during migration, or spend the winter.

**Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve:** In 2012, the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority renamed Dike 14 to Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve (CLNP) and opened it to the public. CLNP is open daily during daylight hours and has 1.2 miles of shoreline and over 2.5 miles of trails. It is intended for walking, observing nature, research, and education. CLNP is located at the intersection of four migratory bird routes: Lake Erie, the Lake Erie shoreline, the Cuyahoga River Valley, and the Doan Brook Valley. Over time, its diverse habitats have sustained 280 species of birds, 41 species of butterflies, and many mammals.

**Adopting Dike 14-Doan Brook Important Bird Area:** The Port Authority manages CLNP and has graciously made this area open for the public to enjoy. Birders and birding organizations have been conducting field trips at CLNP on a recreational basis for many years; however, no one has conducted surveys there in accordance with tested, scientific protocols since 2000. Natural areas such as CLNP are subject to development if no on-going evidence exists to prove their importance for sustaining wildlife. The ability to conduct avian research at CLNP will help ensure not

only the protection of CLNP from development, but active involvement by energized and interested volunteers who are skilled in birding and trained in scientific method. The adoption of CLNP by Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society and two partner conservation organizations is the subject of this proposal.

**Project Phases:** The Dike 14-Doan Brook IBA Avian Survey research project is to last a minimum of five years and consists of five (5) phases. This proposal is written for **Phase I: June 2014 – December 2015**. The project phases are broken down as follows:

#### **Phase 1**

- Setup and training June 2014 – November 2014
- Survey Counts December 2014 – May 2015 with quarterly reporting
- Update Report/Annual Report 2014-2015
- Survey Counts June 2015 – November 2015 with quarterly reporting
- Summary Report to GIAC in Dec. 2015 per requirements.

#### **Phase 2**

- Survey Counts December 2015 – May 2016 with quarterly reporting
- Annual Report 2015-2016

#### **Phase 3**

- Survey Counts June 2016 – November 2016 with quarterly reporting
- Survey Counts December 2016 – May 2017 with quarterly reporting
- Annual Report 2016-2017

#### **Phase 4**

- Survey Counts June 2017 – November 2017 with quarterly reporting
- Survey Counts December 2017 – May 2018 with quarterly reporting
- Annual Report 2017-2018

#### **Phase 5**

- Survey Counts June 2018 – November 2018 with quarterly reporting
- Survey Counts December 2018 – May 2019 with quarterly reporting
- Annual Report 2018-2019

## **2. Specific Goals and Objectives of the Project.**

**Goals:** The primary goal of this project is to adopt, in partnership with two other organizations, the Dike 14-Doan Brook IBA, now known as the Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve (CLNP), hereafter referred to as CLNP. Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society will be the Fiscal Agent for the project and provide logistical support for survey point counts, training, and materials. This means that the three organizations will 1) conduct quarterly surveys to establish credible and detailed data on bird populations at CLNP; and 2) be able to make defensible statements about bird population trends and their link to the health of the habitat.

In addition to providing solid data about avian activity at CLNP, the surveys will be conducted following the same protocol used by Black Swamp Bird Observatory (BSBO) at stations at the Navarre unit of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes (about 10 km south-southeast from CLNP) and in other locations. Use of the same protocols at these locations will increase the usefulness of the CLNP data in understanding avian use of the lakeshore and near shore and interior habitat across northern Ohio

**Objectives:** This goal has three specific objectives, to be accomplished over the full five-year span of the project:

1. Increase the amount of data on bird populations and migration trends observed at CLNP from none to a quarterly compilation starting in July 2014. This data will help assess the abundance of priority species of greatest conservation concern in Ohio IBAs in general and this IBA specifically. According to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the National Audubon Society, these priority species include
  - Magnolia Warbler
  - Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
  - Chimney Swift
  - Wood Thrush
  - Red-headed Woodpecker
2. Increase the number of organizations regularly conducting scientific surveys at CLNP from none to a network of three beginning July 2014. These organizations are from the Greater Cleveland area. We anticipate that these organizations will provide experienced birders to sustain the project for at least five years.
3. Increase public awareness of species diversity at CLNP from an occasional news item to quarterly abundance reports beginning July 2014. Our hope is that this will
  - a. enable more people in becoming actively involved in basic field conservation;
  - b. increase public awareness and sensitivity for the protection of CLNP;

- c. generate interest in and energize local conservation issues;
- d. inspire other Audubon chapters in Ohio to adopt IBAs.

### 3. Deliverables

*(Specific outcomes to be accomplished for this project:*

**Phase I: June 2014 – December 15, 2015.)**

**Recruit Birders** Beginning in March 2014, partner organization recruited birders to participate in the project. To date, thirty (30) people have committed to the project.

**Select a Project Coordinator** Kirtland Bird Club member Laura Gooch volunteered in May to be the Project Coordinator.

**Implement Protocols** We have implemented a set of protocols, provided by Mark Shieldcastle, Research Director for Black Swamp Bird Observatory in Oak Harbor, Ohio, to conduct the surveys. Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society will oversee the sighting of at least 16 wooden marker stakes to signify mark survey locations along the trail at CLNP. Each stake will have the number of the point written in permanent ink. An audit of the placed markers will be conducted every six (6) months to account for any missing, damaged, or moved markers. Moved markers will be relocated. Missing or damaged markers will be replaced.

**Train Volunteers** Mark Shieldcastle conducted initial training on May 31, 2014 for an initial 25 volunteers. This training included the protocols to be used during the times they stand at the points to count birds.

**Schedule and Conduct Surveys** The Project Coordinator will schedule observers so as many people as possible conduct point counts each month starting in June 2014.

**Submit and Compile Data from Survey Reports** Volunteer observers will either enter data into a central database or submit their point counts to a volunteer who will enter the data. The Project Coordinator will audit the collected data each month to ensure that there are no anomalous observations and to verify that survey coverage is adequate.

**Publish Results of Monthly Surveys.** The Project Coordinator will submit the results of the surveys for publication to the Port Authority and local media each quarter.

#### 4. Organizational Budget and Project Budget

(Including the amount requested from the Grange Insurance Audubon Center (GIAC), and show any existing or potential matching funds).

##### Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society Organizational Budget:

Fiscal Year Dates	9/1/2012-8/31/2013
Total operating revenue (includes a \$10,000 bequest received in 2012):	\$22,100.61
Total operating expense:	\$10,967.42
Discretionary funds available for spending:	\$11,133.19
Portion of funds balance that was restricted or reserved for a specific use	\$313.12
Annual revenue received for separate Chapter memberships	\$2,090.00

##### Project Budget:

Phase I of the project will be completed by December 2015. Requested grant monies are for funding for the full 60-month project. Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society will be the Fiscal Agent for the full 60-month project.

Line Item	Total	Requested
<b>16 Posts to mark points.</b> \$7per stake, to be replaced when needed for 5 years.	\$660	\$660
<b>Clipboards</b> for 30 observers (\$4.00 per unit)	\$120	\$120
<b>Markers, Pencils and Sharpeners</b> for 30 observers	\$40	\$40
<b>Survey Forms</b> \$0.10 each for 30 observers (\$3.00) 1 form per month x 60 months (5 years).	\$180	\$180
<b>Training Sessions</b> (\$10 per person) for 30 people x 1 per year x 5 years.	\$1,500	\$1,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,500</b>	<b>\$2,500</b>

**5. Partner Organizations and Matching Funds.**

Our partner organizations are Kirtland Bird Club and Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland.

Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society and Kirtland Bird Club will make up the difference of any funds required to reach the total cost that GIAC does not award.

At the time of this writing, Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland has not approved funding for Phase I of this project. Audubon Society Greater Cleveland will provide support in the form of public relations and marketing via their web site, email to members, and social media.

**6. Timeline for Completing Project and Date of Final Report.**

The **Phase I** project begins June 2014. At the end of 18 months, Phase I will be complete and Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society will submit the **Phase I Final Report** to the Grange Insurance Audubon Center in December 2015.

Time Frame	Deliverable Completed
May 31, 2014	Training provided to volunteer observers
June 2014	Markers placed. Volunteer schedule created.
July 2014	First survey completed.
<i>Quarterly (or monthly) status reports sent to Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society, Kirtland Bird Club, Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland, and Cleveland-Cuyahoga Port Authority for reporting to their individual Boards of Directors.</i>	
August 2014 – December 2015	Survey counts with quarterly reporting.
June 2015	Update Report/Annual Report 2014-2015
December 2015	<b>Phase I Project Final Report</b> submitted to Grange Insurance Audubon Center.

**7. Person Responsible for Project Implementation**

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