

Trail 6: Wild Horse Area

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Much-sought after species occur in this area including, Mountain Plover (in very heavily grazed areas but not every year), Burrowing Owl, Short-eared Owl, Greater Sage-Grouse (very rare), and a variety of sparrows including Grasshopper, Brewer's, and Baird's. Also found here are Sprague's Pipit, Upland Sandpiper. Lark Bunting is irruptive and in some years, this is the only locale where this species can be found. Depending on precipitation, the area might have considerable wetlands that can produce good quantities and varieties of waterfowl and shorebirds.

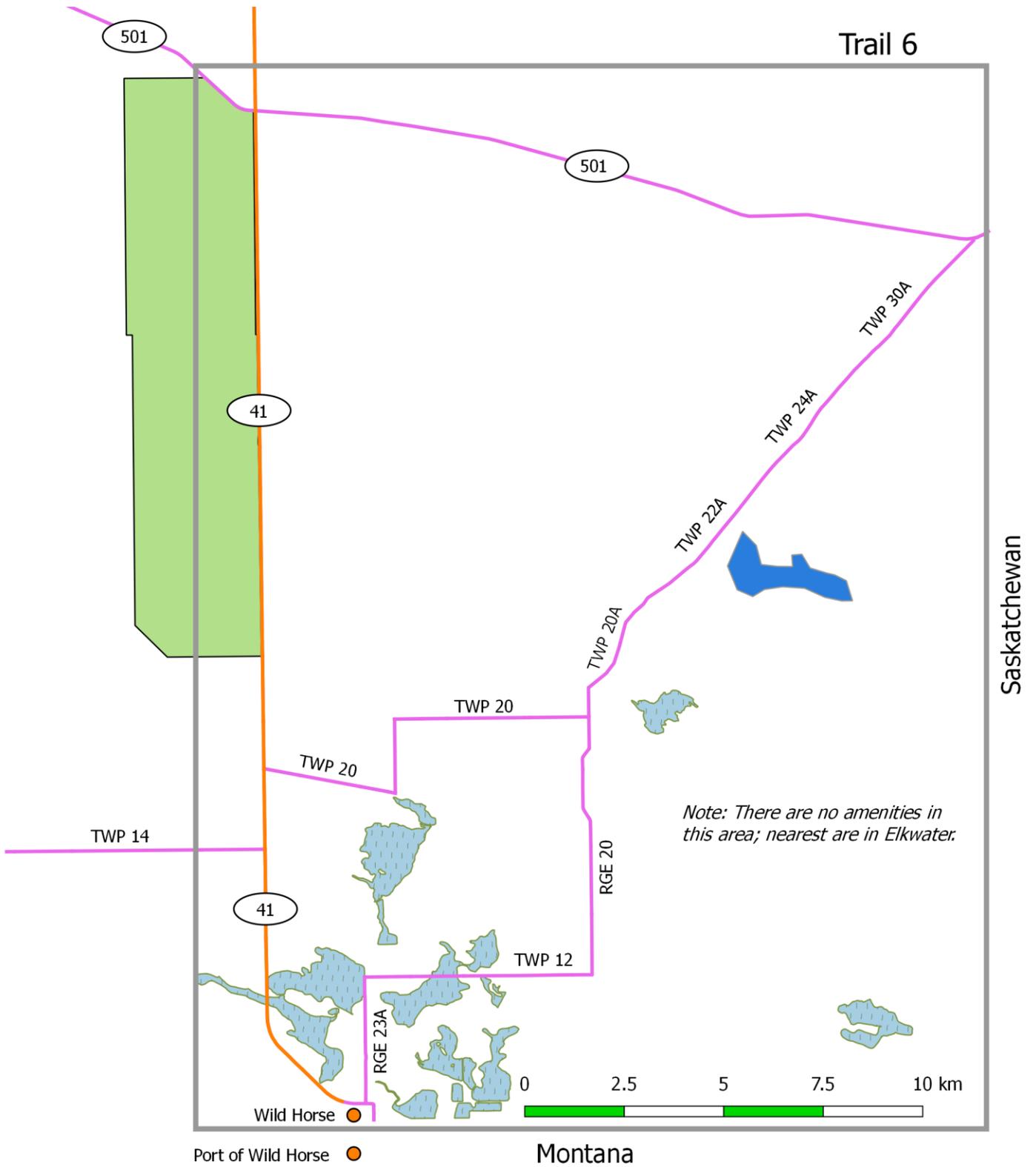
The Greater Sage Grouse is protected by an Emergency Protection Order (EPO). The main portion of this order applying to birders is: "Avoid driving vehicles within 3.2km of a Greater Sage Grouse lek between 1 ½ hours before sunset and 1 ½ after sunrise in all of April and May." The pertinent link for the complete EPO is: <http://www.registrelp-sararegistry.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=B3B27B60-1>.

Starting at the Wild Horse Border Crossing on Highway 41, follow RGE RD 23 north to TWP RD 12, then east to RGE RD 20, north to TWP RD 20 and back west to Hwy 41. Alternately one can continue northeast along TWP RD 20 to Hwy 501 and then back west to Hwy 41.

"DO NOT DRIVE OFF THESE SIGNED GRAVEL ROADS!" The surrounding prairie is very sensitive to disturbance and often the fire hazard is extremely high. Adjacent lands require permission to access. Help ranchers prevent wildfires by staying on the graveled roads.

Animal species in this area include Pronghorn, Mule and White-tailed Deer, Coyote, Badger, Red Fox and if one is very lucky, Swift Fox.

The nearest site for lodgings, food and fuel is at Elkwater in the Cypress Hills. Therefore this birding area could be combined with a Cypress Hills birding trip for an extended two or three day excursion. You might also include the Onefour area on a birding trip to Wild Horse.



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