

Appendix A: Finding of No Significant Impact

Finding of No Significant Impact

Environmental Assessment and Comprehensive Conservation Plan for Rice Lake and Mille Lacs National Wildlife Refuges, Minnesota

An Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to identify management strategies to meet the conservation goals of the Rice Lake and Mille Lacs National Wildlife Refuges (NWRs). The EA examined the environmental consequences that each management alternative could have on the quality of the physical, biological, and human environment, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The EA evaluated two alternatives for the future management of the Refuges.

The alternative selected for implementation on each refuge is *Alternative B*. The preferred alternative for Rice Lake NWR includes improving the long-term sustainability of wild rice in Rice Lake; reestablishing the white pine super-canopy in Refuge forests; and strengthening programs in wildlife-dependent recreation and cultural resources protection. Native American access to the Refuge for harvesting of wild rice and ceremonies will continue. The preferred alternative for Mille Lacs NWR includes reversing the erosion of Hennepin Island through rebuilding and protection with a constructed reef. The island will continue to provide for a nesting colony for the State-listed threatened Common Tern.

For reasons presented above and below, and based on an evaluation of the information contained in the Environmental Assessment, we have determined that the action of adopting Alternative B as the management alternative for each refuge is not a major federal action which would significantly affect the quality of the human environment, within the meaning of Section 102 (2) (c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

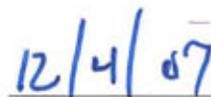
Additional Reasons:

1. Future management actions will have a neutral or positive impact on the local economy.
2. This action will not have an adverse impact on threatened or endangered species.

Supporting References:

Environmental Assessment
Comprehensive Conservation Plan

ACTING 
Regional Director


Date

