

Planning Update

Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge Complex

Issue 1, November 2006

Finalizing the Plan

Over the next year we will be finalizing the comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) for the Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge Complex (complex). The CCP is a 15-year plan that will provide long-range guidance and management direction for all of the complex's programs including habitat conservation and wildlife-dependent recreation such as hunting and wildlife observation.

The complex includes three units: the Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), the Northeast Montana Wetland Management District (WMD), and the Lamesteer NWR. Our complex is a unique and ecologically important component of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Medicine Lake NWR was established in 1935 as "a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife."

The complex is home to more than 270 species of birds, 38 species of

mammals, and 17 species of reptiles and amphibians.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would like your input on how the complex can ensure habitat conservation and restoration while also serving its visitors and neighboring community. We will be hosting a public meeting in Medicine Lake, where we will encourage community members to voice their ideas and concerns for the future of the complex. Additionally, we will be accepting comments shared with us through conversations, email, mail, and fax.

So please join us at the upcoming meeting or feel free to come pay us a visit at the refuge.

Sincerely,



Jerry Rodriguez
Project Leader

Public Meeting

Date: November 29, 2006

Location: Medicine Lake Fire Hall

Time: 2–4 p.m.

Presentation will begin promptly at 2:30 p.m. followed by opportunities to provide comments.



Please come hear project leader, Jerry Rodriguez, talk about the CCP process as well as the refuge complex's habitat, wildlife, and programs. Following his presentation, Jerry will ask participants for comments on what they feel are important qualities of the complex and to express any concerns.

Refreshments will be served.



Visitors experience wide-open grasslands and vast lakes and wetlands at Medicine Lake NWR.

Visions for the Future

Medicine Lake NWR Vision

Visitors to Medicine Lake NWR, on the western edge of the Missouri Coteau, experience wide-open grasslands, vast lakes and marshes, and one-of-a-kind sunsets. Diverse habitats for migratory birds and native wildlife are managed to simulate natural processes which historically shaped the prairie landscape. The awe-inspiring spring and fall migrations are wonders to see against the big Montana sky. The refuge team works collaboratively with partners and the community to conserve, protect, and restore the wildness of the rolling prairie and its natural solitude.

Northeast Montana WMD Vision

Waterfowl Production Areas and conservation easements within the Northeast Montana Wetland Management District located in the glaciated Missouri Coteau provide a network of wetlands and grasslands that preserve historic and vital waterfowl breeding grounds. Other migratory birds, threatened and endangered species, and resident wildlife also benefit from these prairie jewels of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Our community and visitors value grasslands and marshes as a beneficial and important component of a diverse, healthy and productive prairie landscape. Current and future generations enjoy wildlife-dependent uses of these lands and partners actively support and encourage our habitat conservation programs.

Goals for the Refuge Complex

Habitat and Wildlife Goal

Conserve, restore, and enhance the ecological diversity of grasslands and wetlands of the glaciated mixed-grass prairie support healthy populations of native wildlife with an emphasis on migratory birds.

Endangered, Threatened, and Rare Species Goal

Contribute to the preservation and restoration of endangered, threatened, rare, and unique plants and wildlife that occur or have historically occurred in the refuge complex.

Wilderness Goal

Conserve the pristine wilderness quality and associated natural processes of the 11,360-acre Medicine Lake Wilderness Area.

Public Use Goal

Visitors enjoy wildlife-dependent recreation and find opportunities to expand their knowledge and appreciation of the mixed-grass prairie and the NWR System.

Partnership Goal

Partners join with the refuge complex to support research, accomplish habitat conservation, and foster awareness and appreciation of the mixed-grass prairie.

Research Goal

Through science, monitoring, and applied research advance the understanding of natural resources and management within the refuge complex.

Cultural Resources Goal

Preserve and value the cultural resources and history of the refuge complex to connect staff, visitors, and the community to the area's past.

Refuge Operations Goal

Through effective communication and innovation, the refuge complex efficiently uses staff, partnerships, volunteers, and funding in support of the NWR System.



Hannah Jensen banding pelicans.

Opportunities to Comment

Participate in the CCP process by:

- Attending the public meeting in Medicine Lake on November 29.
- Submitting a comment form or sending comments via email, phone, fax or in person.
- Reviewing the draft CCP when it is completed in the spring of 2007.

Contact Information

Public comments for this phase of the planning process will be accepted through January 15, 2007. Please direct comments to:

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For more CCP materials visit:
<http://mountain-prairie.fws.gov/planning/States/Montana/montana.htm>

Medicine Lake NWR CCP
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