

Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge

Planning Newsletter - September 2008

Comprehensive Conservation Planning

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Service) has started work on a comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) for the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge. The plan will establish management goals and objectives for all refuge programs over the next 15 years. Wildlife, habitat, land protection, and visitor services programs will all be evaluated during the planning process.

This planning project provides a unique opportunity for the Service to involve all of those interested in the long-term management of the refuge. You can play a significant role in the development of this far-reaching plan!

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Planner Tom Bonnetti at public meeting

This is the second in a series of newsletters which will cover updates on the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) process.

The introductory (April) newsletter was mailed to 367 refuge neighbors, sporting groups, local politicians, conservation groups and state agencies to inform them of the CCP development process and to ask for their input on concerns and comments about the refuge and its management goals. Copies of the newsletter were also available at the refuge visitor contact station, through the refuge website and at community outreach events.

Iroquois NWR hosted public meetings on April 8, 9 and 10, 2008 which were held in Batavia, Albion and the Refuge Office in Alabama, respectively. Each day the public could attend either an open house style meeting in the afternoon or a more structured meeting in the evening. Approximately 20 people attended over the three days.

A written public comment period was open from February 26 – April 30, 2008 during which time people could mail, email or drop off comments.



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Refuge Manager Tom Roster at public meeting

How Did We Get Here?

1903

Theodore Roosevelt

Established the first National Wildlife Refuge.

1929

Migratory Bird Conservaton Act

Gives authority to purchase lands for migratory birds.

1934

Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act (Duck Stamp Act)

Provides a source to purchase land for migratory birds through the sale of Duck Stamps.

1958

Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge established.

1966

National Wildlife Refuge System Act

Creates guidelines for the administration and management of all areas in the system, including requiring activities on refuges be compatible.

1997

National Wildlife Refuge Improvement Act

Clarified the mission and management priorities, created priority public uses, and requires that each refuge complete a comprehensive conservation plan.

Today

Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge staff are now working on the CCP process.

Witten comments were received from over 40 individuals, and several stakeholder groups. The comments were organized into themes below.

Theme	Number of Comments Received
Fishing	6
Habitat Management	20
Hunting	53
Land and Water Protection	4
Overall Refuge Comments	15
Environmental Education	1
Interpretation	2
Wildlife/Nature Observation	16
Wildlife/Nature Photography	3
Other Non-consumptive Public Uses Comments	2
Trapping	2

Vision Workshop

On June 18 the core committee comprised of refuge staff, a refuge planner from the regional office and representatives from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation came together to create a vision statement for the refuge. The committee reviewed the comments received, discussed possible issues which should be addressed in the CCP and began working on goals. The main outcome of the meeting was the creation of a draft vision statement for the refuge which addresses where we would like to see the refuge in the future.

The next step in the process will be to develop management strategies to deal with the issues identified and then draft the goals (what we want to do), and objectives (how, when and who will achieve the goals) addressing these issues. Goals and objectives will play a key role in accomplishing management decisions which will help the refuge achieve its vision. Since there is more than one way to deal with each issue we will develop alternative management strategies. After considering public inputs, budget, Service goals and policies we will put together a proposed action for the refuge. This, as well as alternative strategies, will be printed in a draft CCP which will open for comment from the public.



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Ringneck Marsh at Sunrise

