

Transportation Study Information for Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge Website

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In August 2008, the Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge kicked-off a transportation study with the U.S. Department of Transportation's [Volpe National Transportation Systems Center](#) (Volpe Center). The study is funded by the Federal Transit Administration's Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands program. As part of the program's effort to proactively consider transportation within and around public lands, this planning study is the first step in documenting and analyzing transportation issues and potential solutions.

The Volpe Center has experience working with the National Park Service on similar studies, and is undertaking an alternative transportation study at another National Wildlife Refuge. The Volpe Center is also currently involved with several other transportation-related studies throughout Cape Cod. This study will examine topics such as parking and congestion relief, transit services and the Flex bus system, and other transportation issues at the Monomoy Refuge and in the Chatham area.

Volpe Center transportation planners will gather information, identify transportation issues, and develop and analyze possible alternatives that can be considered for future implementation by the Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

The project began in late Summer 2008 and should be completed by Summer 2009. Click the links on the left to learn more about the study, and how you can become involved and stay informed.

If you have questions or comments, please email MonomoyTraffic@gmail.com.

F.A.Q.

What is the Monomoy Alternative Transportation Study?

In August 2008, the Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge kicked-off a transportation study with the U.S. Department of Transportation's [Volpe Center](#). The study is funded by the Federal Transit Administration's Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands program.

This study will examine parking and congestion relief, transit services and the Flex bus system, bicycle and pedestrian activities, and other transportation issues at the Monomoy Refuge, and in the Chatham area.

Volpe Center transportation planners will gather information, identify transportation issues, and develop and analyze possible alternatives that can be considered for future implementation by the Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of the study is to gather information, identify transportation issues, and develop and analyze possible alternatives that can be considered for implementation by the Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Goals include:

- Studying alternatives to improve access to the refuge and Chatham area (such as shuttles, vans, and existing Flex bus system);
- Exploring opportunities for partnerships with local public agencies and businesses;
- Coordinating with the refuge's "Comprehensive Conservation Plan" (CCP) effort; and
- Examining future funding needs and potential funding sources for implementation.

Why is this study necessary?

There are multiple documented and perceived issues related to transportation and access to the Monomoy Refuge and around the Town of Chatham. This study will further explore the issues in order to develop possible solutions that can be considered for implementation by the refuge and the town. Some of the transportation problems include:

Parking capacity and management: There is limited parking capacity at the refuge and in the Town of Chatham during peak operations. The narrow roads (which are important part of Chatham's community character) limit the expansion of roadway parking. There have been incidents of visitors parking on residents' lawns. The competition for parking results in vehicles "sharking" for parking, driving slowly up and down the streets looking for an open spot.

Access without a private vehicle: There is no public transit service to Monomoy NWR. Roadways are narrow for bicycling and walking and the nearest stop on the Hyannis to Orleans (H2O) line is approximately 2.25 miles from the refuge. The need for use of a private vehicle exacerbates the existing parking shortages and reduces the accessibility of the site for those without a car.

Potential safety issues: The causeway has no shoulders, so visitors must park with their vehicles partially in the travel lane, effectively reducing the roadway to 1.5 lanes. On busy days, visitors may be parking their vehicles, looking for parking, or traveling to the refuge, causing potential safety hazards. According to FWS staff, emergency responders have problems responding to residential and refuge needs when refuge visitors have filled the parking spaces.

When will the study be completed?

The study began in late Summer 2008 and should be completed by Summer 2009.

How do I find out more about the study's progress and submit comments?

The study team will post updates to this webpage as appropriate. Please check back for new information!

The study team is interested in hearing ideas and feedback from the public, including residents, seasonal residents, the business community, and other stakeholder groups.

A public meeting was held at the Chatham Community Center on August 28, 2008. Another meeting will be held in Spring 2009. You can share your ideas via email at: MonomoyTraffic@gmail.com or by submitting a feedback form available at the Library and Town Hall.

For more information about the Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge, please contact:

Mike Brady, Refuge Manager
Wikis Way, Morris Island
Chatham, Massachusetts 02633
Phone: (508) 945-0594
Fax: (508) 945-9559

For more information about the transportation study being carried out by the Volpe Center, please contact:

Theresa Perrone, Community Planner
US DOT / Volpe Center
55 Broadway, Cambridge MA 02142
Phone: (617) 494-1344
Fax: (617) 494-3280

Members of the study team can be reached by email at: MonomoyTraffic@gmail.com.

What is the relationship between this study and general transportation issues in the Town of Chatham?

This study is focused first on the Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge, as well as other public lands in Chatham, namely the beach managed by the National Park Service as part of the Cape Cod National Seashore. However, because the refuge is located in the town, and visitors must travel through the town to get to the refuge, it is important to consider broader transportation issues in the town.

The study team is working closely with the Town of Chatham to consider partnership opportunities and also to ensure that the approaches explored as part of this study benefit the town as well as the refuge.

Who else is collaborating on this study?

There are many important partners who are critical to the success of the study. Staff members at these partner agencies have provided time, information, data, and opinions to the study team, and are valuable resources for the refuge and Chatham community:

- Town of Chatham
- Cape Cod Commission
- National Park Service
- Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority
- Chatham Chamber of Commerce

I thought this study is about the Monomoy Refuge. Why are you also looking at Bridge Street and Lighthouse Beach?

While the Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge is the primary focus of this study, the grant funding the study was given to both the refuge and the Cape Cod National Seashore to explore ways to improve alternative transportation access to federal public lands in Chatham.

The study will continue to focus primarily on the Monomoy Refuge, while considering Lighthouse Beach and approaches that could improve access to both areas.

How does this study relate to other transportation-related projects in Chatham and on the Cape?

There are several other transportation-related issues under consideration in Chatham and across the Cape (such as parking, bicycle access, transit, and other issues). The study team is maintaining a strong partnership with the Town and the National Park Service to share information and coordinate efforts whenever possible.

Do the public meetings associated with this study fall under the NEPA process?

“The NEPA process consists of an evaluation of the environmental effects of a federal undertaking including its alternatives.”

(EPA, <http://www.epa.gov/oecaerth/basics/nepa.html>).

With this study, no federal undertaking is being contemplated. The intention of the study is to assess technical and financial considerations in various future scenarios. No implementation decisions are being made during or as a direct result of the study, nor will the study itself furnish recommendations on an undertaking to be pursued.

However, the study will develop and analyze possible alternatives for future consideration. At this time, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is planning to consider these alternatives in the draft Monomoy NWR Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP), and if so would they would all receive full analysis under NEPA. If for some reason these alternatives are not considered in the draft CCP and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service decides to consider an undertaking in the future, or if it decides to implement any new transportation-related measures, those would be subject to NEPA requirements per FWS agency policy.

The study now underway would typically be done as an internal agency assessment. However, public participation has been invited at this early point because FWS believes that it would be helpful, by providing an opportunity for transparency and stakeholder collaboration.

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Comment [p1]: Include hyperlinks for each of these partners.

Please note that clicking on the links above will direct you to that partner's Web site. Partner Web sites are separate and external from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Please read the FWS privacy statement for more information about external links.

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