



Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge

Conservation Planning Update

August 2006

One way to open your eyes is to ask yourself, 'What if I had never seen this before? What if I knew I would never see it again?'

-Rachel Carson

Completed plan available

We are happy to announce that the draft comprehensive conservation plan is now available for public comment! In this update, we share with you our draft vision, refuge goals, and some highlights from our three proposed management alternatives.

History of our planning process

In 1997, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service began the federal-mandated comprehensive conservation planning process for its Rachel Carson refuge. The planning team consisted of refuge staff, a regional planner, a regional resource specialist, and a representative from the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

In 1999 and 2000, the team invited the public and other interested groups to share their thoughts and concerns about refuge issues. That input provided the foundation for developing goals, objectives, and strategies for habitat management, public use, and land protection. In 2004, we updated, revised, and added to the plan.

Refuge goals

- Perpetuate the biological integrity and diversity of coastal habitats to sustain native wildlife and plant communities, including species of conservation concern.
- Perpetuate the biological integrity and diversity of freshwater habitats to sustain native wildlife and plant communities, including species of conservation concern.
- Perpetuate the biological integrity and diversity of upland habitats to sustain native wildlife and plant communities, including species of conservation concern.
- Develop the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge as an outstanding center for research and demonstration emphasizing land management techniques for restoring and sustaining



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The Rachel Carson refuge stretches along 50 miles of coastline in York and Cumberland counties in the heart of the Gulf of Maine watershed. Located at the mouth of over a dozen tidal rivers and their watersheds, the refuge protects land in an increasingly developed, fragmented region where those rivers meet the sea.

healthy estuarine ecosystems in concert with the national Land Management Research Demonstration program.

- Increase appreciation and stewardship of coastal Maine wildlife and their habitats by providing positive wildlife-dependent experiences for refuge visitors.
- Foster off-refuge cooperative actions and partnerships to promote and further refuge goals.

Alternatives in the draft plan

The following highlights from the three management alternatives are designed to address the issues identified by both the planning team and the public.

Alternative A, or the “No Action” alternative, maintains our current management. Under this alternative, we will continue to

- protect the remaining 3,833 acres within the approved acquisition boundary
- provide priority management for piping plover, least tern, and their habitats
- monitor and restore salt marshes
- eradicate invasive species
- maintain existing opportunities for visitors to engage in wildlife observation,

How to get a copy of the plan

The draft CCP/EA is available on the Web at

<http://rachelcarson.fws.gov>

Please contact our main office in Wells, ME for a hard copy or CD.

“It is the public that is being asked to assume the risks... the public must decide whether it wishes to continue on the present road and it can only do so when in full possession of the facts...”

-Rachel Carson



Girl scouts using the refuge kiosk.

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Public Meeting Information

August 29, 2006, 5-8 pm

University of New England
St. Francis Room—Library Basement
11 Hills Beach Road
Biddeford, Maine 04005

September 7, 2006, 5-8 pm

Wells National Estuarine
Research Reserve
342 Laudholm Farm Road
Wells, Maine 04090

Meeting Format

5:00-6:00 pm	Open House
6:00-6:30 pm	Service Presentation
6:30-8:00 pm	Question and Answer, and Discussion Period

These locations are fully accessible.

photography, interpretation, hunting, and fishing.

Alternative A will also incorporate three new facilities to support current and approved management, staffing, and administrative obligations.

Alternative B, or our “Proposed Action” alternative, describes how we would prefer to manage the refuges. Under this alternative, we will

- protect the remaining 3,833 acres within the approved acquisition boundary and expand the refuge by 5,558 acres beyond its current approved boundary
- build a new administrative complex, including office space, maintenance facilities, and visitor contact station
- combine the Moody, Lower Wells, Upper Wells, and Mousam River divisions into one Wells Bay Division
- increase public use opportunities e.g., provide expanded hunting and fishing opportunities in new land acquisitions
- improve the availability and quality of interpretives signs and kiosks, nature trails, and parking areas
- incorporate a fee program
- enhance outreach and partnerships with local communities, expand the role and numbers of our Friends Group, and strengthen our relationships with neighbors and elected officials.

Alternative C builds off of the other two alternatives and will require the greatest increases in budget and staffing, and will greatly expand management and recreation. Under this alternative, we will

- protect the remaining 3,833 acres within the approved acquisition boundary and expand the refuge by 11,397 acres beyond its current approved boundary
- build a new administrative complex, including office space, maintenance facilities, and visitor contact station.

Why do we need a plan?

Once our Regional Director approves the final CCP, it will provide strategic management direction for all programs over the next 15 years. Among other things, it will ensure long-term continuity in refuge management and outreach to partners, elected officials, refuge neighbors, and others.

What can I do to get involved?

Effective conservation usually begins with effective community involvement! Please provide us with your feedback on the draft plan during our 30-day period of public review and comment, August 17 through September 18. We also encourage you to attend one of our public meetings.

We will address all substantive comments in a final CCP, which we will complete this fall. Please visit our website or call our main office for details.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

For further information on our public meetings or to request a plan, contact

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<http://www.fws.gov>
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