

# Wapack National Wildlife Refuge

## *Comprehensive Conservation Plan Release*

### Greetings!

We are pleased to announce the release of our Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the Wapack National Wildlife Refuge (refuge). Over the past year we evaluated two proposed management alternatives. We published our analysis in a draft CCP and environmental assessment (EA). The public comments we received on that draft plan guided us in preparing our final CCP.

You may obtain a print copy or cd-rom of the final plan from the refuge headquarters at the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge in Newburyport, Massachusetts. The public library in Peterborough, NH will also have a print copy.

You may also view or download the documents online from our website <http://library.fws.gov/ccps.htm>. Please be patient with the online version; its numerous maps and photos can slow some computers.

### Background

Wapack refuge, at 1,625 acres, was established by donation in 1972 as the first national wildlife refuge in New Hampshire. Its purpose is to provide habitat for migratory birds. The refuge encompasses the 2,278-foot North Pack Monadnock Mountain in the towns of Greenfield and Temple, NH. The terms of the deed of donation require



Andrew Ward/Conway School of Landscape Design

*View from North Pack Monadnock*

the Service to manage the refuge in a “wilderness-like” setting for wildlife. Specific deed restrictions prohibit motorized vehicles, hunting and fishing, trapping, or cutting trees.

The staff of the Parker River refuge now administers the unstaffed Wapack refuge.

### Highlights of the CCP

The CCP is our 15-year management plan for this refuge. It furthers the

mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System, achieves the purposes, vision and goals of the refuge, and contributes to state and regional conservation plans. Implementing the plan will enable us to fulfill the refuge’s important role in conserving and managing wildlife resources.

We have selected alternative B, the Service-preferred alternative, for implementation from the draft CCP/EA. We made the following key addition to that alternative: We found the annual Wapack Trail Race compatible, with certain stipulations identified in its compatibility determination (see appendix A in the final CCP).

### Vision for the Future

*Encompassing the North Pack Monadnock Mountain in southern New Hampshire, the Wapack National Wildlife Refuge provides exceptional mature spruce-fir and northern hardwood-mixed habitat for wildlife, particularly migratory birds. The rock outcrop and cliff on its peak afford ideal locations for viewing migrating hawks each fall. We will manage the refuge to preserve its natural conditions in a setting that appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature.*

*All visitors are welcome to enjoy opportunities to observe and photograph nature along refuge trails, including a 4-mile segment of the Wapack trail. Old and new partnerships with other federal agencies, state agencies, local conservation organization, and volunteers will foster public stewardship of this refuge and its resources, and enhance public understanding of the role of the National Wildlife Refuge System in conserving our nation’s trust resources.*



USFWS

*Blackpoll Warbler*

## Refuge Goals

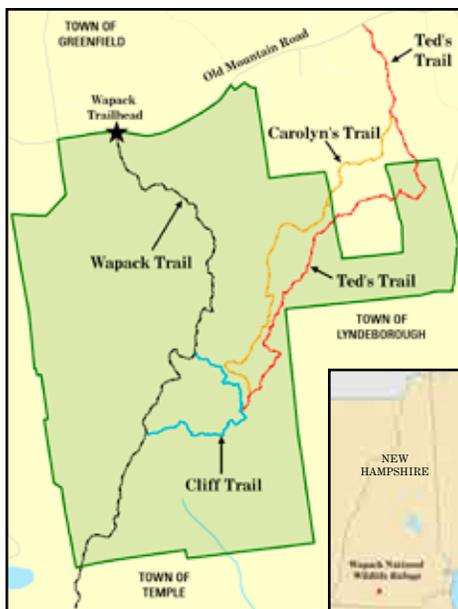
**Goal 1.** Allow natural processes and disturbances to enhance biological diversity and integrity of upland wildlife habitat.

**Goal 2.** Establish a public use program that will encourage compatible, low-impact recreation on refuge trails.

**Goal 3.** Enhance the conservation, management and stewardship of wildlife resources through partnerships with public and private conservation groups, private landowners, State agencies and local entities.

Implementing the CCP will improve our knowledge of refuge resources and start the development of a baseline biological database. We plan to inventory populations of plants and wildlife on the refuge in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service. That project will also help us identify and monitor threats to the integrity of refuge habitats.

Other projects in the CCP will enhance visitor service programs by expanding our partnerships with other federal agencies, state agencies, town departments, local conservation organizations, and individuals. Partners will assist us in maintaining trails, developing and maintaining a new trailhead parking area, and increasing our presence and visibility on the refuge and in the local community. One of our goals is to better communicate refuge opportunities, visitor and contact information, and regulations.



Map of Refuge Trails

We will allow only compatible activities that are consistent with a “wilderness-like” setting and adhere to the other deed restrictions. The new activities we will allow include dog-walking on a leash, recreational berry-picking, and the annual Wapack Trail Race.

Although we do not propose to expand the refuge boundary at this time, we will offer our support in identifying unprotected lands of high wildlife value for partners engaged in other regional land conservation and protection. We will also offer our technical assistance in managing those lands.

### Thank you for your interest and participation!

We really appreciate the level of public interest and involvement in our planning. Our discussions during open houses and public meetings were extremely beneficial. Thanks also to those of you who responded to our planning update newsletters and notices in the Federal Register.

In our final CCP, appendix E, “Consultation and Coordination with Others,” summarizes our coordination with others in writing this plan.

We released the draft CCP/EA for public comment from March 25 to May 1, 2008. We also held a public meeting in Peterborough, NH on April 17, 2008. We evaluated all comments received during the comment period, and included our responses to those comments as appendix F, “Summary of Public Comments and Service Responses,” in the final CCP. Those comments helped us improve the management objectives in the final CCP in many ways, and we are indebted to those who took the time to contribute.

#### For additional information:

Graham Taylor, Refuge Manager  
Parker River National Wildlife Refuge  
6 Plum Island Turnpike  
Newburyport, MA 01950  
978/465 5753  
603/431 6014 fax  
fw5rw\_prnwr@fws.gov  
<http://www.fws.gov/northeast/parkerriver/>

#### For information on the Friends of Wapack contact:

Friends of the Wapack  
P.O. Box 115  
West Peterborough, NH 03468  
info@wapack.org  
<http://www.wapack.org/>



Dave Menke/USFWS

Red-tailed Hawk

### What's Next?

After the release of the CCP for Wapack refuge, the implementation of priority projects decided upon by the refuge manager will begin immediately.

We encourage you to stay involved during its implementation. To accomplish its goals and objectives, we must develop partnerships, enhance our volunteer program, and work with the Friends of Wapack.

**Come visit us soon,  
and often!**

#### Regional planning website:

<http://www.fws.gov/northeast/planning/Wapack/ccphome.html>

**Federal Relay Service for deaf and hard-of-hearing: 1 800/877 8339**

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**  
<http://www.fws.gov>

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