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# News Release



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## **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Expands Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge With Addition of Wapato Lake Unit**

[Click here for a photo of Tundra swans on Wapato Lake](#)

The Wapato Lake Unit, which supports a variety of waterfowl, shorebirds, anadromous fish and remnants of native Willamette Valley wildlife habitats, will be established as an addition to the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge (TRNWR). This addition expands TRNWR boundary by 4,310 acres more than doubling the approved boundary acreage of the TRNWR from 3,060 to 7,370 acres.

Since the mid-1900's, biologists have surveyed waterfowl populations at Wapato Lake identifying this area as prime habitat for wintering tundra swans and other waterfowl. Refuge expansion is expected to contribute to the efforts across the Tualatin River basin to improve watershed health, protect remnant native habitats, restore rare native habitats, protect migratory bird habitat for wintering waterfowl and breeding neotropical songbirds, improve listed anadromous fish habitat, provide public access to beautiful natural spaces, and enhance cultural resources.

In 2000 a group of farmers in the Wapato Lake area petitioned the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to add lands in the Wapato Lake bed to National Wildlife Refuge System.

“This addition shows a strong collaboration and commitment to the protection and restoration of the historic Wapato Lake lakebed,” said Ren Lohofener, Director of the Service's Pacific Region. “This new unit includes a variety of wildlife habitats such as riparian forest, emergent and forested wetlands, and upland prairies which play hosts to a number of important waterfowl species.”

The final decision to add the Wapato Lake Unit to the TRNWR is based on the analysis and public input included in the *Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge Proposed Wapato Lake Unit Addition Land Conservation Plan/Environmental Assessment (LCP/EA)*. This decision allows landowners within the Unit's boundary, the opportunity to sell property to the Service.

The final decision is documented in a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) which can be found along with the LCP/EA on the Service's website at: <http://pacific.fws.gov/planning>. These documents include the Service's responses to comments on the draft planning documents received during the public comment period. For more detailed information or copies of the documents: contact the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge by phone at: (503) 590-5811, or by mail to: Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge, 16507 S.W. Roy Rogers Road, Sherwood, Oregon 97140-8306.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.