



Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge

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Planning Update Number 3 *November 1997*

Comprehensive Conservation Planning

As fall settles in on the Refuge, leaves are turning color, migratory songbirds have moved on, and waterfowl have returned for the winter. Changes are occurring in Refuge planning, too. Significant progress has been made on the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP). Formerly known as the Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP), this 15-year plan is required for each National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) by the NWR System Improvement Act of 1997.

Last spring, the Refuge entered into a cooperative agreement with Ducks Unlimited (DU) to develop and implement habitat restoration and management plans for the Refuge. Through the cooperative agreement, the Refuge and DU hired Anne Van Sweringen as the project planning biologist to help move the CCP process forward. Anne is a wildlife biologist with experience in both field biology and environmental planning.

With Anne's lead, Refuge staff and DU are now gathering information for the CCP. A Geographic Information System database is being compiled by DU to facilitate data collection and map production for the CCP. An internal working group of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff are lending their expertise to assist planning efforts. Through public involvement, citizens, agencies, private landowners, and interest groups will continue to play a significant role in the planning process. Your input on wildlife, habitat, and public use management is needed.

The next opportunity for public participation is November 18 and 19 during two open houses. Complete information about the open houses may be found in this planning update. Issues

workbooks containing background information and issues raised by Refuge staff and by the public in previous scoping meetings will be available at the open houses.

Twenty years ago, many people participated in a planning effort that guided Refuge management through today. Now is the time for everyone to look toward the future and help determine what Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge will look like during the next 15 years.

Administrative Site Planning

For the past year, the Refuge has been working closely with William Wilson and Associates architectural firm in Portland, Oregon on the design of the Refuge office, wildlife center, maintenance buildings, entry road, and parking lot. These facilities were damaged during the February 1996 floods. The architectural plans are nearing the 90 percent completion level, and the project will go out for bid in January. Construction of these new facilities will begin this spring with completion in spring of 1999.

For the next year, the Washington Conservation Corps, working partly on an AmeriCorps grant, will be working on an upgrade of the Twin Barns Loop Trail. This trail will be a one-mile fully accessible loop trail with boardwalks, interpretive sites, and a new wildlife viewing platform at the Twin Barns.

Although we hope to keep disruption to a minimum, these construction projects will impact Refuge visitors and daily Refuge operations. Trail and Refuge closures will occur throughout construction of these new facilities. Visitors are encouraged to call the Refuge prior to visiting, and to check the reader board in the information kiosk for updated trail and Refuge information.

Announcement of Public Open Houses

for Comprehensive Conservation Planning at Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge

You are invited to participate in the planning process for the development of a Comprehensive Conservation Plan for Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge. This plan will guide public use, wildlife, and habitat management on Nisqually NWR for the next 15 years. Your comments, concerns, and issues about the future of the Refuge are important to us.

The open houses, one in Lacey and one in Tacoma, will be held on two different days. The same information will be available at each open house, so you only need to attend one day. The open house format will be informal. There will be no formal presentations made by the public or Refuge staff. You may come at anytime during the hours indicated.

When you arrive, you will receive an issues workbook which you will be encouraged to complete at the open house. In the issues workbook, you may provide written comments on previously identified issues. There will be adequate space for you to identify other issues, concerns, and opportunities for the Refuge. You may also provide comments verbally. Stations focusing on management topics will be staffed with technical people. Recorders at each station will record your comments. Everyone on the CCP mailing list who does not attend an open house will receive an issues workbook to complete and return by mail.

For questions about the open houses, call the Refuge office at (360) 753-9467. We look forward to seeing you and hearing from you during this important planning process.

Open House Information

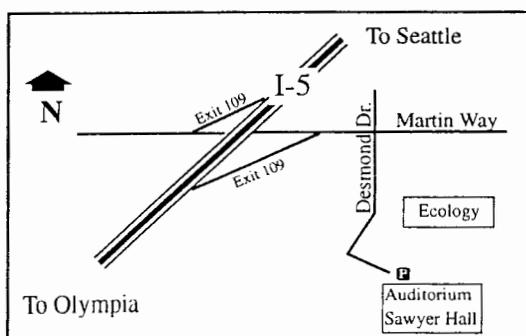
Tuesday, November 18, 1997

2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office
Auditorium (Sawyer Hall)
510 Desmond Drive
Lacey, Washington

Directions: From I-5 north or south, take Martin Way exit 109. Head east (away from town) on Martin Way. Turn right on Desmond Drive. Go straight past the Department of Ecology building following the signs to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Parking is available adjacent to the Auditorium.



Wednesday, November 19, 1997

2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Sherwood Travel Lodge Hotel
Friar Tuck Room
8402 S. Hosmer
Tacoma, Washington

Directions: From I-5 north, take exit 128 and the hotel is right there.

From I-5 south, take exit 129 and follow signs to 84th. The hotel is on the corner of 84th and I-5.

Parking is available adjacent to the Friar Tuck Room or in front of the Travel Lodge.

