

Appendix A: Finding of No Significant Impact

Finding of No Significant Impact

Environmental Assessment and Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge, Indiana

An Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to identify management strategies to meet the conservation goals of Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). The EA examined the environmental consequences that each management alternative could have on the quality of the physical, biological, and human environment, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The EA evaluated four alternatives for the future management of Muscatatuck NWR.

The alternative selected for implementation on the refuge is *Alternative C*. This preferred alternative directs management towards more historic landscape conditions by expanding forest habitats and decreasing management of constructed wetland units. Former farmland is either transitioned to forest or to open areas in order to increase refuge habitat diversity. This alternative relies on a combination of active management and natural processes to provide quality wildlife habitat for over 80 species of Regional Conservation Priority, including 3 species listed as Federally threatened or endangered. Biological surveys and monitoring activities, invasive species management, and wildlife-dependant recreation opportunities - particularly hunting and fishing, would all increase under the preferred alternative.

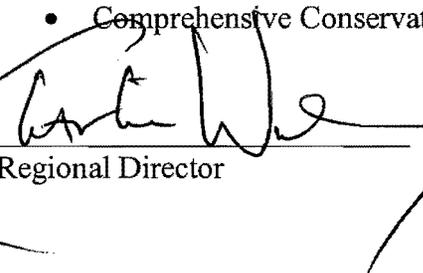
For reasons presented above and below, and based on an evaluation of the information contained in the Environmental Assessment, we have determined that the action of adopting Alternative C as the management alternative for Muscatatuck NWR is not a major Federal action which would significantly affect the quality of the human environment, within the meaning of Section 102 (2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

Additional Reasons:

- Future management actions will have a neutral or positive impact on the local economy.
- This action will not have an adverse impact on threatened or endangered species.

Supporting References:

- Environmental Assessment
- Comprehensive Conservation Plan


ACTING Regional Director

9/10/09
Date

