

Supawna Meadows National Wildlife Refuge

Developing a Conservation Plan for the Future

USFWS/Lee Karney



Great Egret

Refuge Information & History

Supawna Meadows Refuge includes more than 3,000 acres of marsh, grassland, shrubland, and forest habitat. The approved Refuge acquisition boundary encompasses approximately 4,500 acres along the Upper Delaware Bay and Salem River in Pennsville Township, New Jersey. The refuge boundaries are defined by the Delaware Bay, Salem River, and Fort Mott Road.

Supawna Meadows was originally established as the Goose Pond addition to the Killcohook National Wildlife Refuge (currently termed Killcohook Dredge Spoil Disposal Area) that was established by Executive Order 6582 on February 3, 1934. The Refuge was renamed Supawna Meadows National Wildlife Refuge and officially separated from Killcohook on April 10, 1974 by the Service. On October 30, 1998, the Service's jurisdiction over Killcohook was revoked.

Overview

Supawna Meadows Refuge is located in the Atlantic Flyway where birds migrating from interior Canada and the coastal provinces merge to form the main stem of the corridor. The area not only serves as an important migration area but also provides wintering habitat for large numbers of waterfowl. Recent mid-winter waterfowl inventory flights for the Salem River watershed averaged more than 2,000 dabbling ducks and more than 17,000 Canada geese.

The Refuge provides critical foraging habitat for more than 6,000 pairs of nine species of wading birds that nest on Pea Patch Island, one of the largest rookeries on the East Coast. The Refuge also supports migrating shorebirds, bald eagles, and a number of state-listed endangered and threatened species and species of conservation concern.

A maternity colony of more than 1,500 bats, primarily the little brown bat, occupies an empty barn on the Refuge. Reptile and amphibian species of conservation concern include northern diamondback terrapin, eastern box turtle, spotted turtle, and Fowler's toad.

The predominant public uses of the Refuge are hunting, fishing and wildlife observation and photography. There are two walking trails and one boating trail. The Refuge is open to deer bow hunting, in accordance with State regulations, and portions of the area are open to waterfowl hunting. The Finn's Point Rear Range Light is an historic lighthouse on the Refuge that draws many visitors.

Purposes for which the refuge was established

- (1) as a refuge and breeding ground for wild birds and animals;
- (2) for particular value in carrying out the national migratory bird management program;
- (3) for use as an inviolate sanctuary, or for any other management purpose, for migratory birds; and,
- (4) as a refuge suitable for (1) incidental fish and wildlife-oriented recreational development, (2) the protection of natural resources, (3) the conservation of endangered species or threatened species.



A tidal creek flows through Supawna Meadows NWR marshlands

USFWS/Phil Sczerzenie

A Conservation Plan for the Future

A comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) for Supawna Meadows Refuge is under development. The CCP will establish management goals and objectives for the Refuge's wildlife management, habitat protection, and public use programs for the next 15 years.

The CCP process provides an opportunity for States, conservation and local organizations, communities, and concerned citizens to participate in the development of this far-reaching plan. As the first step in the planning process, Refuge staff and Fish and Wildlife Service planners will host a public meeting at the Pennsville Public Library on September 10, 2007. Participants will have an opportunity to learn about existing Refuge programs, help the planning team identify key issues, share ideas and concerns, and make recommendations on how the site should be managed in the future.

Vision and Goals for the Refuge

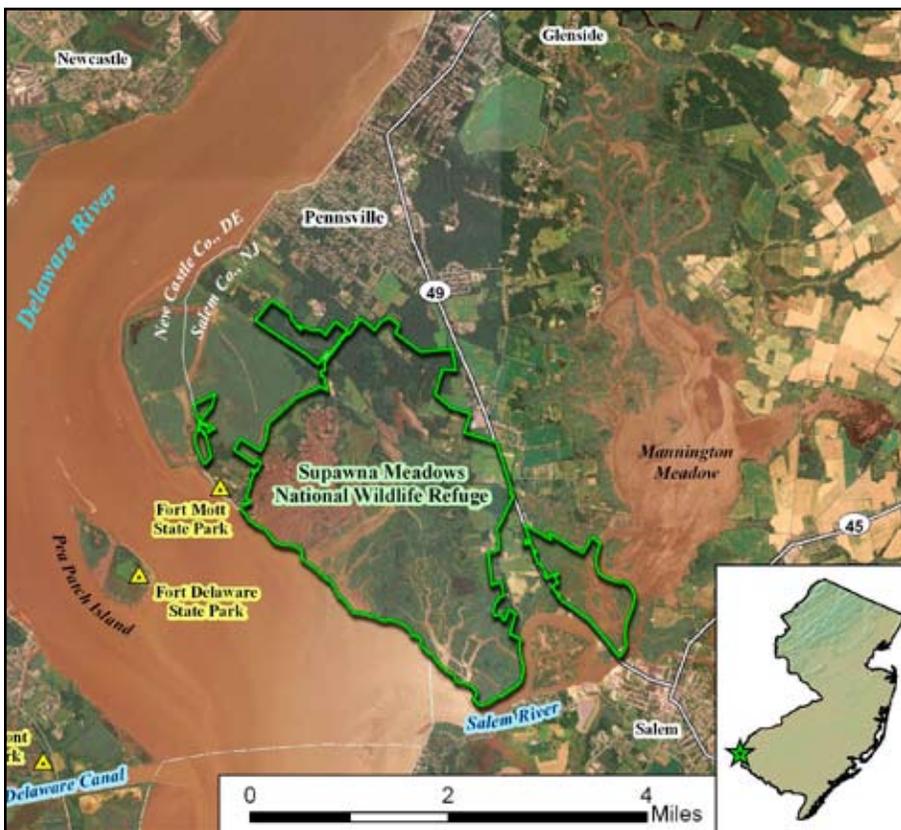
The planning team has developed the following draft vision statement and goals for the Refuge. Comments from the public are appreciated.

Vision Statement

Supawna Meadows National Wildlife Refuge will continue to provide essential tidal marsh habitat to feed and shelter migrating waterfowl and to feed nearby colonial-nesting wading birds, thereby maintaining its significant role as part of the Delaware Bayshore system of wetlands and upland buffers that is one of the most important migratory bird habitats in the nation.

The Refuge will continue to serve as an oasis of native biotic communities within sight of the burgeoning industrial, transportation, and residential developments of the lower Delaware River Basin and South Jersey by providing an array of wetland and upland habitats that support a diverse community of breeding and migrating birds, native mammals, and other species.

Refuge visitors will be able to hunt and fish, observe and photograph wildlife, and learn of the ecological importance and diversity of wildlife at Supawna Meadows. They will understand the Refuge as part of a larger network of protected lands within the National Wildlife Refuge System, set aside specifically for wildlife.



Refuge Goals

Goal 1. Protect and enhance Federal trust resources and other species and habitats of special concern

Objectives would address:

- Waterfowl
- Herons & egrets
- Bald eagle
- National Register Cultural Resources (Finn's Point Lighthouse)

Goal 2. Manage natural ecological communities to promote healthy, functioning ecosystems

Objectives would address:

- Tidal marsh (Phragmites, removal of old dike)
- Impoundments
- Grassland
- Forest

Goal 3. Provide opportunities for compatible high-quality, wildlife-dependent public use

Objectives would address:

- Waterfowl and deer hunting
- Fishing
- Boating for wildlife observation & photography
- Trails for wildlife observation & photography

Public Scoping Meetings

Date: September 10, 2007

- *Open House:* 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.
- *Meeting with presentation:* 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Pennsville Public Library
190 South Broadway
Pennsville, NJ 08070

For more information:

Howard Schlegel, Refuge Manager
Supawna Meadows National Wildlife Refuge,
c/o Cape May National Wildlife Refuge
24 Kimbles Beach Road
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210
Phone: 609-463-0994
Fax: 609-463-1667
Email: fw5rw_spmnwr@fws.gov

Website: <http://www.fws.gov/Refuges/profiles/index.cfm?id=52571>

Federal Relay Service for the deaf or hard-of-hearing: 1 800/877 8339

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

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