



Hopper Mountain, Bitter Creek and Blue Ridge National Wildlife Refuges

Planning Update #2 - April 2010

More information to help you get involved

Why is this planning effort starting now?

In October 1997, Congress passed the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act, which states that, first and foremost, the National Wildlife Refuge System must focus on wildlife conservation. This law establishes: (1) the mission of the Refuge System; (2) a new process of determining compatible public use activities on refuges; and (3) requires us to prepare CCPs for each refuge.

National Wildlife Refuge System (Refuge System) mission:

“... to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.”

Comprehensive Conservation Planning Issues Workbook

Inside is an issues workbook for you to use in formulating your comments. The information you provide in this workbook will be very helpful in assisting Refuge staff in developing a draft plan. Please complete the workbook and mail by **May 20, 2010**.

Help us keep our mailing list updated

If you wish to receive future “Planning Updates” about the Hopper Mountain, Bitter Creek and Blue Ridge NWR’s Comprehensive Conservation Plan, please complete the information below.

(Yes) Add me to your mailing list (No) Take me off your mailing list

Name (Please Print): _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Are you acting in an official capacity as the representative of an organization?

Organization: _____

Title: _____



Goals of this planning process:

- Outline refuge management priorities for the next 10 to 15 years;
- Describe significant refuge resources and their importance;
- Identify how the refuge can best protect these resources;
- Clarify what public uses are, and are not, compatible with managing significant resources;
- Identify the refuge’s role within the local community and as a national resource.

Hopper Mountain, Bitter Creek, and Blue Ridge NWRs Issues Workbook

Values, Vision, and the Service's Role

1. What things do you value most about the Hopper Mountain, Bitter Creek, and/or Blue Ridge National Wildlife Refuges?
2. In a sentence or two, describe your future vision for the refuges. You may want to list a vision for wildlife, wildlife habitats, environmental interpretation/education and outreach to the community or other aspects of the refuge. Please note to which refuge(s) your comments apply.
3. What do you consider the most important problems facing the refuges today? (Please list up to 3, in order of importance.)

4. What services would you like the refuge staff to provide at the refuges? (Please check all that are appropriate.)

wildlife and habitat management

volunteer opportunities

management for endangered species

enhanced environmental outreach

control of invasive and/or non-native plants or animals

enhanced environmental education services

Other: _____

Please provide specific comments concerning services you would like to see on the refuge(s).

5. What role would you like the refuges to play in the conservation of natural areas and wildlife; regionally and/or in your county?
6. Please indicate here any additional comments you wish to make on values, vision, or the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's role.

Fish, Wildlife and Their Habitats

Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge Complex provides important habitat for a wide variety of species, including several rare and declining species.

1. Are any of the following issues a major concern to you on the refuges? If so, please check (or number in priority order) your top 3 areas of concern.

<input type="checkbox"/> control of invasive plant species	<input type="checkbox"/> endangered and rare plant conservation
<input type="checkbox"/> control of non-native animals	<input type="checkbox"/> California condor management
<input type="checkbox"/> economical uses	<input type="checkbox"/> refuge in-holdings and boundary issues
<input type="checkbox"/> water rights and related issues	<input type="checkbox"/> other issues (please specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> habitat restoration/conservation	

2. If possible, please provide additional details on why you selected the above choices. In particular, we would be interested to know specific locations of concern.

3. Are there specific areas within the refuges that, in your opinion, need enhanced management? If so, please list them here, and explain why you think they are important.

4. Please include here any additional comments on fish and wildlife habitat issues and concerns.

Recreation, Education, and Access

National wildlife refuges are closed to public use until officially designated open and only those wildlife-dependent uses that are “compatible” with the purpose(s) for which a refuge was established are allowed. Hopper Mountain, Bitter Creek, and Blue Ridge National Wildlife Refuges were established “... to conserve...fish or wildlife which are listed as endangered species or threatened species...or plants ...” in accordance with the Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended.

1. Currently, the refuges are not open to public visitation, but are there any visitor services that you feel should be provided?

2. Have you ever viewed California condors on or near a national wildlife refuge or do you plan to in the near future?

3. Are any of the following visitor service and public use issues a major concern to you on the refuges? If so, please check (or number in priority order) your top choices. Please indicate to which refuge(s) this applies.

lack of wildlife related visitor services (such as education, information and interpretive services; wildlife observation and wildlife photography).

vehicle access or trespass

hunting

cultural/historical resource preservation

possible conflicts between public uses/facilities and wildlife/habitat values

other public use issues and concerns: _____

Please provide additional details on why you selected the above choices.

4. Please indicate here any additional comments on recreation, education, and public access.

***IMPORTANT: Please mail your completed workbook to the address below by May 20, 2010
(fold this side out, tape, stamp, and send).***

Place
first-class
stamp
here

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