

## Appendix B: Pre-acquisition Compatibility Determinations

In accordance with the provisions of Service refuge planning policy (603 FW 2) the pre-acquisition compatibility determinations covering any lands acquired in full or easement for the proposed Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge (NWR, Refuge) are as follows:

***Uses:***

Pre-acquisition compatibility of wildlife dependent uses (hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, environmental education and interpretation) occurring on lands within the proposed Hackmatack NWR.

***Refuge Name:***

Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge

***Establishing and Acquisition Authority(ies):***

Lands acquired by the Service for the proposed Hackmatack NWR would be purchased under the authority of the Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 1929, the Refuge Recreation Act of 1962, the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956, and the Emergency Wetland Resources Act of 1986.

***Refuge Purpose(s):***

*“for any other management purpose, for migratory birds....” 16 U.S.C. §715d (Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 1929), and*

*“the conservation of the wetlands of the Nation in order to maintain the public benefits they provide and to help fulfill international obligations contained in various migratory bird treaties and conventions ...” 16 U.S.C. §3901(b), 100 Stat. 3583 (Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986),*

*“for the development, advancement, management, conservation, and protection of fish and wildlife resources” 16 U.S.C. 742a et seq. (Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956).*

*“and land, or interests therein, which are 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 listed by the Secretary pursuant to section 1533 of this title, or (4) carrying out two or more of the purposes set forth in paragraphs (1) through (3) of this section...” 16 U.S.C. §460(k), (Refuge Recreation Act, as amended).*

***National Wildlife Refuge System Mission:***

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

***Description of Uses:***

The uses being reviewed are six wildlife-dependent recreational uses (hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation). These are priority uses

outlined in the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997. We will identify which uses may be occurring on lands within the proposed authorized refuge boundary and whether these uses can continue under Service ownership.

All six uses are known to occur on the public and private lands within the proposed Refuge boundary. Hunting and fishing occur primarily on the rural lands of the area on a limited basis. Housing developments, roads, and intense croplands limit the amount of acreage available for upland game hunting. Fishing occurs along the Fox River and Nippersink Creek and on a few open water bodies within the proposed boundary. Wildlife observation and photography are enjoyed by local residents, especially on the county and state public lands. Environmental education and interpretation is primarily limited to programs sponsored by McHenry County Conservation District and local school initiatives.

All activities on new refuge lands would follow applicable local, state, and federal laws, except where the Refuge designates additional restrictions to ensure compatibility with Refuge purposes.

***Availability of Resources:***

The Hackmatack NWR could be administered in several ways depending on the pace of refuge development. In beginning stages, the new Refuge would probably be managed as a satellite refuge by staff of Horicon NWR or the Leopold Wetland Management District. Management of specific parcels could also be conducted through formal cooperative agreements with the State of Illinois and the State of Wisconsin, or with county government conservation agencies. As the restored land base increases, the complexity of habitat management and administration also increases, and the new Refuge would probably be assigned its own funding, equipment, and staff. Generally, a fully staffed refuge of this size could eventually have about seven staff members and an annual operating budget of approximately \$700,000.

***Anticipated Impacts of Use:***

The continuation of existing wildlife-dependent recreational use is consistent with fish and wildlife management principals in that it recognizes, in the case of hunting, the concepts of harvestable surplus and carrying capacity. White-tailed deer and Canada Goose numbers can increase to levels causing increased cropland damage without the control provided by hunting. The potential of floral and faunal degradation reduces biodiversity and negatively impacts other wildlife using the same habitat, including threatened and endangered species. The Refuge goal to maintain diversity and increase abundance of waterfowl and other migratory bird species could be impaired without an active hunting program to manage big game and predator populations.

***Public Review and Comment:***

Public review and comment were provided through the publishing of this Compatibility Determination as an appendix to the Environmental Assessment for the proposed Refuge.

***Determination:***

- Use is Not Compatible
- Use is Compatible with Following Stipulations:

***Stipulations Necessary to Ensure Compatibility:***

To ensure compatibility with Refuge purposes and the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System, (NWRS, Refuge System) wildlife-dependent recreational uses can occur on Hackmatack NWR with the following stipulations:

1. All wildlife-dependent recreational uses must be conducted in accordance with local, state and federal regulations unless the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service places additional restrictions on the activities to ensure compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies.
2. Wildlife-dependent recreational uses will be limited or excluded from areas containing sensitive or rare plant communities if that use would severely damage or extirpate the natural community type.
3. Wildlife-dependent uses will be subject to modification if onsite monitoring by Refuge personnel uncovers unanticipated negative impacts to natural communities, wildlife species, or their habitats.

***Justification:***

The National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 specifies that these are the six priority uses of the Refuge System. As noted in the description of use and anticipated impact sections, the allowed priority uses will have overall minimal impact to fish and wildlife populations and associated habitat. Stipulations above will ensure proper control of the means of use and provide management flexibility should detrimental impacts develop. Allowing these uses also further the mission of the Refuge System by providing renewable resources for the benefit of the American public while conserving fish, wildlife, and plant resources on this tract.

Signature:      Refuge Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature and Date

Concurrence:    Regional Chief: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature and Date

Mandatory 10- or 15-year Re-evaluation Date: 2027