

# **Appendix J: Response to Comments Received on the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan**



## Response to Comments Received on the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan

During the comment period for the Draft CCP, we received a comment letter from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (pages 164-165) and an email comment from the National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office, Cultural Resources Management (pages 166-167).

### *Response to Wisconsin DNR*

We appreciate the Department's support of our management goals. We will continue to work, as noted in Chapter 5, with the Department and other conservation organizations within our shared conservation mission. We respond below to each of the bulleted points of the Department's letter.

**First bullet** – The Service WMD offices integrate Joint Venture documents into their planning and implementation of habitat management and restoration activities as discussed under “Migratory Bird Conservation Initiatives” in Chapter 3 of the CCP. Acquisition funding and available properties vary each year, so it is difficult to set specific wetland protection goals by wetland habitat type and acreage in support of the Joint Venture.

The Service considers waterfowl, grassland birds, species of concern, threatened and endangered species, and other trust species in making habitat management decisions. To be more explicit, the rationale under Objective 2.4 has been modified to add the State's Species of Greatest Conservation Need in its management considerations. Other species are also considered in management decisions but the priority is trust species.

**Second bullet** – We agree that increased coordination to achieve common goals will be beneficial to all parties involved and lead to a landscape approach to conservation issues. Our support of coordinated efforts is acknowledged in our discussion of existing and future partnerships.

**Third bullet** – We, too, see the value in the coordination of data collection, which would provide better data. This is another example of benefits gained through partnerships.

**Fourth bullet** – The Service will continue to work with the Wisconsin DNR to address CWD concerns or management implications on WPAs.

**Fifth bullet** – Public uses on WPAs are evaluated for their compatibility with the purpose of the WPA. At the present time, the CCP proposes public use improvements such as trails, boardwalks, and observation platforms on only a limited number of WPAs. The majority of the WPAs will continue to be managed with few public use modifications. When compatible, hunting along with the other big six uses (fishing, wildlife observation, environmental education, interpretation, photography) are encouraged on WPAs. The Service also recognizes that promotion of the value of WPAs to all members of the public is an important part of reconnecting people with nature and supporting the intent of the National Wildlife Refuge Improvement Act of 1997.

**Sixth bullet** – Your continued support for trapping opportunities is noted.

**Seventh bullet** – Until complete invasive species inventories are conducted on each WPA it is difficult to determine the specific levels of control and the appropriate priority species. Priority for invasives control is stated in terms of attempting to control or limit invasive species in priority wetland and grassland habitat, because these are the most important habitat types for federal trust species.

### *Response to National Park Service*

We have added a paragraph in the CCP and EA that better describes the extent of historic places within the District and edited sentences in both documents to more accurately report the relationship of waterfowl production areas and historic places.



**State of Wisconsin \ DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

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August 22, 2008

Leopold Wetland Management District  
Attention: CCP Comment  
W10040 Cascade Mountain Road  
Portage, WI 53901



St. Croix Wetland Management District  
Attention: CCP Comment  
1764 95<sup>th</sup> Street  
New Richmond, WI 54017

Subject: Leopold and St. Croix WMD Comprehensive Conservation Plan

Dear Mr. Lenz and Mr. McConnell:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Leopold Wetland Management District (WMD) and St. Croix WMD Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCP). As these plans note, the two WMD's share issues and a joint planning process was used to develop the individual CCP's. Because of these shared issues, the following comments are made regarding both CCP's, unless otherwise noted.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (Department) supports the primary management goals listed in Chapter 4 of each plan. We encourage the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) to work hand-in-hand with the Department and other conservation land groups to help maintain the integrity of the area's natural resources and in keeping with the legislative mandates within the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997. In light of the shared mission we have to protect and promote natural resources, the Department and Service can benefit by working together on mutual goals.

More specifically:

- The Department is committed to the "all-bird" habitat goals and objectives of the recently revised Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Joint Venture (UMRGLRJV). We suggest that each CCP would be strengthened by a more prominent support of the UMRGLRJV goals and objectives by wetland habitat type and acreage. As the Service was heavily involved with the revision of the UMRGLRJV, it stands to reason that Service programs would integrate this important habitat initiative within their planning documents and habitat activities.

Likewise, habitat work undertaken by the Service, both wetland and upland, should consider benefits to a variety of species, especially those focal species designated in the UMRGLRJV Implementation Plan or as Species of Greatest Conservation Need as designated in the Wisconsin Action Plan.

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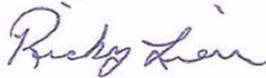
dnr.wi.gov  
wisconsin.gov



- Department and Service field staff and regional and state program administrators should meet on a regular basis to coordinate mutually beneficial activities and increase the awareness of each agency's initiatives, concerns, and ideas. Other habitat partners should be included in these meetings as appropriate.
- We support increased resource inventory and research, as the plan states, especially if data is collected by consistent and statistically valid means. Please work with the Department to facilitate, where appropriate, the cooperative collection of this mutually beneficial information to manage wildlife habitat.
- We are pleased that deer hunting continues to be allowed. In light of both the impact excessive deer can have on native species and ongoing concerns about chronic wasting disease (CWD) in Wisconsin, hunting offers a tool to control deer populations. As CWD management in Wisconsin evolves, the Department would seek USFWS cooperation in both research and management activities where applicable on Service properties.
- Modifications meant to improve visitor services on federal lands such as wildlife observation stations, parking lots, trails, or boardwalks should be evaluated as to their effect on key wildlife habitat and the ability of people to participate in other compatible uses, especially hunting. Physical modifications to federal properties should not negatively impact valuable wildlife habitat. Likewise, such modifications should, at a minimum, have a neutral affect on the ability of hunters to use the land or, preferably, should improve hunting opportunities.
- We are pleased that trapping is a compatible use at federal lands within each WMD. Besides providing a valuable resource harvested by Wisconsin trappers, trapping can benefit the production of grassland nesting bird species by the removal of predators.
- The control of non-native invasive species is an ongoing concern for habitat managers. Rather than stating a percentage of invasives to be controlled as is currently shown in the draft CCP's, it may be beneficial to consider a layered approach that takes into account the degree to which invasive species may be controlled, the relative impact presented by certain invasive species, and the quality of the property at which an invasive species may appear.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on each CCP. The Department looks forward to working with the Service within these important areas in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,



Ricky Lien  
Wetland Habitat Specialist  
Bureau of Wildlife Management

cc: Tom Hauge – WM/6  
Bill Vander Zouwen – WM/6  
Eric Lobner – Fitchburg  
Tami Ryan – Milwaukee  
Jeff Pritzl – Green Bay  
Kris Belling – Eau Claire  
Mike Zeckmeister – Antigo



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08/21/2008 11:57 AM

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cc: don\_stevens@nps.gov, Michele\_Curran@nps.gov  
Subject: Leopold WMD Comment

August 21, 2008

Leopold Wetland Management District  
Attention: CCP Comment  
W10040 Cascade Mountain Road  
Portage, Wisconsin 59301

Re: Leopold Wetland Management District, Comprehensive Conservation Plan  
and Environmental Assessment

To Whom It May Concern:

This email is being sent in response to the draft Leopold Wetland Management District Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment. In reviewing the management plan and environment assessment, it has been observed that neither plan mentions the previously documented National Historic Landmark (NHL) properties that are located within the proposed boundary. Cultural Resources are only identified as Early American Properties that have archeological components. The National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office, Cultural Resources Management, is requesting that these historic properties be included in the study. The Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office located in Madison, Wisconsin is a valuable resource to contact regarding the names and locations of National Register of Historic Places properties also located within the boundary. The list below gives the name and county of the 21 National Historic Landmarks located within the proposed boundary. Please be sure to address these valuable resources to our nation's history in the Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment.

Fond du Lac County: Little White School HouseNHL

Manitowoc County: USS COBIA NHL

Marquette County: Fountain Lake Farm NHL

Sauk County: Ringling Brothers Circus Winter Headquarters NHL, Van Hise Rock NHL, Aldo Leopold Shack and Farm - new NHL proposal currently on review in Washington

Columbia County: Farmers and Merchants Union Bank NHL

Dane County: First Unitarian Meeting Society NHL, Harold Bradley House NHL, Herbert and Katherine 1st House NHL, Herbert and Katherine 2nd House NHL, Robert M. Lafollette House NHL, University of Wisconsin Science Hall NHL, University of Wisconsin Armory and Gymnasium NHL, University of Wisconsin North Hall NHL, University of Wisconsin Dairy Barn NHL, Wisconsin State Capitol NHL

Waukesha County: Ten Chimneys NHL

Racine County: Herbert Johnson House NHL, Administration Building and Research Tower SC Johnson Company NHL

Rock County: Milton House NHL

Sincerely,

/s/

Rebecca Kumar

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Rebecca Kumar  
Historian

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Live today for tomorrow it will all be history.  
Proverb

