

**NEWS RELEASE  
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
P.O. Box 110, Airport Road  
Lewistown, MT 59457**

November 1, 2010

For Immediate Release      Contacts:      Laurie Shannon, FWS, (303) 236-4317  
Bill Berg, FWS, (406) 538-8706

**U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE TO EXTEND PUBLIC COMMENT  
PERIOD FOR DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION PLAN FOR  
CHARLES M. RUSSELL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**

Today, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announced an extension of the public comment period for the draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Environmental Impact Statement for Charles M. Russell and UL Bend National Wildlife Refuges.

In response to requests from the public, and after careful consideration of the many factors involved in the planning effort, the Service has extended the comment period 24 additional days, until the close of business on December 10, 2010. Originally, the Service established a 60-day comment period, until the close of business on November 16, 2010.

The Service has developed four draft alternatives, including a proposed action, based on the Service's mission and purpose and the comments received during scoping which began in early 2008. The draft document is available for download at: <http://www.fws.gov/cmrr/planning>. Written comments should be submitted by December 10, 2010 to Laurie Shannon, Planning Team Leader, P.O. Box 25486, Denver, CO 80225-0486. Emails can be submitted to [cmrrplanning@fws.gov](mailto:cmrrplanning@fws.gov). For more information about the plan, visit: <http://www.fws.gov/cmrr/planning> or call: (303) 236-4317 or (406) 538-8706.

Charles M. Russell NWR was first established in 1936 as the Ft. Peck Game Range for the purpose of sustaining large numbers of sharp-tailed grouse, pronghorn, and other wildlife. In 1963, the Range was designated as Charles M. Russell Range. In 1976 the "Range" became a refuge and the Service was granted full management authority. The refuge is now administered as part of the National Wildlife Refuge System, the world's premier network of lands and waters managed for the conservation of fish, wildlife, and their habitats. It encompasses 1.1 million acres of land and water in north-central Montana and is the largest national wildlife refuge in Montana.

UL Bend NWR was established in 1969. Significant portions of this refuge are protected as wilderness under the National Wilderness Preservation System.

The National Wildlife Refuge System (Refuge System) Improvement Act of 1997 requires that all refuges be managed in accordance with an approved CCP which, when implemented, will achieve refuge purposes; help fulfill the Refuge System mission; maintain and, where appropriate, restore the ecological integrity of each refuge and the Refuge System; help achieve the goals of the Wilderness Preservation System; and meet other mandates. The CCP will guide management decisions and set forth goals, objectives, and strategies to accomplish these tasks. The Service hopes to finalize the plan by 2012.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service is both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for its scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on the Service's work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov).

