

**US Fish & Wildlife Service
Public Meetings on the Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge Draft Study
November 19 & 20, 2008**

Summary of Public Comments and Questions

On both evenings, the public comments and questions were, in general, very positive.

Expressions of support for the study / refuge came from:

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| ▪ Area residents (see full notes) | ▪ Pennsylvania Equine Council |
| ▪ Brodhead Watershed Association | ▪ Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission |
| ▪ Cherry Valley CSA | ▪ Pocono Avian Research Center (PARC) |
| ▪ Congressman Paul Kanjorski | ▪ Pocono Environmental Education Center |
| ▪ Friends of Cherry Valley | ▪ Pocono Heritage Land Trust |
| ▪ Lehigh Valley Horse Council | ▪ Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau |
| ▪ Monroe County Board of Commissioners | ▪ Stroud Township |
| ▪ Monroe County Conservation District | |
| ▪ Monroe County Planning Commission | |

Summary of comments / concerns:

The NWR acquisition process / policies

- Concern about condemnation (see Muehlhan, Burns comments) and / or lack of willing sellers (Bixler).
- Refuge / USFWS can be a great neighbor (see Springer, Angus comments)
- Feels that refuge is wrong approach; conservation should be done locally (see Muehlhan, Bixler comments)

Farming

- Concern that agricultural land stays agricultural land (see Secord comments)

Habitat / conservation of species

- Refuge will benefit the environment, species, habitats in Cherry Valley (see Bloss, D. Schuler, Kennedy for Brodhead Watershed Association, Hu, Allen, Gorham for Pocono Heritage Land Trust, Rienhardt for Pocono Environmental Education Center)

Protection of valley for enjoyment of future generations

- Refuge will enable children / future generations to experience life in the valley as it is now (see Thatcher, D. Schuler, Colgan, Weidensaul, Grant, DiPasquale, Kennedy comments)

Access / Activities

- Would like to see multi-use trails for horseback riding (see Grube, Cortwright comments)
- Refuge will increase opportunities for fishing, boating, etc. (see Schaeffer for Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission)
- Refuge will provide increased access for birders (J. Speicher for Pocono Avian Research Center)

Local economic effects

- Would there be restrictions placed on businesses / would businesses be able to survive within the refuge? Opportunity to make livelihood? (see Reddinger, Burns comments)
- Positive economic effects can be expected from establishment of refuge (see Springer, Drake comments)
- Concern about loss of tax revenue (see Bixler comments)

Compatibility with local conservation plans/activities

- Establishment of a refuge is complementary to organization / agency mission / vision (see McCool and Merli for Monroe County Board of Commissioners, Secord for Cherry Valley CSA, Rienhardt for Pocono Environmental Education Center, D. Speicher for Monroe County Conservation District, J. Speicher for Pocono Avian Research Center, Wilgus for Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau)
- Alternative C does not provide adequate protection for upstream headwaters; supports Alternative B. (see Hu comments)
- Supports establishment of refuge and other similar actions to combat climate change, etc. (see Allen comments)
- Local conservation is not adequate to achieve desired conservation outcomes (see Cramer for Stroud Township, Dettore for Monroe County Planning Commission)

Education / research opportunities

- Establishment of refuge will increase and generate opportunities for environmental education and research (see Rienhardt for Pocono Environmental Education Center, D. Speicher for Monroe County Conservation District)