

Chapter 5



USFWS

Pintail duck

Consultation and Coordination with Others

Introduction

This chapter describes how we included others in developing this draft CCP and EA and how we plan to continue consulting and coordinating with others in the future. It details how we first invited, and will continue to encourage, the partnership of other Federal and State agencies, civic, public, and private conservation and education organizations, and the affected public in our decisions about managing the Refuge.

As we mentioned in chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4, we must comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in seeking public input on proposed Federal actions. A 30-day period for public review will follow our release of this draft CCP and EA. We encourage you to give us your responses and ideas about the plan. As before, we will host an open house at a location near the Refuge to gather your opinions and answer your questions about its future management. We will weigh carefully the responses we receive before we write the final CCP.

Planning to Protect Land and Resources

The current refuge planning effort began six years ago but was interrupted so that CM Complex and Regional staff could focus on completing the CM Complex CCP EA, which was issued as a final CCP/EA in September of 2006. The earlier planning efforts were as follows:

- September 2001:** CCP kickoff meeting held at the Refuge with members of the Refuge staff and Regional Office. Visitor Service evaluation conducted.
- October 2001:** Sent a letter to the State Director asking that two members of his agency join the Core Planning Team. Held biological and public use workshops to help draft vision and goal statements and identify issues.
- June 11, 2002:** Notice of Intent published in the Federal Register. Mailed workbooks to mailing list.
- June 2002:** Held public scoping meetings in nearby communities of Rock Hall, Chestertown and Centreville
- July-August 2002:** Compile comments from workbooks and public meetings.
- October 2002:** Briefing at RO for Region 5 NWRS Chief.
- Spring 2003:** a letter was sent to everyone on the project mailing list indicating that due to changes in personnel and regional priorities, the project was being put on hold
- August 2006:** Resumed planning project
- August 31 to September 1, 2006:** Held a planning team meeting at the refuge
- November 8, 2006:** Hosted a biological experts' workshop to facilitate a discussion on natural resource priorities for the refuge. Twenty-five experts attended, representing other federal agencies, state agencies, researchers and national and private non-governmental conservation organizations. The participants identified resource priorities such as migrating and wintering waterfowl, federal and state-listed species, shallow water habitats, and healthy and diverse habitats, free of invasive plants.

- December 2006:** Distributed a newsletter to all those on the refuge CCP mailing list notifying everyone that the planning process was restarted.
- January 17, 2007:** Held a public information open house meeting to discuss our renewed planning efforts. We also published a Notice of Intent to re-initiate preparation of a comprehensive conservation plan and environmental assessment in the Federal Register.
- August 2009:** Hold a public meeting and open house to discuss the Draft CCP/EA

Partnerships Involved in Planning and/or Refuge Projects

Refuge programs enjoy a great deal of popular support. Program partnerships have developed in many ways, and exist in every arena of refuge management, from weekly waterfowl surveys to the running of the Visitor Center and Bookstore by the Friends of Eastern Neck.

As public interest in protecting the refuge's resources has grown, additional partnerships among the Service, States, and other agencies have also developed. Our opportunities for ever greater partnerships now encompass an array of community organizations and individuals, some of whom appear below.

- American Legion of Rock Hall
- Chesapeake Alliance
- Chesapeake Paddlers Association
- Chester River Association River Keepers
- Friends of Eastern Neck
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources
- Maryland Department of the Environment
- Maryland Energy Administration
- National Aquarium in Baltimore
- National Renewable Energy Laboratory
- National Wild Turkey Federation
- Kent County Bird Club
- Kent County Dept. of Parks and Recreation
- Kent County Dept of Tourism
- Kent County Roads Dept

Under the 1997 Refuge Improvement Act, we must review and update our plan at least once every 15 years, or sooner, should our Director deem it necessary. At that time, we will once again announce our planning for its revision, and once again request your participation.

Contact Information

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