

# Monomoy and Nomans Land Island National Wildlife Refuges Comprehensive Conservation Plan

*Planning Update*

*Summer 2005*

## **Scoping Meetings a Success!**

On April 5, 6, and 7, we held 6 public meetings in the towns of Chatham, Chilmark, and Sudbury to gather input about our Comprehensive Conservation Plan and the issues that need to be addressed as a part of the plan. Over 300 people attended our meetings and provided valuable input!

The format of the meetings was primarily designed as an opportunity for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) to listen to you about the important issues for Monomoy and Nomans Land Island. We have compiled the information that we heard at each of the meetings and will use the information that we heard in developing the CCP, along with goals and objectives for the refuges. The meetings in Chatham were well attended, while smaller gatherings occurred in Chilmark and Sudbury. In Chatham, we broke the larger group into smaller breakout groups. The meeting notes for the Chatham meetings contain a summary of all of the points that we heard from the groups. We have also included the individual group notes for you. The smaller groups at the Chilmark and Sudbury meetings allowed for more of a conversation style discussion between the audience and Service staff to clarify current management, especially with regard to predator control and restrictions on uses associated with Wilderness areas.

Meeting summaries can be found at <http://monomoy.fws.gov/news.htm>

Visit the refuge website at <http://monomoy.fws.gov/plan.html> to

review CCP information and join the CCP mailing list.

## **CCP Process – Where are we now....**

Now that we have received a large number of comments on the scope of issues to be addressed, the Service has put together a planning team composed of staff members, a representative from Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife and a representative from the Wampanoag Tribe of Aquinnah.

This team has been working to develop Vision Statements for the refuges. These visions will be concise statements of what the refuge should be, or what we hope to do, based primarily upon the Refuge System mission and specific refuge purposes, and other mandates. The draft Vision Statements are available on the plan website.

After refining our Visions, we will work toward developing goals and objectives

## **Site specific research**

We continue to work with the town of Chatham to address issues associated with shellfishing at the Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge. The town and its researchers have put together a very comprehensive review of information about soft shell clam ecology and shorebird disturbance.

However, there are still a number of unanswered questions specific to shellfishing at Monomoy NWR. We are working together to identify site specific research needs. This research data will aid in the decision making process. We hope to start preliminary data collection this summer!

for the refuges, which is the next step in the planning process. More information about goals and objectives will be available on the website. If you are interested in more information, you can also access the Service's handbook "Writing Goals and Objectives." It can be found at <http://library.fws.gov/Pubs9/writingrefugegoals04.pdf>.



## **Closed areas map available on the web**

You can view or download a map that shows the current closed areas on Monomoy NWR from our website <http://monomoy.fws.gov>

The map will be updated as changes occur.



## Wilderness

Wilderness in the formal sense is a designation given to federal lands. Only Congress can designate lands as Wilderness. Once lands are included in the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS), they continue to be managed by the agency that owns the lands; however there are some restrictions that go into place.

*"A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain ..."*

-The Wilderness Act, September 3, 1964

protection in their natural condition... For this purpose there is hereby established a National Wilderness Preservation System... these shall be administered for the use and enjoyment of the American people in such manner as will leave them unimpaired for future use as wilderness, and so as to provide for the protection of these areas, the preservation of

their wilderness character, and for the gathering and dissemination of information regarding their use and enjoyment as wilderness" (Public Law 88-577).



study, and recommendation. Lands and waters that meet the minimum criteria for wilderness are identified in the inventory phase. These areas are called Wilderness Study Areas (WSA). In the study phase, a range of management alternatives are evaluated to determine if the WSA is suitable for wilderness designation. Finally, the recommendation phase consists of forwarding the recommendation through the Director of the Service through the

Secretary of the Interior and the President to Congress in a wilderness study report. Areas that are recommended for wilderness

are managed to maintain their wilderness character until Congress makes a decision about inclusion in the NWPS.

The Wilderness Act established the NWPS to include all designated Wilderness. It now totals more than 105 million acres contained in 662 Wilderness Areas in 44 States. The Service, National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, and Bureau of Land Management manage Wilderness lands.

Additional information about Wilderness can be found at <http://www.wilderness.net>

## Wilderness Act of 1964

The Wilderness Act was passed by Congress in 1964.

In the preamble to the Act, Congress stated. "In order to assure that an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and



growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States and its possessions, leaving no lands designated for preservation and

## Designated Wilderness

### *Monomoy NWR*

With the exception of about 250 acres, all of the land area on North and South Monomoy Islands including the intertidal zone is a designated Federal Wilderness Area.

## Wilderness Review

As a part of the CCP process, we are required to conduct a Wilderness Review for any lands within the refuge boundary not already included in the NWPS. The purpose of the review is to identify and recommend areas of the

National Wildlife Refuge System for Congressional designation into the NWPS. There are three phases to the wilderness review process: inventory,

### *Monomoy*

We will conduct a review of the approximately 250 acres of land that was excluded from the original designation.

### *Nomans Land Island NWR*

Nomans Land Island will also be reviewed to determine its potential for Wilderness status. The characteristics of the uninhabited island are such that we will make a careful review. The island contains one of the last relatively untainted island ecosystems in the northeast with very little evidence of human presence makes it a potential candidate for wilderness designation. We will need to look carefully at both the attributes of the island and the proposed management to determine if inclusion into the NWPS is appropriate.

## Photo Contest Details

As mentioned in the previous "Planning Update", we are holding a photo contest for the Cover Photo and other photos for the Comprehensive Conservation Plan. The subject of the photos must relate to either Monomoy or Nomans Land Island. Remember, Nomans Land Island is closed to the public for safety reasons. Photos can be of flora or fauna known to exist on the island, but taken at another location.

The contest will run one full year, enabling you to choose the season of your photos. Details about format and how to submit your photos can be found at <http://monomoy.fws.gov/photo.html>

## Help keep our mailing list up-to-date

If you received this mailing in error or if you are no longer interested in receiving information about the Monomoy and Nomans Land Island Comprehensive Conservation Plan, please call or email, Bill Perry, Refuge Planner at 978-443-4661 ext. 32 or [bill\\_perry@fws.gov](mailto:bill_perry@fws.gov)