

Chapter 5.



Viewing Pod at the Refuge

Consultation and Coordination with Others

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5.1 Introduction

This chapter describes how we included others in developing this draft CCP/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 NEPA in seeking public input on proposed Federal actions. A 45-day period for public review is included with the release of this draft CCP/EA. We encourage you to give us your responses and ideas about the plan. During that period, 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.

5.2 Planning to Protect Land and Resources

We began the CCP process for Patuxent Research Refuge in December 2009 with a kick-off meeting at the refuge. We discussed the current status of the refuge, important issues to be addressed in the CCP, and the status and sources of data for the analysis. We defined a core planning team to include managers and staff from the refuge, a representative from the USGS PWRC, a representative from the Service Division of Migratory Bird Management, the Service Chesapeake Bay Field Office, Service regional planners, and an MD DNR representative.

We published and distributed our first newsletter in February 2010. On March 23 and 24, 2010, we held public scoping meetings at NWVC and MD DNR's headquarters in Annapolis, Maryland to solicit comments from the community and other interested parties on the scope of the CCP and the issues and impacts that should be evaluated in the CCP/EA.

We held a number of core planning team and partner meetings throughout the planning process to review habitat management, visitor services and research. Table 5-1 outlines the planning meetings that we held during the process.

Table 5-1. List of Planning Meetings

Date	Topic	Audience
January 14, 2010	CCP issues and opportunities	Refuge and PWRC staff
May 18, 2010	Refuge vision	Refuge staff
May 19, 2010	Habitat management	Core planning team
August 4, 2010	Public Use alternatives	Core planning team
August 5, 2010	Habitat alternatives	Core planning team
February 22, 2010	Research goal	Refuge and PWRC staff
November 30 - December 2, 2010	Impoundment management	Core planning team and additional experts
January 25, 2011	Habitat management	Core planning team

Date	Topic	Audience
January 26, 2011	Land protection opportunities	County, State, and NGO representatives
April 11 - 12, 2011	Impoundment management	Core planning team and additional experts
May 24, 2011	Grassland management	Core planning team and additional experts
June 29, 2011	Alternatives	Core planning team
October 4, 2011	Alternatives	PWRC research managers

We have published our Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register* announcing the release of this draft CCP/EA. During the 45-day period of public review, we will hold a public meeting to obtain comments. We also expect to receive comments by regular mail or electronic mail. After the comment period expires, we will review and summarize all of the comments we have received and develop our responses. We will present them in an appendix to the final CCP.

Once we have prepared the final CCP, we will submit it to our Regional Director for her review and approval. She will determine whether a FONSI is appropriate and certify whether the final CCP meets agency compliance requirements, achieves refuge purposes, and helps fulfill the mission of the Refuge System. With an affirmative FONSI and other positive findings, the Regional Director can approve the final CCP. If that happens, we will publish another *Federal Register* NOA to announce the availability of the final plan. That will complete the planning and compliance requirements for implementation of a final CCP.

5.3 Contact Information

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5.4 Members of the Core Planning Team

Service Personnel

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Les Vilchek, Cartographer, USFWS
Melanie Steinkamp, Migratory Bird Biologist, Region 5 Migratory Birds Program
Dan Murphy, Chesapeake Bay Field Office
Susan McMahan, Deputy Refuge Chief, Region 5
Ken Richkus, Division of Migratory Bird Management
Tom Bonetti, Natural Resource Planner (former Planning Team Leader), Regional Office
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Other Core Team Members

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Other Contributors

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