

Appendix D



USFWS

Forest on Supawna Meadows NWR

## Wilderness Review



## DOCUMENTATION OF WILDERNESS INVENTORY

The wilderness review process consists of three phases: inventory, study, and recommendation. The purposes of the wilderness inventory phase are:

- to identify areas of System lands and waters with wilderness character and establish those areas as Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs);
- to identify areas of Refuge System lands and waters that do not qualify as WSAs; and
- to document the inventory findings for the planning record.

### INVENTORY CRITERIA

WSAs are areas that meet the criteria in the Wilderness Act. Section 2(c) provides the following definition:

A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural condition, and which generally:

- 1) appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable;
- 2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation;
- 3) has at least 5,000 acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and
- 4) may also contain ecological, geological or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

Section 4(c) of the act prohibits permanent roads in wilderness, so WSAs also must be roadless. For the purposes of the wilderness inventory, a "roadless area" is defined as "A reasonably compact area of undeveloped Federal land that possesses the general characteristics of a wilderness and within which there is no improved road that is suitable for public travel by means of four-wheeled, motorized vehicles intended primarily for highway use. A route maintained solely by the passage of vehicles does not constitute a road."

In summary, the inventory to identify WSAs is based on an assessment of the following criteria: absence of roads (roadless); size; naturalness; and either outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation.

We initially assessed Supawna Meadows National Wildlife Refuge based on the size criteria. The size criterion is satisfied for areas under Service jurisdiction in the following situations:

- An area with over 5,000 contiguous acres (2,000 hectares). state and private land inholdings are not included in calculating acreage.
- A roadless island of any size. A roadless island is defined as a roadless area that is surrounded by permanent waters or that is markedly distinguished from surrounding lands by topographical or ecological features such as precipices, canyons, thickets, or swamps.
- An area of less than 5,000 contiguous acres that is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition, and of a size suitable for wilderness management.
- An area of less than 5,000 contiguous acres that is contiguous with a designated wilderness, recommended wilderness, or area of other Federal lands under wilderness review by the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, or National Park Service.

## **INVENTORY CONCLUSIONS**

The 3,016-acre Supawna Meadows National Wildlife Refuge does not meet the size criteria for a WSA. It is less than 5,000 acres and its size is not sufficient to preserve natural ecological processes. Map D-1 shows the current refuge-owned lands, easements and proposed acquisition boundaries. We will reevaluate this determination in 15 years with the revision of this CCP, or sooner if significant new information warrants a reevaluation. In summary, at this time additional study is not warranted.

Map D-1. Current refuge-owned lands, easements, and proposed acquisition boundaries.



