



James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge Land Protection Planning Study

Planning Update 3, July 2006

Aloha

This is the third in a series of planning updates from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) that will provide information on the James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) boundary expansion and management actions in the expansion area.



Overview of the Refuge's Ki'i Unit coastal area and adjacent lands. Photo USFWS.

Thank you for participating

Your comments, participation in the planning process, and support for the Refuge expansion is greatly appreciated.

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Announcing the Expansion of the James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge

On May 25, 2006, Congress and the President enacted the James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge Expansion Act of 2005 (the Act), Public Law 109-225. The Act was created in response to longstanding public concerns for protecting O'ahu's natural resources and open space on the Kahuku coastal plain. The Act authorizes an expansion of the approved Refuge boundary by approximately 750 acres. The expanded Refuge boundary includes land on the makai (ocean) side of Kamehameha Highway including coastal dunes but not public beaches. This authorization allows the Service to acquire land within the expanded Refuge boundary from the Estate of James Campbell. The lands will link the Refuge's two units—the Ki'i Unit and Punamanō Unit separated by nearly a mile—into a single unit of protected wildlife habitat totaling approximately 1,100 acres.

The Refuge expansion will protect the natural coastal wetlands and natural dune habitats of the Kahuku coastal area as part of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Management of the lands and waters will ensure a protected haven for all four species of endangered Hawaiian waterbirds and a variety of migratory shorebirds and waterfowl that use coastal wetlands and surrounding lands. Other native wildlife that will benefit from the expansion includes the native Hawaiian Owl, a native damselfly, and seabirds that formerly nested in the dune habitat. Protection of the dune and strand vegetation near the coast will conserve resting habitat for the endangered Hawaiian monk seal, and nesting habitat for threatened green sea turtles that use Kahuku beaches. The expansion will also provide visitors increased opportunities to view native Hawaiian wildlife and some of the last remaining pristine coastal habitat on O'ahu.

What does this mean to the Service's Land Protection Planning Process?



Endangered Hawaiian Coot family. Photo USFWS.

Because the Act establishes an expanded approved Refuge boundary, it is no longer necessary for the Service to continue the land protection planning process for the James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge. The Service can proceed with acquiring land from the Estate of James Campbell which will include providing lease extensions to long-term lease holders within the newly established approved Refuge boundary. Consistent with Public Law 109-225, we have developed a map depicting the final Refuge boundary (see map insert dated June 1, 2006).

With the new approved Refuge boundary in place, Service planning efforts will now be directed toward developing a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the entire Refuge.

What is a CCP?

A CCP is a management plan that will guide resource management actions and other activities on the Refuge for approximately 15 years. It will include plans for activities such as enhancing wildlife habitat, monitoring wildlife, and expanding the public use program which includes public access to the coast. Through the CCP planning and public involvement process, the Service and local communities will work together to determine the Refuge's future desired conditions and document the management actions needed to achieve those conditions.

The CCP planning and public involvement process for James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge is scheduled to begin in 2007. At that time, the public will be invited to participate by attending public meetings and workshops, and reviewing and commenting on planning updates and draft documents over the course of 2 years or more. Public input is highly valued because the Service recognizes that a great deal of knowledge about the natural resources and natural processes of an area is not published in reports, it is held by people who have lived in the area for many years. Through public involvement, the Service gains a better understanding of the natural resource issues important to individuals in the community.



Hawaiian short-eared owl. Photo USFWS.



Endangered Hawaiian Stilt and Black-tailed Godwit. Photo USFWS.

What Refuge management actions will be included in the CCP?

Every CCP is required to address a suite of land and wildlife management issues and any secondary uses including public uses. Issues that were identified during the land protection study will be addressed in the CCP, including the following:

- Recovery of endangered Hawaiian waterbirds.
- Conservation and restoration of coastal habitats and native wildlife.
- Local and regional economic effects.
- Public use management including public access to the coastline.
- Cultural resources protection.
- Refuge staffing, facilities, and infrastructure development.

What does this mean for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Watershed Study?

In addition to protecting threatened and endangered species, the land within the expanded Refuge boundary is part of an area under study for a flood damage reduction project led by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and cosponsored by the city, county and State. We share the community's concern regarding impacts from flooding and will continue to participate in planning efforts to address this issue. We remain committed to helping reduce flood damage through strategic management of Refuge lands. Refuge expansion and management will not only benefit wildlife and their habitats, but will also assist with reducing flood damage to the town of Kahuku.



Wildlife observation on a tour of the Ki'i Unit. Photo USFWS.



USE OUR E-MAIL OR WEBSITE

E-mail Comments to:

FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov

(Please use "James Campbell
Refuge" in the subject.)

Refuge Planning Website:

<http://www.fws.gov/pacific/planning>

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Address correction requested