



Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

Refuge Happenings

December 2022: *The Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge is presently located in twenty-two different locations in the four primary Connecticut River watershed states of Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont. The Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge is located in ten locations on the mainland and near shore islands along the northern shore of the Long Island Sound in Connecticut.*

Making Our Mark In The Christmas Bird Count



Photo Credit: Colin Canterbury/USFWS

Conte staff surveyed winter birds within the Nulhegan Basin Division as part of the annual Island Pond Christmas Bird Count. Bird activity on the refuge seemed subdued this year. The windy conditions may have kept many of them hiding under cover. Ten species were recorded including black-capped and boreal chickadees, gray jays, various woodpeckers, ravens, grosbeaks, siskins, ruffed grouse and nuthatches. Efforts were made to locate the three-toed woodpecker that was documented by a birder weeks before the count, but it did not present itself. A non-birding highlight was the sighting of two otters eating fish on the ice of the Black Branch.

For more information contact: Rachel_Cliche@fws.gov

Boundary Marking at Blueberry Swamp



Photo Credit: USFWS

Refuge staff spent time this month marking property boundaries within the 1,300 acre Blueberry Swamp Division. Properly marking refuge boundaries is an important component of land management, and serves to protect the investment that the American public has made in Refuge and other federal lands. In total, staff will traverse more than 8.5 miles of property while marking refuge boundaries this winter.

For more information contact: Jeremy_Goetz@fws.gov



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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Refuge Office Now On Town Water

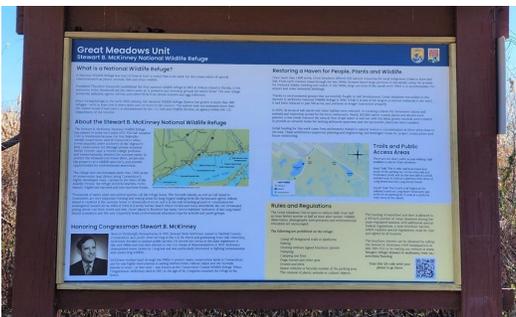


Conte Refuge's headquarters office at the Fort River Division was connected to the town of Hadley's water supply in December. The water quality in the well that formerly supplied the headquarters was poor, and recent water testing found the water was contaminated with bacteria. Connecting to the town's water supply will eliminate the need for quarterly water testing of the well and will ensure the water in the building is safe to use.

For more information contact: Dean_Rhine@fws.gov

Photo Credit: USFWS

NEW KIOSK PANELS AT GREAT MEADOWS



As part of a collaboration with National Audubon Society, NOAA and other refuge partners, the Great Meadows Unit in Stratford, CT received new visitor information panels in its kiosk. Staff from Audubon designed the panels with input from the refuge, which convey pertinent information about refuge history, salt marsh ecology, and facts about the recent restoration project that has taken place. Thanks goes to Sean Healy, Rick Potvin and Shakira Jinez for installing the panels. Be sure to check out the new panels and marsh restoration if you are in Stratford!

Photo Credit: USFWS

For more information contact: Shaun_Roche@fws.gov

Fishing Dock In New Haven Now Complete



Partners from Yale Urban Resources Initiative and volunteers Deanna, Terry and Jim joined refuge staff in early December to finish the fishing dock at Beaver Ponds Park in New Haven, CT. The remainder of the pilings needed to be screwed into the mud, the railing had to be finished and the new gangway had to be put in place. The work went smoothly with such great workers! Now the dock will be ready as soon as fishing season opens in the springtime.

For more information contact: Shaun_Roche@fws.gov

Photo Credit: USFWS