

Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge

Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan

THANK YOU!

We want to thank everyone who helped us complete the Umbagog (formerly Lake Umbagog) National Wildlife Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP). The final document reflects your substantive contributions, including the insights we gained from the thousands of public comments we received. This plan will be our compass for managing the refuge over the next 15 years.

Join Us in Implementing the CCP

Citizen support and active involvement are vital to implementing the plan. We encourage you to consider volunteering or becoming a Friends of Umbagog NWR member.

We need volunteers to help with our new and expanded programs in habitat restoration and management, environmental and habitat monitoring, and visitor services.

Our Friends Group members will:

- assist with refuge projects and programs;
- help us promote community understanding of the refuge as a place of regionally valuable natural resources;
- help us encourage responsible use and enjoyment of compatible public uses; and,
- provide support and advocacy for the refuge.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or a Friend of Umbagog NWR, please contact Paul Casey, Refuge Manager, at (603) 482-3415.



Bob Steele

Blackburnian warbler, a species of conservation concern on the refuge.



Ian Drevil/USFWS

Harper's Meadow flooded in the fall

The Record of Decision Has Been Signed!

Regional Director Marvin Moriarty approved the CCP and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), adopting the Service's preferred alternative (Alternative B). His decision is documented in a Record of Decision (ROD) signed on January 9, 2009. Now that the plan is final, it will serve as our guide for managing natural resources and public use programs. The plan also changes the name of the refuge to Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge, recognizing that the refuge boundary encompasses fish and wildlife resources beyond the shores of Umbagog Lake.

Our highest management priority is protecting the biological integrity, diversity and environmental health of Umbagog Lake and its associated rivers and streams. Our second priority is to conserve upland mixed forests and to sustain the native species that are dependent on these areas.

The CCP expands the refuge boundary, allowing us to pursue the acquisition of up to 47,807 acres of land from willing sellers. Protecting these lands will be important as we work to conserve habitat for certain species

such as common loons, bald eagles, and blackburnian and black-throated green warblers.

We will improve the quality of our existing wildlife-dependent recreational programs and offer several new public use opportunities on refuge lands. This effort will entail strengthening our partnerships with state and local entities that offer similar recreational programs in the area. The plan also approves the construction of a new refuge headquarters and visitor contact facility. In addition to improving visitor services, this particular project will bring job opportunities and invest funding in local communities.

The Final CCP/EIS and ROD are available at Umbagog NWR headquarters. These documents can also be viewed at the following libraries: Berlin Public Library, NH; Errol Public Library, NH; Gorham Public Library, NH; Bethel Public Library, ME and White Mountains Community College, Berlin, NH; or downloaded online at: <http://www.fws.gov/northeast/planning/Lake%20Umbagog/ccphome.html>.

Implementing the Plan in 2009

Now that the CCP is approved, we anticipate implementing many activities in 2009.

Projects to continue or complete in 2009

- Complete the new car-top boat launch north of the refuge office now that all necessary permits are in hand.
- Continue biological surveys and monitoring, and the protection of nesting habitat for species such as common loons, osprey and eagles.
- Continue working with the Umbagog Chamber of Commerce and local businesses to improve visitor appreciation of the Umbagog area.
- Continue working with our state partners to implement biological, recreational and land conservation goals and objectives.

New initiatives for 2009

Visitor and Community Outreach:

In the coming year, we will initiate projects designed to provide more information to the local community and visiting public about the refuge

to enhance their enjoyment of wildlife-related recreational and other opportunities in the area. Some of these projects include:

- installing new entrance signs welcoming the public to the refuge, as well as directional signs to help orient visitors once they are here;
- installing informational kiosks at various locations to help familiarize visitors with all the refuge has to offer;
- completing publication of a refuge informational brochure;
- improving safety and visibility of the boat launch at refuge headquarters; and,
- holding our first quarterly informational meeting on April 8, 2009 at the Errol Town Hall from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

Resource Management Activities:

We will also begin a number of new resource management activities to fully implement the CCP and meet its biological goals and objectives. Some of these activities include:

- developing step-down plans, such as

a Habitat Management Plan and an Inventory and Monitoring Plan;

- establishing woodcock management areas; and,
- controlling invasive plants in areas of the refuge where they are known to be present.

For More Information Contact:

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Federal Relay Service for the deaf and hard-of-hearing: 1 800/877 8339

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
<http://www.fws.gov>

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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Address correction requested