



News Release

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For Release: July 1, 2010

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Comments Solicited on Refuge Farm Program

Buffalo Lake National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) in northern Texas is currently reviewing farming activities that take place on the Refuge. As part of this process the public is being invited to provide early comments on potential issues or concerns that should be considered.

On many refuges throughout the nation, farming programs provide benefits for both resident and migrating animals. For example, farming programs provide supplemental forage for resident and migratory wildlife, manage undesirable and/or invasive vegetation, restore native habitats and aid in the recovery of threatened or endangered species, and in some cases provide a safe resting spot for migrating waterfowl and help to keep them off private farm fields. Farming programs also provide increased wildlife observation, photography, and environmental education opportunities.

Buffalo Lake manages a cooperative farming program on 581 acres. The actual number of acres farmed varies from year to year. Crops planted include winter wheat, milo, and sorghum. Farming on the refuge is utilized to reduce excessive nutrient levels in the soil, prevent/reduce stands of Kochia and salt cedar, reduce wildfire hazard resulting from weed invasion, and to provide food and cover for a variety of migratory and resident wildlife species.

This comment period is known as ‘Scoping’ under the National Environmental Policy Act. During scoping the Refuge is looking for general comments on the farming program. These comments will assist in determining the next course of action. Comments will be accepted until August 1, 2010. Comments should be sent to Lynn_Nymeyer@fws.gov, or mailed to Refuge Manager, Buffalo Lake National Wildlife Refuge, P.O. Box 179, Umbarger, Texas 79091

This review of the Refuge’s farming program is part of a nationwide review of all Refuge farming programs. For the status of farming programs being reviewed throughout the southwest and commenting instructions please visit <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/refuges/Plan/planindex.html>

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