

News Release



Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge
19255 SW Pacific Hwy
Sherwood, Oregon 97140
Ph:(503) 625-5944 Fax:(503) 625-5947
<http://www.fws.gov/tualatinriver>

For Release: October 22, 2012
Contact: Erin Holmes, Refuge Manager, 503-625-5944
TualatinCCP@fws.gov

Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge Releases Its Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment

Public comments accepted until November 22nd, 2012

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service today released the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Environmental Assessment (EA) for Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge located near the cities of Sherwood and Gaston, OR. This plan describes a vision for the refuge and presents three alternatives for management of the refuge for the next 15 years.

The proposed action in the draft plan is to implement Alternative 2, the Service's Preferred Alternative, which represents a balanced approach among the many competing needs and issues that the refuge currently faces and is likely to experience in the next 15 years. Our preferred alternative would combine the existing mosaic of fragmented habitats into larger contiguous blocks of native habitat types, as well as restore relic or disappearing habitat types. Prescribed fire would be added as a habitat management technique. Additional visitor service opportunities would be offered both within the existing public use areas and at other units of the refuge. The Draft CCP was prepared together with an EA, which evaluates the potential environmental consequences of each alternative. All public uses have also been reviewed for compatibility with the refuge's purposes.

"The planning process is a way for the Service and our stakeholders to evaluate management goals and objectives that will ensure the best approach to wildlife and habitat conservation, while providing for compatible wildlife-related recreational and educational opportunities," said Erin Holmes, Refuge Manager. "We invite review by tribal, state and local governments, agencies, organizations, and members the public."

The Service invites the public to review the document and participate in the planning process by providing comments between now and November 22, 2012. A printed "desk copy" of the Draft CCP may be reviewed at the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters Office and at the reference desk of the public libraries in Sherwood, Tualatin, Tigard, Forest Grove, and Beaverton. The full document, plus comment forms, may be accessed online at <http://www.fws.gov/tualatinriver/refugeplanning.htm>. Copies on compact disk may be obtained by contacting the refuge at 503-625-5944 or tualatinccp@fws.gov.

Two open houses are also planned to seek the public feedback on the Draft CCP, and are scheduled as follows:

Sherwood

Date: Tuesday, November 13th, 2012

Time: 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Place: Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge
19255 SW Pacific Highway, Sherwood

Forest Grove

Date: Thursday, November 15th, 2012

Time: 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Place: Forest Grove Senior and Community Center
2037 Douglas Street, Forest Grove

To provide comments, please submit in writing by November 22nd, 2012 in one of the following ways:

Email: TualatinCCP@fws.gov – Please include “Tualatin River CCP/EA” in the subject line.

Fax: Attn: Refuge Manager, 503-625-5947

US Mail: Attn: Refuge Manager, Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge,
19255 SW Pacific Hwy, Sherwood, OR 97140

In person: Drop off written comments at refuge office or at scheduled open houses

Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge is part of the National Wildlife Refuge System and is among a handful of urban refuges in the country. Situated within the floodplain of the Tualatin River, the refuge provides habitat for some of the most diverse and abundant wildlife in the river valley. When land acquisition is complete, the refuge will consist of 7,370 acres. Currently, the refuge manages 2,204 acres.

Since its establishment in 1992, refuge managers have been acquiring and restoring lands and waters for the benefit of native fish and wildlife. Native habitats include rivers and streams, seasonal and permanent wetlands, riparian areas, grasslands and savanna areas, and forested uplands. The refuge is now home to nearly 200 species of birds, over 50 species of mammals, 25 species of reptiles and amphibians, and a wide variety of insects, fish and plants.

The refuge also provides a variety of recreational and educational activities focused on fish and wildlife and their habitats. Visitor facilities include the Wildlife Center, environmental education shelter, trails, overlooks, observation deck, photography blind, environmental education study sites and exhibit panels. Current visitation is approximately 110,000 people per year.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.