

# Chapter 5



*Temporary Picture*

## Consultation and Coordination

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## 5.0 Introduction

This chapter describes how we engaged others in developing the CCP. In chronological order, this chapter details our efforts to encourage the involvement of the public and conservation partners: other Federal and State agencies, county officials, civic groups, non-governmental conservation and education organizations, and use groups. This chapter does not detail the dozens of informal discussions the refuge manager and his staff have had since the CCP planning process began. These informal discussions involved a wide range of audiences, including Congressional representatives or their staffs, organizations, local community leaders and other residents, refuge neighbors, refuge visitors, and other interested individuals. During those discussions, the refuge manager and his staff often would provide an update on our progress and encourage comments and other participation. This chapter also identifies who contributed to writing the plan or significantly contributed to its contents.

According to Service policy, we must review and update our final CCP at least once every 15 years. We may update the plan sooner in response to significant new information that would markedly change management direction or, our Director or Regional Director deem it necessary. If so, we will once again announce our revised planning and encourage your participation.

## 5.1 Planning to Protect Land and Resources

Our refuge planning began informally in 2008 to become familiar with the planning process and to start collecting information on refuge resources and public use. Subsequently, we initiated State and involvement in September 2008. An initial strategy meeting between the refuge staff and regional office staff was held at the refuge in July 2009. One major outcome of this meeting was a timetable for accomplishing the major steps in the planning process and determining when and how we should involve others. Please contact the refuge manager for additional details.

### ***July 2008***

We began to prepare for developing a CCP by becoming familiar with the planning process and collecting information on refuge resources and public uses.

### ***September 2008***

We initiated coordination and involvement with the state and tribes.

### ***July 2009***

Refuge and regional office planning staff met on the refuge. We identified preliminary issues and management concerns, and developed preliminary vision statements and goals.

### ***July 2010***

Our public scoping period began. We distributed approximately 500 copies of the initial CCP planning announcement newsletter to local conservation and interest groups; research organizations; local, State and Federal government agencies; federally-recognized tribes; and interested individuals. We also posted the July 2010 newsletter on the refuge's website to reach a broader audience. The newsletter described the CCP planning process, provided an overview of the refuge, identified draft goals, presented our draft vision statement, and announced the date and location of our first public scoping meetings.

**July 19, 2010**

We published a Notice of Intent to prepare a CCP/EA in the *Federal Register* (Volume 75, Number 137).

**July 28, 2010**

We hosted two public scoping meetings at Chatham Township Municipal Building at 1 PM and 6 PM. At each meeting, we presented an overview of current refuge management, described the CCP planning process, and explained how people can get involved. We also shared our preliminary vision and goals for the refuge and the issues we already know we need to address. We requested feedback and encouraged public involvement, and answered any questions about the planning process. A total of 31 attendees, including six (6) organizations, participated in the public scoping meeting, and 21 written comments from both individuals and organizations were received.

**September 2010**

Our core planning team was expanded to include Amy S. Greene Environmental Consultants, Inc. (Flemington, New Jersey).

**October-November 2010**

USGS began conducting a visitor survey at the refuge, which included two sampling periods, one of which was completed in the fall of 2010 and the other in the spring of 2011. The survey is designed to help us gain further insight into visitors' desires and concerns regarding public use opportunities and facilities at the refuge.

**January 2011**

We distributed a second planning update newsletter to everyone on our mailing list. The newsletter provided the results of the first public scoping period, which included a summary of public comments received at the public scoping meeting and by mail. The newsletter also provided an update on the progress of the CCP planning process.

**March 15-16, 2011**

We hosted a one-day alternatives workshop, focusing on ecosystems and natural resources, to discuss ideas, issues, and opportunities for the refuge as part of the planning process. Participants of this workshop included the core planning team, other refuge staff, and representatives from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Friends of Great Swamp NWR, The Nature Conservancy, and The Land Conservancy of New Jersey.

A one-day alternatives workshop, focusing on public use and visitor services, was also hosted to discuss ideas, issues, and opportunities for the refuge. Participants of this workshop included the core planning team, other refuge staff, and representatives from the Somerset County Park Commission Environmental Education Center, The Raptor Trust, Friends of Great Swamp NWR, National Park Service Morristown National Historical Park, Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education, and American Museum of Natural History.

Comments from the workshops were carefully considered in the development of the CCP.

**April-May 2011**

USGS completed the refuge visitor survey for the spring sampling period. A total of 336 visitors agreed to participate in the survey during the two sampling periods. In all, 219 visitors completed the survey for a 67% response rate and  $\pm 5\%$  margin of error at the 95% confidence level.

**February 2012**

We distributed our third planning update newsletter. This newsletter provided a status update on the CCP planning process, a summary of draft alternatives, an updated vision statement, and a planning timeline.

**June 2012**

We submitted the draft CCP/EA to the regional office for review.

**May 2014**

We distributed our fourth planning update newsletter, which announced the release of the draft CCP/EA. On May 14, 2014, we published a NOA in the *Federal Register* announcing the release of the draft CCP/EA to the public for a 45-day comment period from May 14 to June 30, 2014.

**June 2014**

We hosted two public scoping meetings to provide a presentation on the draft CCP/EA and to give attendees the opportunity to ask questions and submit comments. Meetings were hosted at the Chatham Township Municipal Building on June 11 at 10:00 AM and at the Long Hill Township Municipal Building on June 12 at 6:30 PM. Hardcopies of the draft CCP/EA were also made available for the public to review at Headquarters, the Visitor Center, and four local libraries, including Bernards Township, Long Hill, Library of the Chathams, and Harding. Approximately 40 people attended the two meetings and about 80 comments were received.

**July-August 2014**

We reviewed and summarized all comments received, wrote responses, and revised the CCP. The responses to the comments can be found in appendix F.

**September 2014**

We submitted the final CCP to our Regional Director for approval.

**September 2014**

The Regional Director determined that a FONSI was warranted (see appendix E), and that our analysis was sufficient to simultaneously issue a decision adopting this CCEP for the refuge.

**November 2014**

We announced the final decision by publishing a NOA in the *Federal Register*.

## **5.2 Partners Involved in Refuge Planning**

Refuge programs enjoy a great deal of support from outside the Service in many fields: conducting biological surveys, enhancing public use and refuge programs, restoring habitat, and protecting land. Our partnerships will continue to expand under the increasing interest in conserving refuge resources. During

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the past few years, we contacted the following partners to encourage their involvement in the planning process.

- Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education
- American Museum of Natural History
- Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions
- Drew University
- Ducks Unlimited
- Friends of Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge
- Great Swamp Watershed Association
- Morris County Park Commission
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- New Jersey Audubon Society
- New Jersey Conservation Foundation
- New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife
- New Jersey Division of Parks and Forestry
- New Jersey Endangered and Non-Game Species Program
- New Jersey Land Conservancy
- New Jersey State Historic Preservation Office
- Rutgers University
- Skylands Magazine
- Somerset County Park Commission
- The Nature Conservancy
- The Raptor Trust
- Trust for Public Lands

- William Patterson University

### 5.2.1 Contact Information

Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge  
241 Pleasant Plains Road  
Basking Ridge, New Jersey  
Phone: 973-425-1222  
<http://greatswamp.fws.gov>

Bill Perry, Natural Resource Planner  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 5  
300 Westgate Center Drive  
Hadley, Massachusetts 01035-9589  
Phone: 413-253-8688  
Facsimile: 413-253-8468  
<http://www.fws.gov/northeast/planning/index.html>

### 5.2.3 Members of the Core Planning Team

Bill Perry, *Regional Natural Resource Planner*, USFWS Regional Office  
Bill Koch, *Refuge Manager*, Great Swamp NWR  
Steve Henry, *Deputy Refuge Manager*, Great Swamp NWR  
Dorothy Fecske, *Wildlife Biologist*, Great Swamp NWR  
Jonathan Rosenberg, *Visitor Services Manager*, Great Swamp NWR  
Harry Strano, *Project Manager*, Amy S. Greene Environmental Consultants, Inc.  
Jennifer LaStella, *Project Manager*, Amy S. Greene Environmental Consultants, Inc.  
Patrick Carr, *Supervising Wildlife Biologist*, New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife  
Tamara Francis, *Cultural Preservation Director*, The Delaware Nation

### 5.2.4 Assistance from Other Service Personnel

Bill Koch, *Refuge Manager*, Great Swamp NWR, retired  
Robert Allen, *Contaminants Biologist*, Great Swamp NWR, retired  
Craig Bitler, *Wildlife Biologist*, Great Swamp NWR, retired  
John Eaton, *Regional Cartographer and Spatial Data Services Specialist*, USFWS Regional Office  
Andrew Ferreira, former *Biological Science Technician* and active *Volunteer*, Great Swamp NWR  
Beth Goldstein, former *Refuge Planner* for Great Swamp NWR CCP, USFWS Regional Office  
Michael Horne, *Refuge Manager*, Wallkill River NWR Complex  
Marilyn Kitchell, *Wildlife Biologist*, Wallkill River NWR Complex  
David Miller, *Engineering Equipment Operator*, Great Swamp NWR  
Colin Osborn, *Fish and Wildlife Biologist*, Wallkill River NWR  
Monica Patel, former *Wilderness Fellow*, Great Swamp NWR  
Jerfelis Pimentel, *Office Automation Clerk*, Great Swamp NWR  
David Sagan, *Visitor Services Specialist*, Great Swamp NWR  
Janith Taylor, *Chief, NWRS Division of Natural Resources*, USFWS Regional Office

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Will Waldron, *Realty Specialist*, USFWS Regional Office, retired