



## PRESS RELEASE

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**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to hold open house meeting for and release the draft comprehensive conservation plan and environmental assessment for Cokeville Meadows National Wildlife Refuge**

Green River, WY. – The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announces that the staff of Seedskaadee National Wildlife Refuge Complex will host an open house in the Cokeville High School library on the evening of September 26, 2013 in conjunction with the release of the draft comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) and environmental assessment for Cokeville Meadows National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). In addition, the staff will provide information on the proposed withdrawal of federally owned minerals and land transfer within the Refuge boundary.

The National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act on 1997 requires that all national wildlife refuges be managed under a CCP. The purpose of the CCP is to provide refuge managers with a 15-year plan for achieving individual refuge purposes and contributing toward the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System. In addition to outlining broad management direction on conserving wildlife and their habitats, CCPs consider wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities that may be available to the public, such as hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation.

Cokeville Meadows NWR lies in Lincoln County, along Wyoming's southwestern border with Idaho and Utah. The refuge is bisected longitudinally throughout its length by the Bear River and contains a mosaic of wet meadows, seasonal wetlands, and riparian corridors. The shrub-steppe uplands are dominated by sagebrush and a combination of grasses typical of the arid West. This refuge was established in 1993 for the conservation of the wetlands of the nation and provides nesting habitat for at least 32 water bird species. Wet meadows and wetlands attract thousands of migratory waterfowl and other waterbirds. Greater sage grouse use upland sagebrush areas for nesting, while riparian areas provide important feeding sites for their broods and a variety of neotropical migratory birds. Big game, including antelope, mule deer, and elk, also utilize refuge habitats.

Management techniques include cattle grazing, haying, small crop farming to prepare refuge habitats to be reseeded and restored to native prairie, invasive species control, and water level management with water control structures.

We have scheduled an open house public meeting in the Town of Cokeville, which is adjacent to the refuge. During the open house we will make a brief presentation of the refuge, its resources, its management, and the proposals being made in the draft CCP. We will also answer any questions you may have regarding the CCP or the planning process and welcome your comments.

The open house is considered “informal.” We encourage the public to arrive by 5:30 pm for a brief presentation beginning at 6:00 pm. We will welcome public comments following the presentation and throughout the 30-day public comment period ending on October 21, 2013. Before and after the presentation, attendees will have the opportunity to meet with our personnel, learn more about Cokeville Meadows NWR and the CCP process, and provide information and comments.

Public meeting for the Cokeville Meadows NWR Draft CCP and EA and minerals withdrawal:

*September 26, 2013*  
Cokeville High School Library  
300 Pine Street  
Cokeville, WY 83114  
5:30—7:30 pm

The draft CCP and environmental assessment for the Cokeville Meadows NWR will be published on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region, Division of Refuge Planning website on September 20, 2013. Anyone wishing to review the draft CCP, request a printed copy of the document, or provide comments online, may do so at the following World Wide Web address:

<http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/planning/ccp/wy/ckv/ckv.html>

To review or comment on the mineral withdrawal environmental assessment please use the Refuge Complex website:

<http://www.fws.gov/refuge/seedskaadee/>

*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 <http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/>. Connect with our [Facebook](#) page, follow our [Twitter](#) feed, watch our [YouTube](#) channel and view our [Flickr](#) photo stream.*

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