



U. S Fish & Wildlife Service

Long Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex

Fall 2000 — Planning Newsletter 1

Open Houses and Meetings

Tuesday, September 26

3-5 p.m. and 7:30-9:30 p.m.

Mastic Beach Property Owners'
Association Building
Neighborhood Rd. & Orchid Dr
Mastic Beach, NY
Wertheim NWR

Wednesday, September 27

3-5 p.m. and 7-9 p.m.

St. James Episcopal Church
260 Beaver Dam Road
Brookhaven, NY
Wertheim NWR

Thursday, September 28

3-5 p.m. and 7-9 p.m.

East Hampton Middle School
76 Newton Lane
East Hampton, NY
*Morton, Conscience Point and
Amagansett NWRs*

Wednesday, October 18

3-5 p.m. and 7-9 p.m.

West Sayville Golf Course
Suffolk County Parks
Montauk Highway
West Sayville, NY
*Seatuck, Sayville and Lido
Beach NWRs*

Thursday, October 19

3-5 p.m. and 7-9 p.m.

Oyster Bay High School
150 East Main Street
Oyster Bay, NY
*Oyster Bay and Target Rock
NWRs*

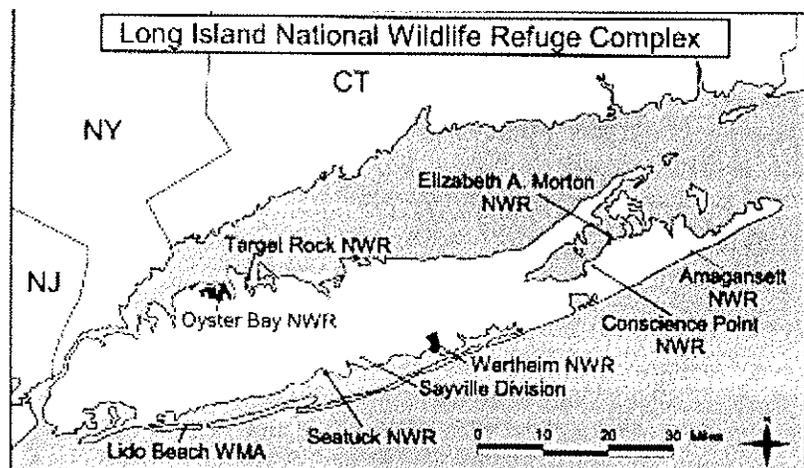
The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Service) is starting work on a long-term management plan for the Long Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex (Complex). This plan, called a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP), will serve as a guide for managing the Complex over the next 10-15 years.

This planning project offers a unique opportunity for the Service to involve individuals, organizations and local communities in the future management of the Complex. You can play a significant role in the development of this far-reaching plan by submitting comments and participating in public meetings.

The Long Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex consists of Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), Oyster Bay NWR, Morton NWR, Conscience Point NWR, Wertheim NWR, Sayville Division, Amagansett NWR, Seatuck NWR, and Lido Beach Wildlife Management Area. The Complex totals more than 6,200 acres. The largest Refuge is Oyster Bay and the smallest is Amagansett. All the Refuges are located in Suffolk and Nassau Counties, the two easternmost counties on Long Island. Wertheim NWR serves as the main office for the Complex, but satellite offices are located at Target Rock, Seatuck and Morton NWRs.

Some of the Complex's broad management goals are as follows:

- provide high quality habitat for waterfowl, waterbirds and shorebirds.
- manage a diversity of habitats to support breeding and migrating birds.
- protect and manage for federal- and state-designated threatened and endangered species.



More information on planning and getting involved

Why is this planning effort starting now?

In October 1997, Congress passed the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act, which states that, first and foremost, the National Wildlife Refuge System must focus on wildlife conservation. This law establishes (1) the mission of the Refuge System, (2) a new process of determining compatible public use activities on refuges, and (3) requires us to prepare CCPs for each refuge.

National Refuge System mission:

"to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans."

CCP goals:

- Outline Complex management priorities for the next 10 - 15 years;
- Describe significant Complex resources and their importance;
- Identify how the Complex can best protect these resources;
- Clarify what public uses are, and are not, compatible with managing significant resources; and
- Identify the Refuge's role within the local community and as a national resource.

What are Refuges all about?

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, part of the Department of the Interior, is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing the nation's fish and wildlife populations and their habitats. The Service also manages the National Wildlife Refuge System, the world's largest collection of lands set aside specifically for the protection of fish and wildlife populations and habitats. Refuges provide important habitats for native plants and animals, facilitating the preservation of threatened and/or endangered species. Refuges also offer a variety of wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities, and many have visitor centers, hiking trails, and environmental education programs.

What activities can be enjoyed at Refuges?

It is important to recognize there are laws and policies which guide management of public use on National Wildlife Refuges. Only those public uses which are determined to be compatible with the mission of the Refuge System and the purposes of the Refuge are allowed. The Refuge Improvement Act identifies six wildlife-dependent public uses as priority uses:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| ⇒ environmental education | ⇒ wildlife photography |
| ⇒ interpretation | ⇒ hunting |
| ⇒ wildlife observation | ⇒ fishing |

Want to get involved?

Your participation is critical to the success of this planning effort. Throughout this process, there will be several other opportunities for you to provide input to the plan. **Share your ideas with us by answering the questions included in this newsletter and returning your responses in the enclosed envelope.** The Complex will host five Open Houses to hear more directly from folks like you. We need to know your feelings about the Complex, your concerns, those things you are happy with, and your ideas for turning the Complex's vision into reality. We hope you can attend an Open House. Locations, dates and times are listed on the front page. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the Complex Headquarters (631/286-0485), or call Tom Bonetti, the CCP team leader, at 413/253-8307.

Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge

Year Acquired: 1947
Location: Shirley, NY

Acreage: 2,550 acres

Habitats: pine barrens, grassland, tidal wetlands.

Key Species: waterfowl, other migratory birds, wild turkey and deer.

Facilities: Complex Headquarters, information kiosk, nature trails, observation blinds, rest rooms.

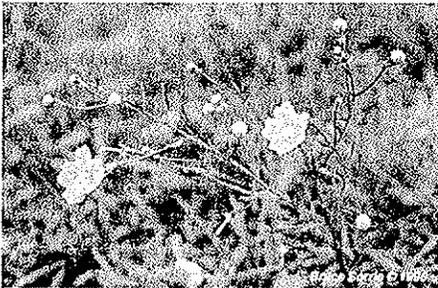
Current Public Uses: canoeing, river fishing, nature trails, wildlife observation, photography, environmental education, interpretation.



Northern saw-whet owl (USFWS photo)

Management:

The Refuge supports a diversity of wildlife, including most of the species found on Long Island. Management activities include forest management, forest opening management, wetland restoration, wildlife nesting structures and derelict land restoration.



Sandplain gerardia

Sayville Property

Year Acquired: 1992
Location: West Sayville, NY

Acreage: 24.9 acres

Habitats: scrub oak and pitch pine uplands, grasslands.

Key Species: sandplain gerardia, grassland and pine barren dependent birds.

Facilities: none.

Current Public Uses: none.

Management:

The Refuge supports the largest population of the federally endangered plant sandplain gerardia in New York State. Management activities are directed towards protecting and enhancing sandplain gerardia and migratory bird habitat, with emphasis on grassland species.

Morton National Wildlife Refuge

Year Acquired: 1954
Location: Sag Harbor, NY

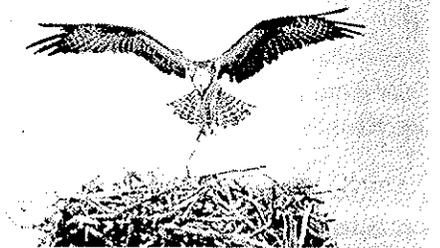
Acreage: 187 acres

Habitats: beaches, wooded bluffs, upland deciduous forest, freshwater and brackish ponds, salt and freshwater marshes, lagoon, fields, kettle holes and tidal flats.

Key Species: piping plover, least terns, roseate terns, sanderling, ruddy turnstone, osprey, sea turtles, waterfowl, migratory birds.

Facilities: information kiosk, restrooms, nature trails.

Current Public Uses: wildlife observation, photography, nature trails, environmental education, surf fishing. (entrance fee)



An osprey comes in for a landing. (USFWS photo)

Management:

Beach and adjacent waters provide habitat for shorebirds and waterbirds, while the peninsula itself acts as an important migration corridor for many migratory bird species. Management is directed towards protecting and enhancing habitat for these types of wildlife species.

Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge

Year Acquired: 1967

Acreage: 80 acres

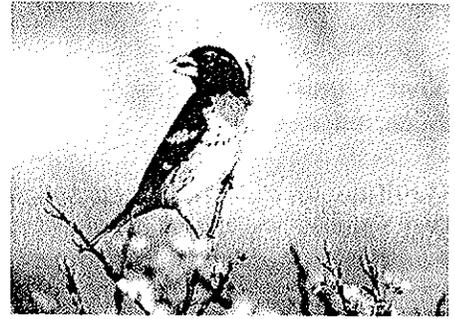
Location: Village of Lloyd Harbor, NY

Habitats: rocky beach, oak-hickory forest, tidal wetlands, vernal ponds.

Key Species: migrating neotropical birds, shorebirds, wintering waterfowl, marine mammals.

Facilities: information kiosk, restrooms, nature trails.

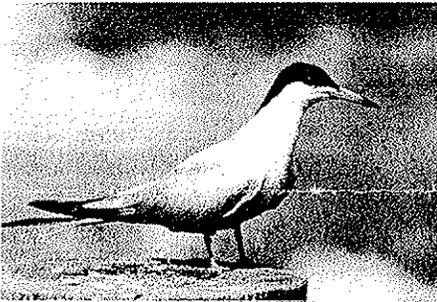
Current Public Uses: nature trails, wildlife observation, environmental education, photography, surf fishing. (entrance fee)



Rose-breasted grosbeak (USFWS photo)

Management:

Neotropical songbirds are common, especially during spring migration. Waterfowl, shorebirds and harbor seals are seasonally common on the beach and off-shore. The headlands provide nesting habitat for kingfishers and swallows. Piping plovers feed on the beach and nest on adjacent lands. Management is directed at maintaining forest health for neotropical birds and protecting breeding habitat for strand- and headland-using wildlife.



Common tern (USFWS photo)

Oyster Bay National Wildlife Refuge

Year Acquired: 1968

Acreage: 3,209 acres

Location: Oyster Bay, NY

Habitat: tidal wetlands and marine subtidal habitats.

Key Species: invertebrates, finfish, shellfish, colonial nesting waterbirds, waterfowl, turtles and seals.

Facilities: none.

Current Public Uses: recreational boating, fishing, wildlife observation, environmental education, photography.

Management:

The Refuge provides habitat for wintering waterfowl and colonial nesting birds. A diversity of marine life, including fish and invertebrates, are present. Management is focused on wetland restoration and protection of natural shoreline and vegetation.

Seatuck National Wildlife Refuge

Year Acquired: 1968

Acreage: 196 acres

Location: Islip, NY

Habitats: grasslands, pine barrens, tidal wetlands.

Key Species: migratory birds (particularly nesting osprey), waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds, raptors.

Facilities: None.

Current Public Uses: Guided education groups are allowed on the Refuge with prior Refuge review and approval.

Management:

The Refuge attracts various waterbirds, deer, red fox, migratory songbirds and migrating raptors. Management activities include forest protection, grassland management, wetland restoration, wildlife nesting structures and restoring derelict lands.



Saltmarsh (USFWS photo)

Amagansett National Wildlife Refuge

Year Acquired: 1968

Acreage: 36 acres

Location: Amagansett, NY

Habitats: coastal barrier beach, double dune system, swales.

Key Species: migrating and breeding shorebirds, songbirds, raptors.

Facilities: None.

Current Public Uses: beach use for hiking and wildlife observation/photography.



Beach habitat (USFWS photo)

Management:

The Refuge's coastal location makes it a prime stopover area for migrating raptors and songbirds.

The double dune system on the Refuge is unique and rare on Long Island. Management is largely focused on controlling non-native vegetation.



Eastern box turtle (USFWS photo)

Conscience Point National Wildlife Refuge

Year Acquired: 1971

Acreage: 60 acres

Location: North Sea, NY

Habitats: oak-beech forest, tidal wetlands, maritime grassland community, kettle holes.

Key Species: migratory birds, wintering waterfowl, shorebirds.

Facilities: None.

Current Public Uses: Guided education groups are allowed on the Refuge with prior Refuge review and approval.

Management:

The Refuge preserves an exemplary maritime grassland on Long Island, which supports prickly pear cactus and migratory birds. Tidal wetlands provide habitat for waterfowl and waterbirds. Management is geared towards native grassland maintenance and tidal wetland restoration.

Lido Beach Wildlife Management Area

Year Acquired: 1969

Acreage: 22 acres

Location: Lido Beach, NY

Habitat: salt marsh, shrub thickets.

Key Species: waterfowl, osprey, shorebirds and wading birds.

Facilities: Boardwalk.

Current Public Uses: Guided education groups are allowed on the Refuge with prior Refuge review and approval.



An environmental education group learns how to make wood duck boxes. (USFWS photo)

Management:

The Refuge's location on a barrier island supports excellent habitat for migrating songbirds and raptors. Diverse shorebird, wading bird and waterfowl populations feed on the Refuge while clapper rails, osprey and songbirds nest there. Management activities are geared towards wetland restoration and removal of non-native vegetation.

Workbook

This Workbook provides a way to share your concerns, ideas and thoughts on important issues concerning the Long Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex. It also offers an effective way to make certain your thoughts will be taken into consideration.

The Workbook is being mailed to everyone on our mailing list and is being handed out to everyone who attends the Open Houses. It helps us focus the planning effort on those things that matter to you and your community. Your responses to these questions will help guide our efforts to better manage and protect important habitats on Long Island.

Please answer the following questions for the particular Refuge(s) in which you are interested. The comments we receive from the Workbooks and at the Open Houses will be used to identify issues that need to be discussed throughout the planning process.

I am completing this Workbook for the following Refuge(s): *(If more than one, please specify which Refuge is being referred to in each question)*

Amagansett NWR
 Morton NWR
 Target Rock NWR

Conscience Point NWR
 Sayville Property
 Wertheim NWR

Lido Beach WMA
 Seatuck NWR
 Oyster Bay NWR

1. How many times per year do you visit the Refuge(s)?

never

5-25 times per year

1-5 times per year

26+ times per year

2. What are your favorite activities to engage in while visiting the Refuge(s)?

3. What makes the Refuge(s) special to you?

4. Which options should the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service pursue in protecting important habitats that are not currently in a National Wildlife Refuge? (Please check your top three choices)

A. land acquisition

F. environmental education

B. conservation easements

G. grants programs

C. purchasing development rights

H. habitat restoration

D. partnerships with private land owners

I. no active involvement

E. work with conservation groups

J. other (please specify)

5. Do our recreational facilities meet your needs (trails, parking, signs, restrooms, information kiosks, etc.)?

6. What do you consider to be the most important problem(s) facing the Refuge(s) today?

7. Do you have any additional comments?

IMPORTANT: Now that you have finished, please separate pages 6 and 7, seal them into the enclosed self-addressed envelope, stamp it and drop it in the mail by Friday, October 27, 2000. We'll let you know the results as soon as we can. Please help us keep our mailing list updated by completing the following:

Are you on our mailing list? (*you are if you received this by mail*)

Yes No

If you wish to receive future Planning Updates about the Long Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan, please fill in the appropriate information below.

- (Yes) Keep me on your mailing list
- (Yes) Add me to your mailing list (I'm currently not included in it)
- (No) Take me off your mailing list

Name (Please Print): _____

Mailing Address (street): _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

If you are acting in an official capacity as the representative of an organization, please complete the following two items:

Organization: _____

Title: _____

IMPORTANT: Please note that names on the Comprehensive Conservation Plan Mailing List become part of the public record for this project. The Service must release names, if requested, under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act of 1974. To retain you on our mailing list we need your permission. Please sign below.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

That's it! We appreciate your time and effort.