

Long Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex

Conservation Planning Update

January 2006

We're back with good news!

Our draft comprehensive conservation plan will be ready for release this spring, now that several new staff members are on board. Although our planning began a few years ago, changes in personnel and regional priorities caused some delays.



USFWS

Debbie Long outside her new office at Wertheim.

A new face

Last summer, former refuge manager **Patricia Martinkovic** took a new post at Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Our new refuge manager, **Debbie Long**, joined our team in November. She is a Long Island native who grew up on the North Shore in Lloyd Neck, and has worked in management positions at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal refuge, Monomoy refuge and, most recently, Edwin B. Forsythe refuge.

What is a draft CCP/EA?

The draft comprehensive conservation plan and environmental assessment details the strategies and evaluates the consequences of three long-term management alternatives for the Complex. We based them on issues you and we identified early in the planning process. Highlights from the alternatives follow.

Alternative A, or the “No Action” alternative, maintains our current management. Under this alternative, we will continue to

- provide a deer hunt at Wertheim and maintain current fishing access sites
- close beaches at Morton and Target Rock from April through August during the nesting season
- manage populations of the federal-listed endangered sandplain gerardia
- control invasive, nuisance, and overabundant species like *Phragmites*, mute swans, mosquitoes, and deer
- upgrade staff housing and offices.

Alternative B, or our “Proposed Action” alternative, describes how we would prefer to manage the refuges. Under this alternative, we will

- initiate waterfowl hunting at Wertheim and Conscience Point, with added emphasis on youth and disabled hunters
- improve fishing access sites at Wertheim in partnership with the DEC
- expand beach closures from March

How do I get a copy?

The draft CCP/EA will be available in the spring on the Web at

<http://library.fws.gov/ccps.htm> or <http://longislandrefuges.fws.gov>

Please contact our main office in Shirley, N.Y., for a hard copy or CD.

through September to encourage plover pair formation, nesting, and shorebird migration

- initiate the development of a permanent headquarters/visitor center at Wertheim, on the east side of the Carmans River
- improve significantly public opportunities for environmental education and interpretation, photography, and outreach at the Complex.

Alternative C takes a stricter approach to administering the Complex and its biological resources, with less emphasis on visitor services. Under this alternative, we will



Photo courtesy of Janet C. Zimm © www.jzimm.com

Ospreys, a New York State species of special concern, breed at several refuges of the Long Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex.

- work with town governments to close all refuge beaches and the shoreline above mean low tide to surf fishing during plover, heron, and waterbird nesting seasons and shorebird migration (April 1 through September 30)
- provide no additional hunting opportunities
- develop a cooperative agreement with the DEC and Suffolk County to limit boaters at plover sites, and prevent beach access at Amagansett if plover pairs are observed.

Why do we need a plan?

Once our Regional Director approves the final CCP, it will provide strategic management direction for all Complex programs over the next 15 years. Among other things, it will ensure long-

term continuity in refuge management and outreach to partners, elected officials, refuge neighbors, and others.

What can I do to get involved?

Please provide us with your feedback on the draft plan during our 45-day period of public review and comment. We also encourage you to attend one of our public meetings. We will post their dates and locations on the Web, or you may call our main office for details.

When will the plan be ready?

The draft will be ready in the spring for public comment. We will address all substantive comments in a final CCP, which we will complete this summer. Please visit our website or call our main office for details.

For further information on our public meetings or to request a plan, contact

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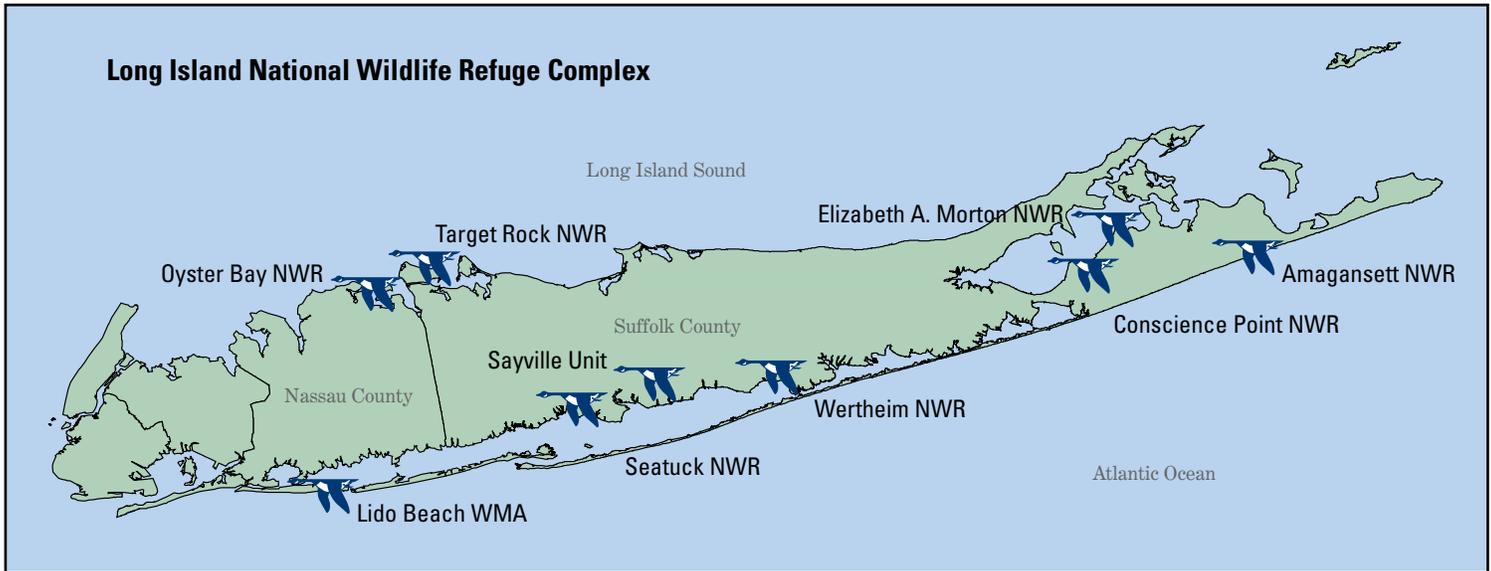
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Federal Relay Service for the deaf and hard-of-hearing: 1 800/877 8339

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

<http://www.fws.gov>
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NWR = National Wildlife Refuge WMA = Wildlife Management Area

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