

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Great Meadows National Wildlife
Refuge
Concord Impoundment Management
2012**



You may have noticed that the upper pool is going dry. We are draining the pool for two reasons. One is to continue the work we began last year cleaning the ditches of accumulated sediment, creating refugia (small shallow depression that will hold water during drawdowns) and increasing topographical relief of the impoundments; and the second is to control the American lotus which has overtaken the pool. Even though it has a beautiful yellow flower in August, the lotus provides limited food and habitat for wildlife. Wood ducks will often use the lotus as cover and even eat the seeds, but for a diversity of wildlife the lotus does not provide quality habitat. Wetlands that produce a variety of high quality plants like wild rice, pickerelweed, smartweed, panic grass, nutsedge and beggarstick, provide better food sources for the waterfowl that nest and rest here and cover for other species like fish and turtles.

Over the next few weeks you will see the pool continue to go dry. Heavy equipment (an amphibious excavator) will be used within the pool to finish the ditch maintenance and make refugia. These shallow depressions will provide a place for wildlife when we drain the pools in the future. Once the work has been completed in the upper pool, we will flood it and then begin the same process in the lower pool, lowering the water levels, cleaning ditches, creating refugia and increasing topography. Every effort will be made to minimize negative impacts to wildlife during the maintenance project.

By conducting this work we hope to increase our ability to conduct drawdowns in the pools. Water levels within the impoundments can be raised and lowered during different times of year to create habitat for a variety of bird species, including: marshbirds and waterfowl in the spring and early summer, wading birds and shorebirds in late summer, and waterfowl in the fall. Drawing down the water stimulates a variety of vegetative growth and invertebrate populations which benefit native wildlife.

If you have any questions regarding management of the Concord Impoundments please feel free to contact either Stephanie Koch (Stephanie_Koch@fws.gov) 978-443-4661 x24, or Eileen McGourty (Eileen_McGourty@fws.gov) 978-443-4661 x37.



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