

# Appendix J. Summary of Public Involvement/ Comments and Consultation/ Coordination

The initial public scoping process for this CCP is described in Chapter 2, The Planning Process.

Once the Draft CCP/EA was complete, a planning update was prepared and mailed out to interested stakeholders on September 18, 2006. The planning update announced the availability of the Draft CCP/EA for review and comment as well as providing notice of the public comment meetings on October 4 and 5, 2006. On September 25, 2006 a Notice of Availability for the draft CCP/EA published in the Federal Register (Vol. 71, No. 185, p. 55801) announcing that the Draft CCP/EA was open to public comment for a 30 day period and noting the location and times for public comment meetings. Printed copies of the Draft CCP/EA were mailed to interested stakeholders, including local libraries, and electronic copies were posted for downloading on the Pacific Region Refuge Planning website and on the Stone Lakes NWR website.

Due to requests for an extension of the Draft CCP/EA comment period from the public and an elected official, the public comment period was extended for an additional 30 days ending on November 27, 2006. Supplemental notices announcing the 30 day comment period extension were mailed to interested stakeholders.

Responses to written comments on the Draft CCP/EA can be found in Appendix G, Response to Comments.

A summary of public comments from the Stone Lakes NWR Draft CCP/EA public meetings held on October 4 & 5, 2006 follows. Public comments received during the public comment period represented a sub-set of the overall written comments received during the open comment period. Appendix G displays responses to all of the written comments received and those responses are incorporated into this Appendix by reference.

## Public comments noted during public comment meetings on 10/4/06

### Biological Resources Management Comments

- Because of good management in some areas, species such as sand hill cranes, ravens and other birds are back in the area, but these are away from areas of human disturbance such as water skiing.
- (I) expect that other wildlife such as turtles, otter, beaver, nesting herons would return to SP cut (if high speed boating ceased).
- Stone Lakes NWR is for the birds.

### Visitor Services Comments

- In order to maintain biological integrity and fulfill biological goals in the preferred alternative, there should be no high speed boating on any portion of the Refuge.
- Supports banning of high-speed boating because of deleterious effects on

- wildlife.
- Refuge does not have other inappropriate uses such as OHV (off highway vehicles) use, rifle ranges, model planes or jet skis.
- (Want) more fishing access, non-boat pier (access).
- Any public access on Southern Pacific Rail Road should ensure no trespass/vandalism occurs
- (Want) increased opportunities for visitor use. (Should) allow bank fishing.
- High speed boating should continue on all or a portion of refuge waterways.
- Motor boats cause noise pollution as well as oil and air pollution.
- High speed boating in the SP cut constitutes an exclusive use and prevents other uses.
- Levee berm erosion has occurred (in the SP cut) and the only wave action in the channel is from high speed boating since there is no east wind.

#### General Comments

- Supports the preferred alternative.
- (Should) put cooperative agreements in (the) conservation plan.
- Should have a more detailed description of the planning process.
- Should clarify how comments on NEPA document and CDs will be addressed.
- A 60 day comment period would be more appropriate than a 30 day comment period (the document is long and difficult to read through in 30 days).
- Questioned designation of SP cut as navigable waters since the throughway was created by dredging.
- Environmental health should be a priority (ex. water quality, vector control).
- Environmental health should not be at the bottom of the pyramid (figure used in power point presentation by Refuge Planner). (He is) concerned about vector control and environmental health.

#### **Public comments noted during public comment meetings on 10/5/06**

##### Biological Resources Management Comments

- Sand hill cranes need a large amount of space and are very sensitive to noise disturbance.
- Sand hill cranes tend to go to the same area every year regardless of the crop type there.
- There is (poor) bad roosting in agricultural areas, (whereas) wetlands allow good roosting.
- Sand hill cranes eat corn, wheat, California voles and may start at tomato fields. It is unknown why they start at the tomato fields, but it may be related to the alkali soils in those areas.

##### Visitor Services Comments

- Concern was expressed about water skiing on the Refuge. (The person commenting) feels that it (water skiing) is not compatible and is disruptive to wildlife. Water skiing is noisy, polluting (gas, fumes, noise) and is unhealthy for wildlife.
- (The person commenting) thinks that kayaks & canoes are o.k. since they provide people with another way to see the Refuge and they are less noisy

- and slower moving, which allows wildlife to escape.
- It is not a good experience to kayak in the SP cut with high speed boats passing at speeds of 15-45 mph.
  - (The person commenting) has seen water skiers scare away wildlife and almost hit an otter. Also wildlife refuge visitors who were observing wildlife were disrupted by the water skiers.
  - (The water skiing use) is inconsistent because the skiers use is uncontrolled. The Refuge would control the numbers of canoes and kayakers to ensure quality of their visit. We do not know when or who comes and goes with the water skiers.
  - (The Refuge) is also a Refuge for city dwellers to think, be quiet and contemplate. (Visitors) should not come to the Refuge and encounter more noise (such as boat engines). Areas with quiet places are becoming rarer.
  - (The person commenting would like to see) removal of skiing because of wake erosion, particularly on the west side. (The person commenting) has seen (negative) effects on native vegetation such as oaks. In many cases (the) water-side berm has been completely eroded away.
  - Today (a visitor) can see many trees that used to be anchored on the bank (that) are now in the water.
  - Waves created by high-speed boats (are the) primary cause of erosion. Erosion is worse on the west side where (the) levee is and (there are) cattails, etc. on (the) east side that may dissipate waves. (The) SP cut run(s) north to south, so winds do not come directly from east to west. Therefore winds are not the cause of (levee) erosion.
  - The addition of paddle tours on the Refuge would be a good addition, to educate (the) public and provide wildlife viewing opportunities. But, in the narrow channel of (the) SP cut, canoeing and kayaking would not be compatible with high speed boating, which could swamp boats and would flush all of the wildlife.
  - (The person commenting) has experience with personal (high speed) watercraft disrupting (the) experience of paddlers.
  - In order to encourage canoes and kayakers, (the Refuge) would need to eliminate high speed boating.
  - (The compatibility determinations) should explore all non-motorized types of watercraft.
  - Any non-motorized craft should be allowed.
  - Paddling is like having a trail in the water.

#### General Comments

- (The Refuge) should increase outreach to groups. ECOS is a local umbrella organization that should be contacted.
- (The Refuge) should add Yolo Audubon to the mailing list.