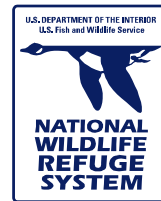


News Release

National Wildlife Refuge System



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 08, 2011

BOMBAY HOOK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE REQUESTS PUBLIC INPUT FOR THE 15-YEAR COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION PLAN

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is seeking public input on developing its Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge. The CCP is required of all National Wildlife Refuges by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 (PL 105-57). The CCP is a 15-year plan designed to provide strategic management direction that best achieves the Refuge's purposes; attains the vision and goals developed for the Refuge; contributes to the National Wildlife Refuge System mission; addresses key challenges, issues and relevant mandates; and, is consistent with sound principles of fish and wildlife management.

The Refuge is initiating this stage of the planning process by hosting public scoping meetings. Public scoping meetings are open to everyone and provide an opportunity for the public to speak directly with Refuge staff and comment on what they see as the issues, concerns, and opportunities for the Refuge over the next 15 years. Refuge staff will be on hand to listen, discuss and answer questions.

Written comments are also welcome and should be sent to Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge, ATTN: CCP Coordinator, 2591 Whitehall Neck Rd., Smyrna, DE 19977 or, electronically via e-mail addressed to northeastplanning@fws.gov. Please put "Bombay Hook" in the subject line.

Public scoping meetings are scheduled for:

Thursday, August 18th – 6:00 – 8:00 PM

Tuesday, August 23rd – 6:00 – 8:00 PM

(Refuge presentation will explain the CCP process, followed immediately by brief remarks from the Project Leader)

Location - Leipsic Fire Hall

318 Main Street - Leipsic

Dover, DE 19901

The Refuge planning team will review all the information, data, and comments gathered during these public meetings before developing a draft plan. Involving the local community, our partners and other stakeholders throughout the planning process is vital to the ultimate success of the plan. In particular, we hope to engage local residents and community leaders in discussing ways the Refuge could become a more integral part of the community. If you are interested in helping us plan this refuge's future, we encourage you to participate. You can contact us at any time. We will also schedule other public meetings at various stages of the planning process to facilitate your input. For additional information

regarding the CCP process or to learn more about upcoming public scoping meetings, please contact Michael Stroeh, Project Leader at (302)653-9345; or visit www.fws.gov/northeast/bombayhook

Under Executive Order (EO) 7643, dated June 22, 1937, Bombay Hook NWR was established "... as a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife" Additional lands were added under authority for the Migratory Bird Conservation Act "... for use as an inviolate sanctuary, or for any other management purpose, for migratory birds." (16 U.S.C. § 715d), and the GSA Transfer Authority for "... particular value in carrying out the national migratory bird management program" (16 U.S.C. § 667b). The refuge currently encompasses 16,251 acres, located in Kent County, Delaware. It is comprised of tidal salt marsh, impounded freshwater pools, brushy and timbered swamps, open fields, and timbered and grassy upland. The refuge's location along the Atlantic Flyway makes it a vital resting and feeding spot for a large number and diversity of birds. The refuge hosts over 100,000 visitors a year to view wildlife in natural settings. Popular attractions within the refuge include the diversity of habitats for wildlife observation and photography; the historic Allee House, in need of restoration; the 12-mile auto tour route; and five nature trails including Bear Swamp and Boardwalk Trails that are handicap accessible. The refuge also provides wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities such as hunting deer, turkey, small game, and waterfowl.

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 www.fws.gov.

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