

continue to follow the current course of action. Private and commercial uses of the refuge would be likely unchanged. Currently 33 percent of the refuge is in Moderate Management and 67 percent of the Refuge is in Minimal Management.

When the original plan was developed in 1987 two areas of Moderate Management were delineated, roughly corresponding to two major river drainages within the refuge. This was to allow more intensive habitat management activities to occur (e.g. water level management and mechanical manipulation of habitat). Though originally thought to be important to enhance the abundance of subsistence resources, subsequent studies showed that this level of manipulation was not needed. That aspect of the plan was never implemented.

Alternative A would continue to protect and maintain the existing wildlife values, natural diversity, and ecological integrity of the refuge. Human disturbances to fish and wildlife habitats and populations would be minimal except, potentially, in Moderate Management areas. Public uses of the refuge employing existing access methods would continue to be allowed. Opportunities to pursue traditional subsistence activities, and recreational hunting, fishing, and other wildlife-dependent activities, would be maintained. Opportunities to pursue research would be maintained.

Alternative B would convert all refuge lands now in Moderate Management to Minimal Management and incorporate the new policies and guidelines for refuges in Alaska. Management of the refuge would generally continue to follow the current course of action but would adopt a vision statement and set of goals developed in response to public scoping, that would implement low impact management.

Alternative B was designed to maintain the natural, unaltered character and ecological integrity of the refuge with little evidence of human-caused change. Disturbance to resources as a result of public uses, economic activities, and facilities would be minimized. Habitats would be allowed to change and function through natural processes. Because activities that could have been allowed under Moderate Management in the 1987 Plan were never implemented, the public would see little or no change under Alternative B despite the removal of areas from the Moderate Management category.

Alternative C (the preferred alternative) would convert a portion of the refuge lands now in Moderate

Management, in the center of the refuge, to Minimal Management and would incorporate the new policies and guidelines for refuges in Alaska. With this change, 85 percent of the refuge would be in Minimal Management and 15 percent of the refuge would remain in Moderate Management. The areas remaining in Moderate Management are adjacent to private lands near the Koyukuk River in the northwestern portion of the refuge. Management activities would generally continue as with Alternative A.

Lands in Minimal Management would be managed to maintain their natural unaltered character and ecological integrity with little evidence of human-caused change. Moderate Management could allow some small-scale changes in the environment that do not disrupt natural processes. Though there may be signs of human activity, the natural landscape would remain the dominant feature. Moderate Management would allow more habitat manipulation than would Minimal Management, and permanent facilities may be constructed. It was anticipated that this flexibility may be needed due to the proximity of these areas to private lands, the river, and overland transportation routes.

Public availability of comments: Before including your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Dated: May 8, 2007.

Thomas O. Melius,
Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Anchorage, Alaska.

[FR Doc. E7-9281 Filed 5-14-07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Lake Andes National Wildlife Refuge Complex, South Dakota

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare comprehensive conservation plan and environmental assessment; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This notice advises that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service)

intends to gather information necessary to prepare a comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) and associated environmental documents for the Lake Andes National Wildlife Refuge Complex (Complex), South Dakota.

The Service is furnishing this notice in compliance with Service CCP policy to advise other agencies and the public of its intentions and to obtain suggestions and information on the scope of issues to be considered in the planning process.

DATES: Written comments should be received by June 14, 2007.

ADDRESSES: Comments and requests for more information regarding the Complex should be sent to Bernardo Garza, Planning Team Leader, Division of Refuge Planning, 134 Union Boulevard, Suite 300, Lakewood, CO 80228.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Bernardo Garza, 303-236-4377, or John F. Esperance, 303-236-4369.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Service has initiated the CCP for the Complex with headquarters in Lake Andes, South Dakota.

Each unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System, including this Complex, has specific purposes for which it was established. Those purposes are used to develop and prioritize management goals and objectives within the National Wildlife Refuge System mission and to guide which public uses will occur on the Complex. The planning process is a way for the Service and the public to evaluate management goals and objectives for the best possible conservation efforts of this important wildlife habitat, while providing for wildlife-dependent recreation opportunities that are compatible with each national wildlife refuge and wetland management district's establishing purposes and the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

The Complex is made up of three separate entities: Lake Andes National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), Lake Andes Wetland Management District (WMD), and Karl E. Mundt NWR. Lake Andes NWR was established in 1936 to preserve an important piece of habitat for waterfowl and other water birds. The Lake Andes WMD was formed in the 1960s to protect wetland and grassland habitat that is critical to our nation's duck population. In 1967, the Service identified an area that was supporting almost 300 endangered bald eagles each winter; this area became the Karl E. Mundt NWR. Hunting and wildlife observation are the two most prevalent public uses on the Complex.

The Service will conduct a comprehensive conservation planning process that will provide opportunity for Tribal, State, and local governments; agencies; organizations; and the public to participate in issue scoping and public comment. The Service is requesting input for issues, concerns, ideas, and suggestions for the future management of the Complex. Anyone interested in providing input is invited to respond to the following questions.

(1) What problems or issues do you want to see addressed in the CCP?

(2) What improvements would you recommend for the Complex?

The Service has provided the above questions for your optional use; you are not required to provide information to the Service. The planning team developed these questions to facilitate finding out more information about individual issues and ideas concerning these three units of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Comments received by the planning team will be used as part of the planning process; individual comments will not be referenced in our reports or responded to directly.

An opportunity will be given to the public to provide input at open houses to scope issues and concerns (schedules can be obtained from the planning team leader at the above address). Comments may also be submitted anytime during the planning process by writing to the above address. All information provided voluntarily by mail, phone, or at public meetings becomes part of the official public record (i.e., names, addresses, letters of comment, input recorded during meetings). If requested under the Freedom of Information Act by a private citizen or organization, the Service may provide informational copies.

The environmental review of this project will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*); NEPA Regulations (40 CFR parts 1500–1508); other appropriate Federal laws and regulations; and Service policies and procedures for compliance with those regulations. All comments received from individuals on Service Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Statements become part of the official public record. Requests for such comments will be handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, NEPA (40 CFR 1506.6(f)), and other Departmental and Service policies and procedures.

Dated: September 19, 2006.

James J. Slack,

Deputy Regional Director, Region 6, Denver, Colorado.

Editorial Note: This document was received at the Office of the Federal Register on May 10, 2007.

[FR Doc. E7–9278 Filed 5–14–07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–55–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska

AGENCY: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to revise the comprehensive conservation plan and prepare an environmental impact statement for Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service, we), will be developing a revised Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge). We will use local announcements, special mailings, newspaper articles, the Internet, and other media announcements to inform people of opportunities to provide input throughout the planning process. We will hold public meetings in communities within the Refuge during preparation of the revised plan. We will visit each of the 36 occupied communities within the Refuge boundary as we revise this plan.

DATES: Please provide written comments on the scope of the CCP revision by January 31, 2008.

ADDRESSES: Address comments, questions, and requests for further information to: Peter Wikoff, Planning Team Leader, Division of Conservation Planning and Policy, 1011 East Tudor Rd., MS–231, Anchorage, AK 99503. Comments may be faxed to (907) 786–3965, or sent via electronic mail to YukonDelta_planning@fws.gov. Additional information about the Refuge is available on the Internet at: <http://alaska.fws.gov/nwr/planning/ypdol.htm>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Peter Wikoff, Planning Team Leader, phone (907) 786–3837 or Mikel Haase, Planning Team Leader, phone (907) 786–3402.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Established by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (94

Stat. 2371) in 1980 (ANILCA), Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge is the second largest Refuge in the National Wildlife Refuge System. Stretching east for 300 miles from Nunivak Island in the Bering Sea to the village of Aniak, the Refuge spans more than 19 million acres. The two largest rivers in Alaska, the Yukon and the Kuskokwim, flow through the Refuge creating a delta which covers about 70% of the Refuge. This broad, flat area is less than 100 feet in elevation and covered by countless lakes and ponds. Flooding is common along rivers and lowlands. Wetlands, lakes, ponds, streams, inlets, bays, and coastal areas support an extremely varied community of fish and wildlife including one of the largest aggregations of water birds in North America. Each year over one million ducks, half a million geese and millions of shorebirds use the Refuge for both breeding and staging. The Refuge is also home to significant salmon fisheries.

Thirty-six occupied communities lie within the Refuge boundaries. Alaskan Native peoples have occupied the region for close to 10,000 years and their lives and culture are intertwined with the Refuge. Local Native corporations own vast tracts of lands within the Refuge.

Refuge purposes include: (1) Conserving fish and wildlife populations and habitats in their natural diversity, including, but not limited to, shorebirds, seabirds, whistling swans, emperor, white-fronted and Canada geese, black brant and other migratory birds, salmon, muskox, and marine mammals; (2) fulfilling international treaty obligations of the United States with respect to fish and wildlife and their habitats; (3) providing, in a manner consistent with purposes (1) and (2) above, the opportunity for continued subsistence use by local residents; and (4) ensuring, to the maximum extent practicable and in a manner consistent with purpose (1) above, water quality and necessary water quantity within the Refuge.

We furnish this notice in accordance with the ANILCA, the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 (16 U.S.C. 668dd–688ee), the regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR 1500–1508), and Service policies.

These laws and policies require all lands within the National Wildlife Refuge System to be managed in accordance with an approved CCP which articulates a 15 year plan for managing a Refuge and identifies Refuge goals and objectives. During the CCP process, we will consider many