

Chapter 6. Compliance, Consultation, and Coordination with Others

6.1 Compliance

In undertaking the Proposed Action, the Service must comply with a number of Federal laws, Executive Orders, regulations, or other guidance pertinent to a Federal action. These are listed and summarized in Appendix D.

6.2 Consultation and Coordination with Others

This section describes consultation and coordination efforts with the public, interested groups, other agencies, and tribes. A Public Involvement Plan was completed February 4, 1998 that described goals and procedures that would be used to ensure full public involvement in developing the CCP.

6.2.1 Public Outreach

The following summarizes public outreach, including public meetings/open houses, workshops, Planning Update mailings, and Federal Register notices.

6.2.1.1 Public Meetings / Open Houses

Date and Location of Outreach: July 25, 1996; Scoping Meeting, Lacey, Washington.

Purpose: To inform the public on habitat management concerns, solicit comments, and encourage participation in the planning process.

Number of Non-Service Participants: 30

Audience: Public

Topics Discussed:

- (1) Background Information: February 1996 flood, administrative site planning, and the Refuge System's goals.
- (2) Key Habitat and Public Use Issues: Habitat management concerns within the diked area, solicited comments on key management issues, identified partners.

Date and Location of Outreach: November 18 and 19, 1997; Open Houses, Lacey and Tacoma, Washington.

Purpose: To present an informal opportunity to all participants to learn about and comment on the CCP process.

Number of Non-Service Participants: 151

Audience: Public

Topics Discussed:

- (1) Values, Vision, and the Service's Role: Draft Refuge goals, Refuge purposes and existing activities, role of Nisqually NWR, concerns about the future of Nisqually NWR.
- (2) Major Issues Discussed: Changing the mix of habitat types at Nisqually NWR (eight draft alternatives presented), trail access and configuration, waterfowl hunting, Refuge expansion and acquisition, PWC use/disturbance and conflicts with other users, sanctuary areas, exotic species control, river restoration, environmental education, reforestation, special designated areas, croplands and haying, fishing access, boating, and cultural resources.

Date and Location of Outreach: January 15 and 16, 2003; Public Meetings, Olympia and Tacoma, Washington.

Purpose: To present the public an opportunity to review, discuss, and provide comments on the Draft CCP/EIS.

Number of Non-Service Participants: 250

Audience: Public

Topics Discussed: Please see Appendix M.

6.2.1.2 Workshops

Date and Location of Outreach: May 13, 1998; Grassland Workshop, USFWS Nisqually NWR, Olympia, Washington.

Purpose: To review historic and current grassland conditions and develop recommendations for improving grassland wildlife habitat.

Number of Participants: 8

Audience: Local and regional USFWS professionals, representatives of Ducks Unlimited and Natural Resources Conservation Service, plus a volunteer and former biologist.

Topics Discussed: Topics included grassland and shrubland objectives and strategies, noxious weed control, freshwater wetlands management, and monitoring methods. Several field site visits were conducted.

Date and Location of Outreach: June 2, 1998; Public Use Workshop, Service Western Washington Office, Lacey, Washington.

Purpose: To gather input for the planning of future public use, recreation, and education programs on the Refuge.

Number of Non-Service Participants: 65

Audience: Representatives of local groups or organizations with specific interest in public use, recreation, and education programs on the Refuge.

Topics Discussed: Workshop attendees participated in one of the following six focus groups in which they discussed topics specific to these groups: (1) boating and kayaking; (2) hunting and fishing; (3) hiking, photography, and birdwatching; (4) outdoor recreation providers and planners; (5) tourism; and (6) environmental education.

Date and Location of Outreach: June 29-30, 1998 and June 3, 1999; Estuarine and Freshwater Wetland Workshops, USFWS Nisqually NWR, Olympia, Washington.

Purpose: To review historic and current habitat conditions, wildlife use, and management activities to develop recommendations for future restoration and management of estuarine and freshwater wetlands.

Number of Participants: 15-18

Audience: Local and regional FWS professionals; ENSR consultants; scientists from the Universities of Washington and Wyoming; and representatives from Ducks Unlimited, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Environmental Protection Agency, Montgomery Water Group, and University of Puget Sound.

Topics Discussed: Estuarine wetlands: lack of juvenile salmonid habitat and Brown Farm Dike influences including tidal loss, marsh erosion, and sediment loss. Freshwater wetlands: low quality habitat conditions due to deep water with low flow, reed canary grass, and vegetation succession. Several alternatives for habitat restoration, management, and monitoring as well as public access issues were discussed.

6.2.1.3 Planning Update Mailings

The Service published six Planning Updates and one Issues Workbook as part of the public outreach efforts. These were sent to everyone on the CCP mailing list. In addition, the Issues Workbook was handed out at the November 1997 public open houses. Planning Update #6 was also summarized in the April 2002 issue of the McAllister Water News published by the City of Olympia. A seventh Planning Update is to be published simultaneously with the release of the Final CCP/EIS.

Planning Updates:

August 1996, November 1996, November 1997, April 1998, December 1998, June 2001, #7 at the same time as the Final CCP/EIS.

Issues workbook :

November 1997

6.2.1.4 Federal Register Notices

A formal "Notice of Intent to Prepare a Comprehensive Management Plan and Associated Environmental Document" was published in the Federal Register on October 9, 1997. Later in the process, the Service decided to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Comprehensive Conservation Plan. For this, a second Notice of Intent was published in the Federal Register on February 9, 2000. A Notice of Availability was published in the Federal Register on December 20, 2002, which announced the availability of the Draft CCP/EIS for public review with comments due on February 21, 2003, and two public open house meetings to be held in January 2003.

6.2.2 Interest Group and Other Agency Consultation/Coordination

Refuge staff gave more than 50 presentations to a variety of groups on- and off-Refuge, providing a summary and update on the CCP process, key issues, and soliciting public input. These groups included: local Audubon chapters, Evergreen College classes, Kiwanis Club of Olympia, Rotary Club in Tacoma, National Marine Fisheries Service technical group, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers wetland training classes, Pacific Coast Joint Venture, Sierra Club, Thurston County Leadership Council, Nisqually Summer Lecture Series, among others.

Service staff participated in panel discussions on estuarine wetland restoration at two Society of Wetland Scientists Northwest Chapter Meetings. The first took place on May 6, 1996 in Olympia, Washington in which approximately 45 people attended. The second took place on May 21, 1998 in Tacoma, Washington with about 200 participants. The panelists included university scientists, agency and tribal representatives, and other restoration professionals. Discussions centered around the issues and challenges of estuarine restoration in Puget Sound as it relates to Nisqually NWR.

The Refuge Manager met individually with the three Thurston County Commissioners on May 17 and June 4, 2001, summarizing the CCP key issues and focusing on Refuge expansion. A meeting was held with representatives of Congressman Adam Smith's and Congressman Brian Baird's local offices on May 23, 2001 to summarize CCP key issues, the schedule, and focus on Refuge expansion.

Several meetings were held with major landowners within the expansion study area, including Fort Lewis, Weyerhaeuser, City of Olympia, and some of the farmers with the largest land holdings in the Nisqually Valley, to summarize the CCP process, key issues, and schedule, with a focus on Refuge expansion, and solicit further comment. Coordination meetings were also held with the City of DuPont. Fort Lewis was given the opportunity to comment on the internal review draft of the CCP/EIS.

The Service gave four presentations to the Nisqually River Council during the planning process. The Council includes more than 20 key partners and citizen participants. The following is a list of meeting dates:

November 19, 1999
May 18, 2001
August 17, 2001
April 19, 2002
January 17, 2003

The Service met with the WDFW seven times during the planning process. WDFW was given the opportunity to comment on an internal review draft of the CCP/EIS. The following is a list of meeting dates:

January 29, 1998
 November 9, 2000
 April 17, 2001
 May 1, 2001
 May 17, 2001
 September 14, 2001
 October 5, 2001

6.2.3 Tribal Consultation/Coordination

The Service met with the Nisqually Indian Tribe 14 times during the course of the planning process, and they were given the opportunity to comment on an internal review draft of the CCP/EIS. The following is a list of meeting dates:

June 23, 1999	January 31, 2001
July 20, 1999	August 27, 2001
January 25, 2000	October 1, 2001
February 29, 2000	October 15, 2001
April 24, 2000	February 14, 2002
June 9, 2000	March 19, 2002
August 10, 2000	April 18, 2002

6.3 Comment Response Process on the Draft CCP/EIS

Public comments on the Draft CCP/EIS were accepted from December 20, 2002 to February 21, 2003; in addition, comments dated within one week after the official close of the comment period were accepted and analyzed. All comments were reviewed and analyzed; the information contained in those comments was used to help develop the Final CCP/EIS, and the refined Preferred Alternative. A detailed summary of the comment process, all comments, and the Service's responses to those comments is included as Appendix M.

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