Request for Public Comments

Section 4(f) of the Act requires us to provide public notice and an opportunity for public review and comment during recovery plan development. It is also our policy to request peer review of recovery plans (July 1, 1994; 59 FR 34270). In an appendix to the approved recovery plan, we will summarize and respond to the issues raised by the public and peer reviewers. Substantive comments may or may not result in changes to the recovery plan; comments regarding recovery plan implementation will be forwarded as appropriate to Federal or other entities, so that they can be taken into account during the course of implementing recovery actions.

Responses to individual commenters will not be provided, but we will provide a summary of how we addressed substantive comments in an appendix to the approved recovery plan.

We invite written comments on the draft revised recovery plan. We specifically seek comments on the following:

- Do you have comments or concerns regarding the proposed recovery criteria?
- Do actions and priorities in the plan’s Implementation Schedule reflect a biologically sound conservation approach for Lost River sucker and shortnose sucker recovery?
- Are the proposed monitoring and management actions appropriate and sufficient?
- Are there important recovery actions which have not been included in the plan?

Before we approve the plan, we will consider all comments we receive by the date specified in DATES. Methods of submitting comments are in ADDRESSES.

Public Availability of Comments

Before including your 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—may do so.

While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information, we will make publicly available at any time. For this reason, we urge you not to include the following: (1) Your complete name and address; (2) a complete copy of your comments; or (3) any other personal identifying information that you do not want released in the public docket. If you do not want your entire comment to be made available to the public, please state this in your comment and make sure we know which parts you do not want released.
Pleomele hawaiensis (hala pepe), Portulaca sclerocarpa (poe), Sesbania tomentosa (ohai).

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

In compliance with NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), we have made an initial determination that the proposed activities in this permit are categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement (516 DM 6 Appendix 1, 1.4C(1)).

Public Availability of Comments

All comments and materials we receive in response to this request will be available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the address listed in the ADDRESSES section of this notice.

Before including your address, phone number, email 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.

Authority

We provide this notice under section 10 of the Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

Dated: October 7, 2011.

Richard R. Hannan,
Acting Regional Director, Pacific Region, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.


DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service


Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge, Genesee County and Orleans County, NY; Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Finding of No Significant Impact for Environmental Assessment

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), announce the availability of our final comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) and finding of no significant impact (FONSI) for the environmental assessment (EA) for Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge (NWR, refuge), Genesee County and Orleans County, New York. In this final CCP, we describe how we will manage this refuge for the next 15 years.

ADDRESSES: You may view or obtain copies of the final CCP and FONSI/EA by any of the following methods. You may request a hard copy or CD-ROM.


E-mail: northeastplanning@fws.gov. Include “Iroquois NWR final CCP” in the subject line of the message.

U.S. Mail: Iroquois NWR, 1101 Casey Road, Basom, NY 14013. In-Person Viewing or Pickup: Call 585–948–5445 to make an appointment (necessary for view/pickup only) during regular business hours at above address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Thomas Roster, Project Leader, 585–948–5445, or Thomas Bonetti, Planning Team Leader, 413–253–8307 (phone); tom_bonetti@fws.gov (e-mail).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Introduction

With this notice, we finalize the CCP process for Iroquois NWR in Basom, New York. We started this process through a notice in the Federal Register (73 FR 10279, February 26, 2008). We released the draft CCP and the EA to the public, announcing and requesting comments in a notice of availability in the Federal Register (75 FR 61171, October 4, 2010).

Iroquois NWR was established in 1958 under 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). The refuge consists of more than 10,800 acres within the rural townships of Alabama and Shelby, New York, midway between Buffalo and Rochester. Freshwater marshes and hardwood swamps are bounded by forests, grasslands, and wet meadows. These areas serve the habitat needs of both migratory and resident wildlife, including waterfowl, songbirds, mammals, and amphibians, as well as numerous indigenous plant species.

We announce our decision and the availability of the FONSI for the final CCP for Iroquois NWR in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (40 CFR 1506.6(b)) requirements. We completed a thorough analysis of impacts on the human environment, which we included in the EA that accompanied the draft CCP. The CCP will guide us in managing and administering Iroquois NWR for the next 15 years.

Background

The National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd–668ee) (Administration Act), as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, requires us to develop a CCP for each NWR. The purpose for developing a CCP is to provide refuge managers with a 15-year plan for achieving refuge purposes and contributing toward the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System, consistent with sound principles of fish and wildlife management, conservation, legal mandates, and our policies. In addition to outlining broad management direction on conserving wildlife and their habitats, CCPs identify wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities available to the public, including opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation. We will review and update the CCP at least every 15 years in accordance with the Administration Act.

CCP Alternatives, Including Selected Alternative

Our draft CCP and our EA (75 FR 61171) addressed several issues. To address these, we developed and evaluated the following alternatives.

Alternative A (Current Management): Alternative A continues existing programs and activities and serves as the baseline against which to compare the other alternatives. Under current management, we manage open water and emergent marsh impoundments, early successional habitat including grasslands, shrublands, and forest habitat including a conifer plantation. Under alternative A, we would continue to conduct furbearer management, monitor waterfowl during spring and fall migration, conduct landbird surveys, and manage for invasive species in the same manner as at present. We would maintain existing opportunities for visitors to engage in wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation, as well as maintain existing hunting and fishing opportunities on the refuge. We would maintain existing infrastructure and buildings, and maintain current staffing levels.

Alternative B (the Service-preferred alternative): This alternative focuses on enhancing the conservation of wildlife through habitat management, as well as providing additional visitor opportunities on the refuge. Alternative B incorporates existing management