

Dated: December 22, 2006.

**Frank L. Davis,**

*General Deputy Assistant Secretary for Housing, Deputy Federal Housing Commissioner.*

[FR Doc. E6-22504 Filed 12-29-06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4210-67-P

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### Notice of Intent to prepare a Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment for ACE Basin National Wildlife Refuge in Charleston County, SC

**AGENCY:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The Fish and Wildlife Service, Southeast Region, intends to gather information necessary to prepare a comprehensive conservation plan and environmental assessment pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and its implementing regulations.

The National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, requires the Service to develop a comprehensive conservation plan for each national wildlife refuge. The purpose in developing a comprehensive conservation plan is to provide refuge managers with a 15-year strategy 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 Service policies. In addition to outlining broad management direction on conserving wildlife and their habitats, plans identify wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities available to the public, including opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, and environmental education and interpretation.

The purpose of this notice is to achieve the following:

- (1) Advise other agencies and the public of our intentions, and
- (2) Obtain suggestions and information on the scope of issues to include in the environmental document.

**DATES:** Please provide written comments on the scope of issues to include in the environmental document by March 5, 2007.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments, questions, and requests for more information regarding

the ACE Basin National Wildlife Refuge planning process should be sent to: Van Fischer, Natural Resource Planner, South Carolina Lowcountry Refuge Complex, 5801 Highway 17 North, Awendaw, South Carolina 29429; Telephone: 843/928-3264; Fax: 843/928-3803; Electronic mail: [van\\_fischer@fws.gov](mailto:van_fischer@fws.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Special mailings, newspaper articles, and other media announcements will be used to inform the public and state and local government agencies of the opportunities for input throughout the planning process. Open-house style public meetings will be held during the scoping phase of the comprehensive conservation plan development process. During this process, many elements will be considered, including wildlife and habitat management, public use opportunities, and cultural resource protection. Public input during the planning process is essential. All comments received become part of the official public record. Requests for such comments will be handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and other Service and Departmental policies and procedures.

ACE Basin National Wildlife Refuge was established on September 20, 1990, to help protect the largest undeveloped estuary along the Atlantic Coast. It consists of rich bottomland hardwoods and freshwater and saltwater marshes, offering food and cover to a variety of wildlife. The refuge is part of an overall ACE Basin Project Habitat Protection and Enhancement Plan implemented by a coalition consisting of the Fish and Wildlife Service, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, The Low Country Open Land Trust, Westvaco, and private landowners of the ACE Basin.

The name ACE Basin represents the Ashepoo, Combahee, and Edisto Rivers, which form the estuary and parts of the refuge boundary. The entire basin encompasses more than 350,000 acres, of which the refuge comprises just less than 12,000 acres. Additional information concerning this refuge may be found at the Service's Internet site: <http://www.fws.gov/refuges>.

**Authority:** This notice is published under the authority of the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, Public Law 105-57.

Dated: December 1, 2006.

**Cynthia K. Dohner,**

*Acting Regional Director.*

[FR Doc. E6-22455 Filed 12-29-06; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### Notice of Intent To Prepare a Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment for Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge in Charleston County, SC

**AGENCY:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The Fish and Wildlife Service, Southeast Region, intends to gather information necessary to prepare a comprehensive conservation plan and environmental assessment pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and its implementing regulations.

The National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, requires the Service to develop a comprehensive conservation plan for each national wildlife refuge. The purpose in developing a comprehensive conservation plan is to provide refuge managers with a 15-year strategy 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 Service policies. In addition to outlining broad management direction on conserving wildlife and their habitats, plans identify wildlife-dependent opportunities available to the public, including opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, and environmental education and interpretation.

The purpose of this notice is to achieve the following:

- (1) Advise other agencies and the public of our intentions, and
- (2) Obtain suggestions and information on the scope of issues to include in the environmental document.

**DATES:** Please provide written comments on the scope of issues to include in the environmental document by March 5, 2007.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments, questions, and requests for more information regarding the Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge planning process should be sent to: Van Fischer, Natural Resource Planner, South Carolina Lowcountry Refuge Complex, 5801 Highway 17 North, Awendaw, South Carolina 29429; Telephone: 843/928-3264; Fax: 843/928-3803; Electronic mail: [van\\_fischer@fws.gov](mailto:van_fischer@fws.gov)

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Special mailings, newspaper articles, and other media announcements will be used to inform the public and state and local government agencies of the opportunities for input throughout the planning process. Open-house style public meetings will be held during the scoping phase of the comprehensive conservation plan development process. During this process, many elements will be considered, including wildlife and habitat management, public recreational activities, and cultural resource protection. Public input into the planning process is essential. All comments received become part of the official public record. Requests for such comments will be handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and other Service and Departmental policies and procedures.

Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1932 to provide wintering habitat for migratory birds. The refuge's 64,000 acres encompass a 20-mile segment of the Atlantic Coast, which includes barrier islands, saltwater marshes, coastal waterways, fresh and brackish water impoundments, and maritime forests. Of the land area, 28,000 acres are preserved within the National Wilderness Preservation System. Additional information concerning this refuge may be found at the Service's Internet site: <http://www.fws.gov/refuges>.

**Authority:** This notice is published under the authority of the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, Public Law 105-57.

Dated: December 2, 2006.

**Cynthia K. Dohner,**

*Acting Regional Director.*

[FR Doc. E6-22465 Filed 12-29-06; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4310-55-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### Notice of Intent To Prepare a Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment for the Central Arkansas National Wildlife Refuge Complex

**AGENCY:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** This notice advises the public that the Fish and Wildlife Service, Southeast Region, intends to gather information necessary to prepare a comprehensive conservation plan and environmental assessment pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act

of 1969 and its implementing regulations. This plan and environmental assessment will cover Bald Knob National Wildlife Refuge, Big Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Cache River National Wildlife Refuge, and Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge, the refuges that make up the Central Arkansas National Wildlife Refuge Complex. The refuges are in Crittendon, Jackson, Mississippi, Monroe, Prairie, White, and Woodruff Counties, Arkansas. The National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, requires the Service to develop a comprehensive conservation plan for each national wildlife refuge. The purpose in developing a comprehensive conservation plan is to provide refuge managers with a 15-year strategy 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 Service policies. In addition to outlining broad management direction on conserving wildlife and their habitats, plans identify wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities available to the public, including opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, and environmental education and interpretation.

The purpose of this notice is to achieve the following:

- (1) Advise other agencies and the public of our intentions, and
- (2) Obtain suggestions and information on the scope of issues to include in the environmental document.

**DATES:** Please provide written comments on the scope of issues to include in the environmental document by March 5, 2007.

**ADDRESSES:** Address comments, questions, and requests for further information to: Judy McClendon, Natural Resource Planner, Central Arkansas National Wildlife Refuge Complex, 26320 Highway 33 South, Augusta, Arkansas 72006; Telephone: 870/347-2074. Comments may be faxed to the complex at: 870/347-2908, or e-mailed to [Judy\\_McClendon@fws.gov](mailto:Judy_McClendon@fws.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Public scoping meetings are planned for early 2007 and will be announced in the local media in advance of the meetings. Announcements will inform people of opportunities for written input throughout the planning process. All comments received become part of the official public record. Requests for such comments will be handled in

accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and other Service and Departmental policies and procedures.

By Federal law, all lands within the National Wildlife Refuge System will be managed in accordance with an approved comprehensive conservation plan. Plans guide a refuge's management decisions and identify long-term goals, objectives, and strategies for achieving the purposes for which the refuge was established. During the planning process many elements will be considered, including wildlife and habitat management, public use opportunities, and cultural resource protection. Public input during the planning process is essential. The plan for the Central Arkansas National Wildlife Refuge Complex will describe desired conditions for refuges within the complex and the long-term goals, objectives, and strategies for achieving those conditions.

The four national wildlife refuges that comprise the Central Arkansas National Wildlife Refuge Complex were all established primarily to provide habitat for migrating waterfowl and other birds, for use as inviolate sanctuary or for any other management purposes for migratory birds, for the conservation of the Nation's wetlands, to protect and restore bottomland hardwood resources, to protect endangered species, and to provide the public with compatible and appropriate wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities. The refuges are located in the bottomland hardwood habitat of the Mississippi River Alluvial Plain and contain large tracts of bottomland hardwood forest, unique wetlands, and habitat for wintering migratory waterfowl and other wildlife. In early 2005, the ivory-billed woodpecker, long thought to be extinct, was rediscovered on the Cache River National Wildlife Refuge.

#### Preliminary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

The following preliminary issues, concerns, and opportunities have been identified and will be addressed in the comprehensive conservation plan. Additional issues will be identified during public scoping.

**Habitat Management and Restoration:** What actions shall the Service take to sustain and restore priority species and habitats over the next 15 years?

**Endangered Species:** How will the Cache River National Wildlife Refuge manage its lands with the rediscovery of the ivory-billed woodpecker?

**Public Use and Access:** What type and level of appropriate and wildlife-dependent compatible recreation opportunities should be provided?