

programs. We will offer new deer and waterfowl hunting opportunities on the Eastern Shore of Virginia NWR and expand environmental education programs and facilities. We will also develop new interpretive materials that focus on how these refuges contribute to the conservation of temperate and neotropical migratory birds.

In the CCP, we commit to conducting wilderness reviews of both Eastern Shore of Virginia (including Skidmore Island) and Fisherman Island NWRs, within 3 years of approval. We will also evaluate these lands for their potential as Research Natural Areas, within the same time frame as the wilderness reviews.

The CCP also establishes how we will manage three facilities on the Eastern Shore of Virginia NWR, which were important public concerns during development of both the draft and final CCPs: The Wise Point boat ramp, the firearms range, and the communications tower.

**Wise Point Boat Ramp:** When the United States acquired the former Wise Point Corporation property in December 2001, the purchase included a private boat ramp which provides one of the only access points to deep water on the southern tip of the Delmarva Peninsula. The boat ramp is popular with recreational anglers and important to the operations of at least 20 commercial watermen. The CCP outlines our plans to maintain access for both user groups, and improve the entrance road, boat ramp, and the parking lot. Docking, 24-hour access, and parking privileges for commercial watermen will be phased out over time. We will charge a fee for boat ramp use with a fee structure based on the type and frequency of use. We will monitor these developments at the boat ramp to ensure they do not adversely impact barrier island and marsh-dependent species, water quality, and surrounding habitat.

**Firearms Range:** Immediately adjacent to the refuge, on 60 acres owned by Northampton County, is a firearms range used by Federal, State and County law enforcement personnel. Our staff will continue to maintain the firearms range, scheduling usage so as not to conflict with environmental education programs. We will continue to work with partners to find an alternate, off-refuge site for the firearms range. Until a new site is located, we will work with Northampton County to implement new practices for firearms range management, including those that control surface runoff and leachate from the berm, and periodically remove contaminated soils.

**Communications Tower:** When the refuge was acquired, the Service assumed two existing leases which allowed a 299-foot communications tower and a switching station on the refuge. The tower supports in-house radio communications for Verizon, Inc. and refuge staff. Adjacent to the tower, the switching station houses underground communications lines which cross the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel and head north to Cape Charles. The leases on both the tower and the switching station expire in 2007. We will not renew the lease for the tower, and Verizon, Inc. will be responsible for removing the tower once the lease expires. The Service will work with Verizon, Inc. to assess the need for continued use of the switching station.

Dated: April 7, 2004.

**Richard O. Bennett,**

*Acting Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Hadley, Massachusetts.*

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**BILLING CODE 4310-55-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### Notice of Availability of Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan for Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge, Las Vegas, NM

**AGENCY:** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announces that the Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) is available for the Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge). This CCP is prepared pursuant to the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 (16 U.S.C. 668dd *et seq.*), and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and describes how the Service intends to manage this Refuge over the next 15 years.

**ADDRESSES:** Copies of the CCP are available on compact diskette or hard copy, and can be obtained by writing: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Attn: Yvette Truitt-Ortiz, Division of Planning, P.O. Box 1306, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 87103.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Joe Rodriguez, Refuge Manager, Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge, Route 1, Box 399, Las Vegas, New Mexico 87701; 505-425-3581, or Yvette Truitt-Ortiz, Natural Resource Planner, U.S. Fish and

Wildlife Service, Division of Planning, P.O. Box 1306, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 87103; 505-248-6452; or direct e-mail to [yvette\\_truittortiz@fws.gov](mailto:yvette_truittortiz@fws.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** A CCP is required by the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 (16 U.S.C. 668dd *et seq.*). The purpose in developing CCPs 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 science, conservation, legal mandates, and Service policies. In addition to outlining broad management direction on conserving wildlife and their habitats, the CCPs identify wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities available to the public, including opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation. These CCPs will be reviewed and updated at least every 15 years in accordance with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 (16 U.S.C. 668dd *et seq.*), and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

Dated: May 3, 2004.

**David Yazzie,**

*Acting Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Albuquerque, New Mexico.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### Notice of Availability of Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan for Muleshoe National Wildlife Refuge, Muleshoe, TX and Grulla National Wildlife Refuge, Arch, NM

**AGENCY:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announces that the Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the Muleshoe and Grulla National Wildlife Refuges has been approved and is now available. Prepared pursuant to the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, this