

Effective interest rate	on or after	prior to
5½	Jan 1, 1999	July 1, 1999.
6⅛	July 1, 1999	Jan 1, 2000.
6½	Jan 1, 2000	July 1, 2000.
6½	July 1, 2000	Jan 1, 2001.
6	Jan 1, 2001	July 1, 2001.
5⅞	July 1, 2001	Jan 1, 2002.
5¼	Jan 1, 2002	July 1, 2002.
5¾	July 1, 2002	Jan 1, 2003.
5	Jan 1, 2003	July 1, 2003.
4½	July 1, 2003	Jan 1, 2004.
5⅛	Jan 1, 2004	July 1, 2004.
5½	July 1, 2004	Jan 1, 2005.
4⅞	Jan 1, 2005	July 1, 2005.
4½	July 1, 2005	Jan 1, 2006.
4⅞	Jan 1, 2006	July 1, 2006.

Section 215 of Division G, Title II of Public Law 108–199, enacted January 23, 2004 (HUD's 2004 Appropriations Act) amended section 224 of the Act, to change the debenture interest rate for purposes of calculating certain insurance claim payments made in cash. Therefore, effective immediately, for all claims paid in cash on mortgages insured under section 203 or 234 of the National Housing Act and endorsed for insurance after January 23, 2004, the debenture interest rate will be the monthly average yield, for the month in which the default on the mortgage occurred, on United States Treasury Securities adjusted to a constant maturity of 10 years, as found in Federal Reserve Statistical Release H–15. The Federal Housing Administration is in the process of making conforming amendments to applicable regulations to fully implement this recent change to section 224 of the Act.

Section 221(g)(4) of the Act provides that debentures issued pursuant to that paragraph (with respect to the assignment of an insured mortgage to the Secretary) will bear interest at the "going Federal rate" in effect at the time the debentures are issued. The term "going Federal rate" is defined to mean the interest rate that the Secretary of the Treasury determines, pursuant to a statutory formula based on the average yield on all outstanding marketable Treasury obligations of 8- to 12-year maturities, for the 6-month periods of January through June and July through December of each year. Section 221(g)(4) is implemented in the HUD regulations at 24 CFR 221.255 and 24 CFR 221.790.

The Secretary of the Treasury has determined that the interest rate to be borne by debentures issued pursuant to section 221(g)(4) during the 6-month period beginning January 1, 2006, is 5½ percent.

HUD expects to publish its next notice of change in debenture interest rates in July 2006.

The subject matter of this notice falls within the categorical exemption from HUD's environmental clearance procedures set forth in 24 CFR 50.19(c)(6). For that reason, no environmental finding has been prepared for this notice.

Authority: Sections 211, 221, 224, National Housing Act, 12 U.S.C. 1715b, 1715l, 1715o; Section 7(d), Department of HUD Act, 42 U.S.C. 3535(d).

Dated: March 3, 2006.

Brian D. Montgomery,
Assistant Secretary for Housing—Federal Housing Commissioner.
[FR Doc. 06–2344 Filed 3–10–06; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment for the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge and the Nansemond National Wildlife Refuge

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 draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) is available for review. The CCP/EA includes Nansemond NWR, an unstaffed refuge managed by the Great Dismal Swamp NWR. The Service prepared this CCP/EA in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and 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.*).

This notice also advises the public that the Service is withdrawing a previous notice, published in 2002, stating that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would be developed for the refuge complex. After completing the environmental analysis, we determined that an EIS is not warranted.

DATES: The draft CCP/EA will be available for public review and comment for a 30-day period starting with the publication of this notice.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the draft CCP/EA on compact diskette or in print may be obtained by writing or visiting Great Dismal Swamp NWR, 3100 Desert Road, Suffolk, Virginia 23434, or you may download an electronic copy from the

<http://library.fws.gov/ccps.htm> Web site. We plan to host three public meetings in the Cities of Suffolk and Chesapeake, Virginia, and in Camden and Gates Counties in North Carolina. We will announce the details at least 2 weeks in advance in local papers and post them at the refuge.

Comments should be submitted to Deloras Freeman, Great Dismal Swamp NWR, 3100 Desert Road, Suffolk, Virginia 23434, by fax at 757–986–2353, or email at deloras_freeman@fws.gov. Comments via email should include the comments in the body of the email, since email security programs could delete attached files.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Deloras Freeman, Great Dismal Swamp NWR at 787–986–3706 or Bill Perry, Refuge Planner, Northeast Regional Office at 413–253–8371.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: 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 CCP for each refuge. The purpose of developing a CCP describes the desired future conditions of the refuge and provides refuge managers with a 15-year strategy for achieving refuge purposes and contributing to the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System, in conformance with the sound principles of fish and wildlife science, natural resources conservation, legal mandates, and Service policies. In addition to outlining broad management direction on conserving wildlife and 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. The Service will review and update each CCP at least once every 15 years, in accordance with the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

Established in 1974, Great Dismal Swamp NWR encompasses 111,201 acres, the largest intact remnant of a vast habitat that once covered more than one million acres of southeastern Virginia and northeastern North Carolina. The Nansemond NWR, established December 12, 1973, is an unstaffed satellite refuge encompassing 423 acres.

The draft CCP/EA analyzes three alternatives for managing the refuge over the next 15 years. Alternative A (the "No Action" Alternative) would continue our present management and provides a baseline for comparing and

contrasting other alternatives. It continues to focus on restoring hydrology and habitat, maintaining roads, acquiring 4,000 acres of land inside the refuge boundary as it becomes available from willing sellers, restoring 1,000 acres of Atlantic white cedar, and enhancing 2,000 acres of pocosin/pine habitat for reintroduction of red-cockaded woodpeckers. It continues to provide current levels of environmental education and interpretation, boating and fishing on Lake Drummond, and annual deer hunting.

Alternative B (the Service-preferred alternative) directs the refuge toward an optimal level of habitat management and public use based on the vision for the refuge at the time of its establishment in 1974. Alternative B proposes the restoration of 8,000 acres of Atlantic white cedar habitat; the restoration of 10,000 acres of red-cockaded woodpecker habitat; and the restoration of a remnant marsh to its original 250 acres from its present 30 acres. We would establish a neotropical migratory bird focus area near Jericho Lane, in which we would focus habitat management and modeling, population surveys, and education and interpretation related to neotropical migratory bird populations. As a part of our preferred alternative, we have proposed to implement a limited bear hunt. This hunt would occur on a total of 2 days during November and December, with a total maximum of 100 permits issued. We anticipate a harvest of approximately 11 bears with a harvest limit target of 20 bears. If 10 or more bears are taken the first day, various parameters will be evaluated and the second hunt day may be cancelled. As with the deer hunt, dogs will not be allowed as a means to hunt bears. The bear hunt is currently authorized in the code of federal regulations (50 CFR part 32), but has never been implemented.

Our preferred alternative also proposes the following building projects: The development of an environmental education site at Jericho Ditch in Suffolk, Virginia. We will also develop an exhibit to be sited at the downtown visitor center that is run by the City of Suffolk. Additionally, we propose the conversion of the current administrative building for concessions, and the construction of a new visitor center and headquarters between the old and new Route 17 in Chesapeake, Virginia, and the construction of new trails, observation and photography platforms, or towers. The CCP proposes to enhance environmental education and outreach, establish hunter safety and youth hunting programs, and

provide interpretative canoe or kayak tours through a concessionaire.

Alternative C (limited habitat management) reduces our emphasis on habitat management compared to current refuge operations, but significantly expands visitor services and public use. It also emphasizes monitoring and researching opportunities.

All three alternatives share some priorities. They manage invasive or exotic species and pine/pocosin habitats. They manage hydrology to slow the rate of surface drainage from the refuge, maintain normal flooding patterns, manage stands of Atlantic white cedar, and conserve water for suppressing fires. Finally, they continue to provide opportunities for compatible public use such as hunting, fishing, environmental education and interpretation, wildlife observation and photography, and off-refuge outreach and partnerships.

A Wilderness Review was also conducted for Great Dismal Swamp NWR as part of this planning process. No areas were recommended for designation because none of the wilderness inventory areas met wilderness criteria.

Dated: February 24, 2006.

Marvin E. Moriarty,
Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Red River National Wildlife Refuge

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare a Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment for the Red River National Wildlife Refuge in Louisiana.

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 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 habitat, 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: Announcements will inform people of opportunities for written input throughout the planning process. Public scoping meetings are planned and will be announced in local newspapers approximately 10 days prior to the meetings.

ADDRESSES: Comments and requests for more information regarding the Red River National Wildlife Refuge planning process should be sent to: Lindy Garner, Natural Resource Planner, North Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Complex, 11372 Highway 143, Farmerville, Louisiana 71241; Telephone: (318) 762-4222, ext. 5; Fax: (318) 726-4667; E-mail: northlarefuges@fws.gov. To ensure consideration, written comments must be received no later than April 12, 2006.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The refuge was created by Congress on October 13, 2000, with the passage of the Red River National Wildlife Refuge Act. Land acquisition for the refuge commenced in August 2002. There are three purposes of the refuge, as stated in the Red River National Wildlife Refuge Act:

- To provide for the restoration and conservation of native plants and animal communities on suitable sites in the Red River basin, including restoration of extirpated species.
- To provide habitat for migratory birds, and
- To provide technical assistance to private landowners in the restoration of their lands for the benefit of fish and wildlife.

The refuge's enabling legislation authorizes it to acquire up to approximately 50,000 acres of Federal lands and waters along that section of