

Public Comments and Refuge Responses

Summary

The Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge held an open house on May 20, 2008 at the Refuge Visitor Center to gather public input on the Draft Habitat Management Plan. Refuge staff provided a brief presentation highlighting the main components of the Draft Plan, followed by a question and answer period. A press release inviting the public was issued to area newspapers on May 5, 2008. The Draft Plan was available to the public at the Refuge Office and Visitor Center, on the Refuge Website, and on the Friends of the Montezuma Wetlands Complex Website. The Draft Plan and an invitation to the open house also were sent to the Director of Conservation and Science, the Director of Bird Conservation, and the Wildlife Ecologist, Audubon New York; the Center Director, Montezuma Audubon Center; the President and the Vice-President, Friends of the Montezuma Wetlands Complex; the Coordinator, Montezuma Wetlands Complex; the Biologist, Region 8 NY State Department of Environmental Conservation; the Nature Conservancy; Ducks Unlimited, Inc.; and two former Refuge Managers and a former Wildlife Biologist, Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge.

The Refuge received 11 positive comments and no negative comments. Public comments and refuge responses are detailed below.

Comments Received at the Public Meeting

Frank Moses, Director Montezuma Audubon Center, Savannah, NY

- Read a very supportive letter reflecting the opinions of the entire staff from the Audubon New York Office at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology Conservation and Science Program.
- Overriding Message: The Montezuma Wetlands Complex is globally significant; conservation agencies are identifying a sense of urgency to move forward with conservation efforts.

Tom Hicks, Junius, NY

- It is interesting how the Refuge is tinkering over time and the progression from historic to current conditions.
- The Great Lakes Commission also is trying to promote natural water levels and increase diversity.
- Inquired about bald eagles, land acquisition procedures, Savannah Dhu, volunteers, and adding additional trails.
- Commented about the Armitage Road Bald Eagle nest.
- Commented on the original digging of the Erie Canal and the human death toll.

Nancy Bates, Throope, NY

- The Refuge is really on top of everything and very aware.
- Commented on places for birds to stop over.
- Inquired about the Seneca Trail, osprey, and a bald eagle observation.
- Inquired about pollution from the NYS Thruway and the newly passed truck law (regarding truck traffic through small towns).

Other Verbal Comments

**Bob Lamoy, Former Deputy Refuge Manager, Vice-president, Friends of the
Montezuma Wetlands Complex, Waterloo, NY, May 20, 2008**

- HMP looks good; no real controversy.
- Concern for funding Dry Marsh restoration project with Refuge money as other stations are being closed. Dry Marsh project itself looks good with minimal issues (golden nematode and deposition areas have been covered).

Wilhelmina Pasmuscans, Seneca Falls, NY, May 21, 2008

- “It’s very boring when you drive right along there [where Wildlife Drive parallels the Thruway]. You should do something there with that area.”
- Comment on the Dry Marsh plans: “Yes, that looks beautiful.”

**Jim Eckler, Biologist, Region 8 NY State Department of Environmental
Conservation, Savannah, NY, June 2, 2008**

- I agree with Dave Odell’s written comments on the Plan.

Written Comments and Refuge Responses

- Dave Odell, Coordinator, Montezuma Wetlands Complex – See attached.
- Michael F. Burger, Director of Conservation and Science, Audubon New York – See attached.
- Larry Nogaj, Refuge Hunter – See attached.
- Chuck Gibson, Refuge, State, and Audubon Volunteer – See attached.
- Pat Sanderson, Refuge Volunteer – See attached.