

Partial List of “Special” Designations

The following lists some of the “special” designations that may overlay refuge lands. If these designations exist on your refuge, there may be special management consideration needed in the comprehensive plan. There may be refuges, or areas of refuges, where one or more of these designations may be appropriate. New special designations could be identified through the comprehensive planning process.

In coastal areas, consideration should be given to special coastal ecosystem programs and estuary programs that may include the refuge.

1. **Man in the Biosphere Reserve:** United Nations Designation. National Park Service source of information.
2. **Marine Sanctuaries:** Administered by NOAA.
3. **National Historic Landmark:** A site, district, building, structure, or object, in public or private ownership, judged by the Secretary of the Interior to possess national significance in American history, archaeology, engineering, or culture according to criteria defined in 36 CFR 65 (Service Manual 614 FW 1.7).
4. **National Historic Trail:**
5. **National Natural Landmark:** An area of national significance designated by the Secretary of the Interior that contains an outstanding representative example(s) of the nation’s natural heritage including terrestrial communities, aquatic communities, landforms, geological features, habitats of native plant and animal species, or fossil evidence of the development of life on earth (36 CFR 62.2).
6. **National Recreation Trail:**
7. **National Register of Historic Places Properties:** Properties, including districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects, significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture (36 CFR 60.1). See 36 CFR 60 for more information.
8. **Public Use Natural Areas:**
9. **Research Natural Area:** Federal land management agencies have developed a national system of Research Natural Areas (RNA’s) since 1927. The Research Natural Area designation is an administrative designation to establish areas on which natural features and processes are preserved with minimal human intervention for research and educational purposes. Each land management agency designating areas were expected to use their existing regulations to protect such areas. The Service Refuge Manual chapter 8RM10 dated August 11, 1983 delineated Research Natural Area management policies for National Wildlife Refuges. All Research Natural Areas are established and disestablished by memorandum signed by the Director. Existing refuge regulations provide the only protection. There are no separate federal regulations for Research Natural Areas.

10. **Wetlands of International Importance:** Ramsar Convention, 1972. The Convention maintains a list of wetlands of international importance and works to encourage the wise use of all wetlands in order to preserve the ecological characteristics from which wetland values derive.
11. **Wild and Scenic Rivers:** Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. (*See additional materials on Wild and Scenic Rivers in this part of the reference notebook*)
12. **Wilderness:** Wilderness Act, 1964, as amended. Established the National Wilderness Preservation System. Wilderness “generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature”, “has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation”, “at least 5,000 acres of land or is of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation”, “and may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.” (*See additional materials on Wilderness in this part of the reference notebook.*)
13. **World Heritage Properties:** Those cultural and natural properties judged to possess outstanding universal value for mankind (see 36 CFR 73).