



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

# The Balancing Act: Issues and Opportunities at Ridgefield NWR

## The Balancing Act

The Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) is part of larger system called the National Wildlife Refuge System whose mission is “to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.”

As we enter the Comprehensive Conservation Planning (CCP) process we have the opportunity to review and discuss the Refuge’s management and operational activities. As we discuss aspects of Refuge management and operations, we need to keep in mind that guiding legislative mandates must be adhered to first and foremost. These mandates include Refuge establishment purposes, Federal laws and acts, and Department of Interior and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service policies and procedures, to name a few.

The established purposes for our Refuge are to provide wintering habitat for dusky Canada geese and other waterfowl, to provide breeding and migration use for waterfowl, and to provide substantial waterfowl hunting opportunities. These purposes are our primary missions around which we balance and integrate all other Refuge management and operational activities.

It is truly a balancing act to address and work through the variety of future issues that will directly impact the Refuge’s wildlife and visitors. This CCP will provide management and operational guidance for the Refuge’s next fifteen years, so we strongly encourage you to share comments about the Refuge’s future.

## Issues to ponder and comment on

As the area around the Refuge continues to grow, the shift to a suburban and urban landscape will affect the Refuge. These are some of the issues you may wish to provide comments on:

1. Handling increased visitation and public safety needs.
2. Dealing with more traffic on Refuge roads; congestion, dust, etc.
3. Greater wildlife disturbance and the need for undisturbed areas.
4. Infrastructure proposals for transiting to and through the Refuge.
5. Developing partnerships to address Refuge management needs.
6. Neighbor concerns; mosquitoes, traffic, hunting noise, etc.
7. Gee Creek water quality concerns.

8. Lack of waterfowl hunting areas puts more pressure on the Refuge.
9. The Refuge’s role from a flyway and larger ecosystem perspective.
10. Increasing demand for wildlife-dependent recreational use opportunities.
11. Lack of off-refuge habitats for migrating wildlife.
12. Lack of wildlife corridors from the Refuge to other wildlife areas.
13. Managing for waterfowl as well as other waterbirds.
14. Protecting the Refuge’s cultural resources.

## Send us your comments

We welcome your comments on the issues affecting the Refuge. Written comments may be submitted at the public meetings, or sent to us via mail, fax, or e-mail to:

Project Leader  
Ridgefield NWR Complex  
P.O. Box 457  
Ridgefield, Washington 98642  
(360) 887-4106  
FAX (360) 887-4109

[FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov](mailto:FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov)  
(Please put “Ridgefield NWR CCP Scoping” on the subject line.)

To allow us to consider your input while writing the Draft CCP, please provide written comments by November 3, 2006.