



© John and Karen Hollingsworth

Appendix D

Conscience Point National Wildlife Refuge

Wilderness Review

Introduction

The wilderness review process consists of three phases: inventory, study, and recommendation. The purposes of the inventory phase are:

- to identify areas of System lands and waters with wilderness character and establish these areas as Wilderness Study Areas;
- to identify areas of Refuge System lands and waters that do not qualify as WSAs; and
- document the inventory findings for the planning record.

Inventory Criteria

WSAs are areas that meet the criteria for wilderness identified in the Wilderness Act. Section 2(c) provides the following definition.

“A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions, and which: (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man’s work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.”

Permanent roads are prohibited in wilderness under Section 4(c) of the Act, so WSAs must also be roadless. For the purposes of the wilderness inventory, a “roadless area” is defined as:

“A reasonably compact area of undeveloped Federal land that possesses the general characteristics of a wilderness and within which there is no improved road that is suitable for public travel by means of four-wheeled, motorized vehicles intended primarily for highway use. A route maintained solely by the passage of vehicles does not constitute a road.”

In summary, the inventory to identify WSAs is based on an assessment of the following criteria: absence of roads, size, naturalness, and either outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation.

Because the largest refuge within the Long Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex is only 3,209 acres, the individual refuge units within the Complex were initially assessed based on the size criteria. The size criterion is satisfied for areas under Service jurisdiction in the following situations:

- An area with over 5,000 contiguous acres or 2,000 hectares. State and private land inholdings are not included in calculating acreage.
- A roadless island of any size. A roadless island is defined as a roadless area that is surrounded by permanent waters or that is markedly distinguished from surrounding lands by topographical or ecological features such as precipices, canyons, thickets, or swamps.

- An area of less than 5,000 contiguous acres that is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition, and of a size suitable for wilderness management.
- An area of less than 5,000 contiguous acres that is contiguous with a designated wilderness, recommended wilderness, or area of other Federal lands under wilderness review by the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, or National Park Service.

Inventory Conclusions

As shown in the following table, none of the Wilderness Inventory Areas in the Complex are large enough to meet the size criteria for a WSA.

Wilderness Inventory Area	Acreage in Fee Title
Amagansett NWR	36 acres
Conscience Point NWR	60 acres
Elizabeth A. Morton NWR	187 acres
Lido Beach WMA	22 acres
Oyster Bay NWR	3,204 acres
Sayville Unit	26 acres
Seatuck NWR	209 acres
Target Rock NWR	80 acres
Wertheim NWR	2,572 acres

Wilderness Act of 1964

Public Law 88-577, approved September 3, 1964, directed the Secretary of the Interior, within 10 years, to review every roadless area of 5,000 or more acres and every roadless island, regardless of size, within National Wildlife Refuge and National Park Systems for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System.