

Back Bay

National Wildlife Refuge

Represented by the following Members of Congress:

Senator John W. Warner (R)
Senator George F. Allen (R)
Rep. Thelma Drake (R-2nd)

Contact

Jared Brandwein, Refuge Manager
Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge
4005 Sandpiper Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23456-4347
Phone: 757/721 2412
Fax: 757/721 6141
TDD: 757/721 0496
E-mail: jared_brandwein@fws.gov
Web site: <http://backbay.fws.gov>

Purpose

Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge was established to provide habitat for migrating and wintering waterfowl, and to protect the Back Bay watershed.

Public Use Notes

- Trails, boardwalks, viewing platforms
- Interpretive visitor contact station and environmental education facility
- Permit hunt for white-tailed deer and feral hogs
- Fishing (salt and freshwater)
- Canoeing/kayaking
- Biking
- Tram tours

Management Activities

- Manipulate water levels, and burn and mow areas to enhance fish and wildlife habitat
- Arrest succession to maintain habitat preferred by waterfowl
- Control invasive plants that threaten native species
- Protect endangered and threatened species like loggerhead sea turtles, piping plover and bald eagles.
- Maintain nest structures for wood duck, osprey and purple martin.
- Work cooperatively with city, state and federal agencies, and non-government organizations to protect and preserve the Back Bay watershed.
- Maintain an active realty acquisition program with willing sellers to protect the Back Bay watershed.

Highlights

Back Bay is in the Atlantic flyway, a major corridor for migratory birds. Ten thousand snow geese and a large variety of ducks frequent the refuge during fall migration.

To help recover loggerhead sea turtle populations, refuge biologists remove eggs from their nests, rebury them in predator-proof cages and release the hatchlings into the ocean.

An environmental education program, both indoor and outdoor, delivers information to various publics, including 4,000 students per year.

Issues and Needs

Non-native predators, such as feral hogs, damage habitat and disturb migratory birds.



Loggerhead sea turtle

USFWS

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD
<http://www.fws.gov>

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Development in the nearby fast-growing area threatens the refuge's water quality and destroys important wildlife habitat. Public use demands are exceeding refuge capacity.

Restricted access to parts of the refuge to protect sensitive species such as piping plover sparks controversy.

The Refuge Operations Needs System identifies over \$2.5 million in unfulfilled public use and biological resource needs.

The Service's asset maintenance management system (SAMMS) identifies over \$10.0 million in unfulfilled maintenance, construction and equipment needs.

