



American black bear

Great Dismal Swamp

National Wildlife Refuge

Represented by the following Members of Congress:

Senator John W. Warner (R)
 Senator George F. Allen (R)
 Rep. Randy Forbes (D-4th-VA)

Senator Elizabeth Dole (R-NC)
 Senator Richard Burr (R-NC)
 Rep. G.K. Butterfield (D-1st-NC)
 Rep. Walter Jones, Jr. (R-3rd-NC)

Contact

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Purpose

Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge was established to restore and protect a unique ecosystem, conserve migratory birds and provide public use and education opportunities.

Public Use Notes

- Hiking and biking on more than 50 miles of interior roads and a boardwalk
- Hunting for white-tailed deer by permit
- Fishing, canoeing and kayaking
- Scenic yachting on the intracoastal waterway

Management Activities

- Prescribed burning to maintain shrub-pocosin habitat and Atlantic white cedar stands
- Commercial logging of hurricane-damaged Atlantic white cedar stands to promote regeneration of this globally rare forest
- Prescribed burning to restore and maintain marshes to promote habitat diversity

- Water control structures slow water loss from past ditching
- Working with federal, state and university researchers
- Managing for possible reintroduction of the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
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Highlights

The refuge provides winter resting habitat for 10,000 to 15,000 tundra swans and snow geese.

The refuge had one of the largest remaining Atlantic white cedar forests in the world until hurricane Isabel devastated the stands in September 2003. A major salvage and restoration project is underway to restore this rare resource.

Lake Drummond, the largest natural lake in Virginia, is located near the center of the refuge.

The refuge provides important nesting areas for neotropical songbirds such as the Swainson's warbler.

The refuge is one of the few areas east of the Mississippi River apparently not showing a reduction in neotropical migrants.

The refuge is home to the one of the largest black bear populations on the east coast.

The refuge became the first national wildlife refuge to be designated by the National Park Service as a unit within the "Underground Railroad Network to Freedom."

Issues

Smoke from controlled burns and wildfires on the refuge can negatively affect neighboring communities.

Construction and widening of highways will bring about more conflicts between people and wildlife, as will continuing residential and commercial development.

Local communities in Virginia and North Carolina are advocating significant expansion of visitor services on the refuge.

Hurricane Isabel inflicted considerable damage to the refuge and increased the probability of a major wildfire.

