

## APPENDIX C – FWS BICYCLING COMPATIBILITY DETERMINATIONS

**Arapahoe NWR, Walden, Colorado**—This Refuge supports diverse wildlife habitats, including sagebrush-grassland uplands, grassland meadows, willow riparian areas, and wetlands. The complex contains about 23,000 acres in Colorado and 21,000 acres in Wyoming.

*Compatibility Determination* –for a proposed 3-mile, 8-foot wide gravel trail for non-motorized vehicles, walking and horses. The trail was proposed in 2004 in the Arapaho Complex CCP, based on local input. The trail starts at a park in Walden and follows scenic byway (Colorado highway 14) to the Refuge. A number of stipulations are necessary to ensure compatibility including: signage for compliance of nonmotorized use and refuge regulations; monitoring to assess the impact of the use on wildlife and the environment and fencing between the trail and refuge to limit disturbance. A local manager indicates bicycling is not common, visitor use is low as is interest in biking is low, with the exception of this proposed trail. Lack of funding/staff are major concerns regarding development of new public use projects. The trail has not been built nor has funding been secured (Dec 2007). It is anticipated Colorado Scenic Byways, Jackson County and the town of Walden will be involved in the future to promote this trail. A private group, Rivers and Ranges, is leading the efforts to plan and construct this multi-use trail.

**Choctaw NWR, Jackson, Alabama**—Approximately one-half of the 4,218 Acre refuge is creeks, sloughs, lakes, and backwaters of the Tombigbee River. The other half is typical bottomland hardwoods. Wildlife includes: herons, raptors, otters, beavers, deer, turkeys, raccoons, squirrels, wood ducks, wintering waterfowl, and endangered/threatened species (American alligators, bald eagles and wood storks).

*Compatibility Determination* -opened up established roads and trails used for administrative and management activities to pedestrians and bicycles. The general public will use existing trails and roads to hike and bike. Due to the motorized vehicles restrictions, these uses have become the major means of locomotion for individuals engaged in the six priority public uses. Hunters may use bicycles along the roads in the Middle Swamp area of the refuge as motorized vehicles are restricted.

**Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, southwest of Cleveland, Mississippi**—is an area of approximately 9,600 acres. The refuge is the largest remaining tract of bottomland-hardwood-forested wetlands in the northwest portion of Mississippi. Late winter concentrations of migratory waterfowl reach 15,000. Populations of white-tailed deer and eastern wild turkey attract hunters. Large numbers of neo-tropical migratory songbirds are especially attracted to the forested woodlands in summer months. <http://www.fws.gov/dahomey> Accessed July 2008.

*Compatibility Determination:* -to facilitate travel on designated roads and trails for the priority public uses. To promote safety with other users, prevent conflicts, and promote a quality wildlife observation environment, group size is limited to 10 bicyclists. Groups of more than 10 require a special use permit. Anglers and hunters can access refuge lands by bicycle on designated roads and trails to access fish and game. Bicycle travel on the refuge provides increased opportunity for public participation in priority public uses and can be less physically demanding than pedestrian travel.

**Hatchie NWR and Lake Isom and Reelfoot NWR in Western Tennessee**—About 90 percent of the Refuge lies within the floodplain of the Hatchie River. The Hatchie is the last

unchannelized river of its type in the Lower Mississippi River Valley and still functions under near normal wetland cycles. About 9,400 acres of bottomland hardwoods are located on the refuge and are flooded by headwater flows of the Hatchie.

*Compatibility Determination* -Bicycling is a minor use of the refuge and is often associated with a priority use such as hunting. Bicycles are permitted only on open designated motorized vehicle routes and trails. Most of the recreational activities on the refuge center on wildlife viewing from roads and the observation tower. Bicycling is a popular activity in the surrounding area, and the refuge is one component in a complex of public lands in west Tennessee. A primary refuge objective is to provide the public with wildlife- oriented recreational opportunities. Bicycling, which adheres to established regulations, is compatible with that purpose.

**Vieques NWR Puerto Rico**—Refuge lands are located on the eastern and western ends of the island and are administered under [Caribbean Island NWR complex](#). The refuge contains several ecologically distinct habitats including beaches, coastal lagoons, mangrove wetlands and upland forested areas. Some of the best examples of sub-tropical dry forest in the Caribbean can be found on refuge lands. The marine environment surrounding the refuge contains coral reefs and sea grass beds. In addition to its ecological value, the refuge contains important resources of archeological and historic significance and legacies of the Taino culture and sugar cane era.

*Compatibility Determination:* Bicycling, horseback riding, hiking, jogging, and moped/motorcycle riding will allow the general public access onto the refuge for wildlife observation, wildlife photography, and recreation. These activities will be allowed on specified and designated roads, footpaths, and trails. Some designated travel routes will be accessible for all of these modes of transportation, while others will be posted as specific to a certain activity (e.g., a hiking trail). Access through or entry on all or portions of individual areas may be temporarily suspended, by posting, upon occasions of unusual or critical conditions affecting land, water, vegetation, wildlife and plant populations, or public safety. Access for the general public onto the beaches and other potentially sensitive environmental areas is only allowed by foot travel. Access to the refuge through designated travel routes provides the general public the opportunity to enjoy scenic views, diverse wildlife, and an array of plants and various habitats. This, in turn, allows for wildlife observation, wildlife photography, and environmental education and interpretation opportunities not usually available on adjacent municipal and private lands.

**Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge- Oklahoma**—This 59,020 acre Refuge hosts a rare piece of the past - a remnant mixed grass prairie, an island where the natural grasslands escaped destruction because the rocks underfoot defeated the plow. The Refuge provides habitat for large native grazing animals such as American bison, Rocky Mountain elk, and white-tailed deer. Texas longhorn cattle also share the Refuge rangelands as a cultural and historical legacy species. More than 50 mammal, 240 bird, 64 reptile and amphibian, 36 fish, and 806 plant species thrive on this important refuge.

<http://www.fws.gov/southwest/refuges/oklahoma/wichitamountains>

*Compatibility Determination* -is for limited mountain bicycling. Bicycling was already permitted on all public us roads on the refuge prior to this determination. Bicyclists are limited to a maximum of 15 per day on existing roads during daylight hours and are required to get a permit to allow land managers to provide education. This determination mentions The Secretary of the Interior’s 1991 Outdoor Recreation Initiative which encourages bicycling on refuge lands while still providing adequate protection of refuge resources.