

Public Notice

**United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge
241 Pleasant Plains Road
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920
973-425-1222**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is re-evaluating existing uses on Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. The National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, requires the mandatory re-evaluation of existing refuge uses, other than wildlife dependent uses, every 10 years. A compatible use is a use of a national wildlife refuge that, based on sound professional judgment, will not materially interfere with or detract from the fulfillment of the National Wildlife Refuge System mission or the purposes of the national wildlife refuge. Compatibility determinations are developed to facilitate evaluation of such uses.

The uses that are being re-evaluated are: anti-hunting demonstrations, pedestrian travel, beekeeping, recreational berry, fruit, and nut picking, landowner access, biking on Pleasant Plains Road, Film Production, Police and Fire Training, Horseback riding on Pleasant Plains Road, Leashed dog walking on Pleasant Plains Road, Research conducted by non-Service personnel, and placement of a National Weather Service (NWS) Automatic Rain Gauge on the Refuge.

The National Wildlife Refuge System 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. Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1960 as an area to provide migration, nesting and feeding habitat for migratory birds.

Compatibility determinations for these uses have been drafted, and are available for a 30 day public review and comment period starting 8/11/04 and ending 9/9/04. All comments received during this period will be considered in finalizing these determinations. Copies of the compatibility determinations are available at the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters at 241 Pleasant Plains Road, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920. They are also available on the Refuge website at greatswamp.fws.gov.