

Restoring our Refuges: A Plan for Massachusetts



An independent consultant found that the Refuge System needs to double its number of law enforcement officers.

Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge – an island in the Atlantic Ocean renowned as a fishing, birding and recreation destination – is a case in point. It plans to implement a law enforcement program to maintain the balance between humans and protected resources.



Officers at Monomoy will spend most of their time on the water, enforcing fishing, shellfishing, horseshoe crabbing and hunting regulations and also developing partnerships with the local law enforcement, emergency management agencies and the Coast Guard.



The National Wildlife Refuge System struggles to meet its wildlife conservation mission

In Massachusetts alone, 56 mission-critical projects sit on the shelf

Massachusetts is home to spectacular natural resources including 11 National Wildlife Refuges. These refuges provide habitat for hundreds of migratory bird species, including federally endangered and threatened species such as the Roseate tern and the Piping plover.

In **2008**, more than **960,000 visitors** enjoyed hiking, bird watching, environmental education, hunting and fishing on Massachusetts wildlife refuges.

Yet, national wildlife refuges in Massachusetts may not be able to continue protecting wildlife and offering world-class recreation.

Massachusetts wildlife refuges are saddled with deferred operations and maintenance projects that total more than \$15 million.

Today, the state's wildlife refuges need at least 46 additional positions. Those include 24 wildlife biologists, 10 guides and educators, and 9 essential maintenance and enforcement personnel. Without these people, Massachusetts refuges will fall further behind in meeting the demand.

What's the solution? CARE recommends \$514 million for the Refuge System's FY 2010 Operations and Maintenance budget and an increase to at least \$765 million by FY 2013.

About C.A.R.E.

The Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement is a diverse coalition of 22 conservation, recreation, sporting, and scientific organizations with more than 14 million members and supporters across the United States. CARE has been working since 1995 to help the National Wildlife Refuge System fight a serious funding crisis.

American Birding Association

American Fisheries Society

American Sportfishing Association

Assateague Coastal Trust

Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation

Defenders of Wildlife

Ducks Unlimited

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Izaak Walton League of America

National Audubon Society

National Rifle Association of America

National Wildlife Federation

National Wildlife Refuge Association

Safari Club International

The Corps Network

The Nature Conservancy

The Wilderness Society

The Wildlife Society

Trout Unlimited

U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance

Wildlife Forever

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[www.FundRefuges.org/CARE/
CareHome.html](http://www.FundRefuges.org/CARE/CareHome.html)



Saddled with declining purchasing power and a \$3.5 billion backlog of deferred operations and maintenance projects, the National Wildlife Refuge System is in a financial vise

The Refuge System needs an annual increase of \$15 million in its operations budget just to keep pace with inflation and demand. The Refuge System welcomed more than 41.2 million visitors in 2008, up from 33 million in 1998.

National Wildlife Refuges are undeniable economic engines.

According to the *Banking on Nature* report from the FWS:

- Spending by visitors to refuges generated more than \$1.7 billion of sales nationwide, created 27,000 jobs in local communities and added \$543 million in employment income. These economic data do not include Alaska or Pacific island refuges, which together generate millions of annual visitors.
- At **Parker River National Wildlife Refuge**, for every dollar appropriated to the refuge budget, over \$9 are generated in expenditures to the local economy. Visitor spending totaled over \$7.3 million, generating 107 jobs, \$3.7 million in employment income and \$1.8 million in tax revenue.

Yet, according to Management Systems International, a respected business consultant, the Refuge System has seen its real purchasing power decline by 11 percent between fiscal years 2003 and 2008.

The Government Accountability Office found that with continuing funding constraints and an expanding list of challenges, it may be difficult to maintain the Refuge System as envisioned in law – “where the biological integrity, diversity, and environmental health of the Refuge System are maintained; priority visitor services are provided; and the strategic growth of the system is continued.”

There is a solution to safeguard the world’s finest network of public lands dedicated to wildlife conservation: \$514 million in FY 2010 for the National Wildlife Refuge System and an increase to at least \$765 million by FY 2013 – steps that will restore operational quality and begin to chip away at the deferred operations and maintenance backlog.