



## **Missions, Mandates and Constraints**

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- **What affects planning for activities on the Don Edwards Refuge such as restoration projects, public access, or even commercial shrimp harvest?**
- **Let's use public access as an example.**

## **Public Access is Important**

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Refuge currently has:

- 30 miles of hiking trails
- Fishing Pier
- Visitor Center
- Environmental Education Center
- Trailside Exhibits
- Interpretive Programs
- Waterfowl Hunting Areas



## **Need to Protect Wildlife Too**

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- **The Refuge needs to protect sensitive wildlife from unacceptable disturbances**
- **Site design, appropriate types of public activities and appropriate location for public access are key to protecting wildlife**

## **How Do We Create Balance?**

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**Refuge staff start by considering the laws and regulations governing what is allowed on the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge**



## **Mission of United States Fish & Wildlife Service**

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**Conserve, protect, and enhance fish and wildlife and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.**

## **How Do We Meet Our Mission?**

- **Review development projects including wetland restoration to protect endangered species & other wildlife**
- **Operate system of Wildlife Refuges**



## **National Wildlife Refuges**

- **Over 535 refuges nation-wide, at least one in each state; 7 in San Francisco Bay Area**
- **Encompassing 95 million acres of land**
- **With 40 million visitors each year**

## **Mission of Refuge System**

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**Administer network of lands/waters for:**

- **Conservation;**
- **Management;**
- **Restoration of fish, wildlife and plant resources and their habitats; and**
- **For the benefit of present and future generations of Americans**

## **Wildlife Comes First**

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**Congress requires that Refuge Managers determine if proposed projects & activities are compatible with the purpose of the Refuge & Wildlife Refuge System**



## **Purposes of Don Edwards NW Refuge**

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- **Preserve and enhance wildlife habitat in south San Francisco Bay;**
- **Protect migratory waterfowl and Endangered Species; and to**
- **Provide an opportunity for wildlife-oriented recreation and nature study.**

## **Compatibility Determinations**

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- **Must be in writing and available for public review**
- ***1<sup>st</sup> Step* - Consider needs of wildlife and potential for impact on wildlife**

## **Balance Wildlife Needs**

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- **Balance the needs of endangered species with resident and migratory wildlife**
- **Then look for opportunities for public access**

## **Priority Public Uses**

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**2<sup>nd</sup> Step - Congress established 6 Wildlife-Oriented Public Uses that take priority over all others:**

- 1. Wildlife observation**
- 2. Wildlife photography**
- 3. Environmental interpretation**
- 4. Environmental education**
- 5. Hunting**
- 6. Fishing**

## **Resources Available?**

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**3<sup>rd</sup> Step - Are resources available to administer and manage each use?**

**Is there staff and money to construct and maintain the public use facilities?**

## **Other Considerations?**

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- **National Environmental Policy Act**
- **Endangered Species Act**
- **Migratory Bird Conservation Act**
- **Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act**
- **Clean Water Act**
- **National Historic Preservation Act**
- **Coastal Zone Management Act**

## **What Can We Expect?**

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- **Refuge looks forward to expanding public use program on the newly acquired salt ponds**
- **The restoration project is a great opportunity to develop opportunities for the public to enjoy wildlife in an urban setting**

## **Examples of Public Use?**

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- **Areas for waterfowl hunting & fishing**
- **Boating in the slough channels**
- **Trails for walking, wildlife photography and observation**
- **Observation platforms and interpretive signs**



## New Public Uses?

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- **Wildlife Drive?**
  - *Maybe on the flood control levees*
- **Dog walking/Training?**
  - *Doubtful*
- **Exercise Courses?**
  - *Maybe Not*
- **Sail boarding in Salt Ponds?**
  - *I don't think so*

## How Will We Decide?

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**Hard Work of the Stakeholder Forum and Work Groups to advise decision-makers considering wildlife needs and opportunities for wildlife-oriented public use**

