



SAM-ILA

Sportsman's Alliance of Maine Institute for Legislative Action
205 Church Hill Road, Suite 1, Augusta, Maine 04330-8210
207- 623 - 4589 david@samofmaine.org www.samofmaine.org

Statement and Position

Sportsman's Alliance of Maine, Institute for Legislative Action, Position on Proposal by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to Create National Wildlife Refuge in the High Peaks Region

Opposition

7/20/23

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is, *"To administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States"*

The Sportsman's Alliance of Maine strongly supports conserving land and wildlife for the public good. We also believe Maine has a better model for conserving natural resources while promoting public access for all, the Land for Maine's Future Program.

In the last legislative session, our organization worked with our outdoor partners to establish the Land for Maine's Future Trust Fund, providing a mechanism for long term conservation funding. The LMF program is a very popular program because it is managed by the State Legislature and accountable to the Maine people. It also has statutory protections that ensure public access for traditional recreation like, hunting, fishing, trapping, snowmobiling and all forms of recreation.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Wildlife Refuge system is managed by Congress and imposes far more restrictions on public use, than the LMF Program; in addition, changes to management of wildlife and recreational access on a refuge is far more susceptible to lawsuits and the whims of unaccountable lawmakers elected in other states.

Lastly, we are very confused by a recent story in the Maine Monitor, 6/25/23 titled, US Fish and Wildlife Service considers a new refuge in Maine's Western mountains, in which this statement was made, "The agency is studying roughly 200,000 acres straddling the Appalachian Trail, with an eye toward creating a refuge of between 5,000 and 15,000 acres, according to Nancy Perlson, a local conservation consultant working with the Fish and Wildlife Service.

It is difficult to understand and evaluate a proposal that appears more like a fishing expedition with no known public benefit or purpose. There is no land identified as for sale, no wildlife habitat of special significance or under threat of development. Maine has a very successful land conservation program that has conserved over 600,000 acres across the state. If land is in need of preservation, we would certainly assist the people of the High Peaks region.

Recent

<https://themaineonline.com/us-fish-and-wildlife-service-considers-a-new-refuge-in-franklin-county/>

Trapping policy on USFWS NWR Also, there is a list of 10 NWR's in Maine

<https://www.fws.gov/story/trapping>

Hunting of Bears on NWR-No baiting or Hounding

<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/sunkhaze-meadows/visit-us/activities/hunting#:~:text=Black%20bears%20are%20plentiful%20and,excellent%20place%20to%20hunt%20them.>

USFWS Wolf Policy

<https://www.doi.gov/oc/management-wolves>

Department of the Interior-Wolves and Tribes

<https://www.doi.gov/oc/management-wolves>

USFWS Predator Hunting on NWR- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service considering ban on predator hunting in refuge lands

<https://www.ktoo.org/2016/04/27/u-s-fish-and-wildlife-service-considering-ban-on-predator-hunting-in-refuge-lands/>

“Today, USFWS proposed a rule to ban the use of lead ammunition and tackle by 2026 in seven specified national wildlife refuge (NWR) areas: Blackwater NWR in Maryland, Chincoteague NWR in Virginia and Maryland, Eastern Neck NWR Maryland, Erie NWR in Pennsylvania, Great Thicket NWR in Maine, Patuxent Research Refuge in Maryland, Rachel Carson NWR in Maine”

<https://naturalresources.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=413510#:~:text=Today%2C%20USFWS%20proposed%20a%20rule,Maine%2C%20Patuxent%20Research%20Refuge%20in>

Contact:

David Trahan

Executive Director, Sportsman's Alliance of Maine, Institute for Legislative Action