

EDITOR'S PAGE

PROPOSED CHANGES AT PARKER RIVER N.W.R.

This past summer the manager of the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge, Mr. George Gavutis, submitted a report proposing ten significant changes for the refuge. Information regarding these proposals was not widely disseminated; many individuals who regularly visit the refuge are therefore not adequately informed as to the nature and magnitude of the changes contemplated. We have only recently learned of the scope of these proposals through the efforts of Mr. John Grugan, of Boston, who has prepared a 10-page personal evaluation of their environmental impact. Space does not permit us to publish either the complete text of the "planned actions," and the accompanying 39-page environmental assessment prepared by the refuge management, or the response by Mr. Grugan. However, we are able to present our own synopsis of the action planned for the refuge, based on the report submitted by Mr. Gavutis.

1. Headquarters Complex Project (to be located at the present sub-headquarters area, known as the "Warden's.")
 - a. Construct 2500 sq. ft. headquarters building, with 30 parking spaces.
 - b. Construct 5000 sq. ft. maintenance building, with 20-30 parking spaces.
 - c. Construct 5000 sq. ft. visitor contact station, including "open space area" (indoors) to accommodate 250 people, with parking spaces for 75-100 cars and buses.
 - d. Construct three-bedroom residence (approximately 1300 sq. ft.).
 - e. Paving and landscaping.
2. Road and Dike Projects
 - a. Widen main road by 4 ft.
 - b. Pave main road and parking lots.
 - c. Install concrete wheel stops in parking lots.
 - d. Protect and reinforce dike slopes.
 - e. Construct water control structures for Stage Island and North Pool dikes.
3. Comfort Station Project
 - a. Convert seasonal bathhouse at Parking Lot #1 to all-year comfort station.
4. Gatehouse Project
 - a. Construct gatehouse of "adequate size" at refuge entrance.
 - b. Construct visitor contact center able to accommodate 6 people at parking lot.
5. Hellcat Trail Projects
 - a. Upgrade current primitive sanitary facilities.
 - b. Enlarge parking lot to accommodate school buses.
 - c. Replace current blind and add a second.
 - d. Remove current steel sightseeing tower.
 - e. Make additions to boardwalk.
6. &
7. Construct exhibits, interpretive displays, observation blinds, boardwalks, and increase parking capacity at Parking Lots # 10 and # 11.
8. Expand open storage area, east of sub-headquarters, by 50%.
9. Construct 1-1/4-mile boardwalk, toilets, and an observation blind, and

- gravel parking lots in area between Parker River and Mud Creek.
- Construct paved road to, and install, two concrete slab boat ramps 1/4-mile southeast of refuge entrance.

Mr. McAndrews, of the regional U.S. Fish and Wildlife office, has informed us that funding has been obtained for project 1 and 2, and that a funding request has been submitted for project 4. No funding requests have yet been submitted for the other proposals. Mr. McAndrews also indicates that there has been discussion regarding the "downsizing" of the visitor contact center proposed for the new headquarters area, from 5000 to 2000 sq. ft., with space for only 75 people and 35 cars.

We urge everyone to learn more about these proposed changes and to express their opinions to the refuge management and the regional office of the Fish and Wildlife Service. The specific proposals and an accompanying environmental assessment can be examined at the current refuge headquarters at the north end of Plum Island, or a copy may be acquired by writing Mr. Howard Larsen, Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1 Gateway Center, Newton Corner, Mass. 02158.



Will Russell, Davis Finch,
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