



United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE



Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge
22817 Ocelot Road
Los Fresnos, TX 78566

Memorandum

To: Regional Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System

From: Refuge Manager, Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge, Los Fresnos, Texas

Subject: Request for Minor Revision to the 2010 Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan to Expand Hunting Opportunities.

Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge (refuge) completed its Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) in 2010, as required by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act (Refuge Improvement Act).

Background/Need for Amendment:

The Refuge Improvement Act and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) policy identify the need to periodically review and revise Comprehensive Conservation Plans (Fish and Wildlife Service Manual chapters 602 FW 1 and 3). Specifically, the Service Manual chapter 602 FW 3, (Comprehensive Conservation Planning Process) Section 3.2 states, “We will revise the CCP... if monitoring and evaluation determine that we need changes to achieve planning unit purpose(s), vision, goals, or objectives.”

Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge is expanding hunting opportunities to provide compatible wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities and meet priorities and mandates outlined by Secretarial Orders 3347 and 3356. The Service has completed a 2020 White-tailed Deer, Exotic Ungulate, and Alligator Hunt Plan (Hunt Plan) and associated compliance documents, including an Environmental Assessment (EA), Compatibility Determination, and Section 7 consultation.

This memo amends and expands the strategies outlined under Public Use Objective 2 in the 2010 CCP as described below:

- The Hunt Plan updates the huntable species to continue allowing the hunting of white-tailed deer, feral hogs and nilgai antelope, with the addition of American alligator and other exotic ungulates as defined by the State of Texas including fallow deer, axis deer, sika deer, Barbary sheep, and blackbuck.
- Hunting is now open on the Bahia Grande Unit and the La Selva Verde Unit, in addition to the Laguna Atascosa Unit.

To open the refuge to expanded hunting opportunities, the refuge’s Hunt Plan has been written, and its impacts to the human environment analyzed in an associated EA, to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The preferred action in the EA includes modifications to provide new and expanded hunting opportunities for big game on the refuge.

This is considered a minor CCP revision because it does not significantly change the management direction of the refuge. The detailed objectives and strategies added through the 2020 Hunt Plan do not change the overall intent of the CCP objectives, and will provide more opportunities for the refuge to meet specific public use objectives.

Refuge Manager:	SERGIO VASQUEZ <small>Digitally signed by SERGIO VASQUEZ Date: 2020.07.15 14:07:21 -05'00'</small> _____ (Signature)	07/15/2020 _____ (Date)
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Concurrence:

Chief, Branch of Planning:	MONICA KIMBROUGH <small>Digitally signed by MONICA KIMBROUGH Date: 2020.07.20 08:52:07 -06'00'</small> _____ (Signature)	07/20/2020 _____ (Date)
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Refuge Supervisor:	PATRICK MC DOWELL <small>Digitally signed by PATRICK MC DOWELL Date: 2020.07.22 14:53:54 -05'00'</small> _____ (Signature)	_____ (Date)
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Approval:

Regional Chief, NWRS:	STEVEN REAGAN <small>Digitally signed by STEVEN REAGAN Date: 2020.07.23 22:28:49 -06'00'</small> _____ (Signature)	_____ (Date)
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