

Alternative A, or the "No Action" alternative, maintains our current management. Under this alternative, we will continue to

- provide a deer hunt at Wertheim and maintain current fishing access sites
- close beaches at Morton and Target Rock from April through August during the nesting season
- manage populations of the federal-listed endangered sandplain gerardia
- control invasive, nuisance, and overabundant species like *Phragmites*, mute swans, mosquitoes, and deer
- upgrade staff housing and offices

Alternative B, or our "Proposed Action" alternative, describes how we would prefer to manage the refuges. Under this alternative, we will

- initiate waterfowl hunting at Wertheim and Conscience Point, with added emphasis on youth and disabled hunters
- improve fishing access sites at Wertheim in partnership with the DEC [New York State Department of Environmental Conservation]
- expand beach closures from March through September to encourage plover pair formation, nesting, and shorebird migration
- initiate the development of a permanent headquarters/visitor center at Wertheim, on the east side of the Carmans River
- improve significantly public opportunities for environmental education and interpretation, photography, and outreach at the Complex

Alternative C takes a stricter approach to administering the Complex and its biological resources, with less emphasis on visitor services. Under this alternative, we will

- work with town governments to close all refuge beaches and the shoreline above mean low tide to surf fishing during plover, heron, and waterbird nesting seasons and shorebird migration (April 1 through September 30)
- provide no additional hunting opportunities
- develop a cooperative agreement with the DEC and Suffolk County to limit boaters at plover sites, and prevent beach access at Amagansett if plover pairs are observed

Why Do We Need a Plan? Once our Regional Director approves the final CCP, it will provide strategic management direction for all Complex programs over the next 15 years. Among other things, it will ensure term continuity in refuge management and outreach to partners, elected officials, refuge neighbors, and others.

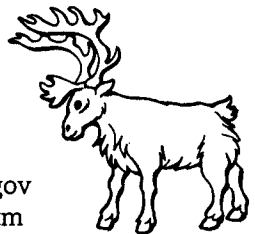
What Can I Do to Get Involved? Please provide us with your feedback on the draft plan during our 45-day period of public review and comment. We also encourage you to attend one of our public meetings. We will post their dates and locations on the Web, or you may call our main office for details.

When Will the Plan Be Ready? The draft will be ready in the spring for public comment. We will address all sub-

stantive comments in a final CCP, which we will complete this summer. Please visit our website or call our main office for details.

For further information on our public meetings or to request a plan, contact

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(631) 286-0485
longislandrefuges@fws.gov
<http://longislandrefuges.fws.gov>
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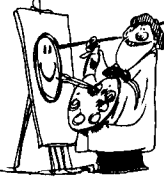
SKETCH, EAT, AND CHAT

Therese Lucas

The evening is about camaraderie as well as fundraising. It's easy. Present your "Easy Way to Raise Dough" coupon at Pizzeria Uno in Lynbrook on **Wednesday, April 26** between 5 P.M. and 9 P.M. when paying (one per table is sufficient) or you can do takeout. SSAS gets back 15% of the total sales up to \$500 and 20% over \$500. Coupons are available at meetings and bird walks. Once you have one, you can make copies and pass them along to family and friends. You don't have to be a member to attend. Join us anytime between 5 and 9 and spend a few minutes or a few hours, whatever suits your schedule.

Pizzeria Uno has a varied menu, ranging from pizza (of course) to pasta, chicken, beef, fish, and salads; something for every palate (see unos.com) and all at a reasonable cost. A nice assortment of desserts is available as well.

A very relaxed "poster" contest will be held. Just bring your "poster" with you to Pizzeria Uno. The "posters" will be on display that night and then brought to the next SSAS board meeting, where two winners will be chosen. The winners will be announced at our May 9 general meeting and you can pick up your "poster" that night. There will be two categories: SSAS membership and birding. The "poster" can be serious or funny, and can be an 8x10 sheet of paper or as large as an oak tag sheet. Use any writing implement, cutouts, or photos, and put your name and phone number on the back (not front). Let your imagination be your guide; it's all for the fun of it!



The only things you have to remember are to bring your "poster" (not mandatory) and to skip lunch (mandatory). The more you eat, the more we make!!

Directions. Pizzeria Uno (aka Uno Chicago Grill) is located at the west end of Phillips Plaza, 693 Sunrise Highway (opposite Lynbrook's LIRR station, west of White Castle and Broadway, and east of Peninsula Blvd.).



OUR E-LIST http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ssas_list



NATURE TALES FROM A WANDERER
A Bald Eagle Observed at Harpers Ferry

Joe Grupp

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park in West Virginia is located in a magnificent landscape, where through a water gap in the Blue Ridge Mountains, the waters of the Shenandoah River empty into the Potomac River. They then splash, roll, and flow to the Chesapeake Bay and eventually to the Atlantic Ocean.

An active old railroad bridge, built in the early 1930s, crosses the Potomac River from Harpers Ferry, where the two rivers join, to the Maryland shore. There the tracks that the bridge carries continue on into a tunnel that has "Harpers Ferry, 1931" carved into its facade. We walked the downstream edge of that bridge, where a steel walkway has been built to carry the Appalachian Trail across the Potomac River. The bridge shows signs of age — its steel is weathered, some black paint is flaking off, and there are some signs of rust — yet its strength and durability are unquestionably safe. I was admiring the components of the old bridge that carries tons and tons of freight on it each day and was contrasting it mentally to the much newer components of the walkway when beyond the upper reaches of the bridge a smooth motion caught my eye. A tall mountain ridge rises from the edge of the very narrow floodplain of the Potomac, appearing almost as a tall wall clothed in leafless trees as I walked towards it. Above the ridge, a large raptor was taking advantage of the air currents forced up over the ridge and was effortlessly soaring in large circles while moving in an upstream direction.

In spite of it being a hazy sunny day, the light on the bird's underside was poor. The long wings of the bird were held almost motionless, the leading and trailing edges somewhat parallel to each other with the trailing edge more curved. Only the wing-tip feathers altered position to compensate for minor air current variations. The most obvious field marks from below were its dark body and slightly darker head and the long tail which had a terminal band. The wingpits, the area where the wings attach to the underside of the body, were a light white and the most evident field mark seen on the underside of the bird. Occasionally, as the bird circled, enough light hit its underside that some white seemed to wash out farther on the wing. The bird was a first-year bird, a juvenile Bald Eagle.

Bald Eagles develop their mature plumage over a period of four to five years. Each year, the character of their plumage differs until they attain the white head and tail that every American is so familiar with.

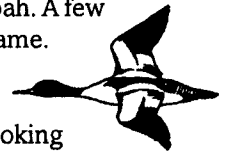
I watched it soar in circles until it drifted out of sight. I was somewhat awed by the bird, even more so because of the setting in which I observed it. The area in and around Harpers Ferry is steeped in history. For Native Americans, the area provided a travel route and food source. In our

early history, the power of the flowing waters of the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers was diverted through turbines to power various industrial mills. The federal armory that was established there in the late 1700s changed, over time, the production of rifles from a craft-based to a machine-based industry capable of producing interchangeable parts for its weapons. In an attempt to free the slaves, John Brown and a small band of supporters attacked the federal armory a few years prior to the Civil War. He was captured, found guilty of treason, and hanged. His action served to raise the nation's attention to the issue of slavery and was instrumental in heading the nation into the Civil War.

There is a natural history in the region also and some of it is disastrous. Flooding of the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers wiped out the works of human beings a number of times. Today, because of the floods, only foundations remain along the river where once homes and industry thrived. I observed more-peaceful natural history on our visit. As I approached the railroad bridge, where the flowing together of the two rivers could be seen, a Common Merganser (pictured) flew down the Potomac around the point of land and up the Shenandoah. A few minutes later, a second one did the same.

A Great Blue Heron was also observed as it stood motionless in an abandoned canal while Mallards floated by. Looking down from the bridge across the Potomac River, I could see a few red cedar trees growing on old stone abutments that once supported a bridge across the Shenandoah, and on one of those abutments a pair of Canada Geese rested.

On the railroad bridge, history, natural history, and the juvenile Bald Eagle became mentally linked together, making a great observation even greater.



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summary I found at the Jamaica Bay Research and Management Information Network Website (<http://nbii-nin.ciesin.columbia.edu/jamaicabay/>), which also has the complete law (and nbii-nin is indeed hyphenated):

On July 20, 2005, Mayor Bloomberg signed Local Law 71, which

- ◇ requires the New York City Department of Environmental Protection to create a watershed protection plan for Jamaica Bay;

- ◇ states that the goal of the Plan is to restore and maintain Jamaica Bay's water quality and ecological integrity;

- ◇ created the Jamaica Bay Watershed Protection Plan Advisory Committee to advise the DEP on the Plan and to provide independent recommendations to the Speaker of the City Council and to the DEP Commissioner.

In developing the Plan, Local Law 71 requires DEP to assess the technical, legal, environmental, and economic feasibility of including the following measures:

- ◇ best management practices to minimize/control soil erosion, and reduce point and nonpoint source pollution, e.g., development practices that control and minimize stormwater runoff;

- ◇ measures to address threats to aquatic habitat, e.g., restoring natural features and water flow;

- ◇ land acquisition, planning/development practices that encourage or discourage certain land uses;

- ◇ protocol for agency coordination;

- ◇ public education program;

- ◇ enhanced enforcement against polluters.

Additionally, the Plan must include:

- ◇ specific goals for restoring and maintaining the Bay's water quality and ecological integrity;

- ◇ boundaries of the Bay's watershed/sewershed for purposes of the Plan;

- ◇ an explanation for any Advisory Committee recommendation not assessed or incorporated;

- ◇ a schedule, with interim and final milestones, to implement the Plan's measures and achieve the specific goals, and methods for monitoring progress.

Under Local Law 71, the Advisory Committee is to provide recommendations concerning the measures that should be included in the Plan. The Advisory Committee will also provide recommendations concerning the other required Plan components, i.e., Plan goals, Plan boundaries, interim and final milestones, and monitoring methods.

Under Local Law 71, the Advisory Committee is required to complete their recommendations concerning the Plan by July 1, 2006. The DEP Commissioner must finish the final Plan by September 1, 2006, and submit it to the Speaker of the Council and the Mayor no more than five business days later. The DEP must review the Plan's progress by October 1, 2007 and every two years afterwards.

The Advisory Committee's workplan is the following:

December–February: With DEP, hold public outreach

meetings, encourage input. Develop preliminary draft of goals, recommendations. Define the watershed/sewershed boundaries for purposes of Plan. Identify outstanding information needs.

March and April: Conduct workshops to fill outstanding information needs.

May: Complete draft recommendations. Receive public comment on draft recommendations.

June: Finalize recommendations.

Input Needed. The Advisory Committee needs your input and ideas on what you'd like to see included in a Jamaica Bay watershed protection plan. Write to Brad Sewell (Advisory Committee Co-Chair), Natural Resources Defense Council, 40 West 20 St., New York, NY 10011 or e-mail him (c/o Megan Lew) at mlew@nrdc.org.

Asian Shore Crabs. At the first public meeting of the Jamaica Bay Watershed Protection Plan Advisory Committee (in Brooklyn; your editor/president attended the second), a participant reported seeing a huge population of Asian shore crabs in Jamaica Bay and suggested that they might be at least partially responsible for the sharp decline of *Spartina alterniflora* grasses there. At the second meeting, American Littoral Society naturalist (and SSAS member) Mickey Maxwell Cohen mentioned this and presented information about the species, which was first found in the U.S. in 1988. Mickey seeks people interested in joining a crab monitoring group at Jamaica Bay; send e-mail to him at bmcohen@aol.com if you're interested.



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NEW YORK AQUARIUM "BEHIND THE SCENES" TOUR (Sat., March 25). Meet 10 A.M. at entrance for 2-1/2 hour special indoor/outdoor tour. See sea otter, walrus, penguins, sharks, stingrays, sea turtles, seals, octopus, etc. Cost: \$20 adults, \$12 kids. Call Don to reserve.

FIRE ISLAND "SUNKEN FOREST" HIKE (Sat., May 20). Join naturalist Steve Finn for a hike along the boardwalk, maritime forest, dunes & beach. Cost: \$20 incl. round-trip ferry from Sayville & guide. Call Steve 631-821-2160 or Don.

JAMAICA BAY SUNSET CRUISES (Sun., May 28 and Sat., June 3, 5 P.M.). Join us for a special 3-hour narrated tour of the backwater marshes aboard 96' boat "Dorothy B VIII" out of Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn. Learn about the bay's history & ecology and see peregrine falcon, osprey, herons, egrets, ibis, oystercatcher, etc. Cost: \$35 incl. tour, wine & cheese, fruit, snacks. Call Don. Rain dates May 29 & June 4.

MONTAUK SPRING WEEKEND (June 9–11). Explore beaches, bluffs & "Walking Dunes" during peak orchid & heather blossom time. Activities incl. birding, botanizing, seining, tidepooling, star watching. Cost: \$325 incl. 2 nights at luxurious Manor House (heated indoor/outdoor pools, jacuzzi), 5 meals, 5 guided hikes, 2 evening programs, pickup at LIRR station.

For information and free field trip brochure,
call/write Don Riepe, (718) 318-9344, driepe@nyc.rr.com,
28 West 9th Road, Broad Channel, NY 11693; www.alsnyc.org.

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Option 2. To join NAS and your all-volunteer local chapter, you can help SSAS survive NAS's major dues-share cutbacks by joining Audubon through us for the same price that it costs if you join through NAS (we get \$0 unless you join through us). Mail the form below and your check payable to **National Audubon Society** to SSAS at the address above. The special rate for the first year is \$20 per household; \$15 for students and seniors.

➔ **Renewing?** Please send NAS renewals directly to NAS (we now get \$0 for all NAS renewals).

Donations to SSAS are always welcome!



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