



NATIONAL
WILDLIFE
REFUGE SYSTEM

Module 4b

Interactions

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mission Statement

“The mission is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.”



PHOTO: KAYLA PELLETIER/USFWS
MAINE COASTAL ISLANDS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE COMPLEX

Refuge Improvement Act

Compatibility

Compatibility is totally unique to the USFWS. We require a compatibility determination for all refuge uses.

This requirement will apply to all such facilities, structures, improvements, and refuge actions associated with uses and the replacements or major repair or alteration of facilities, structures, and improvements associated with already approved uses.



PHOTO: USFWS
AMAGANSETT NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Public Uses

"Big Six" Wildlife Dependent Public Uses

"...declares that all existing or proposed public uses must be "compatible" with the purpose for which each refuge was established."

Interpretation



Wildlife Observation



Photography



Hunting



Environmental Education



Fishing



Some recreational uses *may or may not* be compatible with coastal birds and will differ among refuges.

Sunbathing & Swimming



Leashed Dog Walking



Boating



Beach Combing & Shellfishing



Over-Sand Vehicles & Biking



Public Interaction

Representation

Professionally:

Remember you are representing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Wildlife Refuge System. As a Steward or volunteer, you should present yourself in a professional manner and wear the appropriate attire that your site requires.

Friendly:

The old adage, *"You get more with honey than you do with vinegar"* has bearing. You will *"usually"* have a better interaction with the public if your actions and speech are of a positive friendly demeanor.



PHOTO: USFWS
CHINCOTEAGUE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Public Interaction

Role

Your Role:

Your job and goal is to protect shorebirds through education and interpretation. You should educate visitors about the importance of your site to the wildlife that lives there.

Our mission is “conservation and wildlife first”

You are not an enforcer of the law.

If a visitor is unresponsive or hostile, contact your Supervisor or a Federal Wildlife Officer for assistance.



PHOTO: USFWS
PARKER RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Violations



Be Safe!

The most dangerous situation for a non-law enforcement employee is getting into an encounter, by taking matters into their own hands, without proper authority, training and equipment.

Always act on the side of caution!

Even with having such an important message and role, it is not always possible to educate and influence the public to hear what you have to say.

Violations

Serious Violations

Stop, Take a Breath, and Observe

When should you call 911?

- When you or someone else is in imminent danger OR needs or requests medical attention.
- When describing an incident remain calm, know your location, give pertinent details.

Call a Federal Wildlife Officer ASAP and contact your Supervisor and Refuge Manager.



PHOTO: USFWS

Violations

Serious Violations Continued

Do not disturb a possible crime scene.

Document the Incident:

By taking notes and pictures; this will be helpful later to remember the incident.

Note descriptions of people, vehicles, location, distances, weather conditions, date and time, what happened, etc.

Use the Witness Observation Form.

WITNESS OBSERVATION FORM

- 1) STAY SAFE – DO NOT APPROACH ANY VIOLATORS AND PUT YOURSELF IN DANGER
- 2) STOP AND OBSERVE
- 3) RECORD DETAILED FACTS, INFORMATION AND DESCRIPTIONS (WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY AND HOW)

DATE/TIME OF INCIDENT: _____

INCIDENT WITNESSED (what you saw/heard): _____

LOCATION OF INCIDENT (note landmarks: near lake, road, etc): _____

PERSON(S) INVOLVED:

1st person: Gender: _____ Hair color: _____ Age: _____ Race: _____

Weight: _____ Height: _____ Clothing: _____

2nd person: Gender: _____ Hair color: _____ Age: _____ Race: _____

Weight: _____ Height: _____ Clothing: _____

Additional descriptive information (tattoos, glasses, scars, etc.) _____

VEHICLE(S) INVOLVED:

1st vehicle: License plate #: _____ State: _____

Make/Model: _____ Color: _____

2nd vehicle: License plate #: _____ State: _____

Make/Model: _____ Color: _____

Additional vehicle information (bike, atv, motorcycle, dents, etc): _____

WITNESS CONTACT INFORMATION:

Your name: _____ Phone # _____

2nd witness: Name _____ Phone # _____

REPORT ALL INCIDENTS OCCURRING ON THE ***** NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE TO:

Federal Wildlife Officer *****

Cell: *****

Office: *****

Email: *****

**Use back to sketch incident or for any additional information*

