

# **Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge**

## **Interim Management Plan March 1993**

Prepared by:

### **Alaska Department of Fish and Game Divisions of Wildlife Conservation and Habitat and Restoration**

Carl Rosier, Commissioner  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

David Kelleyhouse, Director  
Division of Wildlife Conservation

Frank Rue, Director  
Habitat and Restoration Division

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
PREFACE.....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	5
THE MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS.....	6
STATUTORY PURPOSES OF THE REFUGE (MISSION STATEMENT).....	8
MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES.....	9
PART 1. PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF HABITAT.....	10
General Management Policy.....	10
Specific Management Guidelines.....	10
A. FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ENHANCEMENT AND USE OF THE FIELDS.....	11
B. RESEARCH.....	15
C. TRAILS AND ASSOCIATED.....	17
D. PICNICKING AND OVERNIGHT CAMPING.....	19
E. AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES.....	21
F. FOREST MANAGEMENT.....	23
G. FIRE MANAGEMENT.....	25
PART II EDUCATION.....	27
A. EDUCATIONAL AND INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMMING AND OPPORTUNITIES, AND USE OF THE BARNS AND FARMHOUSE.....	28
B. INTERPRETIVE MASTER PLAN.....	31
PART III HISTORICAL INTEGRITY.....	34
PART IV. GENERAL PUBLIC USES.....	36
A. Motorized Vehicle Use.....	39
B. Hunting and Trapping.....	44
1. Trapping.....	45
2. Moose Hunting.....	49
3. Small Game Hunting.....	52
4. Migratory Game Bird Hunting.....	55
C. Dog Activities.....	59
D. Organized Events and Activities.....	64
E. Other Uses.....	65
PART V. VIEWING FIELDS MANAGEMENT AREA.....	67

PART VI. REFUGE OPERATIONS (ADVISORY GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS).....	72
A. Land Acquisition and Management.....	74
B. Creamer's Facilities Master Plan.....	79
C. Community Involvement and Participation in Refuge Management Activities .....	83
D. Staffing .....	86
E. Additional Funding .....	88
CONCLUSION .....	90
APPENDICES .....	99
A. ALASKA STATUTE ESTABLISHING CREAMER'S FIELD MIGRATORY WATERFOWL REFUGE.....	A-1
B. ADVISORY GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS.....	A-3
C. ADVISORY GROUP MEMBERS.....	A-12
D. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE MANAGEMENT PLANNING .....	A-14
E. CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF CREAMER'S FIELD.....	A-16
F. REFUGE ACTIVITY CALENDAR.....	A-18
G. CREAMER'S VISITOR CENTER MEETING ROOM POLICY .....	A-19
H. RESOURCE INVENTORY .....	A-21

**List of Maps**

1. CREAMERS FIELD MIGRATORY WATERFOWL REFUGE .....	2
2. VIEWING FIELDS MANAGEMENT AREA .....	71
3. LAND STATUS.....	76

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We thank the members of the Creamer's Refuge Advisory Group, past, present and ex officio, for their hard work in drafting this plan. There were many late meetings when we burned the midnight oil to finish discussing a topic, because of the dedication of this group of people.

In spite of sometimes vast differences of opinion among members, the group worked together to formulate a plan that each member could accept. We all learned how to work together, laugh together, and in the end resolve our differences.

Special thanks to Randall Compton for the donation to the refuge of the drawing used on the front cover of this plan.

We thank Tribune Media Services, Inc. for permission to use a Shoe comic strip and Friends of Creamer's Field for permission to use their logo in this plan.

Many artists have contributed work to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for use in various publications that has been reproduced in this plan. Our thanks to all of these, including Sue Quinlan and Bud Lehnhausen of Linnaea Associates, Richard Carstensen, R. T. "Skip" Wallen, Jim Fowler, Sue Arthur, Bill Ray, Bill Taylor, David Nemeth, Bennie Pokemire, and D & M Bucy and Associates. Thanks also to Frances Inoue for her help in drafting two of the maps.

Margo Matthews

Robert (Mac) McLean

Principal Authors

## PREFACE

Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge encompasses approximately 1,790 acres of state-owned land in the heart of the Fairbanks community. It is known best for the fields adjacent to College Road that attract large numbers of migrating waterfowl each spring, and provide open, pastoral views of the old Creamer's Dairy site. Thousands of people stop to view waterfowl and other wildlife from the roadside parking/viewing area off College Road each spring. After the waterfowl have left Creamer's for nesting grounds, many Fairbanksans and visitors continue to use the refuge for a variety of outdoor activities, or to simply enjoy the peaceful scenery.

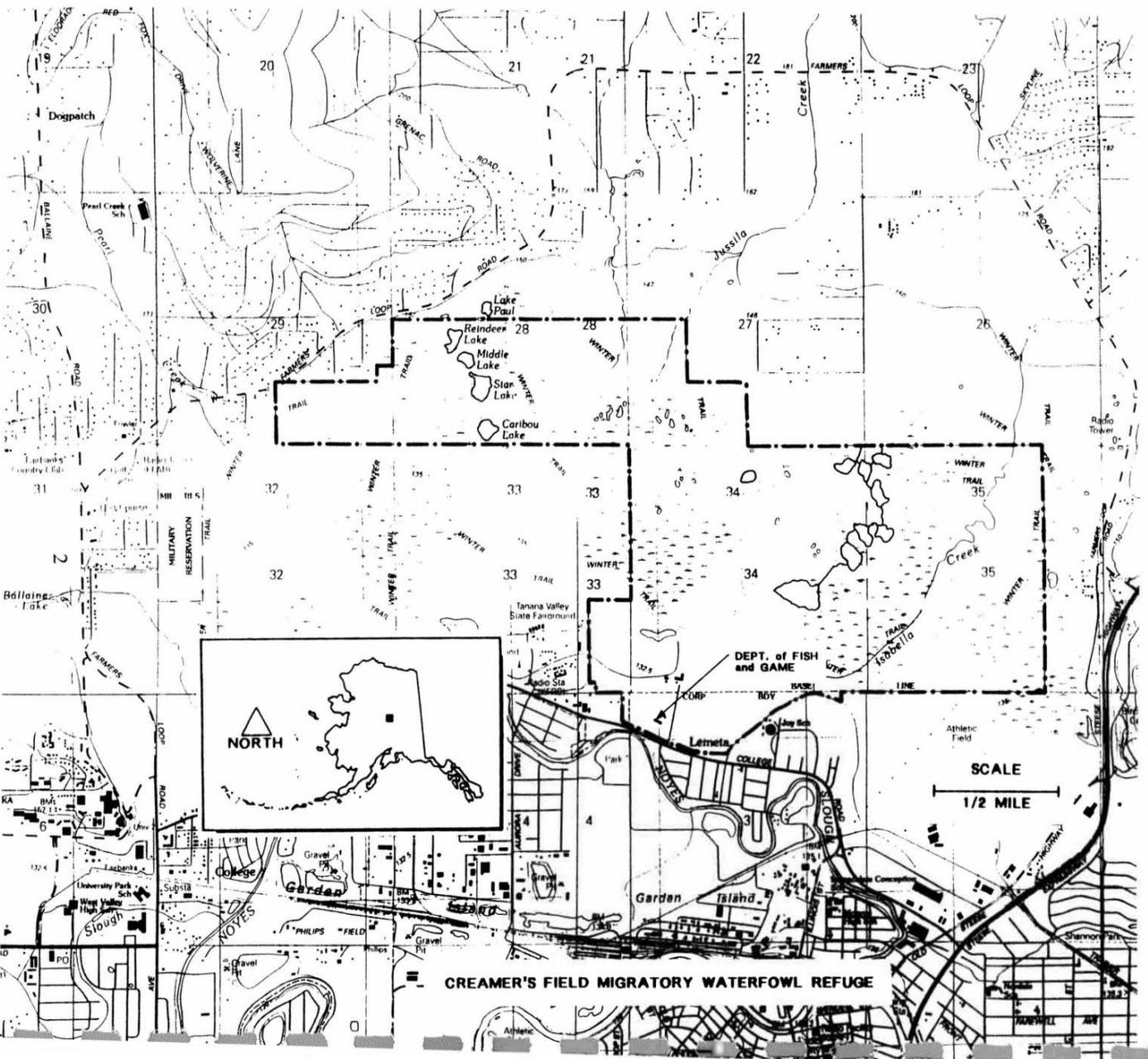
Activities on the refuge include agriculture, research, wildlife watching, photography, walking, working-dog training, hunting, trapping, cross-country skiing, dog mushing, skijoring, and snowmachining. As tourism increases in Fairbanks, Creamer's is seeing more use by visitors from other areas, both individuals and tour groups. The regional headquarters for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (the department or ADF&G) is located on the refuge, next to College Road (see Map One).

Historically, waterfowl viewing at Creamer's Field began when dairy activities first started to attract migrating birds about 1910. The cleared fields with their residual grain and forage crops, and with manure spread on them, melted out early in the spring, providing shallow ponds and feed for waterfowl. Fairbanksans soon learned that excellent spring viewing of these birds was available from Ester Road (what College Road was first called) where it passed Creamer's Dairy. Local news media always featured (and still does) pictures and stories about this wondrous spring migration event along with news about the breakup of interior rivers.

When the dairy fields were put up for sale in 1966, Fairbanks residents who recognized their value for wildlife habitat and open space for the growing community came together to find a way to acquire the property for the public. In 1967 these people, operating through the Alaska Conservation Society, started a fund drive and collected enough money to buy an "option to purchase." This option held the land open until the state obtained federal Pittman-Robertson funds and state funds appropriated by the legislature to purchase the fields (about 250 acres). The Creamer family was anxious to see the dairy fields go to public ownership, and supported this effort by keeping the land off the open real estate market. The fund drive occurred just after the devastating 1967 flood, and its success at this difficult time shows the dedication of Fairbanksans to the concept of keeping Creamer's for wildlife.

Following the purchase, ADF&G worked with the Alaska Department of Natural Resources to get 1,500 acres of adjacent state land, together with the dairy fields, administratively designated as the Fairbanks Wildlife Management Area, in order to protect the wildlife habitat values of the entire area. In 1979 the Alaska Legislature

MAP ONE  
Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge



designated the area as a state game refuge, naming it Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge and stating that it was established to protect and enhance migratory bird habitat, with special emphasis on waterfowl, and to provide opportunity to view, photograph and study various species of plants, wildlife and geological features typical to Interior Alaska. (A copy of the statute is in Appendix A.) In 1982 the state purchased the dairy buildings, which had been placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1977, and the surrounding 12 acres. They are now included in the refuge. More detailed information on the history of Creamer's can be found in Appendix E and in the booklet, *The History of Creamer's Dairy*.

The importance of Creamer's to Fairbanksans is most notably demonstrated by the time, energy and money that have been invested by individuals, groups, and businesses over the years. Each spring the Borealis Kiwanis continues its practice of spreading barley in the viewing field for the waterfowl. In 1970, members of the Alaska Conservation Society and the Fairbanks School District organized a bird identification and observation program at Creamer's Field for school children. This organized wildlife observation program continues to the present with volunteers from the Arctic Audubon Society and the Fairbanks Bird Club.

In 1975, a two-mile nature path was built, with boardwalk constructed over the wet areas, largely through volunteer efforts by the Alaska Conservation Society and the Youth Conservation Corps. A self-guiding booklet for the path containing educational information was developed in conjunction with the Alaska Conservation Society. The Arctic Audubon Society and others have donated funds for the production and printing of this and other booklets about the refuge.

A series of seven ponds was constructed in the northeastern part of the refuge in 1987 with funding from the state's Waterfowl (duck stamp) Fund, and matching funds from Ducks Unlimited. The ponds (known as the waterfowl enhancement project or D.U. ponds) were designed to provide waterfowl nesting habitat to encourage waterfowl to remain at Creamer's throughout the summer. An additional pond for Sandhill cranes was constructed in 1989 under a cooperative agreement with the Fairbanks International Airport. Most recently, a fishing and aquatic education pond was constructed in 1992 under a cooperative agreement with the Midnight Sun Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

Renovation of the interior of the farmhouse was undertaken in 1988 to convert the building into a visitor center for the refuge. The Alaska Craftsman Home Program adopted this project as an energy efficiency retrofit demonstration, and has donated a great deal of time and energy to see it to completion. The project has had materials and labor donated by many businesses and organizations, art prints donated by Alaskan artist Randall Compton, and help and encouragement from the Creamer family. The Arctic Audubon Society is using a previously obtained state grant that was earmarked to develop a nature center in the Fairbanks area to help develop a nature discovery room in the refuge visitor center.

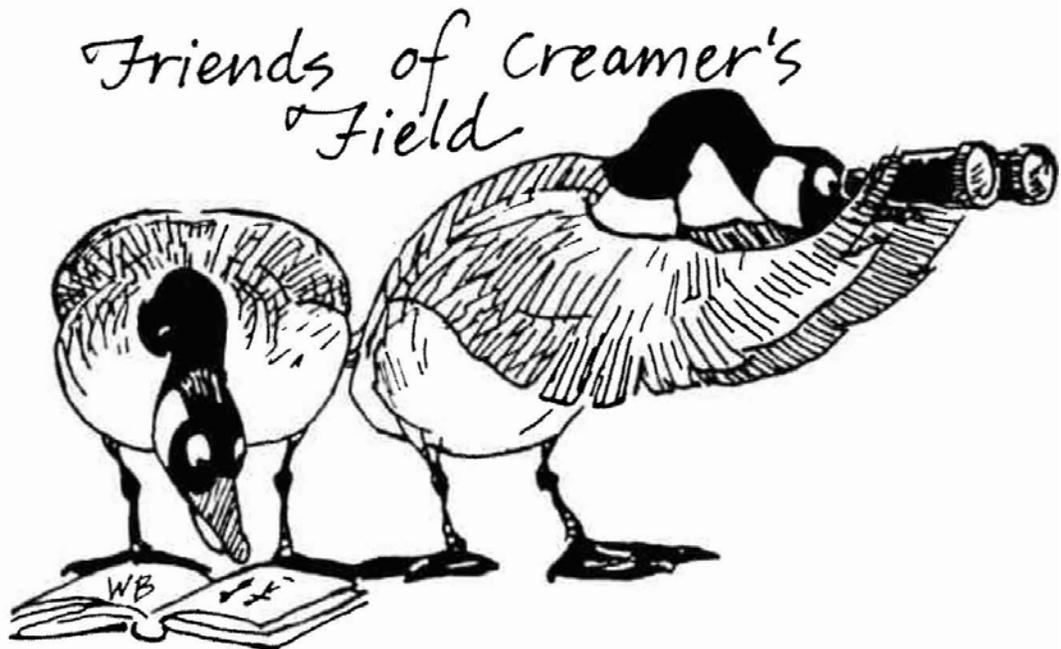
Recently a new non-profit organization, the Friends of Creamer's Field, has formed to increase public appreciation, provide a focus for volunteer energies in developing educational programs, and seek sources of funding for the refuge.

Countless individuals have donated their time, energy, vision, and funds to various projects on the refuge. It is in no small part this spirit of community volunteerism and the hard work and pioneering spirit of the Creamer family that have made Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge what it is today.

\*\*\*\*\*

*"A town is saved, not more by the righteous men in it,  
than by the woods and swamps that surround it" – Thoreau*

In the case of Creamer's Refuge, the woods, swamps,  
and waterfowl are saved, as well, by the generosity and commitment of the town  
that now surrounds them!

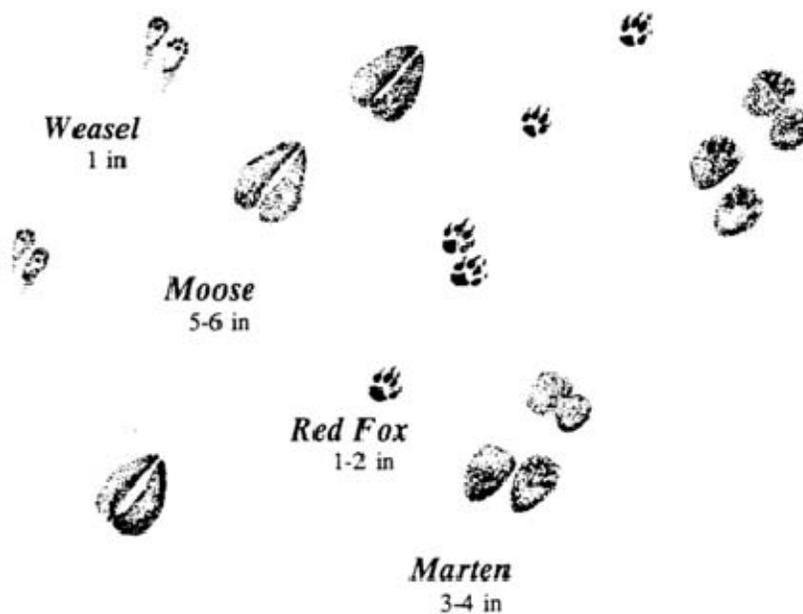


## INTRODUCTION

As Fairbanks has grown, uses of Creamer's Field have increased significantly. To maintain protection of wildlife habitat and coordinate compatible public uses of the refuge, as is mandated in the enabling legislation, the department, in cooperation with community members, has undertaken drafting of this management plan. This plan presents goals for refuge management, and identifies guidelines for determining whether existing and proposed activities are compatible with the refuge's statutory purposes.

Previous planning efforts, completed in 1981, focused primarily on the department's own internal activities rather than addressing the more complex issues associated with promoting and coordinating diverse public uses within or affecting the refuge, including resolution of potentially conflicting uses and development activities. Increasing public use, increasing urbanization surrounding the refuge, and expanding habitat management activities have rendered the previous plan obsolete.

This plan is intended to provide interim operational guidance and greater public involvement in refuge management over the next 10 plus years. The plan will be subject to amendment as future needs dictate, subject to public participation and review. In the future (10 plus years), the department will develop a larger-scale plan for Creamer's that will consider the full range of resource management issues.





## THE MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS

The following management planning objectives were developed to guide the formulation of this plan:

1. Identify public and agency uses of the refuge that are compatible with the statutory purposes and management goals.
2. Identify which of these uses may conflict or interfere with each other and recommend ways to reduce or eliminate these conflicts.
3. Recommend specific projects for the development of refuge habitat, facilities, public uses, and educational programs.
4. Develop recommendations on additional refuge-related issues such as the land south of College Road, corridors outside the refuge, and department facilities on the refuge.
5. Establish a mechanism for continuing public participation in the management of Creamer's, including future planning efforts.

At the onset of this planning process a citizen's advisory group was established. The Creamer's Refuge Advisory Group consists of 12 citizens representing a broad range of public interests and private affiliations. The primary responsibilities of the Advisory Group are:

1. To broaden public awareness, appreciation and use of the refuge;
2. To promote communication among the public, refuge users, interest groups, and the department; and
3. To advise the department on refuge management.

The first task of the Advisory Group was to assist the department in the formulation of this plan. Following that, the Advisory Group will continue to advise the department periodically on refuge management and to review significant projects and activities proposed for the refuge.

The department worked in conjunction with the Creamer's Refuge Advisory Group during a series of 16 meetings to develop this plan. The first step in the planning process was to hold a public meeting (in April 1990) to explain the planning process and solicit ideas, interests, and concerns. The results were used to identify a list of subjects to be addressed in the management plan. The next step was to establish purposes and goals for Creamer's, and objectives for the planning process. Although the statute establishing Creamer's lists the general purposes of the refuge, more specific goals were needed to provide a framework for the plan. The next step was to develop Advisory Group recommendations and management guidelines for each subject. These are the heart of the plan. After a working draft of a plan was developed it was circulated among the department staff and the Advisory Group for review, then revised into a draft plan. The draft plan was distributed to the Advisory Group, the public, and other agencies for review.

All comments received were carefully considered by the department and the Advisory Group. The final plan reflects the consensus of the department and the Advisory Group.

The final plan will be implemented in several ways. The department will review projects and activities proposed for the refuge, including its own activities, for consistency with this plan before deciding whether or not to allow them or issue a Special Area Permit. A Special Area Permit is required for any activity that is likely to have a significant effect on vegetation, drainage, water quality, soil stability, fish, wildlife, or their habitat in the refuge, or which disturbs fish or wildlife (other than lawful hunting, trapping, fishing, viewing, and photography) in the refuge (Title 5, Alaska Administrative Code (5AAC) 95). All projects and activities will be reviewed in this way, whether or not a permit is required.

This plan establishes management guidelines which restrict hunting and trapping activities in parts of the refuge undergoing intensive habitat management or receiving heavy public use. Implementation of these guidelines required changes to the trapping and hunting regulations, which can be done only by the Alaska Board of Game. Accordingly, the department drafted regulatory change proposals for consideration by the Board of Game at its fall 1991 meeting. These proposals were approved by the Board in 1991 and are now promulgated under 5 AAC 92.051, 5 AAC 92.052, and 5 AAC 92.520.

It should be noted that other state, federal, and local agencies also have management responsibilities on the refuge. The Alaska Department of Natural Resources has management jurisdiction over any use, lease, or disposal of resources on the land within the refuge that was not part of the original Creamer's Dairy purchase. The Mental Health Trust Commission oversees actions on Mental Health Trust lands, of which there are about 5 acres in the northwest corner of the refuge. The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation regulates activities affecting air or water quality. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service is responsible for management of migratory bird species, including waterfowl, raptors, songbirds, and others. The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers evaluates applications for discharging dredged and fill materials in waters and wetlands. The Fairbanks North Star Borough exercises Second Class Borough authorities, including land use planning, zoning, and platting. Part of the refuge is within the City of Fairbanks, which governs activities such as use of traps and firearms. These agencies will have an opportunity to participate in the development of the larger-scale management plan when it is undertaken.

## **STATUTORY PURPOSES OF THE REFUGE**

**(see Appendix A for full text)**

1. To provide protection and enhancement of habitat for migratory birds with special emphasis on waterfowl (Alaska Statutes (AS) 16.20.039(c)(1)).
2. To provide opportunity to view, photograph and study various species of plants, wildlife and geological features typical to Interior Alaska (AS 16.20.039(c)(2)).
3. To promote the above purposes by the development of a management plan for the refuge (AS 16.20.039(d)).

AS 16.29.039(d) further directs that recreational and agricultural activity is expressly permitted within the refuge if consistent with the management plan.

## **MANAGEMENT GOALS**

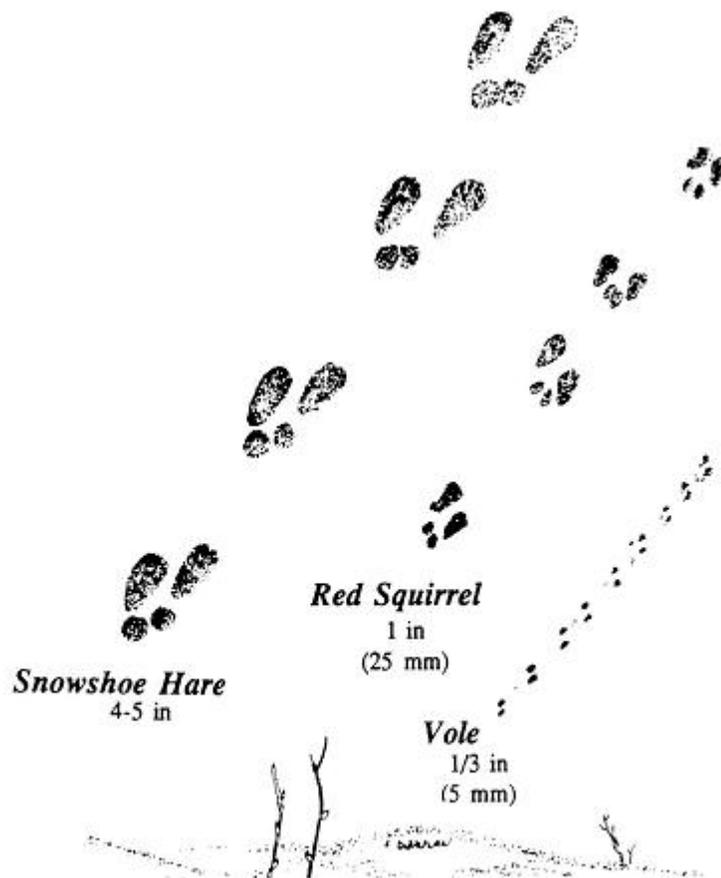
**(Mission Statement)**

The Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge is managed to protect and enhance wildlife habitat, with special emphasis on waterfowl and other migratory birds, to promote conservation of wildlife, and to provide for compatible public uses. The management goals for the refuge are:

1. To protect and enhance the quality and diversity of habitat for wildlife with special emphasis on waterfowl and other migratory birds.
2. To protect and enhance the opportunity to view, photograph and gain an understanding of ecosystems, including wildlife species, plant species, geological and other features typical of Interior Alaska.
3. To encourage opportunities for public education about terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, wildlife, habitat, historical resources and other related topics.
4. To allow other public uses that are consistent with the above statutory purposes and management goals.



## MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES





## **PART 1**

### **PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF HABITAT**

#### **Background**

Throughout the planning process, public, agency, and Advisory Group discussions identified habitat protection and enhancement as the single most important management goal for the refuge. This stemmed in part from the legislation establishing the refuge which requires the "protection and enhancement of habitat for migratory birds with special emphasis on waterfowl" (AS 16.20.039(c)(I)). This focus was extended to include all wildlife species and habitats within the refuge, which is consistent with the department's general authorities and responsibilities under Title 16 of the Alaska Statutes, and has been adopted under this plan as a management objective.

#### **General Management Policy**

Management of the refuge shall be designed to protect and enhance wildlife habitat, with special emphasis on waterfowl and other migratory birds.

All activities shall be conducted in a manner that protects and/or enhances the quality and diversity of wildlife habitat with special emphasis on waterfowl and other migratory birds. Any activity, program, or other use of the refuge that conflicts with the purposes for which the refuge was established (see Statutory Purposes and Management Goals section) or the management guidelines in this plan shall not be allowed.

Public uses shall be managed to provide for those uses which are compatible with the purposes for which the refuge was established. Public uses that are incompatible with the purposes for which the refuge was established shall not be allowed.

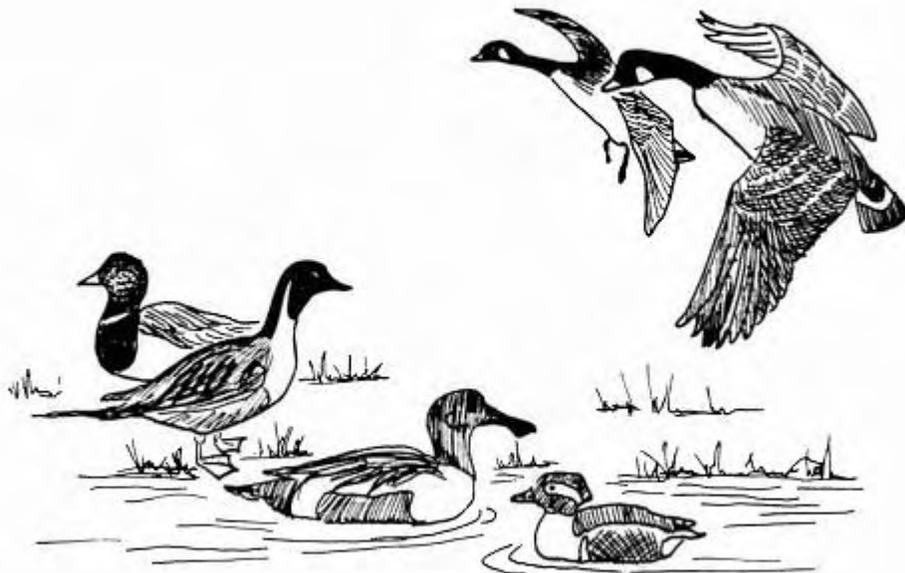
#### **Specific Management Guidelines**

A number of specific management topics were identified as important at the beginning of the planning process. Specific management guidelines were developed to further clarify and augment the general management policy presented above. For each specific management topic, background information is given, followed by the management guidelines developed jointly by the department and the Advisory Group. The guidelines will be used in planning refuge management activities including agriculture, habitat manipulation, research, and department projects, and in deciding whether or not to allow, or place conditions on, proposed activities.



**PART I**

**A. FISH AND WILDLIFE  
HABITAT ENHANCEMENT  
AND USE OF THE FIELDS**





## **PART I**

### **A. FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ENHANCEMENT AND USE OF THE FIELDS**

#### **Background**

A series of seven ponds has been constructed in the northeastern part of the refuge. The first pond was built in 1984 by adjacent landowner George Dornath, in cooperation with the department. Then in 1987 six more ponds were constructed with funding from the state's Waterfowl (duck stamp) Fund, and Ducks Unlimited. The ponds, known as the waterfowl enhancement project and sometimes referred to as the D.U. ponds, were designed to provide waterfowl nesting habitat to encourage some waterfowl to remain at Creamer's throughout the summer.

Another five acre pond has been constructed south of the waterfowl enhancement project, designed to provide summer roosting habitat for sandhill cranes. Known as the crane pond, it is being built as part of the Sandhill Crane Management Project, a joint venture involving Fairbanks International Airport, the University's Agricultural Experiment Station, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The purpose of the project is to deter sandhill cranes and other waterfowl from using the airport, and encourage them to stay at Creamer's instead. Extra barley is being planted at Creamer's, while hazing and habitat manipulation are being done at the airport to reduce its attractiveness to cranes and waterfowl.

A small (1/12 acre) pond was constructed in 1992 immediately west of the bunkhouse (west of the barns). This pond was designed for youth fishing and aquatic education programs under a cooperative agreement with the Midnight Sun Chapter of Trout Unlimited. Future expansions of the pond or construction of a series of interconnected ponds totalling up to two acres is anticipated.

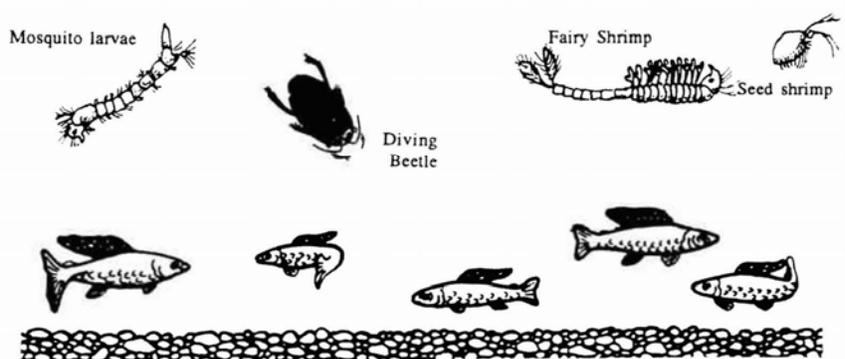
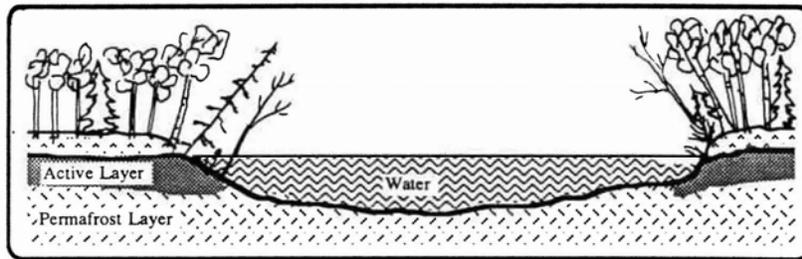
#### **Management Guidelines**

1. The department should evaluate, and as appropriate, implement habitat enhancement projects intended to maintain or improve the productivity of refuge wildlife and waterfowl resources. Emphasis should be placed on maintaining the current diversity of habitats and wildlife and waterfowl resources within the refuge and an appropriate balance between competing uses. Non-forested open space on the refuge should be maintained.
2. Large-scale habitat manipulation within the existing refuge boundaries, for example, moose browse crushing over 70 to 80% of the refuge or development of a large material pit or pond (over 20 acres), is not considered compatible with the purposes of the refuge. However, acquisition and incorporation of lands adjacent to the existing refuge for purposes of large-scale habitat manipulation may be considered compatible provided the other goals and objectives of this plan are achieved (see Part VI.A. Land Acquisition and Management section).
3. Small scale habitat enhancement projects are encouraged in order to maintain the diversity of habitats found on the refuge. Projects must be compatible with the purposes of the refuge and take into account historical values. Acceptable projects are those whose

goals are to enhance wildlife or waterfowl habitat, to provide viewing opportunities, or to promote education about fish and wildlife habitat and habitat enhancement techniques. Examples of acceptable projects are landscaping for wildlife, developing forested strips along the field boundaries, and creating semi- secluded spots for wildlife and viewers.

4. Additional ponds should be developed to promote viewing and educational opportunities. Shallow, seasonal ponds could simply collect spring snow melt (i.e., swales in the fields). Permanent ponds to hold water throughout the summer could be constructed by intersecting the ground water table. The primary purpose of the ponds should be to enhance migratory bird habitats within the refuge. However, other uses, including stocking of fish species indigenous to Interior Alaska, may be considered if compatible with other provisions of this plan and the refuge's statutory purposes (e.g., annual stocking of fish to promote aquatic education programs).
5. Explore the possibility of using Partnership Program funds to develop an aquatic education program on the refuge. Consider implementation of a joint local government/ADF&G effort to rehabilitate Noyes Slough for an urban recreational fishing and aquatic education program.
6. Explore the possibility of using Dingell-Johnson Access funds to acquire and incorporate lands adjacent to the existing refuge for the purpose of developing ponds (including existing ponds or material sites) for an aquatic education program and an urban sport fishery. The ponds should be stocked only with species indigenous to Interior Alaska. Careful consideration should be given to limiting access to foot trail only, to minimize litter and other problems. The primary purpose of the ponds would be aquatic ecosystem education, which could include the wise use of fish resources and proper sport fishing techniques. The secondary purpose of the ponds would be the establishment of an urban fishery.
7. Consider planting more acreage within the Viewing Fields Management Area to barley or other grain species attractive to waterfowl.
8. Consider manipulation and active planting of attractive vegetation within and adjacent to the waterfowl enhancement project to promote waterfowl usage and hunting opportunities.

9. Maintain wildlife habitat and management as the highest priority when making decisions about refuge management.
10. As time and fiscal resources allow, develop a fish and wildlife management plan to provide more direction for habitat enhancement and fish and wildlife management activities. Include management priorities and objectives for habitat and fish and wildlife populations.
11. Provide the opportunity for the Advisory Group to review proposed habitat enhancement projects on a case-by-case basis.





**PART I**  
**B. RESEARCH**





## **PART I**

### **B. RESEARCH**

#### **Background**

Creamer's was the subject of a 1976 study entitled Ecological Survey of the Birds, Mammals, and Vegetation of Fairbanks Wildlife Management Area (now Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge). This Master's Thesis by Michael A. Spindler (University of Alaska Fairbanks, December 1976) gives a detailed inventory of the natural resources of Creamer's, particularly birds.

A research study on sandhill cranes in the Fairbanks area was initiated in 1988 as part of the Sandhill Crane Management Project, and some of the research activities took place in the refuge. For a description of the project, see the Fish and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Section.

In 1992, the Alaska Bird Observatory initiated the Creamer's Field Songbird Project, in cooperation with the department and the Arctic Audubon Society. The purpose of the Songbird Project is to monitor long-term population trends of songbirds. A banding station for small birds was established on the refuge. The project presents banding demonstrations to students and the public, and provides them with the opportunity to participate in bird banding. The project is conducted under the terms of a Cooperative Agreement.

Also in 1992, the Institute of Arctic Biology and the Museum, both of the University of Alaska, began a long-term study of small mammals on Creamer's. It will involve secondary school and university students.

Other research that has been done on Creamer's includes a graduate study of moose in the late 1970s by Matthew Robus and a human use study by Nancy Murphy in 1975.

#### **Management Guidelines**

1. Research which helps to meet the statutory purposes of the refuge is encouraged.
2. Any research activities should be compatible with the purposes of the refuge. Activities should be non-disruptive and should consider aesthetic impacts.



**PART I**  
**C. TRAILS AND ASSOCIATED**  
**ACCESS POINTS**





## **PART I**

### **C. TRAILS AND ASSOCIATED ACCESS POINTS**

#### **Background**

The refuge is crisscrossed by miles of winter trails, many of which are part of the Alaska Dog Musers Association's Jeff Studdert Memorial Trail system. The latter are maintained by the Association under the terms of a Memorandum of Agreement with the department, and are used for their races, training, and general mushing by Association members and others. They are also used by snowmachiners and skiers. Most of these trails are difficult to travel in summer. The trails are listed in the Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Trails Plan as proposed for non-motorized recreation.

The only developed summer trail in the refuge is a two-mile loop footpath beginning at the parking/viewing area on College Road. This is a self-guided nature path with a booklet explaining features to be seen along the way. An addition to this trail currently is under construction and will add a one-half mile loop around the seasonal pond to the existing trail.

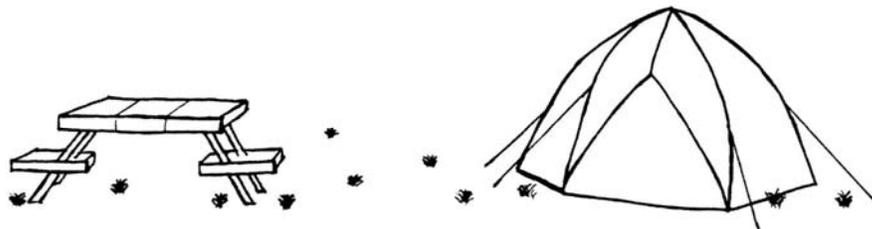
A small parking area was constructed where Farmer's Loop Road crosses a northwest corner of the refuge, during the Farmer's Loop upgrade in 1992. The area provides off-road parking for six to twelve vehicles and is intended as a western access point for the Reindeer, Star, Middle and Caribou lakes area of the refuge. For further discussion of trails and access points, see Part IV.A. Motorized Vehicle Use and Part IV.C. Dog Activities sections, and the Access section of the Resource Inventory in Appendix H.

#### **Management Guidelines**

1. Develop a refuge trails plan to identify the appropriate number of summer trails and access points. The trails plan should include the following recommendations:
  - a. Extend self-guided interpretive trails, like the existing nature path, to each different habitat type on the refuge (such as lakes, swamps, forests, and fields). Consider the northern part of the refuge, especially, for locations for the trails.
  - b. Build an access trail into Caribou Lakes from Farmer's Loop Road.
  - c. For each trail, provide information on trail etiquette and the time needed to make the trip. For a similar recommendation on winter trails, see Part IV.A. Motorized Vehicle Use section.



**PART I**  
**D. PICNICKING AND OVERNIGHT CAMPING**





## PART I

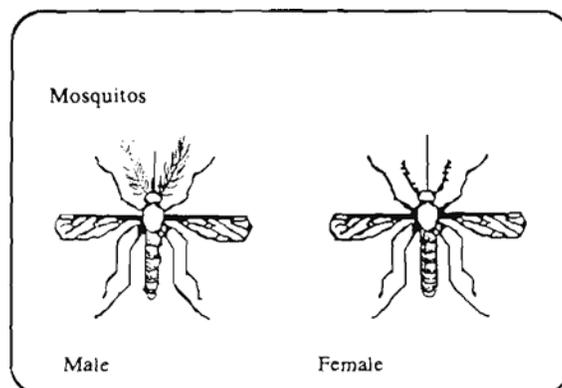
### D. PICNICKING AND OVERNIGHT CAMPING

#### Background

There are currently no picnic or camping facilities on the refuge, with the exception of three small picnic tables by the main office building, primarily used by department employees during lunch hour.

#### Management Guidelines

1. Locate picnic tables or other small facilities only in carefully evaluated sites where garbage would not accumulate and where their use would not disturb wildlife and other refuge users. Consider potential vandalism and maintenance costs.
2. Camping should be generally prohibited. However, camping associated with a valid educational or research activity could be allowed. If such a proposal is received, it should be evaluated to ensure that it is compatible with the refuge's purposes and would produce minimal impacts to refuge resources and other users.





**PART I**  
**E. AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES**



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
Soil Conservation Service



## **PART I**

### **E. AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES**

#### **Background**

The fields were originally cleared from forests for the dairy farm. Without continued farming, they would eventually revert to forest. Currently, the majority of the farm fields are planted in brome hay, and are farmed by the Future Farmers of America under a cooperative agreement with the department. The department plants a smaller acreage, as funding allows, to barley each year. Grain is more attractive to wildlife than hay, but it is much more expensive to farm. Farming either crop keeps the fields from growing back into brush and trees.

#### **Management Guidelines**

1. A farm plan should be developed in consultation with the U.S.D.A. Soil Conservation Service and other knowledgeable and interested people. Practices such as low tillage, natural fertilization, integrated pest management, habitat manipulation experiments, and management for wildlife should be addressed in the plan. The purpose of farming should be to maintain open space and attract wildlife, especially waterfowl. In this context, open space means fields for agricultural production, meadows of grasses and flowers, ponds, and agricultural habitat manipulation experiments.
2. Consider plantings that were historically farmed at Creamer's.
3. Consider planting more acreage to barley or other crops attractive to waterfowl.
4. For farming the hay fields, preference should be given to educational programs such as Future Farmers of America over commercial operators. If commercial haying is allowed, no more than 25% of the refuge's open-space should be committed to this activity.



**PART I**  
**F. FOREST MANAGEMENT**





## PART I

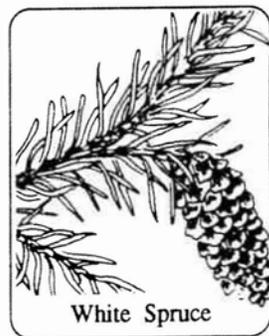
### F. FOREST MANAGEMENT

#### Background

No active forest management has been undertaken on the refuge.

#### Management Guidelines

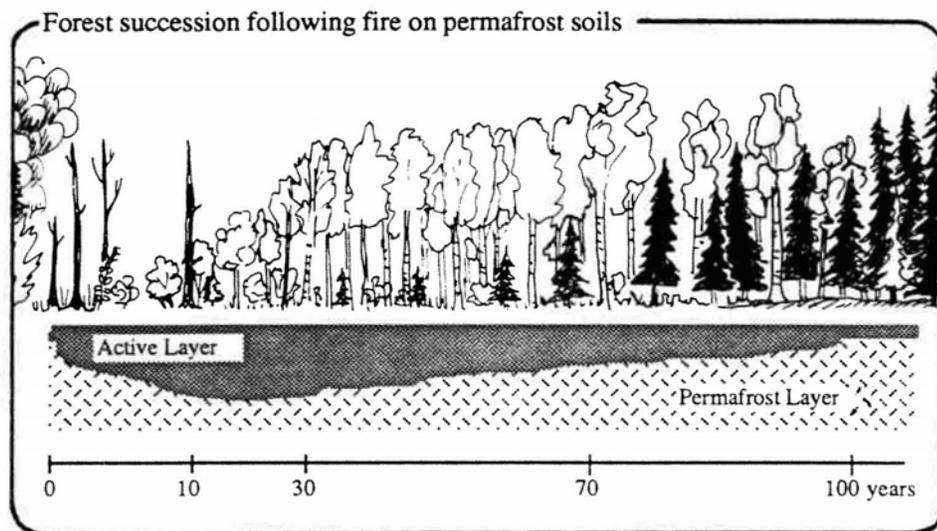
1. Any forest management should be compatible with the purposes of the refuge.
2. Demonstration projects for educational purposes could be compatible.
3. Active forest management should not be done primarily for consumptive uses.





## PART I

### G. FIRE MANAGEMENT



## PART I

### G. FIRE MANAGEMENT

#### Background

Wildland fire suppression for Creamers is governed by the Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan. Under this plan, the refuge will receive a high level of fire protection, which means aggressive fire suppression efforts until the fire is out. This is necessary because of the proximity of the refuge to the densely populated city and suburbs of Fairbanks.

#### Management Guidelines

1. The use of wildland fire suppression methods that will minimize impact to the refuge should be encouraged, when possible. For example, aerial application of water instead of chemicals should be encouraged, and heavy equipment that could cause long term damage should be discouraged.
2. Prescribed fire may be used as a management tool to manipulate small areas of habitat where compatible with the other provisions of this plan, and to reduce fuel accumulations around buildings.



## **PART II**

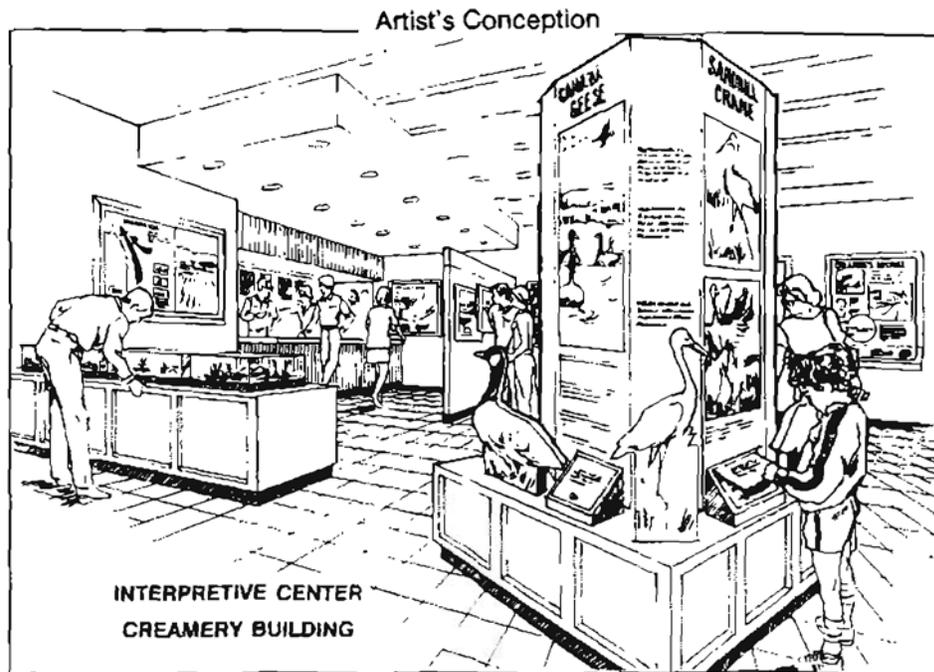
# **EDUCATION**





## PART II

### A. EDUCATION AND INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMMING AND OPPORTUNITIES, AND USE OF THE BARN AND FARMHOUSE





## **PART II**

### **A. EDUCATIONAL AND INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMMING AND OPPORTUNITIES, AND USE OF THE BARN AND FARMHOUSE**

#### **Background**

In 1966 The Audubon Society obtained a grant from the Fairbanks North Star Borough to develop a plan for a nature center to be located between College Road and Farmer's Loop road. The resulting Nature Center Proposal of 1967 contained concepts that led to the creation of the refuge and that can be found in this plan.

The department has published four informational brochures about Creamer's; a leaflet with a map and very general information, the Nature Path Guide with a self-guided informational tour of the nature trail, the Winter Guide with similar information for winter visitors, and The History of Creamer's Dairy booklet.

The Friends of Creamer's Field, a non-profit community organization, has recently been established in part as a result of a recommendation of the Advisory Group early in this planning process. The goal of Friends of Creamer's Field is to increase public awareness of and appreciation for the natural and historical values of the refuge and other Alaskan natural resources, through educational programs focusing on:

1. natural history of Alaskan species, concentrating on the waterfowl, other wildlife and vegetation of the refuge;
2. general ecosystem interactions, emphasizing how the roles of waterfowl, vegetation, geology, aquatic ecology, and other features of the refuge contribute to the uniqueness of its ecosystems; and
3. historical aspects of Creamer's Dairy and surrounding lands.

The department has renovated the interior of the farmhouse for use as a visitor center for the refuge. The Alaska Craftsman Home Program did most of the renovation work as a demonstration energy efficient retrofit project. Groups such as the Friends of Creamer's Field and the Arctic Audubon Society are actively working on establishing the new visitor center, and displays and educational programming for it.

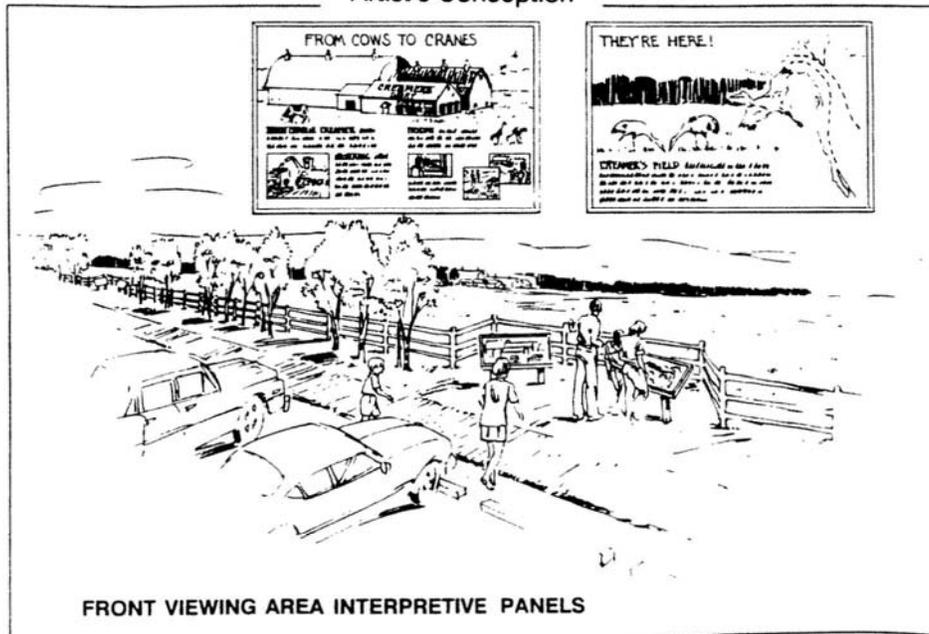
Over the years, the Girl Scouts, Alaska Children's Museum, and Northern Alaska Environmental Center have periodically held nature camps on the Refuge. In 1991, the Northern Alaska Environmental Center, acting in conjunction with Friends of Creamer's Field, the department and a community advisory board, began a summer youth day camp program, called Camp Habitat, emphasizing nature awareness.

## Management Guidelines

1. The statute establishing the refuge specifically mentions education about interior Alaskan ecosystems as one of the purposes of the refuge. Decisions about management of the refuge should encourage and promote the educational aspects of activities on the refuge.
2. Promote educational programs on the refuge. Content should include information about ecological processes, human interactions in those processes, and wildlife management and habitat enhancement programs and goals. Educational programs and events taking place on the refuge should not be used to lobby for specific agency or private viewpoints.
3. Encourage active use of the buildings by community and private groups. Uses must be directly or indirectly related to department or refuge programs, as set forth in the Creamer's Visitor Center Meeting Room policy (see Appendix G).
4. Wildlife viewing is an important aspect of the refuge. Construction of additional viewing stands or blinds in appropriate areas is compatible with, and enhances, the purposes of the refuge. These areas should be screened from road traffic with vegetation or artificial hills and should be somewhat raised to enhance viewing. However, they should not completely block the view of the fields and dairy from College Road.
5. Increased opportunities for wildlife photography should be provided for. Consider initiating a refuge photography contest as a way to increase public awareness of and participation in this activity.
6. Public information and visitor center facilities are an important aspect of the refuge. However, they should not occupy more land than is currently devoted to roads and buildings on the refuge, and buildings should conform to the existing farm building style of architecture.
7. Education emphasis should be placed on observation, identification, and interpretation of ecological processes. Zoos, wildlife parks, or botanical gardens should not be created on the refuge; however, this does not exclude aquariums, terrariums, wildlife landscaping, a garden project, or similar projects from the existing developed part of the refuge (i.e., near the visitor center).
8. A limited number of wildlife enclosures constructed near nature trails would be valuable for educational purposes.

## PART II INTERPRETIVE MASTER PLAN

### Artist's Conception





## **PART II**

### **B. INTERPRETIVE MASTER PLAN**

During the summer of 1992 the department let a professional services contract to have an interpretive master plan prepared for Creamer's Refuge. This was done by contract because it was felt that better expertise was available outside the department, and because there was a need to get a conceptual plan into place quickly. This was because the refuge had received U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Challenge Grants for some elements of an interpretive program on the refuge, including a new nature trail, interpretive signs, and displays for the visitor center. Since the grant funds have to be spent in 1992-93, a plan was needed to guide development of the interpretive program on the refuge.

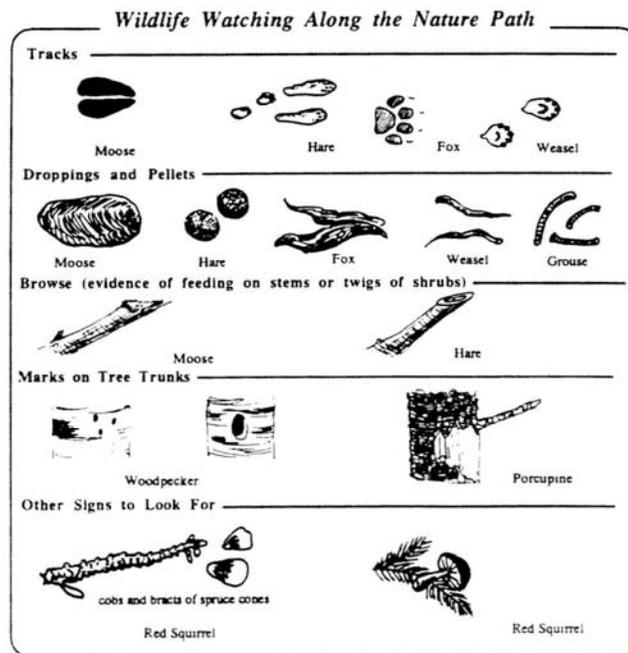
The interpretive master plan was completed in September 1992. It outlines goals for the interpretive program on the refuge, based on and derived from the goals for the refuge contained in this management plan. The interpretive plan goals are as follows:

1. Reduce inadvertent destruction of historic refuge facilities.
2. Increase public understanding of the department's management policies.
3. Contribute to the creation of use patterns that protect refuge resources.
4. Make visitors aware of opportunities to view, photograph, and learn about ecosystems.
5. Provide an interpretive infrastructure that enhances opportunities to view, photograph, and learn about ecosystems.
6. Educate people about ecosystems, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, seasonal cycles, refuge history, and related topics.
7. Provide an interpretive infrastructure and program that is appropriate for school groups and environmental education programs.
8. Develop an interpretive program that is appropriate and attractive for agencies and organizations with similar interests and purposes.
9. Provide an interpretive network that complements and enhances the farm-like appearance of the refuge.
10. Reduce user conflicts.
11. Increase tolerance for multiple use of the refuge.

As stated in the introduction to the interpretive master plan, the document is a plan, not a design, based on the information available at the time, and represents recommendations made to the department by the contractor. It is largely a conceptual plan containing many ideas and suggestions for interpretation on the refuge. The design details will need to be filled in as the interpretive program is developed.

The plan contains a conceptual site plan, themes that interpretive information should convey to visitors, ideas for how to convey the information (such as signs, brochures, etc.), approximate costs, and background information. Many pictures, drawings, and maps expand on the ideas in the plan.

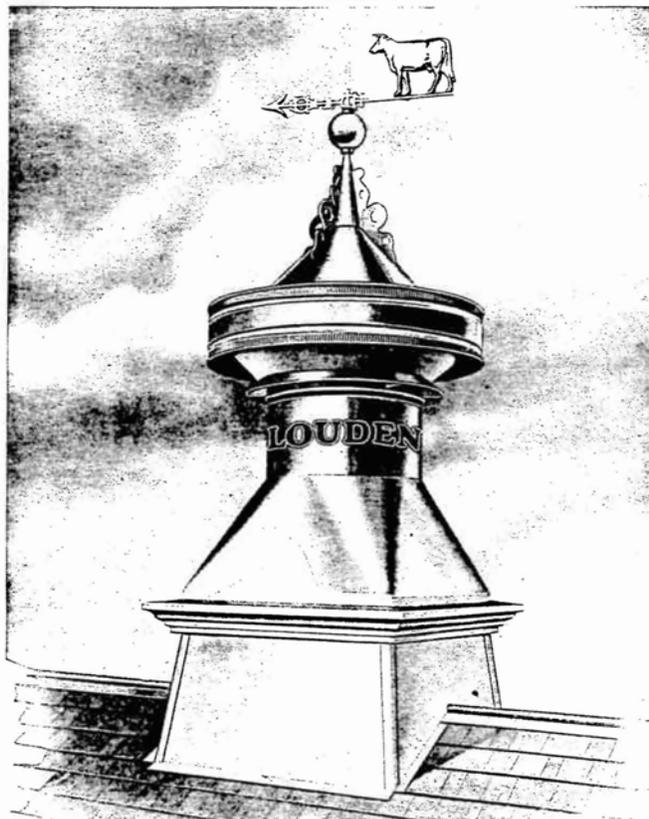
Copies of the Interpretive Master Plan are available to read at the department's Fairbanks Regional Office.



**PART III**  
**HISTORICAL INTEGRITY**

 The Louden Machinery Company

The Louden Ventilating Cupola—Fig. 1396  
Patented November 8, 1921





## **PART III**

### **HISTORICAL INTEGRITY**

#### **Background**

Support and work towards the preservation of the historical integrity of Creamer's has come from the Creamer family, the Tanana-Yukon Historical Society, the Alaska Office of History and Archaeology, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Alaska and Polar Regions Department of the Rasmussen Library, University of Alaska Fairbanks. In addition, the Alaska Craftsman Home Program has renovated the interior of the farmhouse, carefully preserving the important historical features while meeting their standards for high energy efficiency. Preservation of the historical integrity of Creamer's and of the dairy buildings is a major concern of these groups, the public, and the department. Some inspection and evaluation work on the buildings has been done in the past. Further evaluation is needed, and a great deal of restoration and maintenance work remains to be done. Funding is needed to accomplish these things. All the dairy buildings are on the National Register of Historic Places.

#### **Management Guidelines**

1. Maintain the National Register status of the dairy buildings by following the Secretary of Interior's Guidelines in the restoration and maintenance of the buildings.
2. Establish a cooperative effort with the Tanana-Yukon Historical Society and the Alaska Office of History and Archaeology to gather all available information on the dairy buildings, seek further advice from other sources, continue evaluation, restoration and maintenance work, and seek funding from all possible sources to preserve and restore the buildings (see Part VI.E. Additional Funding section).
3. The fields, as well as the buildings, are an important part of the historical values. Maintain the fields to prevent them from growing back into brush and trees, keeping in mind that wildlife and habitat have the higher priority.
4. Important historical events should be included in educational programming. These include the role of the dairy in the growth of the Fairbanks community, and the role of the Creamer family in their pioneering efforts with the dairy, and their foresight in the establishment of the refuge by holding the dairy fields open for purchase by the state following the community fund drive.



# CREAMER'S DAIRY

PHONE 24-E UNIVERSITY ROAD

Alaska's Largest and Best Equipped Farm  
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

January 12, 1938

Louden Machinery Co.  
Fairfield, Iowa

Gentlemen:

Your letter with blue prints ere received and contents carefully noted. I am sending an airplane picture of the place, showing the location of the buildings. The barn we have at present is one hundred twenty (120) feet long with a feed room of forty (40) feet which makes a total length of one hundred sixty feet (160 ft.) You will note the tall building on the barn has two, five foot silos inside. The back part of the barn, that to the left of the silos, is seventy feet long. I figure to tear that part off and build the new barn there and abutting on to the silos. The other end is to be left. A part of it used for feed room and for extra stalls. I am planning on later adding two more silos to make the tall building square.

(answers to questions)

(Q.3) We have electricity, one hundred twenty volts and sixty cycle.

(Q.4) The tubular arch stalls will be satisfactory. All have loose.

(Q.7) The barn is kept around fifty degrees F. all of the time.

The herd is fifty-fifty combination of Holsteins and Guernseys but we expect to have 2/3 guernseys.

After reading your explanation the eight foot ceiling will be all right.

Will the Litter Carrier be available to travel around and just use one door from both litter alleys. Yes, show double door passage ways on revised plans.

(Q.6) I can get all information on heating unit here.

(Q.8) Yes, show ventilating equipment on future plans.

And figure on cork brick under cows as they are in barn all winter.

The litter is to be taken ~~and~~ the west door also have taken in on west end. Will litter carrier interfere with putting hay in loft?

**PART IV**  
**GENERAL PUBLIC USES**





## **PART IV**

### **GENERAL PUBLIC USES**

At the beginning of this planning process, several key public use issues were identified as having existing or potential conflicts. Management guidelines were developed for these issues and are presented in this part of the plan.

For each issue, background information about current use is given, followed by management guidelines developed jointly by the department and the Advisory Group. Supporting material, including comments that were made at Advisory Group meetings and recommendations made by the Advisory Group, can be found in Appendix B.

The guidelines will be used by the department in managing public uses on the refuge, and in reviewing proposed activities that require a Special Area Permit when deciding whether or not to allow, or place conditions on, proposed activities.





**PART IV**

**A. MOTORIZED  
VEHICLE USE**





## PART IV

### A. MOTORIZED VEHICLE USE

#### **Background**

##### 1. Off-road Vehicle Use

Off-road vehicle use on the refuge has been subject to a permit requirement since 1985. Unauthorized summer and fall off-road vehicle use occurs within farm fields and on some of the established winter trails prior to extensive snowfall, primarily by 3- and 4-wheelers and motorcycles. Some cross-country travel occurs on refuge wetlands. Occasional summer and infrequent winter (in light snow pack conditions) 4-wheel drive highway vehicle "sorties" across fields and on existing trails also occurs. These uses are not authorized under existing policies or regulations. Although fencing has been installed at key access points (and subsequently destroyed in some locations) in an effort to limit unauthorized use, efforts at placing signs, public education, news releases and enforcement directed at eliminating these unauthorized uses has been minimal.

##### 2. Winter Snowmachine Use

General winter snowmachine use takes place within the refuge (primarily on the fields and along established winter trails) from early November to early April. Historical use has occurred for decades, with the refuge serving as a connector to a network of winter trails in Goldstream Valley, Chena Hot Springs Road, the Chena River, Tanana Flats, Chena Ridge, military lands, and the flood control project. Many of these connections would not be available without the refuge trails.

The refuge itself provides many opportunities for snowmachine users. Many riders enjoy the wildlife viewing potential. With good populations of moose, fox, small mammals and birds, riders are provided with opportunities to view and enjoy wildlife. The refuge also provides local riders with an opportunity to play, because of the availability of open areas with limited tree coverage. Snowmachine races were held on the refuge from the late 1960s until the early 1980s, but there have been no organized snowmachine activities on the refuge since then.

#### **Legal/Historical Status**

All off-road use of wheeled or tracked equipment within the refuge requires an ADF&G Special Area Permit under AS 16.20 and 5 AAC 95.420 (regulations effective in 1985).

The department may issue a permit for either an individual or the general public, but only if the following standards are met:

1. the use or activity is consistent with the protection of fish and wildlife and their use, protection of fish and wildlife habitat, and the purpose for which the refuge was established; and
2. the use or activity does not unduly restrict or interfere with the public use and enjoyment of the resource values for which the refuge was established; and
3. any adverse effect upon fish and wildlife, and their habitats, and any restriction or interference with public use, is mitigated (5 AAC 95.430).

Currently, a general Special Area Permit is issued each fall to allow public off-road snowmachine use on the refuge during the winter.

The Jeff Studdert Memorial Trail system, located partly on the refuge, is maintained by the Alaska Dog Musers Association (ADMA). Maintenance activities are regulated under a Memorandum of Agreement between the ADMA and the ADF&G. The Memorandum of Agreement specifies that the trail system shall be open to public use and requires that use of the trails is not limited to the activities of dog mushing or to the ADMA and its members" (for more information, see Part IV.C. Dog Activities section). ADMA uses snowmachines for trail maintenance work, and department personnel also use snowmachines for refuge management and enforcement activities.

### **Conflict Identification**

Motorized vehicle uses within the refuge received the most public comment of any management issue discussed during development of this management plan. While nearly all those commenting supported imposition of restrictions on spring, summer, and fall off-road motorized vehicle use (usually citing wildlife harassment, habitat impacts, and a general incompatibility with refuge purposes), regulation of winter off-road vehicle use (particularly snowmachine) generated significant discussion and disagreement among various refuge users. Approximately half of the public comment supported either an outright prohibition of all winter motorized vehicle use within the refuge or establishment of a core area closed to motorized use. Conversely, roughly half supported continuation and possible expansion of winter snowmachine and three- and four-wheeler vehicle uses within the refuge.

Public comment and Advisory Group discussion primarily focused on the following three areas of concern:

1. Public Safety motorized versus non-motorized winter uses of the same trails.
2. Habitat Impacts snow compaction, wildlife harassment.
3. Philosophical pro-snowmachine versus anti-snowmachine. Philosophical viewpoints on the use of snowmachines within the refuge vary widely. At issue is the question of what the public expects, wants, and in some cases, what they believe (correctly or not) the refuge was created for.

### **Winter Snowmachine Use**

During this planning process an effort was made to resolve the areas of disagreement regarding winter snowmachine use on the refuge. It was discussed extensively at several Advisory Group meetings and in other meetings with those particularly interested in this issue. Draft management guidelines were tentatively agreed upon by the end of 1992. However, before the plan was finalized agreement was lost. In view of the fact that it will take additional, unscheduled staff time and effort to reach agreement and draft new management guidelines, the department decided not to postpone finalizing this management plan until the snowmachine use issue could be resolved. Therefore, it is not addressed in this plan, and will be addressed through a separate planning process in the future.

The future plan will also address safety concerns, winter trails use, finding ways to accommodate multiple uses of the refuge's trail system by both motorized and non-motorized uses (cross-country skiing, ski-joring, dog mushing, snowshoeing, and hiking), and finding ways to minimize potential philosophical conflicts through development of educational programs, posting of informational signs, and development of a winter trail safety and etiquette guide. The plan will be done in conjunction with the Advisory Group and in consultation with the Alaska Dog Musers Association, the Fairbanks Snow Travelers, and other interested groups and individuals. The draft management guidelines and Advisory Group comments and recommendations that were generated during this planning process will be saved for use in the future planning process.

**Management Guidelines (Other Motorized Vehicle Use)**

Motorized Highway Vehicles and Heavy Equipment: The off-road use of motorized highway vehicles and heavy equipment (vehicles weighing more than 1500 pounds gross vehicle weight (GVW), including 4-wheel drive vehicles, and passenger cars) is prohibited year-round within the refuge. except as authorized by the department under a Special Area Permit or cooperative agreement for use on existing farm roads or for refuge management, habitat enhancement, or emergency purposes, subject to the requirements of 5 AAC 95,430 (see above).

Spring/Summer/Fall Off-Road Motorized Vehicle: Spring/Summer/Fall off-road motorized vehicles use (off road motorized vehicles less than 1500 pounds GVW) is prohibited within the refuge between April 15 and October 15, except as authorized by the department under a Special Area Permit or cooperative agreement for legitimate purposes where a demonstrable need can be shown, or for refuge management, habitat enhancement, or emergency purposes; subject to the requirements of 5 AAC 95.430 (see above).



## **PART IV**

### **B. HUNTING AND TRAPPING**





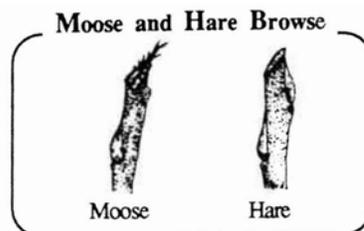
## PART IV

### B. HUNTING AND TRAPPING

These were among the most difficult issues to address in this plan. Members of the public and the Creamer's Refuge Advisory Group had strong feelings about these uses of the refuge, from differing viewpoints. The department felt it was important to find a way to accommodate a full range of public uses compatible with the purposes of the refuge, while maintaining protection of wildlife habitat.

The ideas that emerged from the discussions of these issues were that Creamer's should provide enhanced opportunities for education for trappers and hunters and for other refuge users about trapping and hunting, and that while the use of the refuge and its facilities for these purposes should be encouraged and expanded, it is also important to manage trapping and hunting activities through timing and area restrictions to minimize the perceived or potential conflicts with the purposes for which the refuge was established and other refuge activities.

The intent of the management guidelines presented below is to minimize conflicts now so that trapping and hunting activities may continue on the refuge in the future.





## **PART IV**

### **B-1. TRAPPING**





## PART IV

### B-1. TRAPPING

#### Background

##### 1. Status of Existing Use

Occasional, sporadic trapping has occurred on the refuge. There is no documentation for most of this use. It is believed that most activity has been either in the northern part of the refuge by residents of the Farmer's Loop area or in the southern part by city residents. Some of this use has been by youngsters and adults teaching youngsters. Trapping activity is likely to have been for the following species and areas:

- Fox sets in various locations.
- Probable muskrat sets in the natural lakes, squirrel sets in spruce forests and weasel sets in various locations near water.
- Probable hare and lynx sets in the past during periods of high populations in various locations.
- Possible marten sets in spruce forests and mink sets in various locations near water.

Occasional problems have arisen when loose dogs have been accidentally caught in traps set for wild animals.

##### 2. Legal Status

For furbearers occurring on Creamer's, the 1992 - 1993 trapping seasons and bag limits for the Fairbanks area, including Creamer's, are listed below.

Species	Season	Bag Limit
Beaver	Nov. 1 - April 15	25
Fox	Nov. 1 - Feb. 28	No limit
Lynx	Nov. 1 - Jan. 31	No limit
Marten	Nov. 1 - Feb. 28	No limit
Mink	Nov. 1 - Feb. 28	No limit
Weasel	Nov. 1 - Feb. 28	No limit
Muskrat	Nov. 1 - June 10	No limit
Squirrel	No closed season	No limit
Woodchuck	No closed season	No limit

## Notes:

1. Furbearers may be taken by trap, snare, or firearm under these trapping regulations.
2. Snowshoe hare, grouse, and ptarmigan may be taken by snare under the hunting regulations.
3. City ordinance prohibits the setting of snares or traps and the discharge of firearms within city limits.
4. Skins of beaver and lynx must be sealed by ADF&G (or representative) within 30 days of the close of the trapping season.

**Management Guidelines**

The intent of these guidelines is to keep most of the refuge open to trapping and to encourage educational trapping activities in the refuge.

1. Require a registration permit to trap on the refuge with the following conditions:
  - a. Require education and orientation for trappers prior to obtaining a registration permit for the refuge (see #2 below).
  - b. Close a designated area to include the agricultural fields and the existing nature path to trapping (see Part V. Viewing Fields Management Area (Units A and B) section, and Map Two).
  - c. Trappers may pass through the closed area noted in b. above to reach other parts of the refuge open to trapping, except for the Sandhill Crane Management Area in the east portion of Unit B, which is closed to all public access, including transit through the area to reach other portions of the refuge, during the fall bird migration in September.)
  - d. Labeling of traps and snares with the registration permit number.
  - e. Harvest reporting.
2. The remainder of the refuge is open to trapping under a registration permit.
3. Develop educational material to be given to and discussed with trappers intending to trap on the refuge, and determine that the applicant understands the material. The following subjects should be included:
  - a. Boundaries of the closed area.
  - b. Suggested daily checking of sets and the reasons for it.

- c. Suggested setbacks from trails and the reasons for it.
  - d. Information on other uses taking place on the refuge.
  - e. Discussion of trapping ethics and the philosophical controversy over trapping.
  - f. Safety.
4. Provide other refuge users with educational information about trapping, by developing materials for the visitor center, informational handouts, and signs informing dog walkers about trapping activities and the borough leash ordinance.
  5. Manage trapping activities on the refuge to promote the development and maintenance of a sustainable beaver population, particularly within the waterfowl enhancement project area. It is the intent of this management guideline to manage beaver populations to promote beaver activities as a natural aid to water control and impoundment in the man-made waterfowl enhancement ponds.
  6. Include information on the role of beaver in the control and formation of wetland habitats in the refuge's ecosystem education programs.





**PART IV**  
**B-2. MOOSE HUNTING**





## PART IV

### B-2. MOOSE HUNTING

#### **Background**

##### 1. Status of Existing Use

Bowhunting for moose occurs on the refuge each year. It is not known how many people participate in these hunts or what the harvest is. It is believed that up to several dozen hunters hunt on Creamer's and that several moose are taken each year. Some bowhunters come from other parts of the state to participate in these hunts. A number of tree stands have been erected on the refuge, many of which are left up year round. Most moose hunting seems to take place in wooded or brushy areas, near the waterfowl enhancement ponds, or on the north edge of the fields.

##### 2. Legal Status

For moose hunting, the 1992 - 1993 seasons and bag limits for the Fairbanks Management Area, which includes Creamer's, are:

<u>Season</u>	<u>Bag Limit</u>
Sept. 1 - 30	One bull
Nov. 21 - 27	One bull

Notes:

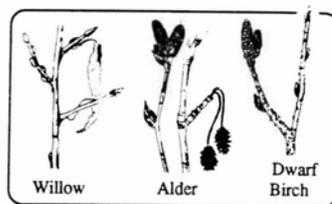
1. Moose hunting is by bow and arrow only.
2. Registration permits are required.
3. Hunters must successfully complete a department-approved bowhunting course (International Bowhunters Education Program or equivalent) before registering.

#### **Management Guidelines**

The intent of these guidelines is to keep most of the refuge open to moose hunting and to encourage educational hunting activities in the refuge.

1. Require a registration permit to hunt moose on the refuge with the following conditions:

- a. Close a designated area to include the front viewing fields and the existing nature path to moose hunting (see Part V. Viewing Fields Management Area (Unit A) section, and Map Two).
  - b. Moose hunters need not obtain an additional permit to hunt on Creamer's in addition to the registration permit already required to hunt in the Fairbanks Management Area. The Fairbanks Management Area permit will be modified so that hunting activity on the refuge can be reported.
  - c. Hunters may pass through the closed area noted in a. above to reach other parts of the refuge open to hunting, except for the Sandhill Crane Management Area in the east portion of Unit B, which is closed to all public access, including transit through the area to reach other portions of the refuge, during the fall bird migration in September.
2. The remainder of the refuge is open to moose hunting.
  3. Develop educational materials to be given to bowhunters when registering to hunt on the refuge. The following subjects should be included:
    - a. Boundaries of the closed area.
    - b. Information on other uses taking place on the refuge.
    - c. Discussion of hunter safety and ethics.
    - d. Provide other refuge users with educational information about moose hunting by developing materials for the visitor center and informational handouts.



**PART IV**  
**B-3. SMALL GAME HUNTING**





## PART IV

### B-3. SMALL GAME HUNTING

#### (FOX, LYNX, SQUIRREL, SNOWSHOE HARE, GROUSE AND PTARMIGAN)

#### Background

##### 1. Status of Existing Use:

Occasional hunting for small game has occurred on the refuge. There is no documentation for most of this use. Hunting activity is likely to have been for the following species and areas:

- Probable grouse hunting in various locations.
- Probable hare hunting in the past during periods of high populations in various locations.
- Possible squirrel hunting in spruce forests and fox hunting in various locations.
- Snowshoe hare hunting by falconry in and near the fields, by as many as several individuals in a year.

##### 2. Legal Status

For small game occurring on Creamer's, the 1992 - 1993 hunting seasons and bag limits for the Fairbanks area, including Creamer's, are listed below.

Species	Season	Bag Limit
Fox	Sept. 1 - March 15	Ten, except only two prior to October 1
Lynx	Dec. 1 - Jan. 31	Two
Squirrel	No closed season	No limit
Snowshoe Hare	No closed season	No limit
Grouse	Aug. 10 - March 31	15 per day, 30 in possession
Ptarmigan	Aug. 10 - March 31	20 per day, 40 in possession

#### Notes:

1. Snowshoe hare, grouse and ptarmigan may be taken by snare. Fox, lynx and squirrel may not be taken by snare, trap or by disturbing or destroying dens.

2. City ordinance prohibits the discharge of firearms or the setting of snares within city limits.
3. Taking by falconry is subject to the same restrictions (such as seasons and bag limits) as taking by other methods.

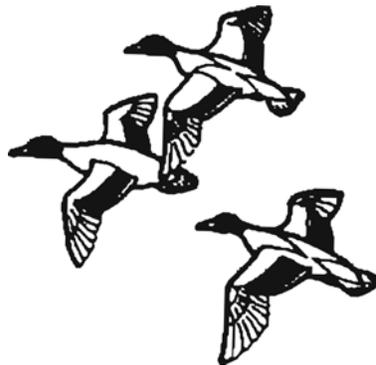
## **Management Guidelines**

The intent of these guidelines is to keep most of the refuge open to small game hunting and to encourage educational hunting activities in the refuge.

1. Require a registration permit to hunt small game on the refuge with the following conditions:
  - a. Require completion of a hunter education course before a registration permit will be issued (see #3 below).
  - b. Close a designated area to include the agricultural fields and the existing nature trail to small game hunting, except hunting by falconry after September 15 (see Part V. Viewing Fields Management Area (Units A and B), and Map Two).
  - c. Hunters may pass through the closed area noted in b. above to reach other parts of the refuge open to hunting, except for the Sandhill Crane Management Area in the east portion of Unit B, which is closed to all public access, including transit through the area to reach other portions of the refuge, during the fall bird migration in September.
  - d. Harvest reporting.
2. The remainder of the refuge is open to small game hunting.
3. Develop educational materials to be given to small game hunters intending to hunt on the refuge. The following subjects should be included:
  - a. Boundaries of the closed area.
  - b. Information on other uses taking place on the refuge.
  - c. Discussion of hunter safety and ethics.
4. Provide other refuge users with educational information about small game hunting by developing materials for the visitor center and informational handouts.

**PART IV**

**B-4. MIGRATORY GAME BIRD HUNTING**





## PART IV

### B-4. MIGRATORY GAME BIRD HUNTING (GEESE, DUCKS, CRANES AND SNIPE)

#### Background

##### 1. Status of Existing Use

Construction of the waterfowl enhancement project, planting of extra barley, and swathing barley in late summer have all contributed to attracting large numbers of migratory game birds to Creamer's in the fall. Previously these birds were not present on Creamer's in the fall in any numbers. In the last few years, some hunting for migratory game birds has been occurring on the refuge in the fall. Most of the birds leave the area by late September. It is not known how many people participate or what the harvest is. It is believed that a handful of people successfully hunt ducks. Most hunting activity seems to be confined to the waterfowl enhancement and crane ponds, with some occurring in the northern part of the agricultural fields.

Some hunting by falconry also occurs in the cultivated fields. Up to several individuals hunt by falconry, and the harvest probably ranges from a dozen to several dozen ducks, depending on how long the ducks remain at Creamer's before migrating south.

##### 2. Legal Status

For migratory game birds occurring on Creamer's, the 1992 - 1993 hunting seasons and bag limits for northern Alaska, including Creamer's, are listed below.

Species	Season	Bag Limit
Canada Geese	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16	4 per day, 8 in possession
White Fronted Geese	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16	2 per day, 4 in possession
Ducks (except sea ducks)	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16	8 per day, 24 in possession (Only 2/day, 6 in possession may be pintails; 1/day, 3 in possession may be canvasbacks)
Sea Ducks (old squaw, scooter, etc.)	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16	15 per day, 30 in possession
Cranes	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16	3 per day, 6 in possession
Snipe	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16	8 per day, 16 in possession

## Notes:

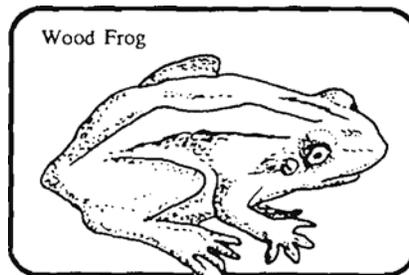
1. Waterfowl, cranes and snipe may not be taken with a rifle, pistol or shotgun larger than 10 gauge.
2. Shotguns must be "plugged" to hold 3 shells or less.
3. Only non-toxic steel shot no greater than .20" diameter (size T) may be used in shotguns.
4. Waterfowl may be hunted only from 1/2 hour before sunrise until sunset.
5. City ordinance prohibits the discharge of firearms within city limits.
6. Taking by falconry is subject to the same seasons as taking by other methods, but the bag limit for all migratory game birds combined is 3 per day, 6 in possession (not to exceed any species limits).

**Management Guidelines**

The intent of these guidelines is to keep most of the refuge open to migratory game bird hunting and to encourage educational hunting activities in the refuge.

1. Require a registration permit to hunt migratory game birds on the refuge with the following conditions:
  - a. Require completion of a hunter education course before a registration permit will be issued (see #3 below).
  - b. Close a designated area to include the agricultural fields, crane pond and the existing nature path to migratory game bird hunting, except hunting by falconry after September 15 (see Part V. Viewing Fields Management Area (Units A and B), and Map Two).
  - c. Hunters may pass through the closed area noted in b. above to reach other parts of the refuge open to hunting, except for the Sandhill Crane Management Area in the east portion of Unit B, which is closed to all public access, including transit through the area to reach other portions of the refuge, during the fall bird migration in September.
  - d. Harvest reporting.
2. The remainder of the refuge is open to migratory game bird hunting.
3. Develop educational materials to be given to migratory game bird hunters intending to hunt on the refuge. Subjects will include the following information:
  - a. Boundaries of the closed area.
  - b. Information on other uses taking place on the refuge.

- c. Discussion of hunter safety and ethics.
4. Provide other refuge users with educational information about migratory game bird hunting by developing materials for the visitor center and informational handouts.





## **PART IV**

### **C. DOG ACTIVITIES**





## PART IV

### B. DOG ACTIVITIES

#### **Background**

##### 1. Status of Existing Use

###### a. Dog Mushing

Dog mushing on the refuge takes place from November through March, with sprint racing and training being the predominant types of mushing. There is an extensive system of winter trails used by dog mushers on the refuge. The Alaska Dog Musers Association (ADMA) has been using these trails since 1946, long before the refuge was established. The most heavily used access to the trail system is from Dog Musers Hall on Farmer's Loop Road. Other access is from the fairgrounds, the Fish and Game office building area, the golf course, and private houses. ADMA maintains the trails to keep them usable and safe for sprint racing and training, at their own expense. The 30-mile extension trail is not used extensively until just before the Open North American race in mid-March, since that is the only race it is used for.

It is estimated that 80 - 90% of the mushing on the refuge is by members of either ADMA, the Junior Musers, or the ski-joring group. Most of the teams consist of 6 or fewer dogs, although open-class teams of 20 dogs are not uncommon. Although teams are noisy when being hooked up before starting, they are quiet when running. There have been few reported encounters with moose or other wildlife, although the possibility always exists. The first race of the season occurs during the late moose bowhunting season in November, resulting in occasional conflicts between moose hunters and dog mushers (see Part IV.B.2. Moose Hunting section). The trails are also used by snowmachiners and occasionally by 3- or 4-wheelers.

###### b. Retriever Dogs

Retriever dog activities on the refuge consist of individuals or small groups of people training dogs, and larger groups of people and dogs participating in field trials. Training is conducted during spring and summer, from April through August. Dummies or bumpers are usually used for the dogs to retrieve. Launchers are sometimes used for the dummies, which are powered by firing a .22 caliber pistol. Field trials usually start in late June or early July and finish in August. Field trials require large, open spaces for the dogs to track and run in. After one part of the trial a new space is needed, that hasn't been filled with scent, in which to conduct the next part of the trial. During field trials, live birds are often used. Domestically raised birds are released and then shot with a shotgun for the dogs to retrieve. For both training and field trials, a variety of terrain and vegetation types, open fields, and adjacent ponds are desirable or needed.

### c. Search Dogs

The P.A.W.S, (Personnel Available for Wilderness Search) search and rescue group conducts search dog training on the refuge about once a month during the summer, and occasionally during the winter. This activity usually involves a half dozen people and several dogs walking over a course with dogs in harness or under voice control. Individual P.A.W.S. members may train on a more frequent basis from May to September.

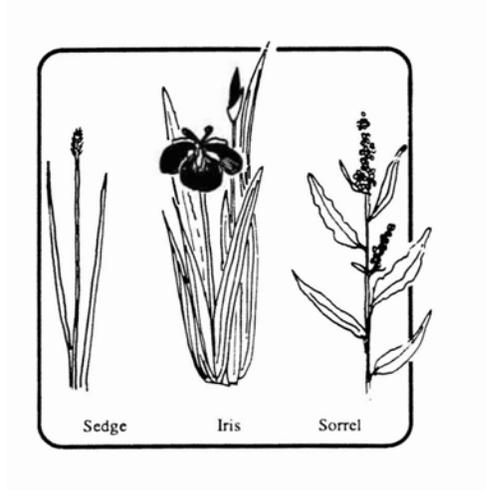
## 2. Legal Status

Organized groups must have a Special Area Permit to conduct activities such as field trials on the refuge. The permit can specify where and when these activities are allowed. A permit is not required for individual use of the refuge. Use of the Jeff Studdert Memorial Trail system by the Alaska Dog Musers Association is authorized by a Memorandum of Agreement with the Association, the Department of Fish and Game, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, and the Fairbanks North Star Borough. For further discussion of this, see Part IV.A. Motorized Vehicle Use section.

## **Management Guidelines**

1. Dogs and other pets must be on a leash, in harness, or otherwise under control by a person at all times.
2. A person may not allow a dog or other pet to harass wildlife or create excessive noise, a public safety hazard, or unsanitary conditions.
3. The department may seize a dog or other pet running at large in the refuge and have it impounded.
4. Organized and unorganized dog mushing activities may be conducted within the Jeff Studdert Memorial Trail system, subject to the terms of the Memorandum of Agreement dated December 19, 1988, between the department, Alaska Dog Musers Association, Fairbanks North Star Borough, and Alaska Department of Natural Resources. The Memorandum outlines the terms and conditions of use in lieu of a Special Area Permit (AS 16.20), is valid through June 30, 1993, and is open for renewal after that date.

5. Organized dog trials or other dog training or competitive events may be conducted in the fields west of the barns and barn access road, as long as those fields are not planted with crops intended to attract wildlife, and are not being used by wildlife during the time of the planned activity. These activities will not be allowed in the waterfowl enhancement ponds, crane pond, or the seasonal pond. A Special Area Permit (AS 16.20) is required, and will include restrictions or conditions that the department deems necessary.





**PART IV**

**ORGANIZED EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES**





## **PART IV**

### **D. ORGANIZED EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

#### **Background**

Over the years a number of organized activities or events have taken place on the refuge. Some of these are covered in the above sections, such as dog mushing or working dog training. Others were discussed at Advisory Group meetings, but not dealt with together as a whole. Some of the activities of this type that have taken place on the refuge include parachuting, frisbee tournaments, snowmachine races, and Girl Scout overnight camp-outs. This section outlines management guidelines for organized activities not covered in other sections of the plan, based on Advisory Group meeting discussions and management guidelines developed for other activities.

In discussing all activities taking place on the refuge, a recurring theme in Advisory Group meetings was that management of the refuge should be directed toward encouraging those activities which are primary to the purposes for which the refuge was established; that is, addressed in the statute establishing the refuge or the refuge goals (see Statutory Purposes and Management Goals Section). Activities which are secondary to refuge purposes (not addressed in the statute or goals) should be accommodated when they are compatible with the purposes and goals of the refuge and don't unduly conflict with other refuge uses. Secondary uses should not be allowed when they are incompatible with refuge purposes and goals.

#### **Management Guidelines**

1. Organized activities that are secondary to, but compatible with the purposes for which the refuge was established or the refuge goals, or related to the programs and statutory purposes of the department will be considered on an individual basis, and may or may not be authorized on the refuge depending on the impact of the activity on refuge resources or whether or not the activity would conflict unduly with other refuge uses.
2. Organized activities that are not compatible with the purposes for which the refuge was established or the refuge goals, or related to the programs and statutory purposes of the department will not be authorized on the refuge.
3. These guidelines do not apply to non-organized activities of individuals on the refuge that are otherwise consistent with this management plan.



**PART IV**

**E. OTHER PUBLIC USES**





## **PART IV**

### **E. OTHER PUBLIC USES**

#### **Background**

At the onset of the planning process, a needs survey was distributed to department staff and the Advisory Group, and a public hearing was held to identify issues and concerns that needed to be addressed in the management plan. All comments and recommendations were reviewed and discussed by the Advisory Group and subsequently distilled to a shorter list of the most pressing concerns warranting specific attention in the management plan. Activities and issues identified in the initial public comments that are not specifically addressed in this management plan included jogging/walking, horseback riding, mountain biking, art/photography, hot air ballooning, ultralights, sky diving, dog walking, and kite flying.

In discussing these activities, the department and the Advisory Group concluded that the current level of use, potential for conflict with other refuge users, or the potential for adversely impacting refuge resources or habitats were sufficiently low that they did not warrant attention at this time. However, the Advisory Group recommended that the department should continue to review and regulate all other public uses taking place on the refuge to ensure maintenance of the primary purposes for which the refuge was established; that is, addressed in the statute establishing the refuge or the refuge goals (see Statutory Purposes and Management Goals Section). The Advisory Group recommended that other public use activities which are secondary to refuge purposes (not addressed in the statute or goals) could be accommodated when they are compatible with the purposes and goals of the refuge, subject to provisions for reducing conflicts between competing secondary uses. Secondary public uses should not be allowed when they are incompatible with refuge purposes and goals.

#### **Management Guidelines**

1. Secondary public uses of the refuge, not subject to specific management guidelines within this plan, will be considered on an individual basis, and may or may not be authorized on the refuge depending on the impact of the activity on refuge resources or whether or not the activity would conflict unduly with other refuge uses.
2. Secondary public uses of the refuge that are not compatible with the purposes for which the refuge was established or the refuge goals, or related to the programs and statutory purposes of the department will not be authorized on the refuge.



**PART V**

**VIEWING FIELDS MANAGEMENT AREA**





## **PART V**

### **VIEWING FIELDS MANAGEMENT AREA**

#### **Introduction**

In developing the management guidelines for the public use issues of this plan, a recurring theme in the Advisory Group discussions was that the part of the refuge including the agricultural fields and the nature path is intrinsically different from the rest of the refuge. The two factors that are significant in defining this difference are the high level of public use, and the intensive habitat manipulation work and resultant high levels of wildlife use at times.

In discussing all the public use issues, the group felt that public use should be managed differently in this part of the refuge than in the remainder. It became evident that an area should be defined within which all public uses could be consistently managed to minimize their impact on wildlife and habitat, to reduce conflicts among refuge users, and to minimize public safety hazards. The area was named the Viewing Fields Management Area, and was divided into two sub-parts, Units A and B (see Map Two).

#### **Management Objectives**

1. Promote public environmental and outdoor education opportunities, and protect and enhance the opportunity to view, photograph and study wildlife, with special emphasis on waterfowl and other migratory birds.
2. Avoid activities that will harass or displace waterfowl and other migratory birds from the viewing fields and sandhill crane habitat enhancement project or interfere with refuge management activities.
3. Minimize public safety hazards within the viewing fields, nature trail, and buildings.
4. Minimize conflicts with other refuge uses.
5. Unit A (buildings, front viewing fields, and nature path) - this area is intensively used by the public and will be managed to (a) provide high quality areas for waterfowl and wildlife viewing, (b) provide high quality areas for environmental and outdoor education, and (c) minimize public safety hazards. Opportunities will be provided for falconry activities to the extent they do not adversely impact the primary management objectives.
6. Unit B (outer fields and sandhill crane pond) - this area will be managed to (1) protect migratory bird staging habitat, and (2) minimize harassment of birds in the Sandhill Crane Management Project area (and adjacent viewing fields in Unit A). Opportunities will be provided for dog trials, training or competitive events, falconry, and bowhunting to the extent these activities do not adversely impact the primary management objectives. The Sandhill Crane Management Project area will be closed to all public access during fall migration in September.

## Management Guidelines

The intent of the following management guidelines is to preserve opportunities for existing public uses of the refuge and to minimize potential conflicts between refuge users.

- Unit A**
1. Closed to hunting, except open to hunting by falconry after September 15 (see Note 1 below).
  2. Closed to the discharge of firearms.
  3. Closed to trapping.
  4. Closed to dog trials, training or competitive events, except dog mushing (unless authorized by Special Area permit).
- Unit B**
1. Closed to hunting by firearms, except open to hunting by falconry and by bow (see Notes 1 and 2 below).
  2. Closed to the discharge of firearms, unless specifically authorized by Special Area permit for non-hunting related activities, such as retriever trials, subject to any restrictions determined necessary by the department to avoid harassment of migratory game birds or other wildlife, or undue conflicts with other refuge users.
  3. Closed to trapping.
  4. Open to dog trials, training or competitive events in the west portion; closed in the east portion except dog mushing (unless authorized by Special Area permit).
  5. The Sandhill Crane Management Project area in the east portion is closed to all public access during the fall bird migration in September.

**Rest of Refuge**

1. Open to hunting and trapping, subject to the management guidelines in this plan (see Part IV.B.1. Trapping, section; Part IV.B 2. Moose Hunting section; Part IV.B.3. Small Game Hunting section; and Part IV.B.4. Migratory Game Bird Hunting section).
2. Open to dog trials, training, or competitive events subject to a Special Areas Permit (see Part IV.C. Dog Activities section).

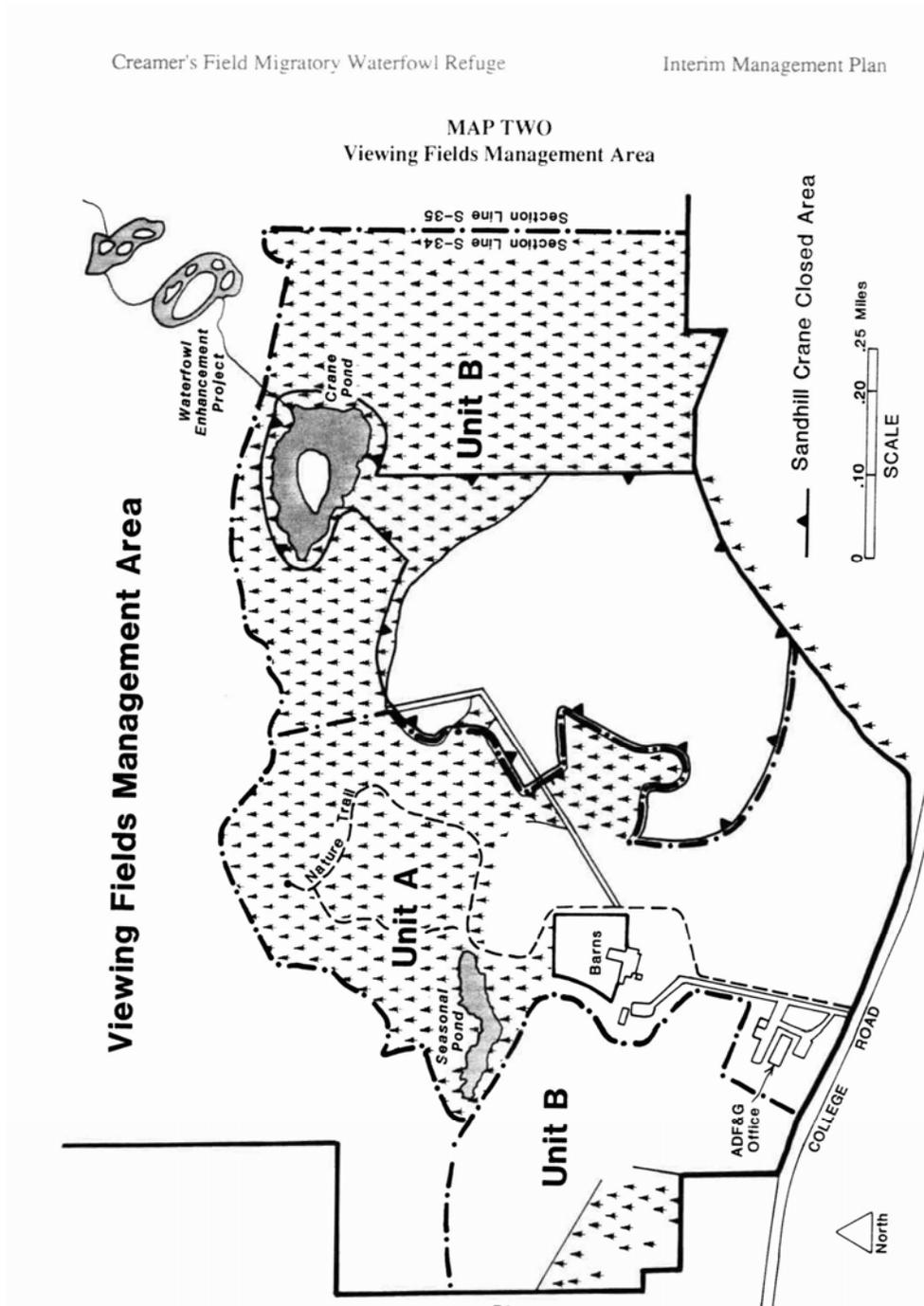
**Notes:**

1. Falconry is generally allowed within these units. However, timing or area restrictions may be imposed to minimize conflicts with staging waterfowl or federal migratory bird hunting regulations pertaining to hunting over baited fields.
2. Registration is required for moose hunting by bow. Management Intent

It is the intent of the department to re-route the existing farm access road east of the barns through Brush Field and Future Farmers Field to the northwestern edges of these fields, and to retire the existing road.

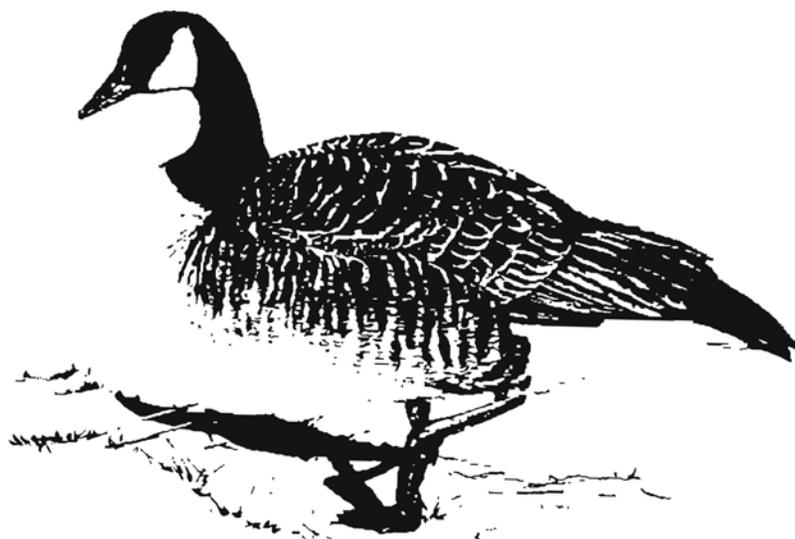








**PART VI**  
**REFUGE OPERATIONS**  
**(Other Advisory Group Recommendations)**





**PART VI**  
**REFUGE OPERATIONS**  
**(ADVISORY GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS)**

The following section details Advisory Group recommendations relating to community involvement and participation in refuge management, staffing, funding, and facilities management.

These recommendations were developed by the Advisory Group during the course of the planning work and should be considered carefully by the department as it budgets for refuge programs and implements the management guidelines contained in Parts I through V of this plan.

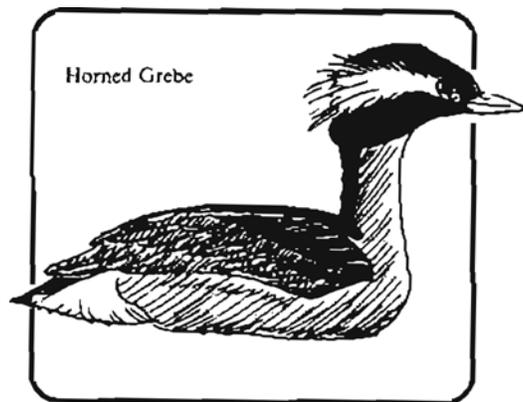


Hammond's Flycatcher



**PART VI**

**LAND ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT**





## **PART VI**

### **A. LAND ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT**

#### **Background**

When the Creamer's dairy fields were purchased in 1968, approximately 9 acres south of College Road, between the road and Noyes Slough, were included in the purchase. This land was not included in the refuge, and because of its physical separation from the refuge by College Road, has been difficult to effectively manage. At the same time, there are other lands adjacent to the refuge that would significantly add to the wildlife value of the refuge if they could be added to it. Development or activities on land adjacent to or near the refuge can significantly affect the refuge itself. The Advisory Group felt that it was important to address the integrity of the refuge's land base and how it fits in with the overall pattern of land use and development in the surrounding area, as far away as Goldstream Valley. This is especially important when considering wildlife movements, such as moose migration corridors, through the refuge.

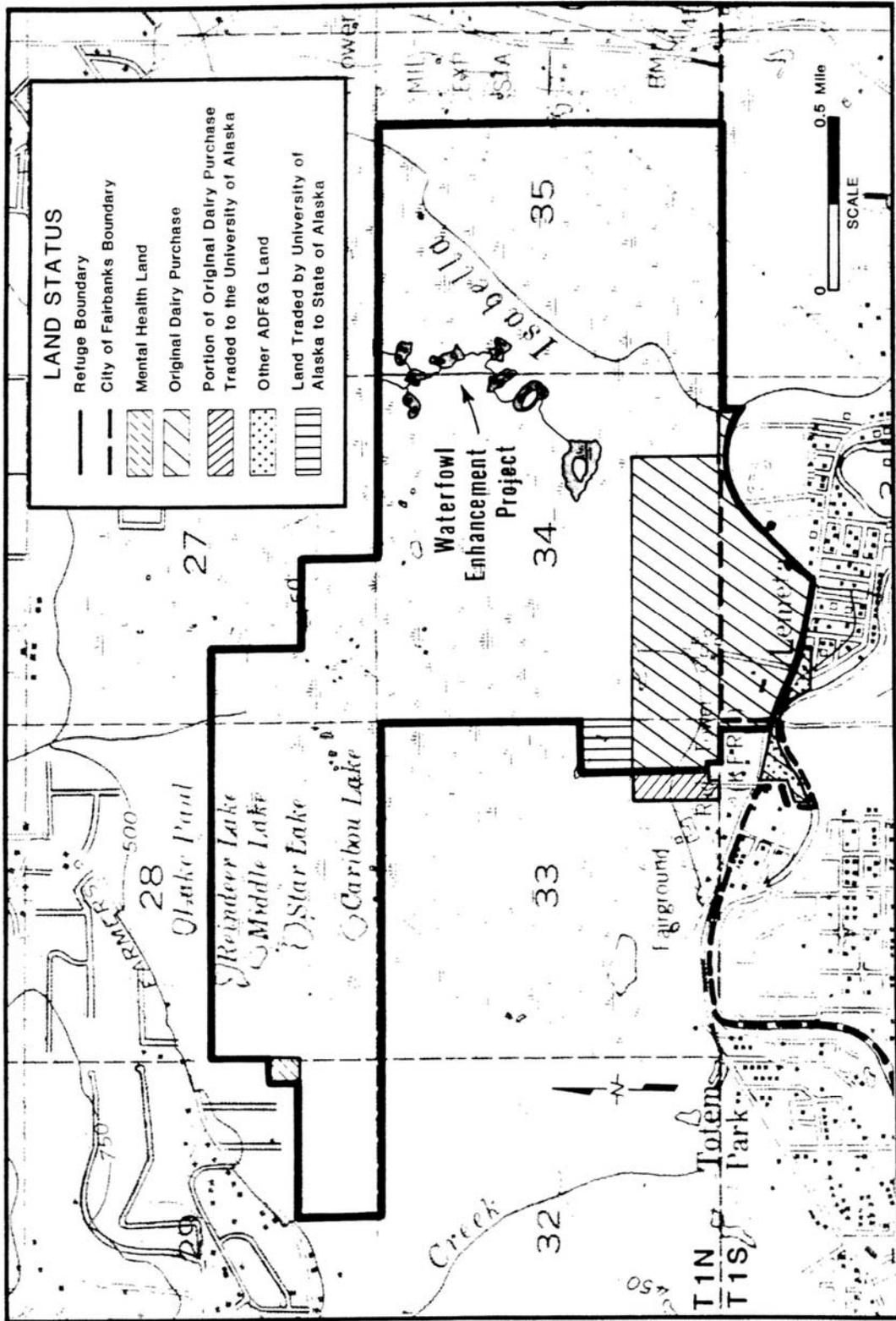
Federal funds (Dingell-Johnson Access Funds), administered through the Sport Fisheries Division, are potentially available for activities to improve access, and participation in, sport fishing. This funding could be used to purchase land for expansion of the refuge for aquatic habitat enhancement projects that provide improved sport fishing opportunities.

The Sport Fisheries Division also administers the Partnership Program which provides up to 75 percent of the costs for the development of angling opportunities in Alaska. Eligible partners include sportsmen's groups, local government agencies, educational institutions, and conservation groups. The funding source is the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration program. Projects using these funds will be evaluated and approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Types of projects eligible for Partnership Grant funding include, but are not limited to: development of fishing access for children, the disabled, or the elderly; construction or renovation of public fishing ponds; aquatic habitat protection or improvement projects; and aquatic educational programs.

#### **Advisory Group Recommendations**

1. Remain alert for opportunities to expand the refuge when land can be acquired that would protect or enhance refuge management objectives. Acquire these lands by, in order of priority:
  - a. Contacting adjacent private land owners to determine their interest in donating priority land or a land management interest to the refuge for tax advantages.

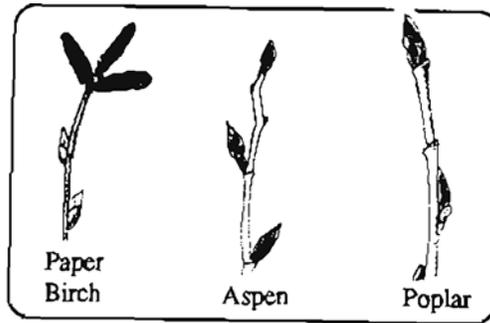
MAP THREE  
Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge Land Status



Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge

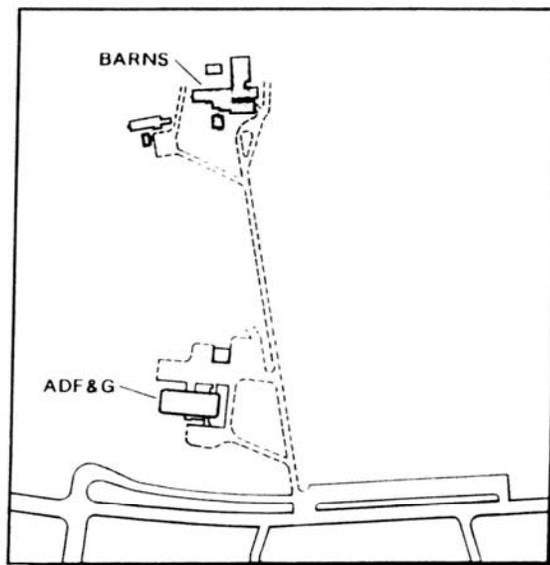
- b. Coordinating with non-profit interest groups (such as the Nature Conservancy and Ducks Unlimited) to obtain title to or a land management interest in priority lands.
  - c. Acquiring title to priority lands through direct purchase.
  - d. Identifying state land suitable for exchange and initiating land trades to acquire priority lands for refuge expansion.
  - e. Acquiring conservation easements or management rights on lands that cannot be otherwise acquired.
2. Establish cooperative agreements with agencies that have surrounding land, such as the University of Alaska, the Fairbanks North Star Borough, and the Army, so that their land can be managed in a manner that is compatible with the refuge.
3. Assess the impacts of adjacent land use activities on refuge management and develop a cooperative approach with adjacent land-owners to minimize adverse effects.
4. Participate in the borough land use planning and zoning processes to encourage compatible development on lands adjacent to the refuge.
5. Priorities for addition to the refuge include public and private lands with high value wetland and waterfowl habitat, contiguous drainages critical for management of the refuge, wildlife migration corridors, and waterfowl staging. A list of priority lands shall be developed, maintained and updated periodically by the Refuge Manager.
6. Keep the land south of College Road open for various management options, pending the outcome of the Creamer's Facilities Master Plan (see Advisory Group recommendation in that section of the plan), and of the identification of land suitable for exchange (see first recommendation above, item #4).
7. Protect and enhance the refuge's land base.
8. Avoid or minimize land management practices that would adversely affect wildlife habitat, wildlife, or interfere with refuge management activities (such as field maintenance or habitat enhancement projects).
9. Permanent or temporary connector roads between area arterial roads should not be constructed within the refuge. Roads internal to the refuge necessary to support refuge activities may be constructed if consistent with the refuge's management objectives and purpose. Construction of necessary access should avoid or minimize creation of attractive nuisances such as secluded parking lots or roads that might encourage illegal dumping of trash or other uses incompatible with the refuge.

10. Explore the possibility of using Dingell-Johnson Access or Partnership funds to acquire lands adjacent to the refuge suitable for developing ponds (or incorporating existing ponds) for an aquatic education program and urban sport fishery (see Part I.A. Fish and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement and Part V, Viewing Fields Management Area sections).





**PART VI**  
**B. CREAMER'S FACILITIES MASTER PLAN**





## PART VI

### B. CREAMER'S FACILITIES MASTER PLAN

#### Background

The importance of Creamer's Field to the Fairbanks community is demonstrated by the history of how the refuge was established, which is discussed in the Preface.

Before the Creamer's fields were purchased, the ADF&G offices were located in inadequate quarters in the state courthouse building on Barnette Street. In 1971 a regional headquarters building was constructed on the Creamer's fields to provide the department with adequate office space and a base for field operations that would minimize long-term costs. Federal Aid in Fish and Wildlife Restoration funding paid for about two-thirds of construction costs, and because the state owned the land no other lease or rental costs were incurred. The building was designed to blend with its surroundings by maintaining a low profile, using natural wood for the exterior, and surrounding the building with low earthen berms. However, the location of the building in front of the dairy buildings causes a visual impact in spite of the design. Although planning for the building construction included some public involvement, there was some negative public reaction when the building went up, and this persists to the present day. Fairbanksans want to maintain the visual integrity of Creamer's Dairy and the attractiveness of the fields for wildlife, especially migratory waterfowl.

Staffing levels have increased considerably since 1971, and once again the department finds itself with inadequate office space. In an attempt to solve the problem in a cost-effective way, the department has sought state funding to expand available office space by constructing an addition to the existing building. It is this situation which led to extensive discussion of this issue by the Advisory Group and the resulting recommendations below.

The Creamer's Refuge Advisory Group believes that the fulfillment of the statutory purposes and management goals of the refuge, as set forth in this plan, could be influenced or possibly negatively affected by expansion of the ADF&G office building, significant increases in departmental or public uses of the developed part of the refuge, expansion of the visitor center or other refuge facilities, or construction of more roads and parking areas. For this reason, the group believes it is vitally important that this issue be addressed as set forth in the recommendations below.

### **Advisory Group Recommendations**

1. Develop a Creamer's Facilities Master Plan. The purpose of this long-range plan is to provide for the orderly development of departmental and public use of the developed part of the refuge, including the existing office building, the barn buildings complex, the parking/viewing area, and access to all of these.
2. Utilize the services of a professional firm with experience in landscape architecture, engineering, and facilities design to assure high quality design work,
3. Conduct the planning process in an open manner with full opportunity for public participation and comment.
4. The Creamer's Facilities Master Plan should address, at a minimum, the following subjects:
  - a) Evaluation of alternative development scenarios, including;
    - i. Facilities expansion within the existing development footprint.
    - ii. Relocation of office or other facilities either off the refuge in another area, off the refuge but adjacent to it, or on the refuge along a non-obtrusive edge of the refuge (including the ADF&G property south of College Road).
    - iii. Alternative uses for the existing office building, such as a visitor center.
  - b. Recommendations for minimizing the impact of ADF&G and public activities in the developed part of the refuge on the wildlife, open space, and historical values of the refuge.
  - c. Projected long-term ADF&G office space, equipment storage, warehousing, and other needs for at least the next 20 years, or longer.
  - d. ADF&G refuge management activities and needs.
  - e. Alternatives for future expansion of the visitor center.
  - f. Other public uses of the developed part of the refuge.
  - g. Utilities.
  - h. Access, transportation, and traffic levels.

**Comments Made at Advisory Group Meetings**

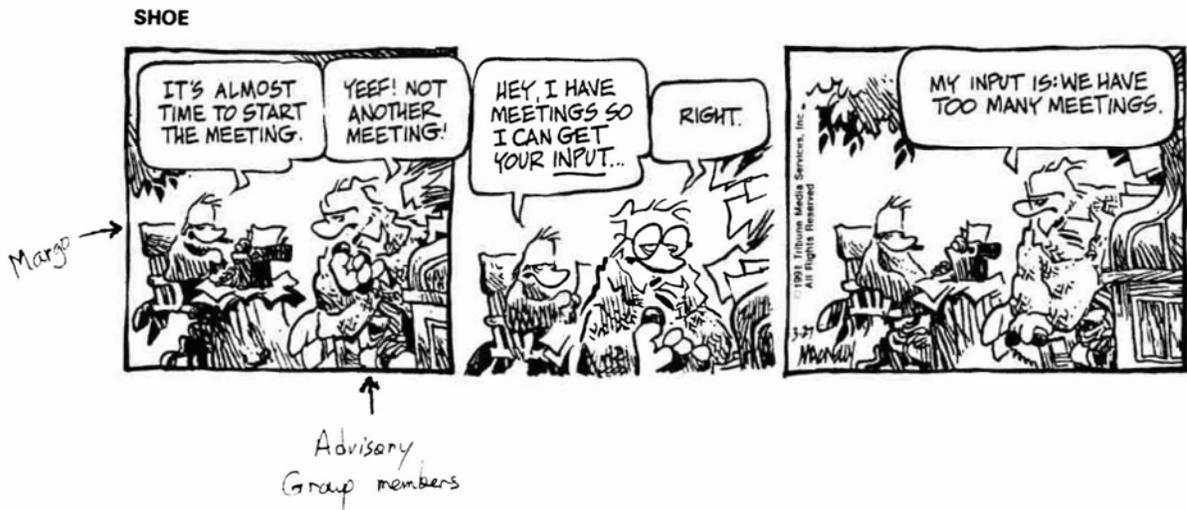
The Creamer's Refuge Advisory Group feels strongly about this issue. It is the desire of the group that the Legislature and the Governor fund and implement these recommendations for the long-range benefit of the refuge, the department, and the Fairbanks community. The group intends to send letters to make known this desire and their recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature, and to take other actions as necessary.

1. There is an advantage to having the department offices on or adjacent to refuge. It can benefit educational and interpretive programs, and results in good refuge management.





PART VI  
C. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT  
AND PARTICIPATION  
IN REFUGE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES





## **PART VI**

### **C. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN REFUGE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

#### **Background**

Community involvement and action was the driving force behind establishment of Creamer's Dairy as a wildlife refuge. Community interest in the refuge has remained high and is critical for continuing support of the department's refuge management programs.

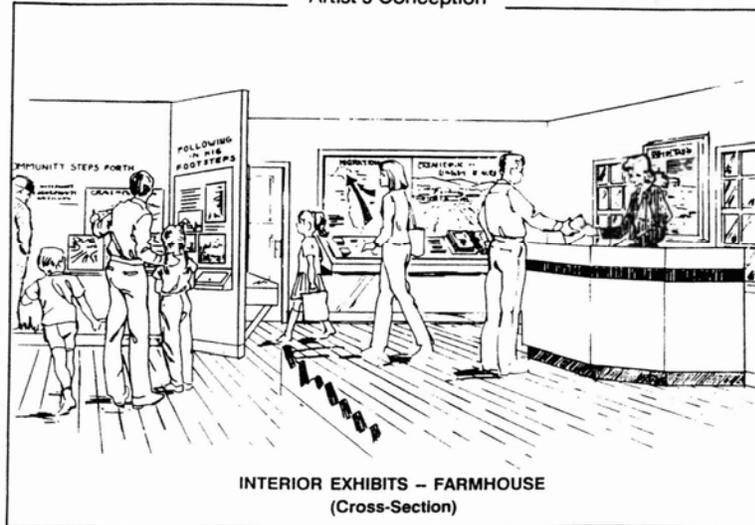
#### **Advisory Group Recommendations**

1. Keep the refuge open to community participation and pursue community outreach. The Creamer's Refuge Advisory Group and Friends of Creamer's Field are both good vehicles for this.
2. Maintain the Advisory Group for broad community representation to work on policy, and Friends of Creamer's for a focus for community energies to work on the visitor center and education on the refuge.
3. Develop an annual refuge activity calendar.



**PART VI**  
**D. STAFFING**

Artist's Conception





## **PART VI**

### **D. STAFFING**

#### **Background**

The legislative creation of state refuges carries specific functions assigned to the commissioner of Fish and Game. While some functions are shared between the departments of Natural Resources and Fish and Game, the responsibility for planning and regulating most uses within these areas falls to the commissioner of Fish and Game. In the case of Creamer's Refuge, many of the basic land management functions that normally would fall under the authority of the Department of Natural Resources are actually administered by Fish and Game, due to the department's outright purchase of the Creamer's Dairy through federal Pittman-Robertson funds, as opposed to legislative designation of state lands. (see Preface, and Map Three).

Day to day management of Creamer's Refuge has been assigned to the department's Division of Wildlife Conservation. Long term planning and permitting responsibilities are assigned to the Habitat and Restoration Division. For most of the past decade, the Wildlife Conservation Division dedicated a seasonal Fish and Wildlife Technician position to managing Creamer's. The position was funded for six months during the spring and summer. In 1991, the department hired a professional-level refuge manager (Wildlife Biologist I) to develop an educational and interpretive program for Creamer's, implement this management plan, and oversee day to day refuge management activities. The position remains funded from the refuge operating budget for six months annually. Over the past two years other sources have provided funding for an additional six months; however, funding remains a problem for the future.

Other staff from the divisions of Administration, Wildlife Conservation, and Habitat and Restoration have been involved in refuge management along with other duties, but none on a full-time basis.

#### **Advisory Group Recommendations**

1. Establish a refuge manager position on a year-round, full time, professional level basis, in addition to the existing summer seasonal technician position. The manager would be a point of contact for refuge matters, and would have the authority to make day-to-day decisions on refuge operations. The position would call for someone with experience in dealing with people, groups, and agencies, and with the ability to communicate well with community leaders, educators, and other authorities. The seasonal technician, and eventually the visitor center staff, would report to the refuge manager.

2. Encourage continuing the use of volunteer help for refuge operations.



**PART VI**  
**E. ADDITIONAL FUNDING**





## PART VI

### E. ADDITIONAL FUNDING (sources and mechanisms for handling)

#### Background

A chronic shortage of funding is an obstacle to further development of Creamer's and implementation of many of the ideas in this plan. The Advisory Group felt that recommendations should be made to address this problem.

Early in this planning process the Advisory Group recommended that the department consider working with a non-profit community organization for handling and pursuing sources of funding for Creamer's. In part as a result of this recommendation, The Friends of Creamer's Field was formed as an independent, non-profit corporation. For further discussion of Friends, see Part II.A. Educational and Interpretive Programming section. Other Advisory Group Recommendations on funding are given below.

#### Advisory Group Recommendations

1. Request funding in future ADF&G budgets for the full-time (twelve month) refuge manager position recommended in Part VI.D. Staffing section.
2. Investigate the use of existing sources of funding for the refuge, such as the Federal Aid in Fish and Wildlife Restoration Pittman-Robertson (P-R) and Dingell-Johnson funds, the state Waterfowl Fund (state duck stamp), Wildlife Trust, and Partnership Program, and private organizations such as Ducks Unlimited. Investigate the potential to use these funds on a matching basis to operating money spent on the refuge. The Advisory Group should approach the legislature about allocating existing unused P-R funds for Creamer's.
3. Look for new sources of funding for the refuge. For example, Exxon settlement mitigation funding might be used for waterfowl habitat enhancement on Creamer's or for purchasing adjacent lands with waterfowl habitat for addition to the refuge.



## CONCLUSION

This plan is intended to serve as a guide to the department in managing Creamer's. However, no plan should be cast in concrete. Flexibility is needed to keep refuge management responsive to changing times, conditions, and the needs of refuge users. This should be kept in mind by the reader, and managers and users of Creamer's.

The anticipated life of this plan is approximately 10 years, after which a review will take place and revisions may be needed. Until then, any other projects, issues, or problems arising that are not covered in this plan will be handled on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the Advisory Group and the public.

As explained in the introduction, a larger-scale resource management plan eventually will be undertaken for Creamer's. In the meantime, this plan will provide interim guidelines for managing the refuge.





## **APPENDICES**



**APPENDIX A**  
**ALASKA STATUTE**  
**ESTABLISHING THE**  
**CREAMER'S FIELD MIGRATORY WATERFOWL REFUGE**

**Sec. 16.20.039.** Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge. (a) The following state-owned land and water is established as the Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge:

(a lengthy legal description follows)

(b) The land and water described in (a)(1) of this section is subject to an easement for water and sewer lines given to the City of Fairbanks, along with a portion of the southern boundary of the tract, more particularly described as follows:

(a lengthy legal description follows)

(c) The Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge is established to provide the following:

1. protection and enhancement of habitat for migratory birds with special emphasis on waterfowl;
2. opportunity to view, photograph and study various species of plants, wildlife and geologic features typical to interior Alaska.

(d) The department shall develop a management plan for the land described in (a) of this section to promote the purposes described in (c) of this section. Recreational and agricultural activity is expressly permitted within the land described in (a) of this section if consistent with the management plan adopted by the department.

**Sec. 16.20.040. Regulations.** The board shall, under AS 16.05, adopt regulations governing the taking of game on state game refuges it considers advisable for conservation and protection purposes.

**Sec. 16.20.050. Multiple land use.** Where the use, lease or disposal of real property in state game refuges created by AS 16.20.010 - AS 16.20.080 is under the control or jurisdiction of the state, whether through federal permit or state ownership, the responsible state department or agency shall notify the commissioner of fish and game before initiating any use, lease or disposal of real property. The commissioner shall acknowledge receipt of notice by return mail.

**Sec. 16.20.060. Submission of plans and specifications.** If the commissioner so determines, the commissioner shall, in the letter of acknowledgement, require the person or governmental agency to submit full plans for the anticipated use, full plans and specifications of proposed construction work, complete plans and specifications for the proper protection of fish and game, and the approximate date when the construction or work is to commence, and shall require the person or governmental agency to obtain written approval of the commissioner as to the sufficiency of the plans or specifications before construction is commenced, The commissioner shall abide by the principal which recognizes preferences among beneficial uses as more particularly set forth in art. VIII of the state constitution.

**Sec. 16.20.070. Relationship to other laws.** AS 16.20.050 and 16.20.060 do not affect AS 16.05.870 - 16.05.890.

**APPENDIX B**  
**RECOMMENDATIONS**  
**OF THE CREAMER'S REFUGE ADVISORY GROUP**  
**AND**  
**COMMENTS MADE AT ADVISORY GROUP MEETINGS**

This appendix contains material supplementary to the Management Guidelines developed for this plan. In addition to the Management Guidelines, there were recommendations made by the Advisory Group and many comments made at Advisory Group meetings. These serve to give an indication of the discussions that took place in the formation of the Management Guidelines, and contain many good ideas. In the draft of this plan they were included in with the Management Guidelines. Many people commented that this was confusing when reading the plan, so they have been moved to this appendix to eliminate the confusion.

**PART I**  
**PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF HABITAT**

**A. Fish and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement and Use of the Fields**

**Comments Made at Advisory Group Meetings**

- \* The existing refuge is small and cannot inexhaustibly support all competing proposals to enhance specific activities (e.g., hunting, fishing, general recreation). Habitat enhancement projects within the existing refuge boundaries should emphasize the refuge's primary statutory purposes (e.g., protection and enhancement of migratory bird habitat, opportunities to view, photograph, and study). Large-scale enhancement of other public uses of the refuge should be directed toward adjacent lands available for inclusion in the refuge.
- \* Habitat enhancement activities that coincidentally benefit a use unrelated to the purposes for which the refuge was established may be considered consistent with the management plan and refuge purposes, provided that the activity is not intended solely for the benefit of that use. For example, enhancement activities in the waterfowl enhancement project primarily intended to increase migratory waterfowl habitat that coincidentally improved hunter opportunity would be considered compatible. Construction of hunting blinds within the waterfowl enhancement project would not be considered compatible.

- \* Improvements intended solely to benefit a specific use should be undertaken only for those uses specifically mentioned in the refuge's statutory purposes (see Statutory Purposes and Management Goals). For example, construction of wildlife viewing blinds would be considered compatible since the refuge's statutory purposes specify creation of "opportunity to view, photograph and study....
- \* Intrusive, large-scale habitat modifications that significantly alter the current balance between competing uses or reduce the diversity of habitats and wildlife within the existing refuge boundaries are not compatible with the purposes of the refuge. Small-scale enhancement projects that promote viewing or educational opportunities without significantly reducing habitat diversity or altering the balance between competing uses are considered compatible.
- \* Habitat enhancement projects should be located and designed to avoid or minimize creation of attractive nuisances incompatible with the purposes of the refuge (i.e., uncontrolled vehicle access, remote parking areas subject to the dumping of trash).

## **PART IV**

### **GENERAL PUBLIC USES**

#### **A. Motorized Vehicle Use**

##### **Comments Made at Advisory Group Meetings**

There were many comments made at Advisory Group meetings regarding snowmachine use. These have been saved and will be used in the planning process addressing snowmachine use on the refuge. Following are the comments regarding other motorized vehicle use.

##### **Habitat Impacts**

- \* Off-road motorized vehicle use potentially could cause habitat damage and conflicts with other refuge users in both summer and winter, although conflicts with other refuge users tend to be greater in summer than in winter.
- \* Summer impacts of off-road motorized vehicle use consist of the spread of weed seeds such as foxtails through the agricultural fields, soil compaction, destruction of vegetation, disturbance of nesting birds, and noise levels undesirable to many other refuge users. While the impact from one pass of a vehicle may be very little, the impact from many passes can be great.
- \* Limitations or prohibitions on a specific use should not be invoked unless it has been shown to substantially damage habitat or conflict with the refuge's statutory

purposes. If an activity damages the public's opportunity to view refuge wildlife, then zoning or timing restrictions should be considered first.

### **Philosophical**

Public lands restrictions on a specific user group should not be invoked unless adequate documentation has been collected to identify a significant problem.

### **Advisory Group Recommendations**

There were many recommendations made at Advisory Group meetings regarding snowmachine use. These have been saved and will be used in the planning process addressing snowmachine use on the refuge.

#### **1. General**

- \* Integrate trail use on the refuge with the Fairbanks North Star Borough Trails Plan.

#### **2. Spring/Summer/Fall Motorized Vehicle Use**

- \* The refuge should be closed to summer and fall off-road motorized vehicle use, with a provision for individual permits to be issued on a case-by-case basis.
- \* If the refuge is closed to summer and fall off-road vehicle use, limited use could still be allowed for special circumstances by issuing individual permits with stipulations about timing, route, etc. Examples of special circumstances include enhancement activities, trail maintenance or construction, or other legal requirements (e.g., if a bow hunter needs to haul out a moose quickly to avoid meat spoilage - wanton waste - in warm weather). Individual permits issued for special circumstances will contain stipulations to limit the number of trips, identify designated routes, etc., to avoid conflicts with other refuge users and to insure the protection of refuge wildlife and their habitats.

### **B-1. Trapping**

#### **Comments Made at Advisory Group Meetings**

- \* Presently, conflicts between trapping and other uses are at a low level.
- \* The primary areas where conflicts do occur are the front fields and along trails, especially the nature trail.

- \* Specifying a distance setback for setting traps from trails would help avoid conflicts, as would frequent checking of traps (such as daily).
- \* Loose, uncontrolled dogs are in violation of the borough leash law. This ordinance requires a dog to be on leash or under competent voice control when engaged in a recognized animal activity (events, trials or training) or formal training requiring that it not be physically confined,
- \* The emphasis on trapping use should be the educational aspect. Trapping for educational purposes should be encouraged in open areas.
- \* Any trapping closures should be done for valid biological, public safety or social reasons, not for emotional reasons.
- \* There is a need to protect beavers to encourage dam building activities on the waterfowl enhancement ponds.

### **Advisory Group Recommendations**

- \* The agricultural fields and trails should be closed to trapping.
- \* A registration permit should be required to trap on the refuge.
- \* Education for trappers should be required before a registration permit is issued, and should include basic information and discussions of trapping ethics and the philosophical controversy over trapping. One of the purposes for requiring trapper education is to provide non-political opportunities for positive reinforcement of trapping ethics and the role of trapping within the modern wildlife management system and our understanding of ecosystems. A second reason is to obtain basic refuge use information.
- \* Harvest reporting should be required to enable the department to obtain an indication of the level of trapping within the refuge.
- \* Although the Board of Game at its November 1991 meeting gave the department broad discretionary authority to manage registration permit trapping areas designated by the Board, including Creamer's, only those conditions contained in the following were recommended by the Advisory Group to be applied to trapping on Creamer's: 5 AAC 92.051 (2), (3), (4), (7), (9), (12) and (13). The conditions contained in 5 AAC 92.051 (1), (5), (6), (8), (10) and (11) were not discussed by the Advisory Group, and it was not the intent of the Advisory Group that they should be applied to trapping on Creamer's.

**B-2. Moose Hunting****Comments Made at Advisory Group Meetings**

- \* Public announcement of moose hunting opportunities and restrictions may significantly increase hunting pressure, as many people do not know that the refuge is open to bow hunting.
- \* The department should anticipate philosophical objections and conflicts with other refuge users and adjacent landowners, and then implement an active hunter management program to minimize or avoid conflicts.
- \* Hunter education, hunting ethics, and public safety should be emphasized and promoted on the refuge.
- \* Hunting within the refuge can be viewed as a component of the refuge's wildlife education program.
- \* Information should be collected on how many people hunt on the refuge and what the harvest levels are.
- \* Wildlife viewing can be disrupted by hunting; for example, a moose being watched by a viewer could be disturbed or taken by a hunter. These kinds of potential conflicts need to be minimized. The nature trail and front fields should be closed to moose hunting.
- \* Dog mushers and bowhunters can be using trails at the same time, presenting a safety hazard to each other, because the first dog mushing race of the season and the late bowhunting season coincide.
- \* Enforcement is a consideration. How is a hunting policy going to be enforced?

**Advisory Group Recommendations**

- \* The front fields and nature trail should be closed to moose hunting.
- \* A registration permit should be required to hunt moose on the refuge.
- \* A bowhunting education course, including hunting safety and ethics, should be required before a registration permit is issued. The course should include information on ways to minimize conflicts with other refuge users and adjacent land owners.
- \* Harvest reporting for the refuge should be required.

**B-3. Small Game Hunting (fox, lynx, squirrel, snowshoe hare, grouse and ptarmigan)****Comments Made at Advisory Group Meetings**

- \* Small game hunting within the refuge presents opportunities for people who live in town without transportation to be able to hunt; for instructing youngsters about small game hunting; for educating others about small game hunting; and for falconers to hunt with their birds.
- \* Public announcement of small game hunting opportunities and restrictions may significantly increase hunting pressure, as many people do not know that the refuge is open to small game hunting.
- \* There is a need to anticipate philosophical objections and conflicts with other refuge users and adjacent landowners. If hunting is allowed it needs to be carefully managed to minimize or avoid conflicts.
- \* Hunter education, hunting ethics, and public safety should be emphasized and promoted on the refuge.
- \* Information should be collected on how many people hunt on the refuge and what the harvest levels are.
- \* Conflicts with other users need to be minimized. The nature trail and front fields should be closed to small game hunting. The use of firearms can present a safety hazard to other users.
- \* Enforcement is a consideration. How is a small game hunting policy going to be enforced?

**Advisory Group Recommendations**

- \* There is a place for small game hunting within the refuge (although some Advisory Group members prefer that hunting not be allowed within Creamer's).
- \* A sanctuary-type of area is needed. The front fields and nature trail should be closed to small game hunting. An exception to this could be allowed for hunting by falconry.
- \* Where small game hunting is allowed, it should be restricted to bows, shotguns or rimfire rifles.

- \* A registration permit should be required to hunt small game on the refuge.
- \* Hunter education, including hunter safety and ethics, should be required before a registration permit is issued. Education should include information on ways to minimize conflicts with other refuge users and adjacent land owners.
- \* Harvest reporting for the refuge should be required.

#### **B-4. Migratory Game Bird Hunting (geese, ducks, cranes and snipe)**

##### **Comments Made at Advisory Group Meetings**

- \* Leaving the refuge open to waterfowl hunting provides opportunities to hunt near town (not many other opportunities exist that don't require a riverboat or airplane for access) or for people without transportation; for instructing youngsters about waterfowl hunting; to educate others about waterfowl hunting; and for falconers to hunt with their birds.
- \* Creamer's Refuge was created to protect waterfowl habitat and promote opportunities to observe waterfowl. Unregulated waterfowl hunting could compromise these refuge purposes.
- \* Other activities of a quiet nature (wildlife viewing, walking, etc.) can be disrupted by gunfire.
- \* Sandhill cranes attracted to the habitat enhancement area can be disturbed or displaced by hunting.
- \* Public announcement of waterfowl hunting opportunities and restrictions may significantly increase hunting pressure, as many people do not know that the refuge is open to waterfowl hunting.
- \* Information should be collected on how many people are hunting on the refuge and what the harvest levels are.
- \* Conflicts with other users need to be minimized. The nature trail and front fields should be closed to waterfowl hunting. The use of firearms can present a safety hazard to other users.
- \* A sanctuary-type of area is needed. The front fields and nature trail should be closed to waterfowl hunting. This would provide an escape area adjacent to the waterfowl enhancement ponds if those ponds remain open to hunting. An exception could be allowed for hunting by falconry.

**Advisory Group Recommendations**

- \* A registration permit should be required to hunt on the refuge.
- \* Hunter Education, including hunting ethics, should be required before a registration permit is issued. Education should focus on ways to minimize conflicts with other refuge users and adjacent land owners,
- \* Harvest reporting for the refuge should be required.

**C. Dog Activities****Comments Made at Advisory Group Meetings**

- \* The primary conflict of retriever use on the refuge with wildlife is in the fields during the spring and fall migrations and in the ponds when waterfowl broods are present. Use of other parts of the refuge is not a conflict.
- \* The key to retriever use of the fields is what crops are planted in the fields. If attractive to birds (such as barley) then dog use shouldn't be allowed, but if not attractive (such as brome hay) then use could be allowed. Establish a link between retriever use of fields and the management of the fields, since the management can change. (At present the west fields are all in brome, and east fields are a mixture of brome and barley.)
- \* Field trial uses are easy to manage, as club members are self-policing. Casual use by non-group members is more difficult to manage. Public information efforts would be helpful to reach these users.
- \* Shooting blanks (dummy launchers) is just as disruptive in terms of noise as shooting live ammunition, and should be limited to times and places where waterfowl will not be disturbed.

**Advisory Group Recommendations**

- \* Allow the continued use of refuge lands for dog activities consistent with the purposes for which the refuge was established.
- \* Avoid activities that will harass, displace, or harm wildlife or interfere with refuge management activities such as field maintenance, habitat enhancement projects, etc.
- \* Minimize conflicts with other refuge users and consider public safety concerns.

- \* In the interest of promoting the conservation of game birds by increasing the success of hunter retrieval of birds, allow the training of retriever dogs on the refuge.
- \* Close the waterfowl enhancement ponds, crane pond, and the seasonal pond to retriever use, for both organized events and use by individuals, in order to promote waterfowl use of and nesting in those ponds.



**APPENDIX C**  
**MEMBERSHIP OF THE CREAMER'S REFUGE**  
**ADVISORY GROUP**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Affiliation or Interest</b>
Randall Compton	Wildlife Artist Alaska Falconers Association
Ron Dearborn	Alaska Dog Musher's Association
Karen Wilson	Fairbanks Retriever Club
Jane N. Williams	Tanana-Yukon Historical Society Fairbanks Youth Hostel
Del DeMeritt	Golden North Archery Association Fairbanks Advisory Committee
Carl P. Jeglum	Alaska Outdoor Council Neighborhood Resident
Junior D. Kerns	Ducks Unlimited Ft. Wainwright
Larry Mayo	Nature Education Arctic Audubon Society
Tony Gasbarro	Community At Large Cooperative Extension Service
Philip Martin	Fairbanks Bird Club Ornithologist
Betsy Smith	Education Joy School Teacher
Brian Rogers	Community At Large University of Alaska
<hr/>	
<b>Past Member</b>	
Bob Weeden	Community At Large
Steve Trickett	Fairbanks Retriever Club
Mary Hemshrot	Education Arctic Audubon Society

**Ex Officio Member**

---

Scott Heidorn

Fairbanks Snow Travelers

**Other Contributors**

---

Dick Bishop

Alaska Outdoor Council

John Sheets

Golden North Archery Association

Chris Snyder

Golden North Archery Association

Lynn Levensgood

Fairbanks Advisory Committee

## **APPENDIX D**

### **SUMMARY OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS AND LOCATION OF PUBLIC AND AGENCY RESPONSES AND COMMENTS**

#### **Public Hearings**

The first public meeting for the Creamers Refuge plan was held on April 23, 1990 at the Noel Wien Memorial Library auditorium. The meeting was attended by approximately 40 - 45 people. ADF&G staff present from the Division of Wildlife Conservation included Chris Smith, Regional Supervisor, Ken Taylor, Management Coordinator, Margo Matthews, Wildlife Biologist, and Pam Bruce, Refuge Manager, and from the Habitat Division Matt Robus and Bob McLean, both Habitat Biologists.

A second public workshop was held on September 24, 1991 to provide an opportunity for public review and comment on the draft management plan.

#### **Agency and Public Comment Sheets**

A survey form was prepared and distributed to department staff, those who attended the first public hearing, and other interested parties requesting recommendations on the following:

#### **Refuge Management**

- A. Suggestions for ways to make the refuge more attractive to wildlife or to increase public enjoyment of the refuge, for specific projects or improvements, and general comments on refuge management
  - 1. General
  - 2. Habitat Enhancement
  - 3. Trails, Signs and Other Use Improvements
  - 4. Other Development
  - 5. Visitor Management
  - 6. Adjacent Land
- B. Ideas for ways to fund projects

**Public Uses of Creamer's Field**

- A. Art and Photography
- B. Wildlife and Other Outdoor Education and Wildlife Viewing
- C. Walking, Jogging, Skiing, Horseback Riding, etc.
- D. Retriever and Tracking Dog Activities
- E. Dog Mushing
- F. Snowmachine and Off Road Vehicle Use
- G. Hunting and Trapping
- H. Other Uses and General Use Comments

**Land and Buildings**

- A. Suggestions for how the historic aspect of the dairy site could be better enhanced or displayed for public enjoyment or education
- B. Comments on the use of the farmhouse as a visitor center and suggestions for improving the attractiveness of Creamer's for visitors to Fairbanks
- C. Comments on what should be done with the land south of College Road

**Advisory Group Meetings**

Sixteen Advisory Group meetings were held in 1990-91. An agenda, background information, and draft guidelines were prepared for each meeting. Afterwards, a meeting summary was prepared detailing the discussion and decisions reached at each meeting.

**Location of Public and Agency Responses and Comments**

Copies of all public meeting summaries, public testimony, and Advisory Group meeting summaries are on file and available through the Division of Wildlife Conservation at the department's Fairbanks Regional Office located at 1300 College Road. The Division of Wildlife Conservation's contact is Ms. Margo Matthews (456-5156).

## APPENDIX E

### CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF CREAMER'S FIELD

- 1897 Charlie Creamer came to Alaska with his father,
- 1900 Charles and Belle Hinckley left Oregon in a schooner: went to Nome.
- 1904 The Hinckley's moved to Fairbanks with Belle's sister, Anna Carr. The Creamer family moved to Fairbanks.
- 1905 Charlie Creamer began working at Hinckley's dairy.
- 1908 Hinckley bought a 327 acre homestead known as Murray Meadows, the dairy's present location on College Road.
- 1915 Hinckley moved his dairy operation from Graehl to Murray Meadows.
- 1920 Charlie Creamer married Anna Carr, Belle Hinckley's sister.
- 1928 Charlie and Anna Creamer bought Hinckley's dairy.
- 1938 The first new barn was built (the larger of the two).
- 1949 Charlie and Anna's son, Don, became a full partner in the dairy.
- 1950 The second barn was built (the smaller of the two).
- 1965 Anna Creamer died at the age of 80.
- 1966 The dairy ceased operations.
- 1967 Charlie Creamer, faced with foreclosure, decided to sell the dairy. The Alaska Conservation Society organized a fund drive and raised the purchase option money within 4 weeks.
- 1968 The state legislature approved a bill to purchase Creamer's dairy fields. The fields were purchased, using 75% federal Pittman-Robertson funds and 25% state funds. Management of the area was given to the Department of Fish and Game.
- 1970 The dairy fields and an adjacent 1,524 acre tract of state land were established as the Fairbanks Wildlife Management Area (FWMA). The farm buildings and dairy were purchased by a private investment group.
- 1971 Charlie Creamer moved from the dairy site into the Pioneer's Home. ADF&G regional office building was constructed on the FWMA.
- 1974 Charlie Creamer died at the age of 83.

- 1975 The nature path was built by the Alaska Conservation Society and Youth Conservation Corps.
- 1977 Creamer's dairy buildings were admitted to the National Register of Historic Places.
- 1979 The state legislature designated the FWMA as a state game refuge, naming it Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge.
- 1982 The state purchased the dairy and farm buildings and surrounding 12 acres of land.
- 1987 The Waterfowl Enhancement Project ponds were constructed under a cooperative agreement with Ducks Unlimited.
- 1990 The Creamer's Refuge Advisory Group was formed.
- 1991 The Friends of Creamer's Field was incorporated. The state legislature added the dairy and farm buildings and surrounding 12 acres to the refuge.

**APPENDIX F**

**REFUGE USER ACTIVITY CALENDAR**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Bird watching				X	X	X	X	X	X			
Fifth grade <sup>1</sup> field trip				X	X							
Horseback riding					X	X	X	X	X	X		
Jogging					X	X	X	X	X	X		
Nature path walking				X	X	X	X	X	X			
Retriever training					X	X	X	X	X			
Dog mushing <sup>2</sup>	X	X	X								X	X
Skiing/ski-joring	X	X	X	X						X	X	X
Snowmachining	X	X	X	X						X	X	X
Falconry <sup>3</sup>									X	X		
Moose bow hunting <sup>3</sup>									X		X	
Small game hunting <sup>3</sup>	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X
Waterfowl hunting <sup>3</sup>									X			
Trapping <sup>3</sup>	X	X									X	X

<sup>1</sup> For dates, contact Arctic Audubon Society.

<sup>2</sup> For dates of race events, see Alaska Dog Musers Association race schedule.

<sup>3</sup> For season dates, see hunting and trapping regulations.



**APPENDIX G**  
**CREAMER'S FIELD**  
**MIGRATORY WATERFOWL REFUGE**  
**VISITOR CENTER MEETING ROOM POLICY**

June 12, 1992

**General Policy**

The Creamers Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge was established to provide for the protection and enhancement of habitat for migratory birds with special emphasis on waterfowl and to provide opportunity to view, photograph and study various species of plants, wildlife and geological features typical to Interior Alaska [AS 16.20.039(c)(1) and (2)]. Consistent with these purposes, a primary objective of the Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge Management Plan is to encourage opportunities for public education about ecosystems, wildlife, habitat, historical aspects of the Refuge, and other related topics.

It is the policy of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) to encourage the use of the Refuge Visitor Center meeting room by the community within the framework of this policy and the specific requirements identified below and as long as meeting room use does not interfere with normal ADF&G and other Refuge functions. Public meetings and programs of a non-commercial nature may occur within the Refuge Visitor Center which are either directly or indirectly related to ADF&G or Refuge programs.

Groups using the Refuge Visitor Center meeting room must meet the specific requirements identified below. Permission to use the rooms will be denied any group whose purpose is illegal, unrelated to ADF&G or Refuge purposes, solely personal or of a direct or indirect commercial nature (excluding non-profit organizations), or where satisfactory adult sponsorship is not provided. Abuse of meeting room privileges may be grounds for denial of permission for future use.

**II. Visitor Center Meeting Room Requirements**

Approval for use of the Visitor Center Meeting Room is subject to the following requirements:

- A. All meetings and programs shall be open to the public.
- B. Users must complete and submit to the Refuge Manager an application form furnished by the ADF&G. The form must be signed by the person who will be in charge of the planned activity and responsible for any damages. The signature of that person indicates that these regulations have been read and will be observed. The purpose, date, and time of the meeting must be stated explicitly on the application. A reservation is not confirmed until the application form is signed by the Refuge Manager.
- C. No fee may be charged for public attendance at any meeting or program. This restriction does not include the collection of normal dues or voluntary donations by non-profit organizations provided public attendance is not restricted in any manner for non-dues paying individuals or individuals who choose not to donate. This restriction also does not include direct program fees which may be charged for approved activities (e.g., summer educational programs) which are authorized under a cooperative agreement with the ADF&G.

**Visitor Center Meeting**

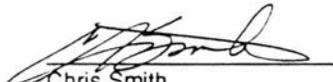
**2**

**June 12, 1992**

**Room Policy**

- D. Smoking or the use of alcoholic beverages is not allowed in the Visitor Center meeting room.
- E. No materials may be affixed to walls or other surfaces.
- F. Groups meeting outside of regular Refuge Visitor Center hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday) must either be sponsored by a responsible ADF&G employee who will be physically present and assume responsibility for the security of the building or must arrange and pay for security from an ADF&G - approved security service.
- G. Groups composed of persons under the age of 19 must be sponsored and supervised by at least one adult responsible for that group.
- H. Direct or indirect sale of any product or service is prohibited. The only exceptions are sales sponsored by the ADF&G or Friends of Creamers Field.
- I. If a scheduled meeting is to be cancelled, the applicant is obliged to inform the Refuge Manager. Failure to notify the Refuge Manager of a meeting cancellation or abuse of meeting room privileges may result in the denial of permission to that group in the future.
- J. The ADF&G reserves the right, with 24 hours notice, to cancel permission to use the Visitor Center meeting room and/or to substitute facilities.
- K. Reasonable care of the building and its furnishings will be the responsibility of the group using the facility. The cost of any damage repair will be the responsibility of the user group.
- L. Groups must return the meeting room to their original condition upon completion of activities.
- M. As a condition of approval to use the Visitor Center meeting room, each group shall agree to indemnify, save harmless, and defend the department, its agents and its employees from any and all claims or actions for injuries or damages sustained by any person or property arising directly or indirectly from the use of the Visitor Center meeting room.

APPROVED:

  
 Chris Smith  
 Regional Supervisor  
 Wildlife Conservation

6/22/92  
 Date

  
 Earnie Greek  
 Admin. Officer III  
 Division of Administration

6/25/92  
 Date