

Silvio O. Conte

National Fish and Wildlife Refuge in Massachusetts Fact Sheet for Members of Congress

Represented by the following Members of Congress:

Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D)
Senator John F. Kerry (D)
Rep. John W. Olver (D-1st)
Rep. Richard E. Neal (D-2nd)
Rep. James P. McGovern (D-3rd)

Contact

Andrew French, Project Leader
Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge
52 Avenue A
Turners Falls, MA 01376
Phone: 413/863 0209
Fax: 413/863 3070
TDD: 800/877 8339
E-mail: fw5rw_socnwr@fws.gov

Profile

Established:	1997
Current acres:	27,391
Connecticut	0
Massachusetts	186
New Hampshire	617
Vermont	26,534
Proposed acres:	93,395
Connecticut	28,330
Massachusetts	16,260
New Hampshire	7,945
Vermont	40,860
Staff:	9
FY 2002 budget:	\$795,000
2002 volunteer hours:	1,920
2002 visitation:	145,800

Purpose

The Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge was established to protect the abundance and diversity of native species throughout the 7.2 million-acre Connecticut River watershed. This is accomplished through land acquisition and by providing technical and financial support to partners for improved habitat management and environmental education projects.

Public Use Notes

- Great Falls Discovery Center

Management Activities

- Work with many public and private partners to protect rare species, native plants and animals and important habitats
- Provide leadership to partners throughout New England to encourage the control of invasive species
- Develop cooperative visitor centers to educate the public about wildlife resources and issues within the watershed

Highlights

From 1996 to 2001, the refuge helped Massachusetts citizens by competitively awarding 70 challenge cost-share projects to support grassroots efforts to restore habitats and provide environmental education.

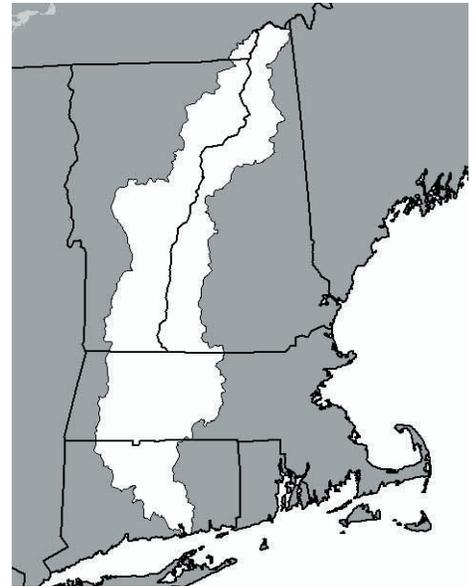
The Great Falls Discovery Center will open this year. Walk-through dioramas guide visitors on a journey from the mouth of the Connecticut River to its headwaters in northern New Hampshire.

The refuge is working in partnership with the New England Wild Flower Society and University of Connecticut to produce the Invasive Plant Atlas of New England. This four-year project involves hundreds of volunteers and is being funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Issues

Rapid urbanization in the southern half of the watershed threatens the limited high-quality habitat.

The extensive spread of exotic invasive species threatens the integrity of native habitats.



The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD
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