

From: [Sabrina Chandler@fws.gov](mailto:Sabrina.Chandler@fws.gov)
Sent: Saturday, August 1, 2015 4:02 PM
To: [Timothy Mason](#)

Mr. Mason,

I appreciate your concern for the Refuge and the impacts to it during a recent bowfishing tournament. I would like to provide some clarification regarding some of the points that you made in your email.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service nor the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge were aware of the bowfishing tournament until the day before it was set to begin. We did not permit the activity. We first realized that the tournament was taking place when we noticed a significant increase in airboat use on Pools 9 and 10 on Thursday July 23. We looked into it and discovered that there was a tournament going on.

On the Refuge we do not currently permit fishing tournaments of any kind. We depend on our state partners to issue permits through their systems they have in place to help regulate crowding and resource concerns. One I discovered this tournament was occurring in WI waters, I looked on their tournament website to see if they had been permitted. I could not find the tournament listed on the permit calendar so I contacted the individual listed on the DNRs tournament website and asked if I was overlooking something. He looked into it and discovered that they did not have a permit. Looking further into the issue it was realized that the tournament fell into a "loophole" allowing "regional" tournaments an exception to the permit requirement.

In response to the tournament and expecting that we may have some complaints, I alerted my officers to focus on those areas and work night hours to document any issues. DNR also had wardens alerted.

As for impacts to the Refuge, we have certainly received additional noise complaints. Without specific identifying information we cannot pursue these complaints at this time but have certainly documented them.

The Refuge, next year will be reviewing it's current compatibility determination (CD) for fishing tournaments. The current CD was established in 2006 and is up for a 10 year review next year. It currently does not address bowfishing tournaments and night activities. All of this will have to be considered in the review. We will also work with our State partners in this review to ensure that their permitting system for tournaments on the Refuge is adequate to address our concerns.

Feel free to give me a call if you have any questions. And thanks for your concern and stewardship of the Refuge.

From: [Sabrina Chandler@fws.gov](mailto:Sabrina.Chandler@fws.gov)
Sent: Thursday, August 13, 2015 8:15 AM
To: [Timothy Mason](#)

Mr. Mason,

Our current CD is based on the premise that "Fisheries management and tournament oversight is conducted by the four states' departments of natural resources." Therefore we must depend on them to regulate the tournaments that occur in their waters, which includes permitting these activities on the Refuge. I raised concern with the WI DNR over this particular tournament and the lack of notice that was provided to the Refuge. They are aware of those concerns and we will work to address them. New intricacies associated with these activities arise frequently, which is why we conduct reviews of the CDs. We intend to complete that review next year as required and have it built into our workplan.

As for the suggestion that we have an inappropriate relationship with Cabela's, the office space that we rent was coordinated through the General Services Administration which manages office spaces leased by the Federal Government. The location was selected based on a bid process and has nothing to do with Cabela's.

I have continued to catalog your concerns in a record that will be used during the review process for the CD. Thanks for your input.