

UPDATE:

Lake Mattamuskeet Cyanobacteria Treatment

Over the past year, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) evaluated a proposed pilot study of a cyanobacteria treatment in four bays on the perimeter of Lake Mattamuskeet. The FWS released a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) in September 2023 and received comments from the public. The FWS is now releasing a final EA that includes responses to those comments and an updated version of the EA with several measures to minimize potential impacts. Those measures and other updates to the EA are summarized below.

- Treatments will be limited to four bays totaling 400 acres (1% of the lake). These bays will be isolated from the rest of the lake by turbidity curtains.
- Treatments will be limited to dates when few waterfowl are present on the lake (April to October).
- Wildlife response during treatments will be monitored by refuge staff. Any birds using the treatment areas will be “hazed” or disturbed to the point of leaving the area.
- Application will be by boat to ensure the product is appropriately placed and begins to dissolve immediately.
- More prescriptive details about the treatments were added to the final EA (how, when, how often, rates, etc.).
- Rates of the hydrogen peroxide-based product to be applied (Lake Guard Oxy) will be limited to a maximum of 50 pounds/acre based on recently conducted bird and aquatic invertebrate toxicity tests.
- Extensive monitoring to measure cyanobacteria abundance will be used to minimize the amount of product required for treatments.
- Water quality thresholds for pH and dissolved oxygen were established and will be monitored to determine if treatments must be suspended.
- Additional clarification on potential impacts was added to the EA.

The full EA including responses to public comments is available at:

<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/mattamuskeet>