

[From Spring 1999]

Visitor Center Make Over

The Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Contact Station got a make-over in February. The refuge used monies derived from entrance fees to repaint, replace carpet, and add a new roof to the facility. Most of our visitors are surprised and somewhat disappointed that the refuge does not have more suitable visitor facilities. The contact station's make-over will hopefully help to alleviate some of those concerns until we can plan, design and construct an educational and administrative center that meets the public's growing demand for education and interpretation.

The refuge is planning a variety of improvements for visitors and the contact station's make-over is just the beginning. Plans are already underway to replace the wildlife observation platform located on the Freshwater Marsh Trail. Refuge public use staff are also in the early stages of designing new interpretive hubs that will showcase the relationship between people and Assateague Island over time.

A lot of exciting things are happening at the refuge. One of our primary goals is to provide visitors with a clean, safe and wholesome atmosphere to learn about Chincoteague Refuge and the value of safeguarding and sustaining wild living resources. Our contact station, as inadequate as it is (no running water, no bathrooms, and a 10-seat audio viewing room), needs to make visitors feel welcome. We hope we have accomplished this with the new makeover.

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