GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Biological Diversity - The variety of life forms and processes, including the complete natural complex of species, communities, genes, and ecological functions.

Biomass - The weight of all life in a specified unit of environment or an expression of the total mass or weight of a given population, both plant and animal.

Bloom - A readily visible concentrated growth or aggregation of plankton (plant and animal).

Cumulative Effects - Those effects on the environment that result from the incremental effect of the action when added to the past, present, and reasonable foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or nonfederal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative effects can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.

Dissolved Oxygen - Amount of oxygen dissolved in water.

Drainage Basin - An area mostly bound by ridges or other similar topographic features, encompassing part, most, or all of a watershed.

Ecology - The study of the relations between organisms and the totality of the biological and physical factors affecting them or influenced by them.

Ecosystem Approach - A strategy or plan to manage ecosystems to provide for all associated organisms, as opposed to a strategy or plan for managing individual or clusters of species.

Ecosystem - An ecological system; the interaction of living organisms and the nonliving environment producing an exchange of materials between the living and nonliving.

Ecosystem Management - Management of an ecosystem that includes all ecological, social, and economic components which make up the whole of the system.

Effects - Effects, impacts, and consequences, as used in the environmental assessment, are synonymous. Effects may be direct, indirect, or cumulative.

Endangered Species - Any species of plant or animal defined through the Endangered Species Act as being in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range, and published in the Federal Register.

Environmental Analysis - An analysis of alternative actions and their predictable short-term and long-term environmental effects, incorporating physical, biological, economic, and social considerations.

Environmental Assessment - A systematic analysis of site-specific or programmatic activities used to determine whether such activities have a significant effect on the quality of the physical, biological, and human environment and whether a formal environmental impact statement is required; and to aid an agency's compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act when no environmental impact statement is necessary.

Eutrophication - The intentional or unintentional enrichment of water.

Food Chain - The dependence of organisms upon others in a series of food. The chain begins with plants or scavenging organisms and ends with the largest carnivores.

Goals - Broad statements of direction; end results or positions to be achieved.

Interdisciplinary Team - A group of individuals with varying areas of expertise assembled to solve a problem or perform a task. The team is assembled out of recognition that no one scientific discipline is sufficiently broad enough to adequately analyze the problem and propose action.

Monitoring - A process of collecting information to evaluate if an objective and/or anticipated or assumed results of a management plan are being realized (effectiveness monitoring) or if implementation is proceeding as planned (implementation monitoring).

National Environmental Policy Act - An act passed in 1969 to declare a National policy that encourages productive and enjoyable harmony between humankind and the environment, promotes efforts that prevent or eliminate damage to the environment and biosphere and stimulate the health and welfare of humanity, enriches the understanding of the ecological systems and natural resources important to the nation, and establishes a Council on Environmental Quality.

Objectives - Intermediate-term targets necessary for the satisfaction of Refuge goals; quantifiable measures that serve as indicators against which attainment, or progress toward attainment, of goals can be measured.

Riparian Area - A geographic area containing an aquatic ecosystem and the adjacent upland areas that directly affects it. This includes floodplain, and associated woodland, rangeland, or other related upland areas. Pertaining to the banks of streams, lakes, wetlands, or tidewater.

Riparian Zones - Terrestrial areas where the vegetation complex and micro-climate conditions are products of the combined presence and influence of perennial and/or intermittent water, associated high water tables, and soils that exhibit some wetness characteristics. Normally used to refer to the zone within which plants grow rooted in the water table of rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, reservoirs, springs, marshes, seeps, bogs, and wet meadows.

Sedimentation - The settling-out or deposition of suspended materials.

Succession - A gradual change from one community to another and characterized by a progressive change in species structure, an increase in biomass and organic matter accumulation, and a gradual balance between community production and community respiration.

Sensitive Species - Those plant or animal species for which population viability is a concern as evidence by a significant current or potential downward trend in population numbers, distribution, density, or habitat capability.

Strategies - Step-down approaches that could be used to meet Refuge goals and objectives; provide direction for defining and coordinating operational tasks to effectively perform the Refuge's purpose.

Threatened Species - Those plant or animal species likely to become endangered species throughout all or a significant portion of their range within the foreseeable future. A plant or animal identified and defined in accordance with the 1973 Endangered Species Act and published in the Federal Register.

Viable Population - A viable population is one which has such numbers and distribution of reproductive individuals as to provide a high likelihood that a species will continue to exist and be well-distributed throughout its range.

Watershed - The drainage basin contributing water, organic matter, dissolved nutrients, and sediments to a water body.

Watershed Analysis - A systematic procedure for characterizing watershed and ecological processes to meet specific management and social objectives. Watershed analysis is a stratum of ecosystem management planning applied to watersheds.

Watershed Restoration - Actions taken to improve the current conditions of a watershed to restore degraded habitat, and to provide long-term protection to natural resources, including riparian, terrestrial, and aquatic resources.

Watershed Treatments - Specific actions or tools to satisfy the goals and objectives of the watershed initiative project. These may include establishing permanent vegetation on sensitive areas within the watershed (riparian buffers, stream bank stabilization, erosion-prone areas); establishing permanent wildlife habitat for dependent species (warm/cool season grasses, wetlands, sediment retention, erosion, or water control structure basins, field/farmstead windbreaks, shelter rows, and winter food plots); and encouraging Best Management Practices (BMP's) on agricultural lands (strip-cropping systems, terraces, diversions, contour farming, cropland protective cover, conservation tillage, feedlot and manure management).