

Silvio O. Conte

National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

Building Alternatives for the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan

What geographic area you are commenting on? _____

Where are you from? (town and state) _____

Optional: Your name, affiliation, phone # _____

INSTRUCTIONS

Identify the geographic area to which you would like your input applied (in space above); your response can be specific to an existing refuge division or unit, proposed focus area, state, or the entire refuge.

If you feel strategies should vary from one geographic area to another, additional input sheets should be used so that your input can be accurately applied and considered.

Below, select each strategy that you feel should be employed to accomplish the congressionally legislated purposes for the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge in that area.

If you also want to indicate the priority you would like to see placed on various strategies, you may use an "H" for High, an "M" for medium, and an "L" for low next to the strategies you select. Also, feel free to write comments on additional sheets.

Land Acquisition (willing sellers only, fair market price by appraisal)

- Fee Title:** Service owns the underlying fee, potentially subject to a variety of reservations. The Service can provide a variety of opportunities for compatible public uses and a revenue sharing payment is made annually to the local taxing authority.
- Easement:** Service owns only those specific rights purchased. Easements cost less than fee title and the amount paid is determined by the value of the interests being acquired. If public access and land management are added, the difference between the purchase price of the easement and fee title decreases. Service does not pay revenue sharing payments.
- Combination of Fee and Easement:** The Service purchases easements and fee title within designated and delineated conservation project areas. The type of conservation tool used will be determined by landowner preference and minimum interest needed to accomplish refuge purposes.
- Public and Private Conservation Partnership Mosaic:** The Service purchases interest in land (fee and easement) that is part of a larger conservation partnership effort composed of local, state, federal, and private partners.

- Focus Existing State and Federal Easement Programs:** Focus existing U.S. Department of Agriculture easement programs (Forest Legacy and Farm Bill) and appropriate State easement programs within priority resource protection areas.
- Other (describe) and/or other comments

Habitat Management

- Early Succession:** Early stage forest stands with aspen, alder, poplar, and birch. Habitat for American woodcock, chestnut-sided warbler, and resident species such as ruffed grouse and white-tailed deer.
- Late Succession:** Forests stands are dominated by old, often large trees, interspersed with younger trees that have grown under forest canopy gaps. Habitat for blackburnian warbler, black-backed woodpecker, and wood thrush.
- Grasslands:** Areas managed to retain meadows and pastures. Habitat for harriers, bobolinks, and upland sandpipers
- Habitat Restoration (aquatic and terrestrial):** Techniques that move habitats toward a desired condition such as erosion control, converting former cropland to floodplain forests by planting trees, restoring developed land to native habitat, restoring drained or degraded wetlands, and reshaping and stabilizing stream banks.
- Fish Passage:** provide passage at barriers to migration like culverts and dams, by removing the structure, modifying the structure or its installation, or providing a fish ladder.
- Water Management:** Controlling water levels in an area to benefit specific species such as waterfowl, marsh birds, and their habitats.
- Natural Processes:** This is a hands-off approach where there is little to no active management.
- Fire Management:** There are two aspects to fire management. First, is suppression of undesired wildfires; and, second is the use of prescribed fire to manage habitats.
- Furbearer Management:** Typically trapping is the technique used to maintain furbearer populations, often beavers and muskrats, at desired levels.
- Other (describe) and/or other comments

- Local Friends Group:** Citizens work to support refuge at a given Division.
- Volunteers:** Citizens assist refuge staff with a variety of types of work.
- Higher Education/Summer Work Programs:** Provide opportunities for students to do maintenance, habitat and trails work.
- Local Tourism Groups:** Cooperators host events, publicize area recreational opportunities.
- Cooperative Weed (Invasive Species) Management Area:** Organizations and landowners in a given area cooperate to prevent new invasive plant introductions and share resources to control certain species.
- Local Watershed Group:** Organization that identifies and corrects fish passage and water quality issues. Their work benefits aquatic habitats.
- Private and Public Landowners:** Encourage landowners in the surrounding area to coordinate and “partner” to improve habitats on their lands. Could benefit a particular species or the overall integrity and health of ecosystems.
- Land Conservation Partnerships:** Work with federal and state agencies, national, regional and local non-governmental organizations and land trusts to protect lands within and in the vicinity of important natural resource areas.
- Other (describe) and/or other comments

Education

- Visitor Center:** Building with exhibits, usually staffed, staff serves those who choose to come with programs and events.
- Visitor Contact Station:** Usually associated with an office; typically provides unstaffed exhibits.
- Visitor Contact Points:** A variety of facilities that provide passive education, including trails with interpretive signage, kiosks, etc.; can be placed on or off refuge
- Mobile Exhibit(s):** May be used at various locations to reach new audiences.
- Loaner Exhibits:** Created and provided at partners’ sites, to reach more people.
- Programs:** May be given on or off-refuge, wide variety of topics.

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- Workshops and/or Conferences:** May be given on or off-refuge, usually for a specific audience, take lots of staff time to prepare and deliver.
- Events:** Day of many special activities offered to attract new, broad audiences.
- Demonstration Areas:** Areas on the refuge where on-going habitat management techniques are explained to the public through signage and brochures.
- Field Trips:** Guided tours for habitat/wildlife viewing or to highlight management actions.
- Work with Schools:** Offer teacher workshops, provide sites and equipment to encourage area teachers to use refuge as living classroom; reaches young audiences.
- Media Work:** Regular newspaper columns, magazine articles, radio interviews to get various messages to large numbers of citizens
- Other (describe) and/or other comments

Recreation

- Wildlife-dependent priority public uses:**
 - Hunting
 - Fishing
 - Wildlife Observation
 - Photography
 - Environmental Education
 - Interpretation
- Other uses if found to be appropriate and compatible:**
 - Hiking on trails
 - Snowmobiling on designated roads
 - Bicycling on designated roads
 - Skiing on designated trails
 - Camping
 - Canoeing/kayaking
 - Horseback riding on designated roads
 - Orienteering
- Other (describe) and/or other comments

Additional information concerning the Silvio O. Conte Refuge – Comprehensive Conservation Plan can be viewed and printed by visiting the following website: <http://www.fws.gov/northeast/planning/Conte/ccphome.html>

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