

# Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

## Comprehensive Conservation Plan



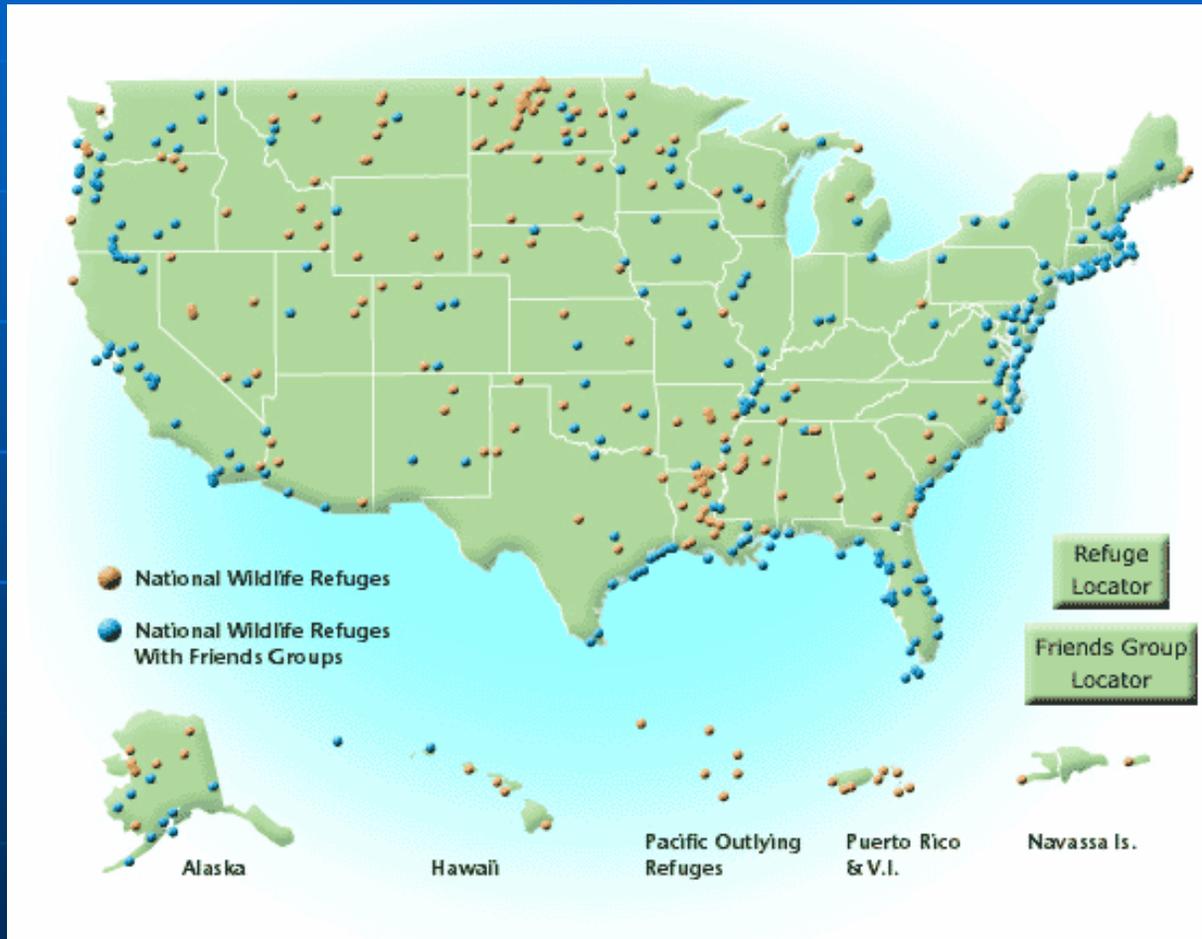
# Silvio O. Conte

## National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

### *Meeting Agenda*

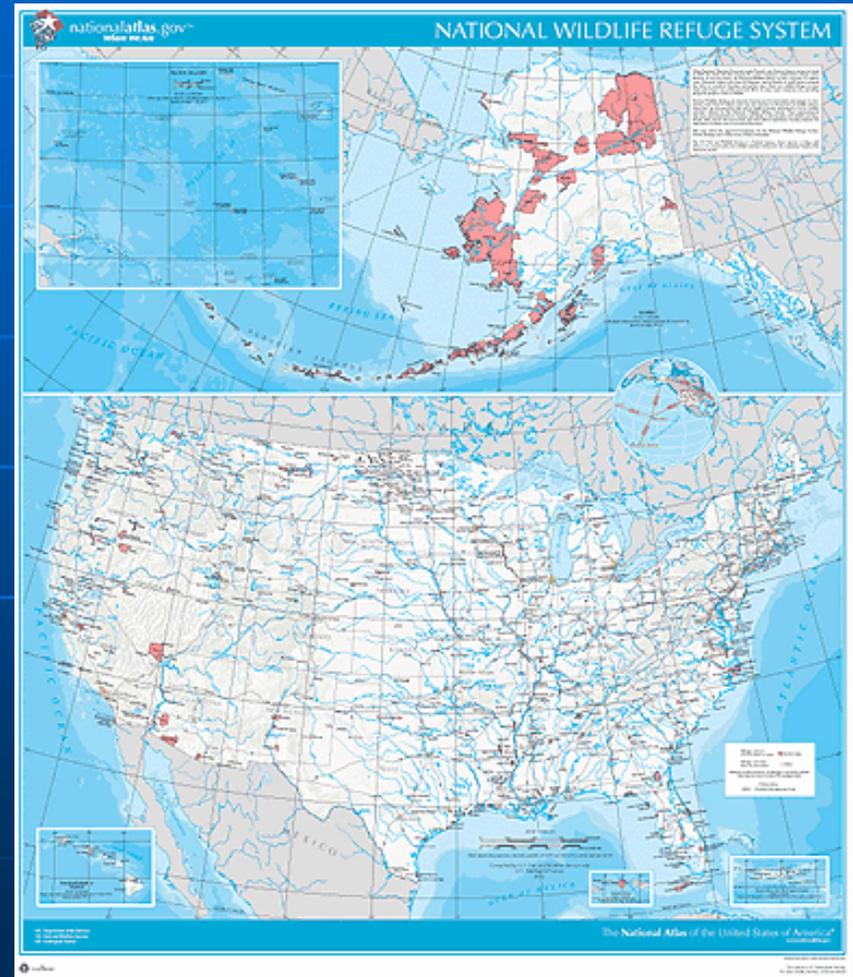
- Provide a general overview of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge and the Comprehensive Conservation Planning (CCP) process.
- Summarize the range of alternatives presented in the recent CCP newsletter.
- Outline the components of each the four alternatives, answer questions, and help guide you through the steps necessary to “construct” an alternative
- Build new alternatives that can be presented and evaluated in the draft CCP, using the components from the alternatives presented in the newsletter and input received in these meetings.
- Silvio O. Conte Refuge, 103 East Plumtree Road, Sunderland, MA 01375

# National Wildlife Refuge System



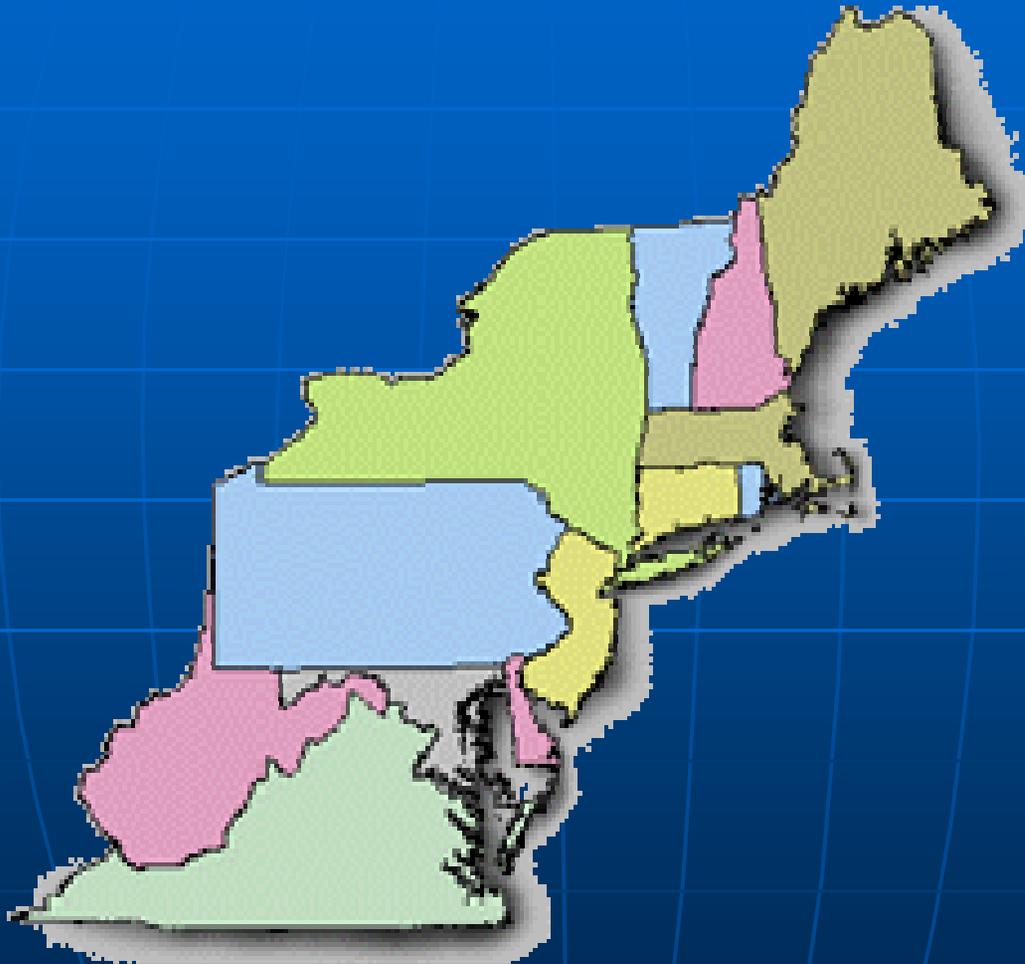
# National Wildlife Refuge System

- There are 545 Refuges in the System
- Includes about 100 million acres that have been invested by the public for plants, fish, wildlife, and people.



# Northeast Region

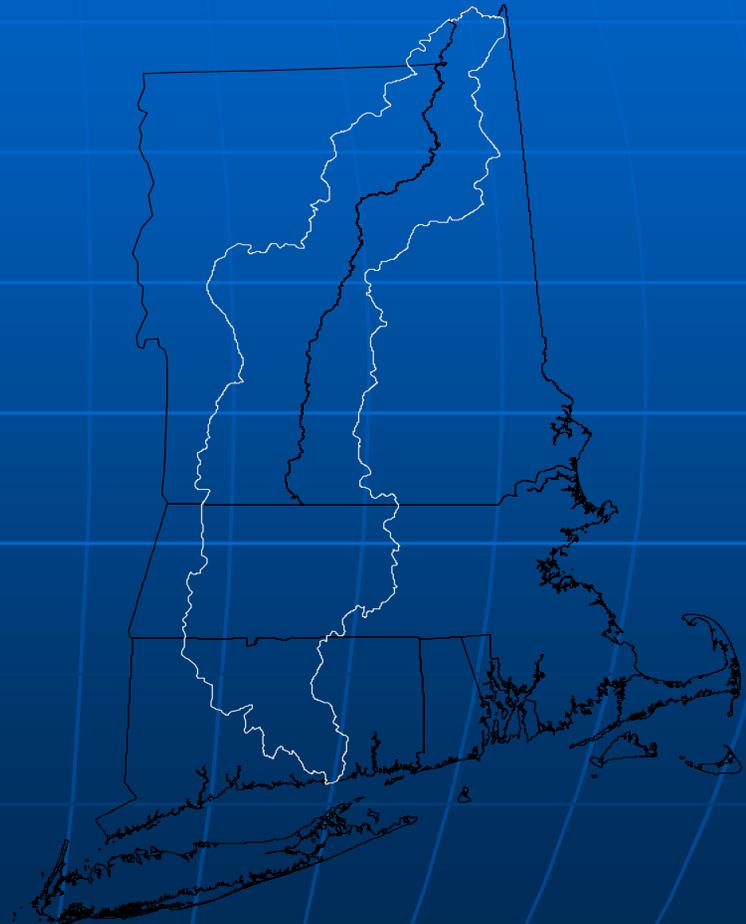
## U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



# Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

## Project Area

The 7.2 million acre watershed, located in parts of Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, nourishes 410 miles of river via 16 major tributaries.



# Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

***“Source to the Sea”***

- **Approximately 2.2 million people call the 390 communities in the watershed their home.**

Connecticut Lakes  
Region



# Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

***“Source to the Sea”***

The Silvio O. Conte Refuge was officially established on October 3, 1997 when the Connecticut River Watershed Council donated the 3.8 acre Third Island to become part of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Third Island  
Deerfield, Massachusetts



# Silvio O. Conte

## National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

### *Legislated Purposes*

- Conserve, protect, and enhance the Connecticut River watershed populations of Atlantic salmon, American shad, river herring, shortnose sturgeon, bald eagles, peregrine falcons, osprey, black ducks, and other native species of plants, fish, and wildlife.
- Protect species listed as endangered or threatened, or identified as candidates for listing, pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended.
- Conserve protect, and enhance the natural diversity and abundance of plant, fish, and wildlife species and the ecosystems upon which these species depend within the refuge.
- Restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of wetlands and other waters within the refuge.
- Fulfill the international treaty obligations of the United States relating to fish and wildlife and wetlands.
- Provide opportunities for scientific research, environmental education, and fish and wildlife-oriented recreation and access to the extent compatible with the other refuge purposes.

# Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

*“Source to the Sea”*

- Presently 32,545 acres of a proposed 78,395 acres, about 42 percent, have been acquired to date.





# Silvio O. Conte

## National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

### Comprehensive Conservation Plans...

The challenge and the opportunity includes...Integrating plants, fish, wildlife, and people together within this landscape and doing so in a way that is healthy and sustainable.



# Silvio O. Conte

## National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

### *Comprehensive Conservation Plans Provide...*

- Consistency and continuity in Refuge administration and management for the **next fifteen years**.
- Compelling and comprehensive marketing and budgeting information
- Promote public awareness, understanding, ownership, and support of the Refuge
  
- Progress can be monitored, quantified, and evaluated
- Legally defensible and biologically sound document
- Aids in communication, decision making, and program focus
- Nationally recognized by the employees, public, partners, and Congress as vitally important to National Wildlife Refuge administration

# Steps in the Comprehensive Conservation Planning Process

Preplanning  
Planning the Plan

**Public Process**  
Identify Challenges  
& Opportunities

Refuge Purposes  
Review Vision, Goals,  
Objectives & Strategies

Develop Alternatives  
Including  
Proposed Action

Prepare Draft Documents  
CCP Document  
& NEPA Document

Prepare Final Documents  
and Adopt CCP

Implement CCP  
Monitor, Quantify,  
and Evaluate

Revise Plan  
in Consultation with  
Public and Partners

# Silvio O. Conte

## National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

### Draft Goals

- Presently, we have three draft goals for the Refuge which can be generally described as follows...
- Conservation
- Education
- Recreation

**Silvio O. Conte**  
**National Fish and Wildlife Refuge**  
***Conservation Goal***

- The Refuge will contribute to species viability and biological diversity via land conservation, habitat management, research, partnerships, and private lands work.

**Silvio O. Conte**  
**National Fish and Wildlife Refuge**  
***Education Goal***

- The Refuge will inspire, guide, and support the citizens of the watershed to conserve the wide diversity of healthy habitats and the abundance of native species that characterize the watershed.

**Silvio O. Conte**  
**National Fish and Wildlife Refuge**  
***Recreation Goal***

- The Refuge will provide visitors with a variety of appropriate and compatible recreational opportunities to promote an appreciation of the intrinsic values of plants, fish, wildlife, and their habitats.

# Silvio O. Conte

## National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

### *Alternatives in Newsletter*

- **Alternative A:** Stop purchasing land; minimal land management, partnerships, education, and recreation opportunities.
- **Alternative B:** Implement the 1995 Environmental Impact Statement as envisioned.
- **Alternative C:** Focus land acquisition on larger conservation projects, expand land management, education, partnership, and recreation efforts.
- **Alternative D:** Additional divisions would be established which would be larger and require additional land management efforts and increase opportunities for recreation, education, and partnerships.

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## National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

### *Steps in Building an Alternative*

- Pick up the data sheet(s) that you were provided.
- Identify the geographic area in the space provided on the data sheet that you would like your input applied.
- **Your response can be specific to an existing refuge division or unit, proposed focus area, state, or the entire refuge.**
- Under each component, select the strategy(ies) that you feel should be employed in that geographic area.
- **Provide us with a sense of your priority (High, Medium, or Low) for the strategy(ies) identified.**
- If you feel the strategy(ies) should vary from one geographic area to another, use additional data sheets.

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## National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

### *Components for Building Alternatives*

- Land Acquisition
- Land Management
- Partnerships
- Education
- Recreation

# **Silvio O. Conte**

## **National Fish and Wildlife Refuge**

### *Land Acquisition - Strategies*

- **Fee Title**
- **Easement**
- **Combination of Fee and Easement**
- **Public and Private Conservation Partnership Mosaic (easements and fee title)**
- **Focus Existing Federal and State Easement Programs**
- **Other Strategies?**

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*Land Management*

- **Early Succession**
- **Late Succession**
- **Grasslands**
- **Habitat Restoration (Terrestrial & Aquatic)**
- **Fish Passage**
- **Water Management**
- **Natural Processes**
- **Fire Management**
- **Furbearer Management**
- **Other Strategies?**

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*Partnerships*

- **Local Friends Group**
- **Volunteers**
- **Higher Education and Summer Work Programs**
- **Local Tourism Groups**
- **Cooperative Weed (Invasive Species) Management Area**
- **Local Watershed Group**
- **Private and Public Landowners**
- **Land Conservation Partnerships**
- **Other Strategies?**

**Silvio O. Conte**  
**National Fish and Wildlife Refuge**  
*Education*

- **Visitor Center**
- **Visitor Contact Station**
- **Visitor Contact Point**
- **Mobile Exhibit(s)**
- **Loaner Exhibit(s)**
- **Programs**
- **Workshops and/or Conferences**

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*Education - Continued*

- **Events**
- **Demonstration Areas**
- **Field Trips**
- **Work With Schools**
- **Media Work**
- **Other Strategies?**

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**National Fish and Wildlife Refuge**  
*Recreation – Priority Public Uses*

- **Hunting**
- **Fishing**
- **Wildlife Observation**
- **Photography**
- **Environmental Education**
- **Interpretation**

**Silvio O. Conte**  
**National Fish and Wildlife Refuge**  
*Recreation – Other Public Uses*

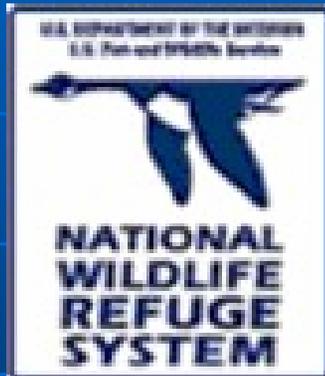
- Hiking on trails
- Snowmobiling on designated roads
- Bicycling on designated roads
- Skiing on designated trails
- Camping
- Canoeing and kayaking
- Horseback riding on designated roads
- Orienteering
- Other Uses?

# Silvio O. Conte

## National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

### Questions and Contact Information

<http://www.fws.gov/northeast/planning/Conte/ccphome.html>  
[Andrew\\_French@fws.gov](mailto:Andrew_French@fws.gov)



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**John Hay National Wildlife Refuge**

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**Website: [www.fws.gov/r5soc](http://www.fws.gov/r5soc)**