



Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge

Planning Update 5, August 2012



Ryan Hagerly/USFWS

Bighorn sheep are just one of the many majestic native wildlife species you can find at the Refuge

The Refuge's Final CCP/EIS is Available

Thank you for commenting on the Draft CCP/EIS

The Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (CCP/EIS) for Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge is available. We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), are pleased to announce that we completed our analysis of the alternatives in the CCP/EIS, and identified Alternative 2 as our preferred alternative for managing the Refuge. Thirty days after the CCP/EIS is available to the public, our Regional Director will select an alternative to implement on the Refuge in a Record of Decision.

We developed the CCP/EIS to provide reasonable, scientifically grounded guidance for managing fish and wildlife populations. Under the preferred alternative, we would manage habitats for priority sagebrush-dwelling species, stock and maintain native trout species, and control feral horse and burro populations for the long-term conservation of native fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats.

Actions for protecting and sustaining the Refuge's habitats, migratory bird populations, and other fish and wildlife species are

identified in the CCP/EIS. Our priority public uses—wildlife observation, photography, environmental education and interpretation, hunting, and fishing; along with commercial guiding, rock collecting, and scientific research are evaluated in the CCP/EIS as well.

Public Comments on the Draft CCP/EIS

We sincerely appreciate everyone who provided comments and participated in our planning process. We reviewed your comments on the Draft CCP/EIS, and responded to them by revising our alternatives and summarizing the comments and our responses in Appendix N of the CCP/EIS. A copy of the CCP/EIS can be obtained by downloading it from our website or by contacting the Refuge. See page 4 for details.

In this issue:

- CCP/EIS Highlights.....2
- Summary of Public Involvement.....3
- What Happens Next?.....3
- CCP/EIS is Available from the Refuge...4



Lahontan cutthroat trout

Bureau of Reclamation

Highlights of our Preferred Alternative

How would Refuge management change?

Under Alternative 2, our preferred alternative, we would manage for a natural mosaic of Great Basin habitats and the native species that depend on them. We would use a broad range of management tools, including prescribed and natural fire, mechanical treatments, and water management.

Opportunities for wildlife-dependent recreation on the Refuge such as wildlife observation and photography, environmental education and interpretation, hunting, and fishing, would improve, see the map insert.

The Refuge staff would also conduct the following management actions, often with partners.

- Stock and maintain indigenous trout species, such as Lahontan cutthroat trout, Alvord cutthroat trout, or redband trout, in Big Spring Reservoir and Virgin Creek (instead of nonnative rainbow trout).
- Increase control of nonnative and invasive plants.
- Remove western juniper where it is encroaching upon sagebrush habitats.
- Restore springs and playas by removing abandoned water control developments where appropriate and beneficial to wildlife.
- Improve recreation opportunities by relocating and expanding the visitor contact station, upgrading campground facilities, developing an accessible interpretive trail, creating a self-guided auto tour route, and designating and improving signage of routes open to vehicle use.
- Manage 424,360 acres for wilderness character.

- Increase inventory, protection, and the quality of interpretation for historic and cultural resources.

How were comments addressed?

Public comments on the Draft CCP/EIS resulted in additions and corrections that helped clarify the intent of management direction in the Final CCP/EIS. The primary changes and additions included:

- Expanding our rationale for Refuge goals, objectives, and strategies.
- Adding information regarding the Refuge's wilderness stewardship.
- Expanding descriptions contained in our alternatives of actions needed to maintain wildlife guzzlers.
- Updating our public involvement appendix.
- Adding an appendix summarizing public comments and our responses.
- Adding an appendix summarizing the Refuge's integrated pest management program.

Public Involvement Wrap-up

Our mailing list includes 4,500 participants

We initiated our planning and public involvement process in 2008 by announcing our intention to complete a CCP/EIS in the *Federal Register*. Simultaneously, we issued a press release and distributed Planning Update 1 announcing the planning process and a series of open house meetings, and requesting public comments.

We held five public open house meetings in 2008, and several additional meetings were held with county, state, and federal agencies, and key stakeholder groups.

Planning Update 2 was distributed in April 2009, in it we summarized the significant planning issues we identified in public comments.

In Planning Update 3, distributed in June 2010, we included our three preliminary management alternatives that we drafted based on public comments, the Refuge's resource needs, and our management policy. We requested

public comments on the alternatives, including Alternative 2, our preferred alternative.

Additional meetings were held with Nevada's Department of Wildlife (NDOW) and key stakeholder groups after we released Planning Update 3. We modified our preliminary alternatives based on the comments we received from the public, NDOW, and our stakeholders, and presented our refined alternatives in the Draft CCP/EIS.

We announced the availability of the Draft CCP/EIS in the *Federal Register* in September 2011, and simultaneously sent a news release to local media outlets and distributed Planning Update 4 to more than 4,500 interested individuals, organizations, and agencies.

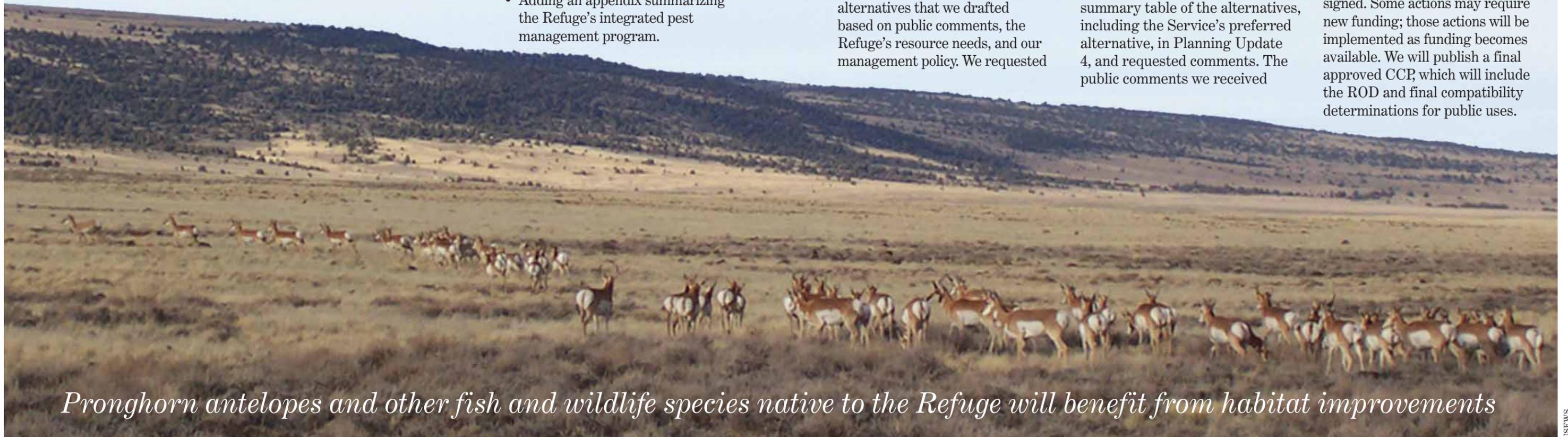
We included descriptions and a summary table of the alternatives, including the Service's preferred alternative, in Planning Update 4, and requested comments. The public comments we received

on the Draft CCP/EIS have been addressed in the Final CCP/EIS.

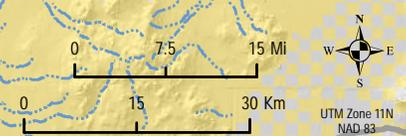
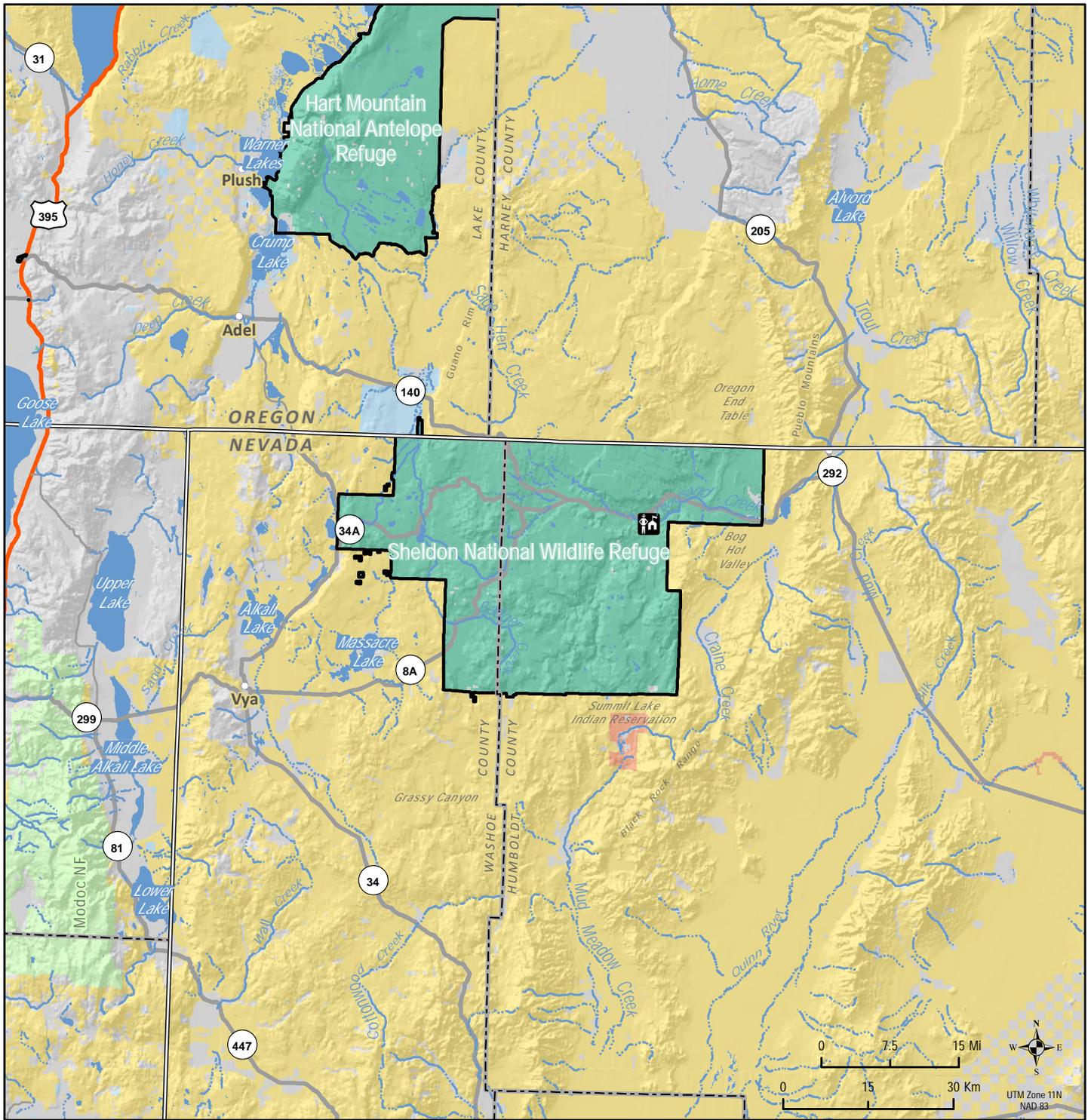
We appreciate all the comments we received during the planning process and encourage you to stay involved in the Refuge's activities. Successful implementation of the CCP is largely dependent upon continued public support, partnerships, funding, and volunteer efforts.

What Happens Next?

Now that the CCP/EIS is available, after 30 days our Regional Director will make a decision regarding which alternative to implement. The decision will be documented in a Record of Decision (ROD). We can begin implementing CCP strategies at the Refuge once the ROD is signed. Some actions may require new funding; those actions will be implemented as funding becomes available. We will publish a final approved CCP, which will include the ROD and final compatibility determinations for public uses.



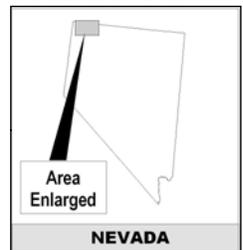
Pronghorn antelopes and other fish and wildlife species native to the Refuge will benefit from habitat improvements



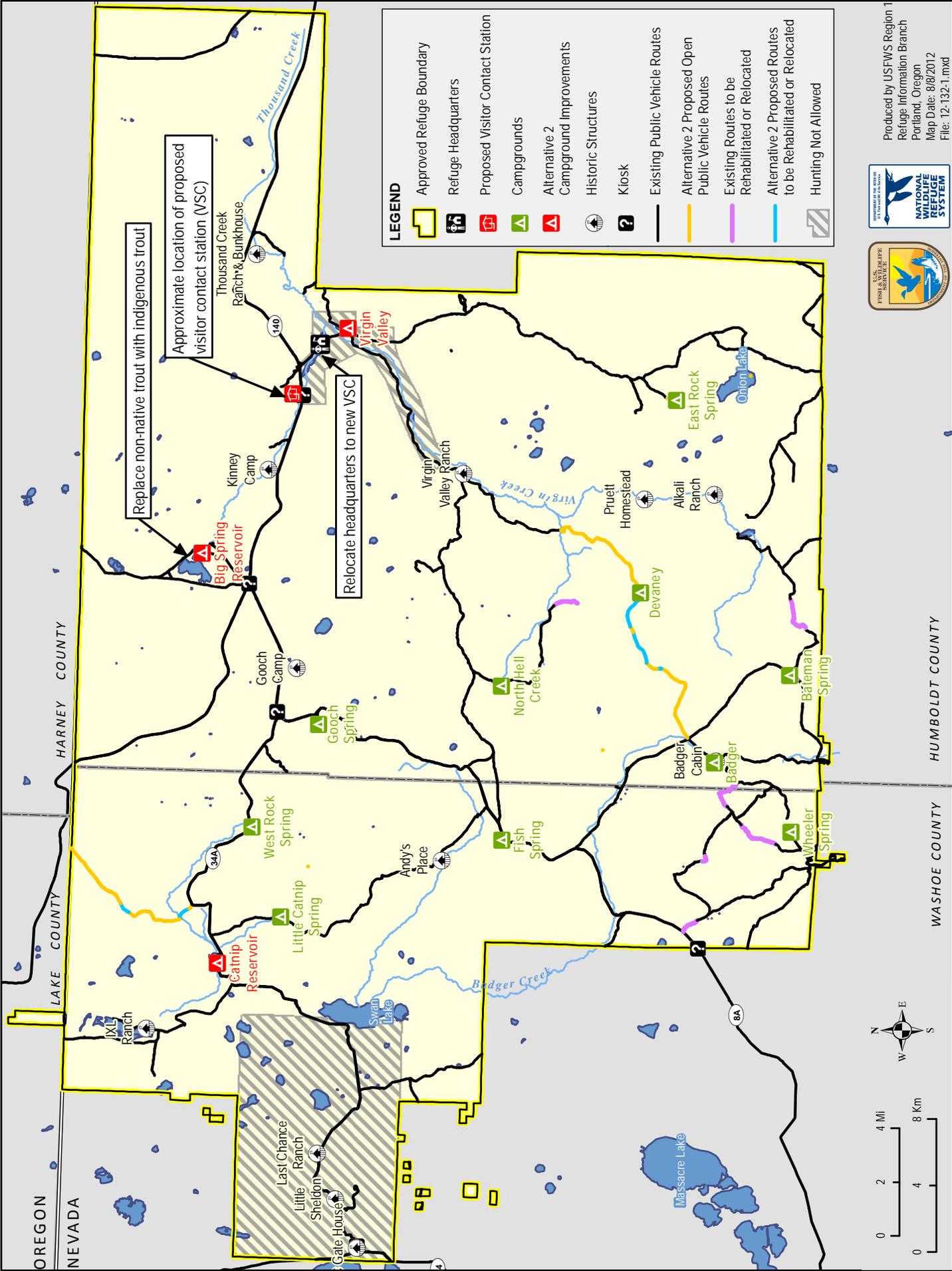
LEGEND

-  Refuge Headquarters
-  Sheldon NWR Approved Boundary
-  County Boundary
-  State Line
-  City/Town
-  Intermittent Stream
-  Perennial Stream

- Land Ownership**
-  Bureau of Indian Affairs
 -  Bureau of Land Management
 -  State Lands
 -  US Fish and Wildlife
 -  US Forest Service
 -  Private/Unclassified



Produced by USFWS Region 1
 Refuge Information Branch
 Portland, Oregon
 Map Date: 8/8/2012
 File: 12-132-2.mxd



LEGEND

- Approved Refuge Boundary
- Refuge Headquarters
- Proposed Visitor Contact Station
- Campgrounds
- Alternative 2
- Campground Improvements
- Historic Structures
- Kiosk
- Existing Public Vehicle Routes
- Alternative 2 Proposed Open Public Vehicle Routes
- Existing Routes to be Rehabilitated or Relocated
- Alternative 2 Proposed Routes to be Rehabilitated or Relocated
- Hunting Not Allowed

Replace non-native trout with indigenous trout

Approximate location of proposed visitor contact station (VSC)

Relocate headquarters to new VSC



Produced by USFWS Region 1
 Refuge Information Branch
 Portland, Oregon
 Map Date: 8/8/2012
 File: 12-132-1.mxd

OREGON
 NEVADA

LAKE COUNTY
 HARNEY COUNTY

WASHOE COUNTY
 HUMBOLDT COUNTY



Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge
P.O. Box 111
Lakeview, OR 97630

The Final CCP/EIS is Available from the Refuge

Please contact Aaron Collin as follows, to obtain a CD-ROM copy of the Final CCP/EIS:

Aaron Collins, Planning Team Leader
Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge
P.O. Box 111
Lakeview, OR 97630

Phone: 541/947-3315 ext. 223

Fax: 541/947-4414

E-mail: SheldonCCP@fws.gov

A printed copy of the Final CCP/EIS is available at each of the following libraries:

Humboldt County Library
85 East Fifth Street
Winnemucca, NV 89445

Washoe County Library
301 South Center Street
Reno, NV 89501

Modoc County Library
212 W. 3rd St
Alturas, CA 96101

Lake County Library
513 Center Street
Lakeview, OR 97630



**You can download the Final CCP/EIS and other planning documents online at:
www.fws.gov/pacific/planning/main/docs/NV/docssheldon.htm**

Mule deer