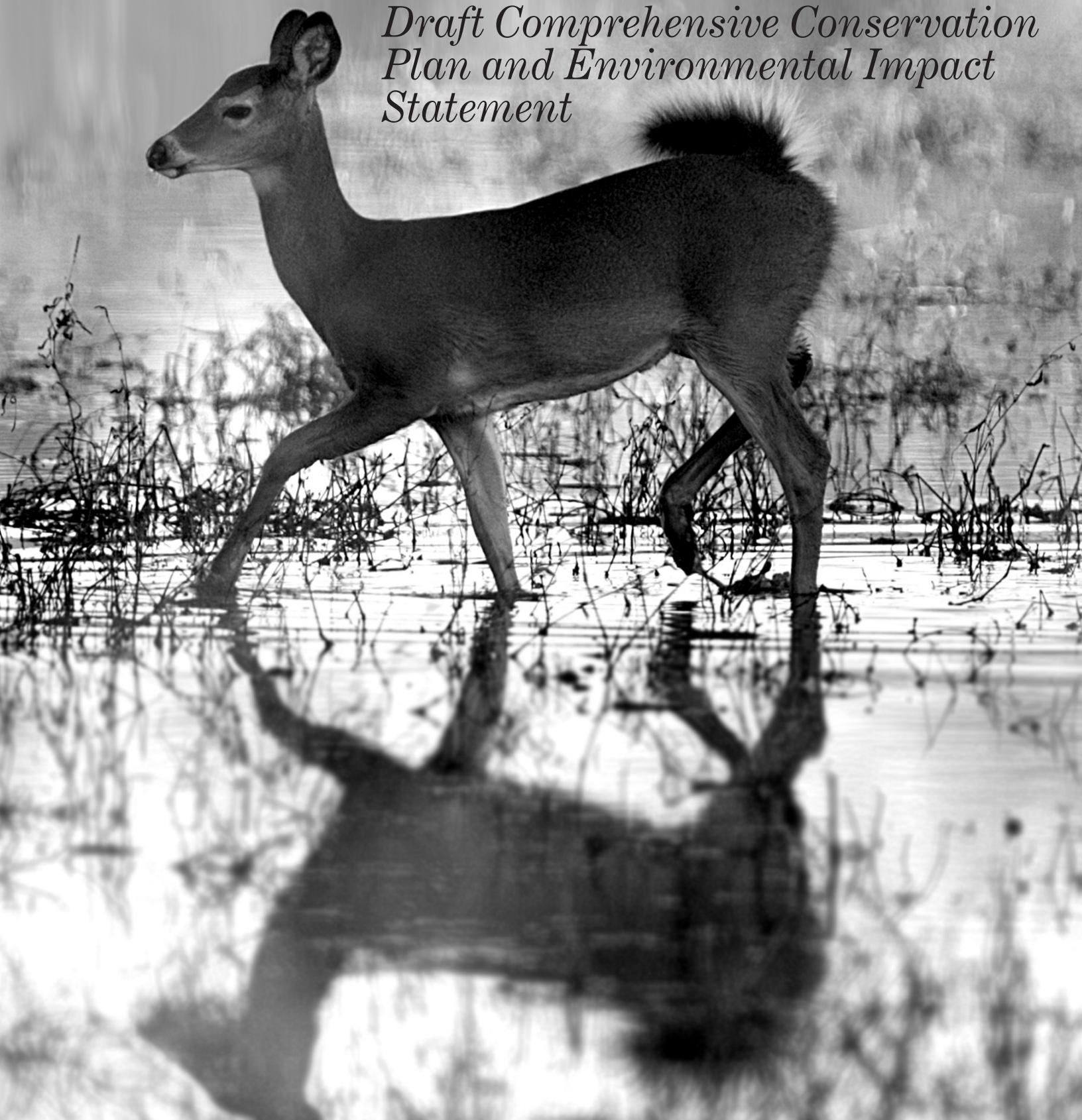


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Lewis and Clark National Wildlife Refuge and Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the Columbian White-tailed Deer

*Draft Comprehensive Conservation
Plan and Environmental Impact
Statement*



Our Vision for the Future

Lewis and Clark National Wildlife Refuge

Named for the famed explorers, the landscape and rich wildlife of this Refuge have changed very little in the past 200 years. Modern-day explorers visit this Refuge to experience its wilderness qualities and enjoy the abundant wildlife resources. Native species of migratory birds, wild salmon, and other native plants and animals thrive where natural processes take precedence within the varied habitats of Sitka spruce swamps, riparian forest, tidal marshes, mudflats, and sand bars typical of the Columbia River estuary today and 200 years ago.

Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the Columbian White-tailed Deer

Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the Columbian White-tailed Deer is a stronghold for the conservation of this once nearly extinct population. Columbian White-tailed deer and other wildlife thrive here in a mosaic of meadows, wetlands, and riparian forests characteristic of the lower Columbia River watershed. Natural processes and management activities support a broad range of native plants and wildlife from Sitka spruce swamps to wild salmon. The Refuge staff works closely with a variety of partners, both on and off the Refuge, to accomplish Refuge purposes and conservation goals.



**Lewis and Clark National Wildlife Refuge and
Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the Columbian White-tailed Deer**
Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement
Wahkiakum County, Washington, and Clatsop and Columbia Counties, Oregon

Type of Action:	Administrative
Lead Agency:	U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service
Responsible Official:	Robyn Thorson, Regional Director
For Further Information:	Charlie Stenvall, Project Leader Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Complex 3888 SR 101 Ilwaco, Washington 98624

Abstract: We developed alternatives, including preferred and no action alternatives, as required by National Environmental Policy Act regulations, for each of the following refuges: Two alternatives were developed for the Lewis and Clark National Wildlife Refuge and three alternatives were developed for the Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the Columbian White-tailed Deer (refuges). We compared and assessed issues, opportunities, and options for managing the refuges in the alternatives. Summaries of the alternatives follow:

Lewis and Clark Refuge

Alternative 1 (No Action). Under Alternative 1 no changes to current management would occur, we would: Monitor refuge islands and treat invasive plant infestations as funded; protect wintering and foraging habitat for migratory waterfowl and bald eagles; and provide hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography.

Alternative 2 (Preferred Alternative). Under Alternative 2 current management would continue, and we would: Expand partnerships for managing invasive species; recruit graduate students to conduct wildlife and habitat research; explore options for managing State-owned lands within the refuge's acquisition boundary; expand wildlife observation and photography opportunities; initiate a wilderness study for eligible refuge lands; and develop partnerships to ensure dredge spoil islands provide benefits for wildlife.

Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the Columbian White-tailed Deer

Alternative 1 (No Action). Under Alternative 1 no changes to current management would occur, we would: Maintain and protect habitats; establish early successional riparian forest habitat; manage predators January through April; and provide wildlife-dependent public use programs.

Alternative 2 (Preferred Alternative). Under Alternative 2 current management would continue, and we would: Close a section of Steamboat Slough to waterfowl hunting to improve public safety; manage predators year-round as needed to achieve Columbia white-tailed (CWT) deer recovery goals; establish an experimental CWT deer population upriver; develop two trails; open Crims and Price islands to waterfowl hunting; improve interpretive media; and initiate a wilderness study for eligible refuge lands;.

Alternative 3. Under Alternative 3 current management would continue, and we would: Conduct predator management January thru August to achieve recovery goals for the CWT deer; develop a bicycle and hiking trail; open Crims and Price Islands to waterfowl hunting; close a small section of Steamboat Slough to waterfowl hunting to improve public safety; install new interpretive exhibit panels; develop curriculum for the refuge's study sites; and initiate a wilderness study for eligible refuge lands.

Public Comments: Willapa National Wildlife Refuge will accept comments February 10 to April 12, 2010.

Lewis and Clark National Wildlife Refuge and Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the Columbian White-tailed Deer

Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

Prepared by:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Complex
3888 SR 101
Ilwaco, Washington 98624

January 2010

Comprehensive Conservation Plans provide long-term guidance for management decisions and set forth goals, objectives, and strategies needed to accomplish refuge purposes and identify the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's best estimates of future needs. These plans detail program planning levels that are sometimes substantially above current budget allocations, and as such, are primarily used for strategic planning and program prioritization purposes. The plans do not constitute a commitment for staffing increases, operational and maintenance increases, or funding for future land acquisition.

Each chapter heading is a link to said chapter.

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