



## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Tulare Basin Wildlife Management Area

*Planning Update #5, December 2007*

## Greetings!

In our previous updates, we described three alternatives for protecting wetland habitat in the Tulare Basin. The alternatives were available for public review and comment from September through October, 2004.

Public comments were reviewed and a decision has been made. A brief summary of the decision and what happens next is provided in this update.

## Contact Us for More Information!

### **Refuge Planning:**

Richard Smith, Natural Res. Specialist  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
California/Nevada Refuge Planning  
2800 Cottage Way, Room W-1832  
Sacramento, CA 95825-1846  
Phone: (916) 414-6502 Fax: (916) 414-6497

### **Kern National Wildlife Refuge Complex:**

Dave Hardt, Refuge Manager  
or  
Scott Frazer, Wildlife Refuge Specialist  
Kern National Wildlife Refuge  
P.O. Box 670  
Delano, California 93216  
Phone: (661) 725-2767 Fax: (661) 725-6041

E-mail: [FW8PlanComments@fws.gov](mailto:FW8PlanComments@fws.gov)  
(Please use "Tulare Basin" as the subject)

Refuge Planning Website:  
[www.fws.gov/cno/refuges/planning.html](http://www.fws.gov/cno/refuges/planning.html)



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/  
Bob Savannah

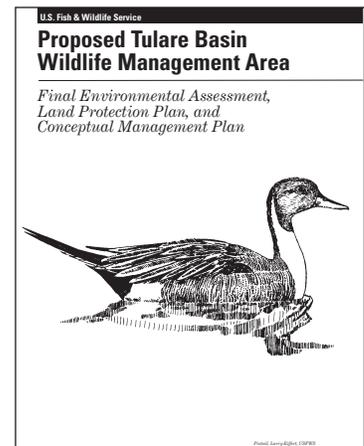
## New Wildlife Area Approved

### Public Review Results

The draft planning documents were distributed to the public in September, 2004, for a 30-day comment period. Eight comment letters were received from individuals along with three letters from units of local government. All comments were generally supportive of the project. Comments and the Service's responses are included in the Final Environmental Assessment.

### FWS Decision

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has decided to implement the Preferred Alternative, as described in the *Tulare Basin Wildlife Management Area Environmental Assessment, Land Protection Plan, and Conceptual Management Plan*.



The selected alternative proposes protection of 20,000 acres using perpetual conservation easements with the addition of an area, not to exceed 2,000 acres, of potential fee acquisition or optional

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Kern National Wildlife Refuge  
P.O. Box 670  
Delano, CA 93216

# Land Protection Plan and Conceptual Management Plan

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conservation easements. All 22,000 acres could be protected via conservation easements if landowners choose to participate. It is the Service's policy to acquire easements, lands, or interests in lands from willing sellers.

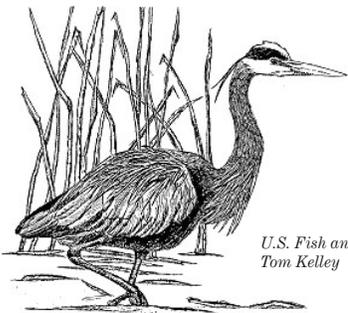
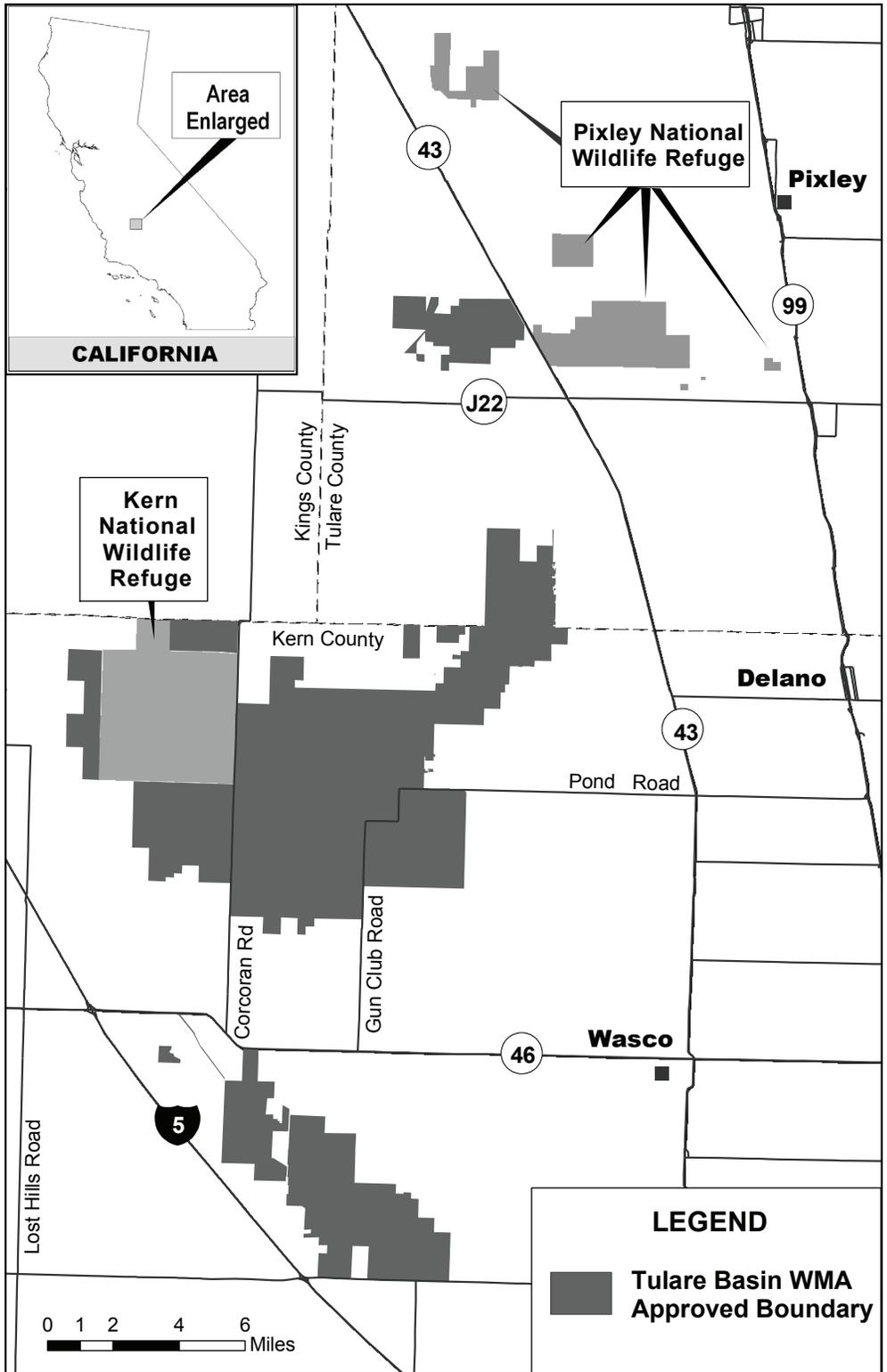
The decision is documented in the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The Service will establish an approved WMA Boundary that encompasses the widely scattered private wetland habitats and associated uplands targeted by this proposal.

With the protection of this habitat, the Service would also be contributing to protection and recovery of migratory waterfowl populations, shorebirds, landbirds and neotropical migratory birds of North America's Pacific Flyway, and federally listed threatened and endangered species.

## What Happens Next?

Next steps include requesting approval from Kern and Tulare counties where the WMA is located, as well as concurrence from the California Fish and Game Commission and the federal Migratory Bird Commission. Easement purchase will proceed according to the availability of funds.

The *Final Environmental Assessment* can be downloaded from the website at <http://www.fws.gov/cno/refuges/tulare/>. There are also CDs and a limited number of hard copies available from the refuge. Request your copy from Kern NWR or from Richard Smith (*see contact information*).



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/  
Tom Kelley