

Chapter 5: Plan Implementation

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This chapter summarizes the actions, funding, coordination, and monitoring to implement the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP). As noted on the inside cover of this document, this plan does not constitute a commitment for staffing increases or operational and maintenance increases. These decisions are at the discretion of Congress in overall appropriations and in budget allocation decisions made at the Washington and Regional levels of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS, Service).

New and Existing Projects

This CCP outlines an ambitious course of action for the future management of Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge (NWR, Refuge). It will require considerable staff commitment as well as funding commitment to actively manage the wildlife habitats and to add, improve, and maintain public use facilities. The Refuge will continually need appropriate operational and maintenance funding to implement the objectives in this plan. A full listing of unfunded Refuge projects and operational needs can be found in appendix F along with a brief description of the highest priority Refuge projects.

Staffing

Implementing the vision set forth in this CCP will require changes in the organizational structure of the Refuge. Existing staff will direct their time and energy in new directions, and new staff members will be added to assist in these efforts. Table 5-1 presents current staffing and the increases proposed for the Refuge in this plan.

Table 5-1: Current and Proposed Staffing Under the CCP

Current Staff	Proposed Additions
Project Leader	Law Enforcement Officer
Wildlife Refuge Specialist	Park Ranger
Wildlife Refuge Specialist	Maintenance Worker
Wildlife Biologist	Tractor Operator
Administrative Technician	
Prescribed Fire Specialist	
Range Technician (Fire)	
Maintenance Mechanic	

Partnership Opportunities

Partnerships are an essential element for the successful accomplishment of goals, objectives, and strategies at Big Stone NWR. The objectives outlined in this CCP need the support and the partnerships of federal, state and local agencies, non-governmental organizations, and individual citizens. Refuge staff will continue to seek creative partnership opportunities to achieve the vision of the Refuge.

We expect to continue to work with the following notable partners, while developing new partnerships:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- Ducks Unlimited
- Upper Minnesota River Watershed District
- Pheasants Forever
- The Nature Conservancy

Step-Down Management Plans

The CCP is a plan that provides general concepts and specific wildlife, habitat, and people-related objectives. Step-down management plans provide greater detail to managers and employees who will carry out the strategies described in the CCP. The Refuge staff will revise or develop the following step-down plans:

Step-down Management Plan	Estimated time of completion after CCP approval
Habitat Management Plan	1 year
Visitor Services Plan	2 years
Inventory and Monitoring Plan	2 years

Monitoring and Evaluation

The direction set forth in this CCP and specifically-identified strategies and projects will be monitored throughout the life of this plan. On a periodic basis, the Regional Office will assemble a station review team whose purpose will be to visit the Refuge and evaluate current activities in light of this plan. The team will review all aspects of Refuge management, including direction, accomplishments, and funding. The goals and objectives presented in this CCP will provide the baseline for evaluation of this field station.

Plan Review and Revision

The CCP is meant to provide guidance to the Refuge Manager and staff over the next 15 years. However, the CCP is also a dynamic and flexible document, and several of the strategies contained in this plan are subject to uncontrollable events of nature. Likewise, many of the strategies are dependent upon Service funding for staff and projects. Because of all these

factors, the recommendations in the CCP will be reviewed periodically and, if necessary, revised to meet new circumstances. If any revisions are major, the review and revision process will include the public.