

Refuge Conservation Planning

Program Elements	FY 2005 Actual ¹	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007			Change From 2006 (+/-)
			Fixed Costs & Related Changes (+/-)	Program Changes (+/-)	Budget Request	
Refuge Planning <i>FTE</i>	[6,710] [76]	6,733 67	+ 223	- 152 ^a	6,804 67	+ 71 -
Land Protection Planning <i>FTE</i>	[3,546] -	3,494 -	- -	- -	3,494 -	- -
Comprehensive Conservation Planning <i>FTE</i>	[2,875] -	2,833 -	- -	-2,833 -	- -	- 2,833 -
Total Refuge Conservation Planning <i>FTE</i>	[13,131] [76]	13,060 67	+ 223 -	- 2,985 -	10,298 67	-2,762 -

¹ Congress approved a new budget structure for the National Wildlife Refuge System beginning in FY 2006. FY 2005 funding and FTE are shown here in the new budget structure for comparison purposes only, and do not reflect actual expenditures in the new budget structure.

^a This includes -137 program change and -15 in program management savings.

Summary of FY 2007 Programmatic Changes for Refuge Conservation Planning

Request Component	Amount	FTE
Programmatic Changes		
• Refuge Planning	-137	0
• Comprehensive Conservation Plans	-2,833	0
• Program Management Savings	- 15	0
TOTAL, Program Changes	-2,985	0

Justification of FY 2007 Program Changes

The FY 2007 budget request for Conservation Planning is \$10,298,000 and 67 FTE, a net program decrease of \$2,985,000 and 0 FTE from the 2006 enacted level.

Refuge Planning (-\$137,000)

The reduction of \$137,000 to this funding element will have a limited impact on planning operations and performance. The reduction will be accommodated by reducing activities supporting the development of new CCPs as the refuge system will focus efforts during FY 2007 on streamlining the CCP process. This reduction is not expected to have a measurable impact on key performance measures.

Comprehensive Conservation Plans (-\$2,833,000)

The President’s budget requests a reduction of -\$2,833,000 for Comprehensive Conservation Plans. The Service expects to achieve the Congressional mandate of completing CCPs for all 554 units of the refuge system by 2012. This will be accomplished by significantly restructuring and streamlining the CCP process during FY 2007, redirecting field staff to develop CCPs, and marshalling existing resources to complete the job. The redirection of field staff may be necessary. Greater detail pertaining to CCP streamlining efforts are described in the FY 2007 Program Performance Estimates section.

Program Management Savings (-\$15,000) – To enable the Service to address its highest priorities during constrained fiscal times, the Service proposes reducing program administrative funding by \$1,980,000. Using Activity Based Cost information and other budgetary analyses the Service anticipates achieving a savings of \$15,000 in Refuge Conservation Planning. These savings will be realized by streamlining program administrative support activities.

Program Performance Change Table

	<i>Total Performance Change</i>		<i>-43 CCPs completed during the fiscal year</i>		
	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D=A+B+C</i>	<i>E</i>
<i>Overall Performance Changes from 2006 to 2007</i>					
Measure	2006 Enacted Performance	2007 Base Performance	2007 Impact of Program Change on Performance	2007 Budget Request Performance	Out-year Impact of 2007 Program Change on Performance
2.5.1 # refuges/WMDs with a CCP completed (during the year)	92	92	-43	49	0
2.5.3 # refuges/WMDs with a CCP underway at the end of the FY	252	252	-144	108	0
2.5.5 # where effective cooperation and collaboration by stakeholders is underway	252	252	-144	108	0
<p>Column B: The performance level expected to be achieved absent the program change (i.e., at the 2006 request level plus/minus funded fixed cost/related changes); this would reflect, for example, the impact of prior year funding changes, management efficiencies, absorption of fixed costs, and trend impacts.</p> <p>Column E: The out-year impact is the change in performance level expected in 2008 and Beyond of ONLY the requested program budget change; it does <u>not</u> include the impact of receiving these funds again in a subsequent outyear.</p>					

Program Overview

Refuge Planning. Activities include completion of major conservation planning in support of refuges. More specifically, Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCPs) and step-down management plans, such as Habitat Management and Visitor Services plans, are developed for individual refuges. This funding also provides Geographic Information System capability that supports planning and other refuge operations.

Land Protection Planning. Land protection planning evaluates potential land acquisitions to support the strategic growth of the refuge system. Refuge field stations work in cooperation with others to identify and protect habitats for migratory birds and other important species. In some cases, Land Protection Plans will be prepared to expand existing refuges or to establish new refuges in order to address the needs of fish, wildlife, and plant communities. Specific activities include gathering background data, coordinating with state and local entities, involving the public, analyzing ecological, legal, and financial issues, and printing and distributing draft and final plan documents.

In FY 2004, the Service developed three draft policies to guide the strategic management of the refuge system. These policies will be incorporated into the Service Manual as sections on Strategic Growth,

Land Protection Planning, and Land Acquisition Planning. The Strategic Management policy provides guidance to identify areas of ecological importance and potential land acquisitions. The Land Conservation Planning policy describes the specific procedures and documents used in conservation planning processes. The Land Acquisition Planning policy provides criteria for prioritizing approved proposals for funding.

Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCPs). As mandated by the *National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997*, CCPs will be developed for 554 units of the refuge system by 2012 (including 517 refuges and 37 WMDs). Following completion, a CCP guides management of a refuge for the next 15 years. CCPs ensure that the unit is comprehensively managed to fulfill the purpose(s) for which it was established. Developing a CCP facilitates decisions regarding issues like wildlife-dependent public use, the construction of facilities, and the development of biological programs. It also helps refuge managers address any conflicting uses that may exist. Once a refuge finishes its CCP, it may develop subsequent “step-down” management plans to meet the CCP’s goals and objectives. Examples of the most important step-down management plans include habitat management, visitor services, fire management, wildlife inventory and monitoring, and wilderness management.

The refuge system uses CCP development as the primary method to conduct citizen-centered government, which is central to Executive Order 13352 on Cooperative Conservation. Developing these long-term plans relies on public participation. Local communities, State conservation agencies, and other partners help guide refuge management through the development of the CCP. Diverse private organizations, such as the National Rifle Association and Defenders of Wildlife, also participate in the CCP planning process.

2007 Program Performance Estimates

The FY 07 budget reflects a \$2.895 million program decrease to the CCP program from FY 06. The Service still expects to achieve the Congressional mandate of completing CCPs for all 554 units of the refuge system by 2012. At the end of FY 2007, the refuge system will have 289 CCPs to complete. The funding reduction will reduce the number of CCPs completed during the fiscal year 2007 from 92 to 49. The refuge system will initiate 36 CCPs during the fiscal year. The Director of the Service has reaffirmed the commitment to meeting the Congressional mandate to complete CCPs for 554 units by the year 2012. Consequently, a new completion schedule is under development. Specific measures that will be taken to streamline the CCP process include:

CCPs as High Refuge Priority. The completion of a CCP in a timely manner will become a high priority for every national wildlife refuge. This will be established by the Director and adopted by the Service directorate, regional refuge chiefs, refuge supervisors, and refuge managers.

Accountability. Beginning in 2006, the accountability for completing CCPs will be placed with the refuge manager, who will be responsible for ensuring that the CCP is completed in a timely and high-quality manner. Refuge supervisors, regional refuge chiefs, and regional directors will be held accountable for supporting the refuge managers in this goal.

Annual Regional CCP Planning Goals. The Service will review and update planning goals for each region. Regional directors together with regional refuge chiefs will ensure that staff and resources are dedicated to CCP development to meet a region’s planning goals.

Clustering of Refuge CCPs. Refuge system will continue to “cluster CCPs” (do simultaneous CCPs) for refuges and wetland management districts that share geographic proximity, leveraging biological

information and management issues common to refuges. This approach worked in Region 3 where the CCPs for five of the Region's western wetland management districts were planned simultaneously.

Preplanning. A significant amount of preplanning information will be collected, reviewed, and organized prior to initiating the formal CCP planning process. Much of the CCP can be drafted during this preplanning stage. A preplanning handbook and associated checklists are being developed to provide refuge managers specific guidance for this task.

Decouple Refuge Acquisition Planning from CCPs. Pending the development of a Service strategy for the strategic growth of the National Wildlife Refuge System, all planning associated with significant refuge expansion proposals will be decoupled from the CCP planning process. The CCP can however, identify a future need to complete and submit a refuge expansion proposal.

Redirecting Field Staff to Complete CCPs. Staff will be redirected from other duties to complete CCPs.

2006 Planned Program Performance

During FY 2006, the Service will improve its capabilities to achieve performance goals pertaining to the development and completion of CCPs. The Service will complete approximately 92 CCPs raising the total number of refuges with completed CCPs to 216, with another 252 plans underway. Performance in FY 2006 will be above the trend of the past few years, reflecting the increased emphasis within the NWRs to complete those plans.

The Service continues developing Land Protection Plans to describe the specific procedures and documents used in the preliminary and detailed conservation planning processes. During FY 2006, the Service will produce an estimated five Land Protection Plans.

2005 Program Performance Accomplishments

Comprehensive Conservation Planning

A total of 40 CCPs were completed in FY 2005. In addition, 26 new CCPs were initiated during the course of the year.

Step-Down Plans

Through FY 2005, the refuge system completed a variety of step-down plans as follows:

- Habitat Management Plans - 78
- Inventory and Monitoring Plans - 106
- Visitor Services Plans - 85
- Wilderness Plans – 27

Land Protection Planning

In addition to the above, five Land Protection Plans were approved during FY 2005. Likewise, Preliminary Project Proposals for five additional refuge expansion projects were approved during the year. Land Protection Planning information is summarized below.

Refuge Expansion Projects – FY 2005					
Unit	State	New or Expansion	Additional Acres	Date Approved	Type of Document
Glacial Ridge	Minnesota	New	35,756	10/12/04	LPP
Ozarks Plateau	Oklahoma	Expansion	11,363	02/08/05	LPP
Grassland WMA	California	Expansion	46,400	03/25/05	LPP
Maine Coastal Islands	Maine	Expansion	2,460	06/09/05	LPP
Upper Klamath	Oregon	Expansion	9,945	07/06/05	LPP
Rocky Mountain Front Range	Montana	New	170,000	10/04/04	PPP
Karl E. Mundt	South Dakota	Expansion	2,000	02/08/05	PPP
St. Lawrence	New York	New	8,000	03/03/05	PPP
New River	Oregon	New	5,900	03/12/05	PPP
Bill Williams	Arizona	Expansion	8,316	04/02/05	PPP

LAND PROTECTION PLANNING PROGRAM FY 2006					
Station	State	Approved Action	FY 06 Status	Study Area ²	Approved Acreage ³
Region 1					
James Campbell NWR	HI	Expansion	Draft LPP	388	342
New River NWR	OR	New	Approved PPP	5,900	0
Turnbull NWR	WA	Expansion	Approved PPP	12,000	20,726
Wapato Lake	OR	New	Approved PPP	6,280	0
Misc small additions (<40 acres or 10% ARB)	OR, ID, WA, Pac Is	Expansion	Draft LPP		
Region 2					
North Neches NWR	TX	New	Draft LPP	25,000	0
Ozark Plateau NWR	OK	Expansion	Draft LPP	12,000	3,000
Texas Chenier Plain Complex EIS	TX	Expansion	Draft LPP	137,500	102,626
Willcox Playa NWR	AZ	New	Draft LPP	28,000	0
San Pedro NWR	AZ	New	Draft PPP		
Region 3					
Green Bay NWR	WI/MI	Transfer/expansion	Draft PPP	4,133	2
Marais Des Cygnes	MO	Expansion	Draft PPP	11,145	9,300
Driftless Area NWR	WI/MN/IA	Expansion	Draft LPP	6,000	777
Miscellaneous Small Projects (additions, exchanges; includes Regional Resource Assessment)	Region	Exp/Exchg	Draft LPP	120	0
Region 4					
Miscellaneous Small Projects (additions, exchanges; includes Regional Resource Assessment)	Region	Exp/Exchg	Draft LPP	0	0
Region 5					
Chesapeake Marshlands NWR Complex	MD	Expansion	Draft LPP	31,314	29,389
Maine Coastal Islands NWR	ME	Expansion	Draft LPP	2,314	8,428
St. Lawrence Wetland and Grassland Management District	NY	New	Approved PPP	8,000	0
Rachel Carson NWR	ME	Expansion	Approved PPP	15,000	7,817
Wallkill River NWR	NJ	Expansion		16,450	8,167

LAND PROTECTION PLANNING PROGRAM FY 2006					
Station	State	Approved Action	FY 06 Status	Study Area ²	Approved Acreage ³
Region 6					
Rocky Mt Front Range Conservation Easement Program	MT	New	Draft LPP	170,000	170,000
Charles M. Russell NWR (cabin exchange)	MT	Exchange		25,000	1,100,000
Ft. Niobrara NWR (State Land Exchange)	NE	Exchange	Completed	440	72,598
Karl E. Mundt NWR	SD	Expansion	Draft LPP	2,000	1,000
Medicine Lake NWR	MT	Expansion	Approve PPP	8,400	31,660
Baca NWR (State of CO, BLM and FWS exchange)	CO	Exchange		25,000	92,500
Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR (<10% >\$500,000)	CO	Exchange		28	16,083
Misc small additions (<40 acres or 10% ARB)	CO, UT, WY	Exchange / Expansion	Draft LPP	647	149,234

Region 7*					
Adak NWR	AK	Exchange	Draft LPP	47,150	
Alaska Peninsula NWR	AK	LPP4	Draft LPP	1,395,000	4,359,000
Becharof NWR	AK	LPP4	Draft LPP	1,171,000	1,171,000
Kanuti NWR	AK	LPP4	Draft LPP	1,635,000	1,635,000
Kodiak/Koniag NWR	AK	Exchange	Draft LPP	189	0
Newtok	AK	Exchange	Draft LPP	21,427	0
Nikoiski	AK	Exchange	Draft LPP		0
Nima	AK	Exchange	Draft LPP	23,636	0
Shumagin	AK	Exchange	Draft LPP	18,000	0
Sitkanik Island	AK	Exchange	Draft LPP	1,653	0
Women's Bay	AK	Exchange	Draft LPP	26	0
Yukon Delta NWR	AK	LPP4	Draft LPP	26,291,000	26,291,000

CNO					
Ellicott Slough NWR	CA	Expansion	Draft LPP	312	170
Humboldt Bay NWR	CA	Expansion		876	9,554
Tulare Basin WMA	CA	New	Draft LPP	22,000	0
Misc small additions (<40 acres or 10% ARB)	CA,OR, NV	Expansion	Draft LPP		

Notes

Draft PPP - Region preparing PPP for WO approval

Approved PPP - WO approved for Regional Detailed Planning

Draft LPP - Region preparing LPP for WO Approval

1 Area being studied for inclusion in expansion/new refuge

2 Acreage in existing approved boundary. Not applicable for Exchanges due no increase in refuge size.

⁴ In Alaska, LPPs are completed for the entire refuge; all inholdings are evaluated; not all will be pursued. Planning covered by existing Laws

Performance Overview
(cost information in thousands)

Measure	2005 Plan	2005 Actual	Change from 2005 Plan	2006 Enacted	2006 Change from 2005 Actual	2007 Request	2007 Change from 2006
2.5.1 # refuges/WMDs with a CCP completed (during the year) (BUR)	19	40	21	92	52	49	-43
2.5.2 # refuges/WMDs with a CCP completed (cumulative) (BUR)	103	124	21	216	92	265	49
2.5.3 # refuges/WMDs with a CCP underway at the end of the FY (BUR)	171	171	0	252	81	108	-144
7.5.3 % of refuges/WMDs have an approved Wildlife Inventory and Monitoring Plan (BUR)	est baseline	18% 106/ 582	n/a	25% 146/ 582	7% +40	25% 144/ 582	0% -2