

PLAN SUMMARY

The Comprehensive Management Plan for the Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge will serve as a management tool to be used by the Refuge staff and its partners in the preservation and restoration of the Refuge. In that regard, the plan will guide management decisions over the next fifteen years and set forth strategies for achieving Refuge goals and objectives within that time frame.

The results of the planning process are perhaps best summarized by six major Refuge goals that are supported by a series of quantifiable objectives and specific implementation strategies. Those goals and key objectives include:

GOAL I: RESOURCE PROTECTION

Through land acquisition, protect the integrity of the areas natural and cultural resources.

GOAL II: HABITAT RESTORATION

Through ecological restoration, re-establish native plant communities throughout the Refuge for wildlife and educational and recreational opportunities.

GOAL III: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Maintain the Refuge through active management programs, cultural resource monitoring and research.

GOAL IV: DYNAMIC PARTNERING

Extend the cooperative action approach to local communities, agencies, and organizations to maintain, enhance, and create new partnerships that are mutually beneficial and further the goals of the Refuge.

GOAL V: ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Develop public appreciation and understanding of wildlife and plant communities and resource issues within the Cache River Wetlands through a formal, hands-on, educational program that results in environmentally literate and active citizens.

*GOAL VI: WILDLIFE-DEPENDENT RECREATION &
INTERPRETATION*

Provide opportunities for visitors to understand, observe, and enjoy wildlife and native habitats of the Cache River Wetlands.

The achievement of these goals will result in the following major accomplishments over the next fifteen years:

- ❖ Acquisition of 7,500 acres of additional land within the Refuge;
- ❖ Restoration of 5,250 acres to native hardwoods;
- ❖ Restoration of 1,500 acres of former wetlands;
- ❖ Restoration of 100 acres of herbaceous wetlands;
- ❖ Construction of 330 acres of additional moist soil units;
- ❖ Restoration of 100 acres of unique habitat;
- ❖ Construction of a 23,000 square foot Cache River Wetlands Visitor Center.
- ❖ Development of a conservation network among communities, schools and volunteers.

In the final analysis, the cost associated with the achievement of the vision and the goals for the Refuge is, in 1996, estimated to be \$27,000,000.