

## Chapter 5: Plan Implementation

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### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the actions, funding, coordination, and monitoring needed to implement the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP). As noted in 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).

### 5.2 Funding

This CCP outlines an ambitious course of action for the future management of Hamden Slough National Wildlife Refuge (NWR, Refuge). The ability to enhance wildlife habitats and to develop and maintain quality public use facilities will require a significant commitment of staff and funding from the Service. The Refuge will continually need appropriate operational and maintenance funding to implement the objectives of this plan. The highest priority Hamden Slough NWR projects as chosen by Refuge staff are:

- Full restoration of Pierce Lake.
- Full restoration of Bisson Lake, including raising/relocating Becker County Highway 14.
- Full restoration of Hamden Lake, including raising existing county and township roads.
- Implementation of a water monitoring plan as identified in the Water Resources Inventory and Assessment.

### 5.3 Staffing

Currently, Hamden Slough NWR has no full-time employees. The Refuge is managed by the staff of Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District (WMD, District). Table 5-1 lists current District staff. At least one additional position (visitor services specialist) will be needed for full implementation of this CCP. However, future funding is uncertain and new staff positions cannot be guaranteed.

**Table 5-1: Current Detroit Lakes WMD staffing**

Category	Number of Positions
Management	3
Biological	1
Visitor Services	0
Administrative	2
Maintenance	2
Fire Management	5
Law Enforcement	1

## 5.4 Partnership Opportunities

Partnerships are an essential element for the successful accomplishment of goals, objectives, and strategies at Hamden Slough 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 also developing new partnerships:

- Red River Basin Commission
- Buffalo-Red River Watershed District
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Friends of Detroit Lakes WMD
- Becker County
- Ducks Unlimited
- Pheasants Forever
- Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
- Minnesota Prairie Chicken Society
- Safari Club International of Minnesota
- Izaak Walton League, Prairie Woods Chapter
- Detroit Lakes Area Birding Club

## 5.5 Step-Down Management Plans

The CCP for Hamden Slough NWR is intended to be a broad umbrella plan that: 1) outlines general concepts and objectives for habitat, wildlife, visitor services, cultural resources, and partnerships; and 2) guides Refuge management for the next 15 years. Step-down management plans provide greater detail for carrying out specific actions authorized by this CCP. Table 5-2 below presents step-down management plans that are anticipated to be needed, along with their current status and next revision date. Some of these plans logically suggest an integrated approach and, where appropriate, may be combined into a single integrated step-down management plan.

**Table 5-2: Step-down Management Plans**

Step-down Plan	Existing Plan Year Approved	New or Revised Plan
Habitat Management	N/A	2014
Inventory and Monitoring	N/A	2014

## 5.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

The direction set forth in this CCP and specifically-identified strategies and projects will be monitored throughout the life of the plan. Many actions inherent in the plan are new directions and monitoring will

help understand the effects of the actions on habitat, wildlife, and public use patterns. In addition, the Refuge and its watershed will certainly change, and likely in ways unforeseen. Land use changes, invasive species, floods and droughts, disease outbreaks, and climate may alter expected outcomes. Monitoring will be critical to detecting and reacting to such change.

## **5.7 Plan Review and Revision**

The CCP is intended to be a dynamic plan based on the concept of adaptive management. Since the CCP will be a constant reference and guide for Refuge staff, internal review will be continuous. In addition, it is expected that the public and partners will offer continuous feedback. The Service will document minor plan modifications when monitoring and evaluation determine that changes are needed to achieve Refuge goals and objectives. There will be opportunity for public review and comment before making any substantive amendments or revisions. A major plan review and re-write will occur after 15 years.