

Chapter 5: Plan Implementation

New and Existing Projects

This CCP outlines an ambitious course of action for the future management of Seney NWR. The ability to enhance wildlife habitats on the Refuge and to maintain existing and develop additional 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 in this plan.

The following provides a brief description of the highest priority Refuge projects as chosen by the Refuge staff.

Seney NWR Operating Needs Projects

Replenish Visitor Services/Environmental Education Capacity and Capability – Hire a full-time Visitor Services Manager (Park Ranger). Due to Regional Workforce Planning considerations, the position at Seney NWR has been vacant since early in 2004. With this position filled, the Refuge would:

- Be able to conduct teacher workshops again
- Increase environmental education activities/presentations in area schools and at the Refuge, especially during the winter months when currently there is not any visitor services staff on duty.
- Increase outreach activities.
- Present more focused activities related to Service events such as Wildlife Refuge Week, Migratory Bird Day, etc.

A full-time Visitor Services Specialist would allow us to better meet one of the highest priorities for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service which is “Connecting



Seney NWR. USFWS photo.

People with Nature: Ensuring the Future of Conservation.” Estimated Cost – \$80,000. Strategy 14 under Objective 3.4.

Replace Refuge Visitor Center and Office – The current Refuge Visitor Center was built in 1963. Current exhibits and displays are becoming outdated and the auditorium is a simple room with basic features. Technology for interactive displays, multi-media presentation, and exhibits has significantly evolved over the past 40 years. It would not be feasible to update the existing facility to modern standards. The current office, exhibit space, and book store space are all used to the maximum and there is no space to expand. A new building could be constructed completely to Federal accessibility standards and include the latest in energy conservation capabilities. In addition, the current parking space for the Visitor Center is limited and is not conducive for parking and maneuverability of modern RVs.

The current Refuge Office was originally built in 1935 as a garage and then was converted into an office building. The building has been renovated several times over the years. Office space is used to maximum capacity, especially during the summer months with the arrival of seasonal staff/interns. The Refuge does not have the space to store official records and display library materials. A new building would be constructed to meet Federal accessibility standards and include the latest in energy conservation capabilities.

A joint Visitor Center/Office building would be estimated at \$4 million to \$7 million, depending on the chosen design. Strategy 15 under Objective 3.4.

Increase Law Enforcement Capability – Hire a full-time law enforcement officer. Currently the station only has one dual function officer. A full-time officer would be able to do more regular and intensive law enforcement on the Refuge throughout the year. The Refuge is responsible for managing and monitoring 30 different easements throughout the Upper Peninsula and northern Lower Peninsula; three remote island refuge units – one each in Lake Superior, Lake Michigan and Lake Huron; Whitefish Point, a remote unit of the Refuge approximately 70 miles from Seney NWR’s Headquarters; and finally the Kirtland’s Warbler Wildlife Management Area, which is composed of 125 different parcels in eight different counties in the northern Lower Peninsula. A full-time officer would be able to build cooperative relationships with neighboring enforcement agencies and enhance enforcement of state regulations on the Refuge. Estimated Cost - \$100,000.

Whitefish Point, Implement Human Use/Natural Resource Management Plan for Whitefish Point and Increase Public Use Opportunities – Hire a full-time Refuge Manager trainee with a major responsibility to work with partners in implementing the Human Use/Natural Resource Management Plan. A portion of the old U.S. Coast Guard Station was transferred to the Great Lakes Shipwreck Historical Society, Michigan Audubon Society/Whitefish Point Bird Observatory and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service/Seney National Wildlife Refuge. Regular Refuge staff presence is needed at Whitefish Point to build relationships with the other partners and to cooperatively work to implement the plan. This person would be able to acquire grant money or other funding to implement the plan. This person would be tasked with developing kiosks, new

trails or other items to better educate and inform the general public about the natural resources at Whitefish Point. Estimated cost \$70,000. Strategy 8 under Objective 3.3, Strategy 11 under Objective 3.4, and Strategy 5 under Objective 3.7.

Maintain Refuge Infrastructure – Seney NWR was established in 1935. Most of the water control structures, bridges, dikes, and canals for Refuge impoundments were built in the first 10 years of the Refuge’s existence. The Refuge actively manages 21 impoundments that are very important in management for Common Loons, Trumpeter Swans, other waterfowl and waterbirds, plus they are a major facet of the Refuge public use program. The Refuge should be on a schedule to replace or rehabilitate one to two water control structures/bridges every 5 to 10 years. In a top 10 priority list for deferred maintenance projects for the time-frame 2010 to 2014, replacing the water control structure at Upper Goose Pen is the number 1 priority; replacing the C-2 to M-2 water control structure is the number 2 priority; and replacing the J to H bridge is the fifth priority.

All Refuge dikes/dams have issues with trees and brush growing on the slopes and erosion problems from wave action and beaver activity. Some dikes are showing bare spots from vegetation dying out, plus they are all showing wear from 60 to 70 years of use. In addition to annual maintenance, the Refuge should be on a schedule to every 5 years complete major rehabilitation work on at least one dike/dam. In a top 10 priority list for deferred maintenance projects for the time-frame 2010-2014, rehabilitating the dike at B-1 Pool is listed as our fourth prior-



Researcher with eaglet, Seney NWR. USFWS photo.

ity and the dike at H-1 Pool is listed as the ninth priority. Estimated costs for water control structures/bridges would range from \$10,000 to \$740,000. Estimated costs for rehabilitating a dike/dam would range from \$10,000 to \$1,000,000. Strategy 8 under Objective 2.7.

Continue and Increase Efforts Concerning Invasive Species Control – For several years, Seney NWR has been conducting an active glossy buckthorn (invasive species) control program including mechanical cutting of the shrub, prescribed burning and application of herbicide. Annually, approximately 20 acres per year are treated. In addition to glossy buckthorn, invasive populations of multiflora rose and tartarian honeysuckle are also treated. This project would hire a career seasonal bio-tech to assist the Refuge forester in continuing the control program on glossy buckthorn. In addition this person would inventory and document extent of other invasive populations and begin to treat these other invasives. Estimated Cost \$35,000. Strategies 1-4 under Objective 2.11.

Maintain Refuge Roads – The Refuge maintains over 90 miles of roads, a majority of the roads are gravel but a significant portion are earthen roads. The 7.1-mile Auto Tour Loop and 4.3-mile Fishing Loop are both gravel. The Refuge maintains less than 2 miles of paved roads encompassing our entrance road and short roads to administrative sites. The entrance road and the Auto Tour and Fishing Loop, by far receive the most extensive public use. Estimated cost to re-pave the entrance road and associated parking lots at visitor center, office and shop would be \$436,000. Strategy 2 under Objective 3.3.

Investigate Feasibility of Utilizing Solar and/or Wind Power to Power River Road Quarters – The Refuge River Road quarters is housing for summer interns and researchers. The building is shut down and remains vacant in the winter. The building is located in an open field area and should be ideal for receiving and generating solar power and possibly wind power. No research has been conducted to date to determine the feasibility or expense of this project. (No specific strategy.)

Increase Capacity for Volunteers – Improve capabilities for housing trailers at River Road (location of pads, sewer and electrical hookups, phone hookups, etc.) Estimated Cost \$10,000. Strategy 16 under Objective 3.4.

Establish a Refuge Museum in the Historic Log Cabin – The Historic Log Cabin was built by the CCC in 1940 from timber harvested at the Refuge and is a superb example of local workmanship. It has served as a lodging facility for visiting dignitaries and was said to be a favorite of J. Clark Salyer's. The Refuge has numerous artifacts, photographs and documents from its early years that would be suitable for display in a museum. One bedroom would remain to provide accommodations for an "Artist in Residence" program or individuals conducting historical research. No research has been conducted to date to determine the feasibility or expenses of this project. Strategy 4 under Objective 3.5.

Future Staffing Requirements

Implementing the visions set forth in this CCP will require additions to the organizational structure of Seney NWR. Existing staff will direct their time and energy in somewhat new directions and new staff members will be added to assist in these efforts. The organizational chart (Figure 17) shows the existing Refuge staff as of Fiscal Year 2008. One full-time equivalent (FTE) law enforcement officer is needed to fully implement this plan by Fiscal Year 2023.

Step-down Management Plans

Step-down management plans describe specific actions that support the accomplishment of Refuge objectives. The management plans identified in Table 11 on page 78 will be reviewed, revised, or developed as necessary to achieve the results anticipated in this CCP. Please note that several existing management plans will be incorporated into the new Habitat Management Plan.

Wilderness Review

We reviewed Refuge lands outside of the designated wilderness area for suitability as additional wilderness. This evaluation is presented within Chapter 3. No additional lands were found suitable for designation as wilderness as defined in the Wilderness Act of 1964.

Figure 17: Current Staffing, Seney NWR

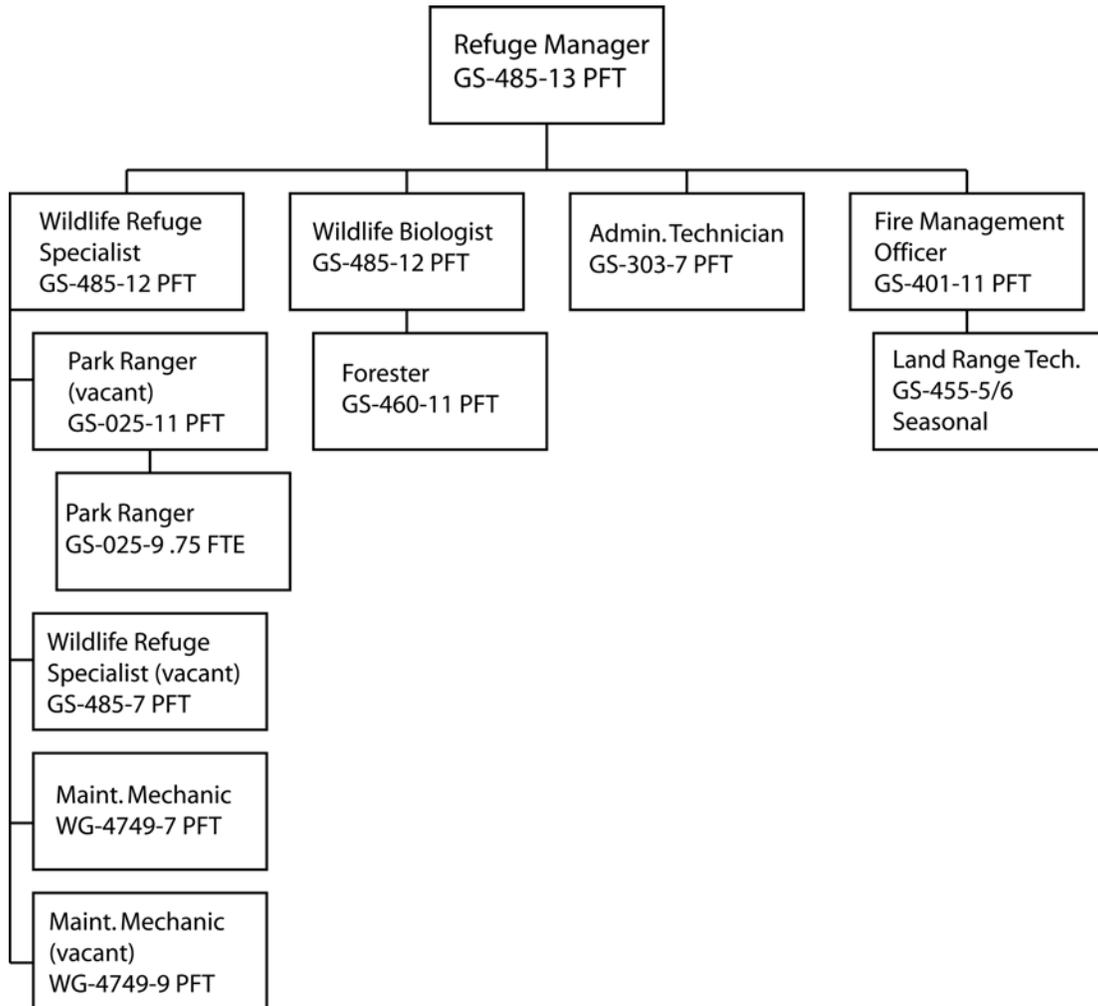


Table 11: Step-down Management Plan Schedule, Seney NWR

Step-down Management Plan	Plan Completed/ Updated	Anticipated Revision
Visitor Services Plan	N/A	2012
Hunting Plan	1989	2013
Law Enforcement Plan	2006	2009
Furbearer Management & Trapping Plans	1989	2013 Seney Habitat Management Plan
Marsh & Water Management Plan ¹	1993	
Forest Management Plan	1991	
Wildlife Inventory Plan	1989	
Fisheries Management Plan	1989	
Fire Management Plan	2008	2013
Wilderness Management Plan	N/A	2012
Cultural Resources Management Plan	1976	2016
Safety Plan	2007	2012

1. Annual Management Plans are written for the Water Management Plan.

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 Seney NWR and evaluate current Refuge 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 from which this field station will be evaluated.

Plan Review and Revision

The CCP for Seney NWR is meant to provide guidance to Refuge managers 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 such things as drought, floods, windstorms and other uncontrollable events. 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.