
Chapter 5: Plan Implementation

Introduction

This appendix summarizes the actions, funding, coordination, and monitoring required to implement the Comprehensive Conservation Plan. As noted in the inside cover, these plans do not constitute a commitment for staffing increases, operational and maintenance increases, or funding for future land acquisition. 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 Service.

A Word About Priorities

In the Refuge Improvement Act of 1997, Congress established a three-tiered hierarchy, or three priorities, for refuge management. As a first priority, every refuge is to be managed to fulfill its purposes and the Refuge System mission, namely conservation of fish, wildlife, and plants. Secondly, refuges are to facilitate wildlife-dependent or “Big 6” public uses, namely hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and interpretation and environmental education. Of lowest priority is managing other uses and activities such as general recreation.

However, setting priorities in a linear or in-order fashion (e.g. implementing from top to bottom on a list of prioritized actions) is generally not realistic when dealing with the complexities and multi-program nature of managing a national wildlife refuge. In practice, a linear approach is not always workable. Below are a few of the reasons why some actions identified in this Implementation Plan must be done simultaneously, or why some general recreation actions are done before other resource-related actions.



Trempealeau Mountain. © Sandra Lines

- # Funding streams from Congress may not follow an established hierarchy. For example, there may be no appropriations for land acquisition or habitat restoration in a given year, but Congress may choose to fund visitor services enhancement packages.
- # A high priority such as habitat restoration is costly on a major river and dependent on funding from other sources, such as the Environmental Management Program administered by the Corps of Engineers. Thus, habitat restoration may be the highest priority for the Refuge, but if the funding is lacking, it cannot be accomplished.



Prairie habitat, Trempealeau NWR. USFWS

- # The states or Corps of Engineers may have year-to-year priorities that benefit visitors to the Refuge and meet a Refuge objective. An example would be state funding for recreation enhancement such as extension of the state bike trail that must be spent in a given year or lost. In this case it is an urgent need in a fiscal sense, although a lower priority resource-wise.
- # The public or other units of government may strongly urge actions that may not be high resource priorities, or staff may be confronted with health, safety, or societal needs that must be addressed. Examples include a right-of-way expansion for a utility or highway project, protection of archeological resources, or entrance road flooding.
- # Many actions are integrated with other actions. For example, during migration, waterfowl stage in large flocks, resting and feeding in preparation of energy demanding flight. Disturbance from public uses can severely impact the birds' ability to put on enough reserve energy (body fat) to successfully migrate. It is important to limit disturbance to migrating waterfowl, which leads to guidelines or regulations for public use during critical times. Thus, many actions must be enacted simultaneously to achieve objectives.
- # Some actions must be sequenced. For example, Objective 2.2 calls for using commercial fishing to reduce rough fish abundance. Rough fish control is most effective in coordination with a pool drawdown the following spring. Drawdowns are scheduled at 5-year intervals, so commercial fishing would likely also occur at a 5-year interval.

Given the above, the actions listed below are in two categories: those that can be completed with existing funding and staffing, and those that will take additional resources. Target dates for completion give an indication of the priority and are useful for planning workloads in any given year. Many actions are ongoing as noted, and some of these may also be included in a step-down plan (see list, page 83). If an action has the date of 2022, this means the action will be done no later than 2022, the 15-year planning horizon for the CCP. It is hoped that many of these actions will be completed well ahead of that date. This list is not all inclusive and details in specific objectives, along with all the strategies, will be used as applicable in implementing the CCP.

Actions – Existing Funding and Staffing

The following actions are derived from objectives and strategies in the CCP and represent those actions that can be accomplished with existing resources. Some of these actions reflect current, ongoing efforts, but most require a new initiative and/or redirection of existing Refuge funding and staff effort. This list will help focus annual work planning and performance plan preparation during the 15-year life of the plan. Details of these actions are found in Chapter 4.

Goal 1: Landscape

1. Maintain contact with landowners within the approved acquisition boundary.
2. Keep Regional Realty Specialists informed of any changes to property status.
3. Seek Land and Water Conservation Fund appropriations for land acquisition.
4. Travel the boundary every other year to inspect signs and correct deficiencies.
5. Request a survey of the north boundary along Highway 35 between Marshland and River Bottoms Road. Correctly post.
6. Correctly post west boundary of River Bottoms property, surveying if necessary.
7. Implement the following flood management policy: “When the Mississippi River is in flood stage, do not allow water to enter Refuge pools through the lower diversion dike structure, the Marshland Road inlet or any other facilities.”

8. Meet with BNSFRR officials to explain the policy and explore other alternatives to protect their dike.
9. Develop a Management Plan for Black Oak Island.
10. Determine if further shoreline protection is needed to prevent erosion of artifacts from Black Oak Island.
11. Protect archeological resources on Black Oak Island by increasing law enforcement surveillance and closing the island to unsupervised public access.
12. Improve relationship and coordination with the Mississippi Valley Archeology Center.
13. Restrict public access to the top of the road on Kiep's Island.
14. Work with Wisconsin DNR and Perrot State Park to protect cultural resources on Trempealeau Mountain.
6. With others, seek research on floodplain forest regeneration and restoration of forest habitats to benefit cavity-dependent species.
7. Once every 5 years reduce water levels in pool A by pumping to expose 50 percent (350 acres) of the bottom.
8. Once every 5 years (alternating with Pool A), reduce water elevations in Pool E. Avoid prolonged flooding of swamp white oaks in Unit C2 by lowering water level below the root mass of these trees during the growing season.
9. Maintain stable or declining water levels in Pools B and E, June through August.
10. Use commercial fishing and winter drawdowns to reduce populations of rough fish in Pools A and B.
11. Work with USGS and the National Weather Service to re-establish a permanent weather station.

Goal 2: Wildlife and Habitat

1. Develop a Habitat Management Plan.
2. Annually treat 5 acres each of upland and floodplain forest to remove black locust and European buckthorn.
3. Work with Army Corps of Engineers foresters to identify stands and prescriptions for timber sales. Permit commercial harvest of black locust and pine.
4. By 2008, clear down timber from burn units by permitting firewood cutting.
5. Protect swamp white oak in Pool C2 by lowering the water level during the growing season to avoid prolonged flooding.
12. Continue to stress the importance of water quality in public information and interpretation, and environmental education programs.
13. Maintain existing 335 acres of prairie.
14. Use prescribed fire as described in the approved Fire Management Plan (USFWS 2001).
15. Expand the flea beetle release program to reduce leafy spurge in all prairie/oak savanna habitats.
16. Removing all pine plantings from within prairie units.
17. Use volunteers and school groups to collect and redistribute native grass and wildflower seed.
18. Develop interpretive and education programs on prairies and invasive plants.
19. Write an Integrated Pest Management Plan.
20. Seek seasonal staff and funding to accelerate current control of invasives.
21. Continue to work with the Department of Agriculture, other agencies, the state, and other refuges in securing insects for release on the Refuge and on private lands within the Trempealeau and Buffalo River Watersheds.
22. Seek grants, cost-sharing, or special funding opportunities for invasive plant removal.
23. Conduct public information efforts including media, brochures, signs, and programs to increase awareness of the threats posed by



Bald Eagle. USFWS

- invasive plants and what citizens can do to minimize the introduction or spread of invasive species.
24. Monitor all pools for invasive fish, aquatic plants and mollusks.
 25. Investigate feasibility of implementing an exchange program for gardeners with loosestrife planted in ornamental gardens.
 26. Continue to serve as a source of flea beetles for other agencies and landowners who have infestations of leafy spurge.
 27. Update the Wildlife Inventory Plan to include all federal and state listed species, species of regional conservation concern, furbearers, and deer.
 28. Participate in formal coordination meetings with USGS to share biological data, monitoring and monitoring expertise.
 29. Work with the Upper Mississippi NW&FR GIS biologist and the Winona District biologist to coordinate equipment, staff, survey schedules, and data analysis.
 30. Foster partnerships with colleges and universities to encourage graduate research projects.
 31. Continue to use volunteers to complete wildlife surveys.
 32. Evaluate all state listed species for potential occurrence on the Refuge and the need for monitoring or management action.
 33. Continue to monitor Bald Eagle nesting and success.
 34. Close a 100-meter radius around active Bald Eagle nests to public entry February 1 to July 1.
 35. Where feasible, protect large nest trees from prolonged flooding and erosion.
 36. Work with Wisconsin DNR to assess the potential for reintroduction of Massassagua rattlesnakes in the River Bottoms Road area.
 37. Increase education and outreach on threatened and endangered species and their needs.
 38. Encourage research by universities and partner agencies on deer-habitat interactions including implications to invasive plant abundance.
 39. Work closely with Wisconsin DNR to coordinate information exchange, planning, and management of chronic wasting disease (CWD) on nearby lands.
 40. Continue to use a managed public hunt of white-tailed deer to maintain acceptable levels of browse.
 41. Update the Hunt Plan to include white-tailed deer hunting.
 42. Update the Visitor Service Plan to improve safety and require all pedestrians to wear blaze orange during the gun hunt.
 43. Investigate options for closing the Refuge to non-hunting visitors during key hunting times.
 44. Continue issuing over-the-counter permits for late season archery.
 45. Continue to operate a check station on opening weekend.
 46. Require mandatory reporting of hunter success or loss of 1-year hunting privileges.
 47. Continue to follow Wisconsin guidelines for season dates and times.
 48. Update the Furbearer Management Plan.
 49. Continue to manage muskrat, beaver, and raccoon populations at levels where damage to dikes and interference with water management and bird banding operations is limited.
 50. Use furbearer harvest data to determine appropriate levels to minimize damage to dikes and structures.

Goal 3: Public Use

1. Improve and maintain two existing hiking trails, a 4.5-mile auto tour route, and the existing observation deck.
2. Promote wildlife photography by working with local photographers to develop at least one annual workshop and assist with Upper Mississippi NW&FR photo contest.
3. Develop a Visitor Services Plan.
4. Investigate the cost/benefit ratio of implementing an entrance fee program.
5. Work closely with the Wisconsin DNR and advisory committee to facilitate extension of the bike trail to Winona, while minimizing impacts to Refuge lands.
6. Improve directional signs and install “watch for bikes” signs along auto tour route.



Hunt Program for person with disabilities, Trempealeau NWR. USFWS

7. Add bike racks at the Marshland and main entrances, near the kiosk at the entrance to the auto tour route, and at the observation deck.
8. Improve directional signs and interpretive materials for bicyclists.
9. Develop and publish a list of interpretive events and environmental education opportunities.
10. Update and maintain current events on the Refuge website quarterly. Include current events, trail information, and seasonal bird sightings.
11. Continue to hold an annual birding festival each spring; participate in the Mississippi Valley Birding Festival sponsored by Audubon.
12. Explore opportunities to develop volunteer-led interpretive programs by involving volunteers in program development and training them as docents.
13. Establish a Junior Ranger program.
14. Continue to issue news releases on special events or temporary changes to regulations.
15. Investigate developing a Master Naturalist program.
16. As practical, participate in local area expos, sportsman shows, and other outdoor events to promote the Refuge.
17. Prepare a bi-annual column for area newspapers highlighting Refuge news, events and wildlife sightings.
18. Work closely with local community groups, like the Chamber of Commerce, tourism board, library, Great River Road Committee, and Perrot State Park to share resources and coordinate programming.
19. Work with local teachers to develop grade-specific environmental education curricula that meet local, state and national education standards.
20. Continue to offer River Education Days (RED) targeting 5th grade students from surrounding Wisconsin and Minnesota schools.
21. Promote collaboration and partnerships with area teachers, schools, colleges, other wildlife agencies, and natural resource and conservation groups to increase environmental education opportunities focused on Refuge and river corridor ecosystems.
22. Offer environmental education and other related topic workshops for teachers.
23. Contact schools annually, notifying them of the Refuge's facilities, resources and educational opportunities by means of fliers or letters to principals and individual teachers.
24. Update the Trempealeau NWR Educators' Guide by 2010.
25. Encourage additional partnerships with high school science or biology classes to assist with research, wildlife surveys, or bird banding.
26. Encourage high schools and universities to utilize the Refuge facilities for curriculum based programs.
27. Develop a hunting program that provides opportunities for people with disabilities, youth, and other first time hunters, and allow ample time for public review and comment.
28. Investigate opportunities to partner with the state's "Becoming an Outdoorswoman" program.
29. Investigate options for developing a "learning to hunt" program.
30. Annually review Refuge hunting regulations to ensure clarity and to address emerging issues

or concerns, and to give the public an opportunity to review and comment on any changes.

31. Improve the general hunting experience by continuing to improve habitat quality and enforcement of regulations.
32. Clearly sign boundaries of areas closed to hunting.
33. Consult with the La Crosse Fishery Resource Office to update the Fishery Management Plan by 2009.
34. Remove sediment and milfoil from around the existing fishing platform to improve habitat for fish.
35. Coordinate with Trempealeau County to improve their boat launch on the Trempealeau River.
36. Promote fishing through interpretive posters and exhibits.
37. Include fish biology and management in environmental education events and curriculums.
38. Work with staff of Upper Mississippi NW&FR to provide an annual fishing event for young people.

Goal 4: Neighboring Landowners and Communities

Existing Funding and Staffing

1. Join the Trempealeau County Tourism Council and Trempealeau Chamber of Commerce and attend meetings.



Refuge Week school group visit, Trempealeau NWR. USFWS

2. Attend meetings of the Great River Road Promotion Committee, Mississippi River Parkway Commission and Scenic Byways Commission.
3. Develop relationships with Galesville, Trempealeau, and Ettrick libraries to hold evening programs and set up seasonal exhibits.
4. Continue to issue news releases to local newspapers, radio and television stations for public events, environmental education programs, changes to Refuge regulations, management activities of interest to the public and special wildlife viewing opportunities.
5. Work with Western Wisconsin Cable Television to produce programs for public access TV.
6. Invite key individuals to coordinate establishment of a Friends group.
7. Assist new Friends members with mentoring and applications for start-up grants.
8. Suggest a list of Friend's team building projects that would benefit the Refuge.
9. Assist Friends with contacts and an introduction to state and federal legislative staffs.
10. Assist Friends with inventory, set up, and operation of a Refuge bookstore.
11. Increase volunteer hours and number of volunteers by an average of 5 percent per year.
12. Keep volunteer contact information current. Contact each volunteer at least once annually whether they participated that year or not.
13. Have clear expectations and instructions for each volunteer and each task.
14. Train volunteers to effectively conduct educational and interpretive programs, biological surveys, and maintenance operations.
15. Ensure that volunteers receive the same safety training as all staff.
16. Provide an identity for volunteers with uniforms and standard nametags.
17. Recruit volunteers with a diversity of backgrounds and skills, matching them with tasks that complement their interests and abilities.
18. Keep volunteers active in all programs: administration, biology, maintenance, and public use.



Observation deck, Trempealeau NWR. USFWS

19. Recognize and thank volunteers for their efforts. Ensure that they feel they are a contributing part of the staff team.
20. Hold an annual volunteer appreciation banquet.
21. Keep a current volunteer news and recognition bulletin board in the office building.
22. Meet twice a year with Perrot State Park staff to coordinate land management, and public use issues.
23. Develop partnerships with Universities of Wisconsin and Minnesota, and other local colleges to share resources and to implement graduate level, adaptive management research.
24. Improve coordination and communication with local sportsman and conservation groups.
25. Monitor three conservation easements annually for compliance and to assess habitat management need.
26. Ensure opportunities for communication between staff and area citizens.

Goal 5: Administration and Operations

1. Ensure that Refuge office and maintenance needs are reflected in budget needs databases.
2. Continue to maintain Service-owned facilities using annual maintenance budget allocations.
3. Ensure that staffing needs are incorporated in budget needs databases.
4. Update databases as needed or at least once annually.

Environmental assessments or other documentation may also be needed to comply with National Environmental Policy Act or other requirements.

1. Actions – New Funding and Staff

The actions in the following charts are derived from objectives and strategies in the CCP and represent those actions that can be accomplished if new funding and/or staffing is allocated to the Refuge. The completion target for these actions is generally 2022 given the unknown nature of funding. Details of these actions are identified in Chapter 4.

Costs are estimates and will likely be higher or lower based on detailed project planning and timing of implementation. Staff costs reflect 2006 salary and benefit rates at grades normal for the positions described. These needs will be reflected in key Refuge System databases such as the Refuge Operating Needs System, Maintenance Management System, and Service Assessment and Maintenance Management System, which provide information used in budget formulation and allocation. The Refuge will also seek other project funding such as cost share agreements with partners, agency grant programs, grants from non-profit groups, and cost-saving or reprogramming measures within existing budget allocations.

Total funding needs for the 15-year life of the CCP equals the one-time or project-specific costs plus the recurring costs per year times 15 years (\$4.5 million), or a total of \$16.2 million. Of this total, \$10 million, or 62 percent, is directly related to habitat improvements and land acquisition.

2. Summary of Step-Down Plans Needed

Below is a list of step-down plans called for in the CCP or required by Service policy. The planned completion date is in parenthesis, as well as a notation as to whether the step-down plan is new or is a revision of an existing plan. These Refuge-specific plans provide the details of implementing the respective program or initiative described in broad terms in the objectives and strategies. These plans will be developed in consultation with other agencies, states, and partners. The public will be given ample opportunity for plan review and comment.

- # Fire Management Plan (revise, 2013)
- # Public Use Natural Area Management Plan (new, 2010)

Goal 1: Landscape

Action	Short-term or project-specific costs (thousands)	Recurring cost per year (thousands)
1. Acquire from willing sellers 340 acres within approved boundary	\$510	
2. Install automatic gate a entrance	\$30	\$1
3. Develop interpretive program on importance of flood plains	\$5	
4. Map vegetation on Black Oak Island	\$5	
5. Remove invasive plants from Black Oak Island	\$15	\$5
6. Inventory archeological resources on Black Oak Island	\$25	
7. Develop a Cultural Resources Management Plan	\$15	
8. Develop interpretive program on ancient people of refuge	\$12	
9. Hire PFT law enforcement officer , shared ½ time w/Winona District	\$70	\$30
10. Provide archeological resource protection training for all staff	\$6	
11. Inventory archeological resources on sensitive sites	\$15	\$5

Goal 2: Wildlife and Habitat

Action	Short-term or project-specific costs (thousands)	Recurring cost per year (thousands)
1. Enhance 500 acres of floodplain forest	\$250	
2. Remove all Scotch pine and thin pine plantations by 50%	\$100	
3. Continue restoration of swamp white oaks at river bottoms site		\$10
4. Once every 7 years pump pool B		\$5
5. Develop infrastructure to manage 5,500 acres of wetlands	\$6,000	\$50
6. Hire seasonal tractor operator to maintain pumps dikes, structures		\$40
7. Continuously monitor water quality at 6 locations	\$20	\$2
8. Restore 100 acres prairie/oak savanna		\$20
9. Annually convert 5 acres black locust to prairie		\$10
10. Annually plant 2 acres of oaks and hardwoods		\$10
11. Hire seasonal biological technician to oversee prairie/oak savanna restoration and invasive plant removal		\$40
12. Build and maintain GIS database on invasive plants	\$10	\$2
13. Explore installation of fish barriers at all structures	\$50	
14. Summarize and analyze survey data	\$50	
15. Every 5 years count deer/model browse impacts		\$20
16. Improve signs and develop hunting safety brochure	\$10	
17. Provide Refuge-specific training for trappers		\$3

Goal 3: Public Use

Action	Short-term or project-specific costs (thousands)	Recurring cost per year (thousands)
1. Develop a canoe trail	\$10	\$2
2. Develop trail guide and maps	\$5	
3. Update and add new trail signs	\$10	\$2
4. Maintain and enhance auto-tour loop	\$20	\$2
5. Develop observation points along hiking trails; install benches	\$80	\$2
6. Update signs on Woods Trail	\$15	
7. Improve and upgrade accessibility at Prairie View Trail	\$100	\$5
8. Update and enhance the native plant interpretive garden	\$15	\$1
9. Interpret the historic CCC camp site	\$75	\$1
10. Develop an accessible trail and interpretive program for people with vision impairments	\$150	\$2
11. Develop a Marsh Discovery Trail and connect 3 existing trails	\$250	\$5
12. Establish a system of cross-country ski trails and trail maps	\$10	\$2
13. Purchase 30 pairs of snowshoes	\$10	
14. Replace existing observation deck	\$125	\$1
15. Install bird cam w/internet link	\$10	\$1
16. Construct an outdoor, fully accessible restroom to accommodate groups	\$80	\$5
17. Add an outside drinking fountain/water source to shop	\$25	
18. Develop interpretive signs for Marshland portion of bike trail	\$5	
19. Develop interpretive materials for bicyclists	\$5	
20. Develop a Blue Goose Bike program, to encourage park and bike on Refuge	\$25	\$5
21. Update 3 and add 6 new kiosks with interpretive panels	\$180	\$2
22. Update and reprint self-guided tour route brochure; enhance stops with sound posts	\$30	
23. Develop brochures on Big 6 public uses, plant list, invasives, winter wildlife and others	\$30	
24. Develop a traveling, pop-up display about Refuge	\$10	
25. Develop 3 ranger-led interpretive programs	\$10	
26. Hire seasonal park ranger to lead programs	\$40	
27. Purchase 30 binoculars, field guides and misc. interpretive supplies	\$10	\$3
28. Add a multi-purpose classroom addition (1,000ft ²) to office	\$300	\$5
29. Construct a 3 season outdoor learning shelter (900 ft ²)	\$400	\$5
30. Develop a lending library of books, videos, trunks	\$10	\$2
31. Conduct annual "learn to hunt" program		\$5
32. Expand hunt for people with disabilities	\$150	\$2
33. Improve boat ramp, parking, and existing fishing platform	\$200	
34. Install a new fishing platform on the Trempe. River	\$75	

Goal 4: Neighboring Landowners and Communities

Action	Short-term or project-specific costs (thousands)	Recurring cost per year (thousands)
1. Participate in 2 local expos, 3 festivals, 1 sportsmen show and 1 career fair annually		\$6
2. Develop an “It’s your backyard” program for local landowners and citizens		\$3
3. Hire a private lands biologist (shared ½ time w/ Winona District)	\$30	\$70
4. Develop an invasive plant control program for private landowners	\$10	\$2

Goal 5: Administration and Operations

Action	Short-term or project-specific costs (thousands)	Recurring cost per year (thousands)
1. Continue design work on bridge for entrance road	\$150	
2. Replace existing shop	\$1,200	\$2
3. Add a 1500 ft ² office addition for new staff, volunteers, and storage	\$500	

5. New Funding Summary

New Funding Summary by Major Category to Fully Implement the CCP	Short-term or project-specific costs	Recurring cost per year
Land Acquisition within approved boundary	\$0.5 million	0
Habitat Improvement	\$6.5 million	\$0.2 million
Improved and expanded public use programs	\$2.4 million	\$0.1 million
General operations and maintenance	\$2.3 million	\$0.1 million
TOTAL	\$11.7 million	\$0.3 million



River Education Days, Trempealeau NWR. USFWS

- # Wildlife Inventory and Monitoring Plan (revise, 2008)
- # Habitat Management Plan (new, 2010)
- # Cultural Resources Management Plan (new, 2008)
- # Threatened, Endangered and Candidate Species (new, 2009)
- # Fishery Management Plan (revise, 2009)
- # Hunting Plan (revise, 2009)
- # Visitor Services Plan (revise, 2009)
- # Trapping Plan (revise, 2009)
- # Spill Response Plan (revise, 2009)
- # Educator' Guide (new, 2010)
- # Easement/ROW Management Plan (new, 2010)
- # Disease Contingency Plan (new, 2010)
- # Herptile Management Plan (new, 2010)

3. Monitoring and Evaluation

Objectives and strategies implemented will be continually monitored and evaluated during the 15-year life of the plan. The wildlife inventory and monitoring plan update will be critical since fish and wildlife are important barometers of habitat condition and health. Many of the objectives in the plan deal directly with better monitoring and evaluation, and in this regard, adequate staffing and continued partnerships with the Corps of Engineers, states, U.S. Geological Survey, and others will be important. Many actions inherent in the plan are new directions, and monitoring will help understand the effects of the actions on habitat, fish and wildlife

populations, and public use patterns and levels. In addition, the Mississippi River and its watershed will certainly change, and likely in ways unforeseen. Land use changes, invasive species, floods, disease outbreaks, and climate may alter expected outcomes, and monitoring will be critical to detecting and reacting to such change.

4. Plan Review and Revision

As noted previously, environmental change and unforeseen effects may call for changes in the plan. The Refuge will practice adaptive management, using monitoring, evaluation, and experimentation to learn and change aspects of the plan as needed.

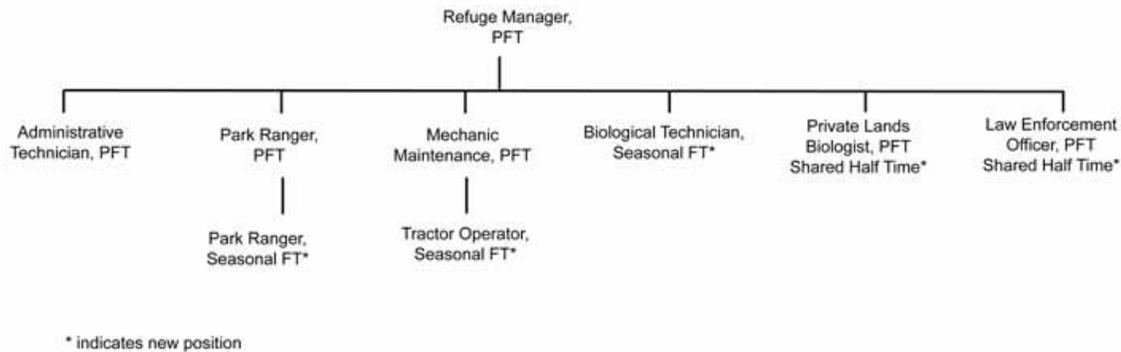
Since the CCP will be a constant reference and guide for Refuge staff, internal review will be continuous. In addition, it is expected that the public and partners will offer continuous feedback. At least every 3 years, representatives of the Corps of Engineers, the state, other agencies, and non-profit and citizen groups will be invited to meet and provide more formal input into what is working, what is not, and possible changes the Refuge should consider. Revisions will be undertaken as needed by amendments to the CCP. There will be an opportunity for public review and comment prior to making any substantive changes. A major plan review and rewrite will occur after 15 years.

5. Partnerships

Refuge staff works with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in designing and carrying out projects and programs. The Corps of Engineers is often a partner due to its dominant role in navigation, water level management, forestry, and the planning and construction of environmental restoration projects. Much of the large scale habitat restoration and enhancement work is done through the Environmental Management Program administered by the Corps, and this work could accelerate should Congress approve and fund the Navigation and Environmental Sustainability Program (NESP).

The U. S. Geological Survey, Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Agriculture, and state-level counterpart agencies all play a role in biological monitoring, research, environmental regulation, and policy making on the river, and thus the Refuge. Other U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service programs such as fisheries and ecological services also

Figure 15: Staff Chart, Trempealeau NWR



play a key role, both as leaders for certain projects and programs, and in support. The Service’s Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program will continue to play a critical role in working with private landowners to improve the watersheds of the Refuge.

Conservation organizations are active in policy issues and/or land acquisition affecting the Refuge and include Audubon, The Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, Trout Unlimited, Boys and Girls Scouts, and American Rivers. A host of local conservation and sporting organizations like the Wisconsin Waterfowl Association and the Associated Sportsman’s Clubs of Trempealeau County are active. Lastly, many citizen conservationists help the Refuge as volunteers and as members of the Friends of the Upper Mississippi River Refuges, a citizen support group.

The forum for bringing together such a diversity of partners, who often have different missions and agendas, is both formal and informal. Established associations, commissions, committees, and working groups bring people together; plans, planning, and public meetings allow input from everyone. Specific projects and events let citizens lend a helping hand. These partnerships will remain an important part of plan implementation, both in gaining and maintaining public and partner understanding and support, and through the joint funding of specific actions.

6. Proposed Staff Chart

Please see Figure 15.