

Glossary of Terms

accessible—Pertaining to physical access to areas and activities for people of different abilities, especially those with physical impairments.

adaptive resource management—The rigorous application of management, research, and monitoring to gain information and experience necessary to assess and modify management activities; a process that uses feedback from research, monitoring, and evaluation of management actions to support or modify objectives and strategies at all planning levels; a process in which policy decisions are implemented within a framework of scientifically driven experiments to test predictions and assumptions inherent in management plan. Analysis of results helps managers determine whether current management should continue as is or whether it should be modified to achieve desired conditions.

Administration Act—National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966.

alternative—A reasonable way to solve an identified problem or satisfy the stated need (40 CFR 1500.2); one of several different means of accomplishing refuge purposes and goals and contributing to the Refuge System mission (Draft Service Manual 602 FW 1.5).

amphibian—A class of cold-blooded vertebrates including frogs, toads or salamanders.

animal unit month (AUM)—Measure of the quantity of livestock forage. Equivalent to the amount of forage needed to support a 1,000-pound animal (or one cow/calf pair) for 1 month.

annual—A plant that flowers and dies within 1 year of germination.

ATV—All-terrain vehicle.

AUM—*See* animal unit month.s

baseline—A set of critical observations, data, or information used for comparison or a control.

biological control—The use of organisms or viruses to control invasive plants or other pests.

biological diversity, also biodiversity—The variety of life and its processes, including the variety of living organisms, the genetic differences among them, and the communities and ecosystems in which they occur (Service Manual 052 FW 1.12B). The National Wildlife Refuge System's focus is on indigenous

species, biotic communities, and ecological processes.

biotic—Pertaining to life or living organisms; caused, produced by, or comprising living organisms.

canopy—A layer of foliage, generally the uppermost layer, in a vegetative stand; midlevel or understory vegetation in multilayered stands. Canopy closure (*also* canopy cover) is an estimate of the amount of overhead vegetative cover.

CCC—*See* Civilian Conservation Corps.

CCP—*See* comprehensive conservation plan.

CFR—*See* Code of Federal Regulations.

cfs—Cubic feet per second.

Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)—Peacetime civilian “army” established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to perform conservation activities from 1933–42. Activities included erosion control; firefighting; tree planting; habitat protection; stream improvement; and building of fire towers, roads, recreation facilities, and drainage systems.

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)—The codification of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the executive departments and agencies of the federal government. Each volume of the CFR is updated once each calendar year.

compatibility determination—*See* compatible use.

compatible use—A wildlife-dependent recreational use or any other use of a refuge that, in the sound professional judgment of the director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, will not materially interfere with or detract from the fulfillment of the mission of the Refuge System or the purposes of the refuge (Draft Service Manual 603 FW 3.6). A compatibility determination supports the selection of compatible uses and identified stipulations or limits necessary to ensure compatibility.

comprehensive conservation plan (CCP)—A document that describes the desired future conditions of the refuge and provides long-range guidance and management direction for the refuge manager to accomplish the purposes of the refuge, contribute to the mission of the Refuge System, and to meet other relevant mandates (Draft Service Manual 602 FW 1.5).

concern—*See* issue.

cool-season grasses—Grasses that begin growth earlier in the season and often become dormant in the summer. These grasses will germinate at lower temperatures. Examples of cool-season grasses are western wheatgrass, needle and thread, and green needlegrass.

cover, also cover type, canopy cover—Present vegetation of an area.

cultural resources—The remains of sites, structures, or objects used by people in the past.

dense nesting cover (DNC)—A composition of grasses and forbs that allows for a dense stand of vegetation that protects nesting birds from the view of predators, usually consisting of one to two species of wheatgrass, alfalfa, and sweetclover.

depredation—Destruction or consumption of eggs, broods, or individual wildlife due to a predatory animal; damage inflicted on agricultural crops or ornamental plants by wildlife.

DNC—*See* dense nesting cover.

drawdown—The act of manipulating water levels in an impoundment to allow for the natural drying-out cycle of a wetland.

EA—*See* environmental assessment.

ecosystem—A dynamic and interrelating complex of plant and animal communities and their associated nonliving environment; a biological community, together with its environment, functioning as a unit. For administrative purposes, the Service has designated 53 ecosystems covering the United States and its possessions. These ecosystems generally correspond with watershed boundaries and their sizes and ecological complexity vary.

EIS—Environmental impact statement.

emergent—A plant rooted in shallow water and having most of the vegetative growth above water such as cattail and hardstem bulrush.

endangered species, federal—A plant or animal species listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

endangered species, state—A plant or animal species in danger of becoming extinct or extirpated in a particular state within the near future if factors contributing to its decline continue. Populations of these species are at critically low levels or their habitats have been degraded or depleted to a significant degree.

endemic species—Plants or animals that occur naturally in a certain region and whose distribution is relatively limited to a particular locality.

environmental assessment (EA)—A concise public document, prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, that briefly discusses the purpose and need for an action and alternatives to such action, and provides sufficient evidence and analysis of impacts to determine whether to prepare an environmental impact statement or finding of no significant impact (40 CFR 1508.9).

EPA—Environmental Protection Agency.

extinction—The complete disappearance of a species from the earth; no longer existing.

extirpation—The extinction of a population; complete eradication of a species within a specified area.

fauna—All the vertebrate and invertebrate animals of an area.

federal trust resource—A trust is something managed by one entity for another who holds the ownership. The Service holds in trust many natural resources for the people of the United States of America as a result of federal acts and treaties. Examples are species listed under the Endangered Species Act, migratory birds protected by international treaties, and native plant or wildlife species found on a national wildlife refuge.

federal trust species—All species where the federal government has primary jurisdiction including federally endangered or threatened species, migratory birds, anadromous fish, and certain marine mammals.

flora—All the plant species of an area.

FMP—fire management plan.

forb—A broad-leaved, herbaceous plant; a seed-producing annual, biennial, or perennial plant that does not develop persistent woody tissue but dies down at the end of the growing season.

fragmentation—The alteration of a large block of habitat that creates isolated patches of the original habitat that are interspersed with a variety of other habitat types; the process of reducing the size and connectivity of habitat patches, making movement of individuals or genetic information between parcels difficult or impossible.

“friends” group—Any formal organization whose mission is to support the goals and purposes of its associated refuge and the National Wildlife Refuge Association overall; “friends” organizations and cooperative and interpretive associations.

FWS—*See* U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

geographic information system (GIS)—A computer system capable of storing and manipulating spatial data; a set of computer hardware and software

for analyzing and displaying spatially referenced features (such as points, lines and polygons) with nongeographic attributes such as species and age.

GIS—*See* geographic information system.

goal—Descriptive, open-ended, and often broad statement of desired future conditions that conveys a purpose but does not define measurable units (Draft Service Manual 620 FW 1.5).

grassland tract—A contiguous area of grassland without fragmentation.

GS—general schedule (pay rate schedule for certain federal positions).

habitat—Suite of existing environmental conditions required by an organism for survival and reproduction; the place where an organism typically lives and grows.

habitat disturbance—Significant alteration of habitat structure or composition; may be natural (for example, wildland fire) or human-caused events (for example, timber harvest and disking).

habitat type, also vegetation type, cover type—A land classification system based on the concept of distinct plant associations.

HMP—Habitat management plan.

impoundment—A body of water created by collection and confinement within a series of levees or dikes, creating separate management units although not always independent of one another.

Improvement Act—National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997.

indigenous—Originating or occurring naturally in a particular place.

integrated pest management (IPM)—Methods of managing undesirable species such as invasive plants; education, prevention, physical or mechanical methods of control, biological control, responsible chemical use, and cultural methods.

introduced species—A species present in an area due to intentional or unintentional escape, release, dissemination, or placement into an ecosystem as a result of human activity.

invasive plant, also noxious weed—A species that is nonnative to the ecosystem under consideration and whose introduction causes, or is likely to cause, economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.

IPM—*See* integrated pest management.

issue—Any unsettled matter that requires a management decision; for example, a Service initiative, opportunity, resource management problem, a threat to the resources of the unit, conflict in uses, public concern, or the presence of an undesirable resource condition (Draft Service Manual 602 FW 1.5).

management alternative—*See* alternative.

migration—Regular extensive, seasonal movements of birds between their breeding regions and their wintering regions; to pass usually periodically from one region or climate to another for feeding or breeding.

migratory birds—Birds which follow a seasonal movement from their breeding grounds to their wintering grounds. Waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors, and songbirds are all migratory birds.

mission—Succinct statement of purpose and/or reason for being.

mitigation—Measure designed to counteract an environmental impact or to make an impact less severe.

monitoring—The process of collecting information to track changes of selected parameters over time.

national wildlife refuge—A designated area of land, water, or an interest in land or water within the National Wildlife Refuge System, but does not include coordination areas; a complete listing of all units of the Refuge System is in the current “Annual Report of Lands Under Control of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.”

National Wildlife Refuge System (Refuge System)—Various categories of areas administered by the Secretary of the Interior for the conservation of fish and wildlife including species threatened with extinction, all lands, waters, and interests therein administered by the Secretary as wildlife refuges, areas for the protection and conservation of fish and wildlife that are threatened with extinction, wildlife ranges, game ranges, wildlife management areas, and waterfowl production areas.

National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 (Improvement Act)—Sets the mission and the administrative policy for all refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System; defines a unifying mission for the Refuge System; establishes the legitimacy and appropriateness of the six priority public uses (hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, environmental education, and interpretation); establishes a formal process for determining appropriateness and compatibility; establish the responsibilities of the Secretary of the Interior for managing and protecting the Refuge System; requires a comprehensive conservation plan

for each refuge by the year 2012. This Act amended portions of the Refuge Recreation Act and National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966.

native species—A species that, other than as a result of an introduction, historically occurred or currently occurs in that ecosystem.

neotropical migrant—A bird species that breeds north of the United States and Mexican border and winters primarily south of this border.

NEPA—National Environmental Policy Act.

nest success—The percentage of nests that successfully hatch one or more eggs of the total number of nests initiated in an area.

NOA—Notice of availability.

nongovernmental organization—Any group that is not composed of federal, state, tribal, county, city, town, local, or other governmental entities.

noxious weed, also invasive plant—Any living stage (including seeds and reproductive parts) of a parasitic or other plant of a kind that is of foreign origin (new to or not widely prevalent in the U.S.) and can directly or indirectly injure crops, other useful plants, livestock, poultry, other interests of agriculture, including irrigation, navigation, fish and wildlife resources, or public health. According to the Federal Noxious Weed Act (PL 93-639), a noxious weed (such as invasive plant) is one that causes disease or has adverse effects on humans or the human environment and, therefore, is detrimental to the agriculture and commerce of the U.S. and to public health.

NRCS—Natural Resources Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

NWR—national wildlife refuge.

objective—An objective is a concise target statement of what will be achieved, how much will be achieved, when and where it will be achieved, and who is responsible for the work; derived from goals and provide the basis for determining management strategies. Objectives should be attainable and time-specific and should be stated quantitatively to the extent possible. If objectives cannot be stated quantitatively, they may be stated qualitatively (Draft Service Manual 602 FW 1.5).

overwater species—nesting species such as diving ducks and many colonial-nesting birds that build nests within dense stands of water-dependent plants, primarily cattail, or that build floating nests of vegetation that rest on the water.

patch—An area distinct from that around it; an area distinguished from its surroundings by environmental conditions.

perennial—Lasting or active through the year or through many years; a plant species that has a life span of more than 2 years.

plant community—An assemblage of plant species unique in its composition; occurs in particular locations under particular influences; a reflection or integration of the environmental influences on the site such as soil, temperature, elevation, solar radiation, slope, aspect, and rainfall; denotes a general kind of climax plant community, such as ponderosa pine or bunchgrass.

playa—A nearly level area at the bottom of an undrained desert basin, sometimes temporarily covered with water.

prescribed fire—The skillful application of fire to natural fuels under conditions such as weather, fuel moisture, and soil moisture that allow confinement of the fire to a predetermined area and produces the intensity of heat and rate of spread to accomplish planned benefits to one or more objectives of habitat management, wildlife management, or hazard reduction.

priority public use—One of six uses authorized by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 to have priority if found to be compatible with a refuge's purposes. This includes hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, environmental education, and interpretation.

proposed action—The alternative proposed to best achieve the purpose, vision, and goals of a refuge (contributes to the Refuge System mission, addresses the significant issues, and is consistent with principles of sound fish and wildlife management).

public—Individuals, organizations, and groups; officials of federal, state, and local government agencies; Indian tribes; and foreign nations. It may include anyone outside the core planning team. It includes those who may or may not have indicated an interest in Service issues and those who do or do not realize that Service decisions may affect them.

public involvement—A process that offers affected and interested individuals and organizations an opportunity to become informed about, and to express their opinions on, Service actions and policies. In the process, these views are studied thoroughly and thoughtful consideration of public views is given in shaping decisions for refuge management.

purpose of the refuge—The purpose of a refuge is specified in or derived from the law, proclamation, executive order, agreement, public land order, donation document, or administrative memorandum establishing authorization or expanding a refuge, refuge unit, or refuge subunit (Draft Service Manual 602 FW 1.5).

raptor—A carnivorous bird such as a hawk, a falcon, or a vulture that feeds wholly or chiefly on meat taken by hunting or on carrion (dead carcasses).

Reclamation—Bureau of Reclamation of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

refuge operations needs system (RONS)—A national database that contains the unfunded operational needs of each refuge. Projects included are those required to implement approved plans and meet goals, objectives, and legal mandates.

refuge purpose—*See* purpose of the refuge.

Refuge System—*See* National Wildlife Refuge System.

refuge use—Any activity on a refuge, except administrative or law enforcement activity, carried out by or under the direction of an authorized Service employee.

resident species—A species inhabiting a given locality throughout the year; nonmigratory species.

rest—Free from biological, mechanical, or chemical manipulation, in reference to refuge lands.

restoration—Management emphasis designed to move ecosystems to desired conditions and processes, such as healthy upland habitats and aquatic systems.

riparian area or riparian zone—An area or habitat that is transitional from terrestrial to aquatic ecosystems including streams, lakes, wet areas, and adjacent plant communities and their associated soils that have free water at or near the surface; an area whose components are directly or indirectly attributed to the influence of water; of or relating to a river; specifically applied to ecology, “riparian” describes the land immediately adjoining and directly influenced by streams. For example, riparian vegetation includes all plant life growing on the land adjoining a stream and directly influenced by the stream.

RONS—*See* refuge operations needs system.

SAMMS—*See* Service Asset Maintenance Management System.

scoping—The process of obtaining information from the public for input into the planning process.

seasonally flooded—Surface water is present for extended periods in the growing season, but is absent by the end of the season in most years.

sediment—Material deposited by water, wind, and glaciers.

Service—*See* U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Service Asset Maintenance Management System

(SAMMS)—A national database which contains the unfunded maintenance needs of each refuge; projects include those required to maintain existing equipment and buildings, correct safety deficiencies for the implementation of approved plans, and meet goals, objectives, and legal mandates.

shelterbelt—Single to multiple rows of trees and shrubs planted around cropland or buildings to block or slow down the wind.

shorebird—Any of a suborder (*Charadrii*) of birds such as a plover or a snipe that frequent the seashore or mud flat areas.

spatial—Relating to, occupying, or having the character of space.

special status species—Plants or animals that have been identified through federal law, state law, or agency policy as requiring special protection of monitoring. Examples include federally listed endangered, threatened, proposed, or candidate species; state-listed endangered, threatened, candidate, or monitor species; Service’s species of management concern; species identified by the Partners in Flight program as being of extreme or moderately high conservation concern.

special use permit—A permit for special authorization from the refuge manager required for any refuge service, facility, privilege, or product of the soil provided at refuge expense and not usually available to the general public through authorizations in Title 50 CFR or other public regulations (“Refuge Manual” 5 RM 17.6).

species of concern—Those plant and animal species, while not falling under the definition of special status species, that are of management interest by virtue of being federal trust species such as migratory birds, important game species, or significant keystone species; species that have documented or apparent populations declines, small or restricted populations, or dependence on restricted or vulnerable habitats.

spoil piles—Spoil piles (also known as stock piles or storage piles) are excavated materials consisting of topsoil or subsoils that have been removed and temporarily stored during construction activity. Proper placement and stabilization of spoil piles helps reduce soil erosion.

step-down management plan—A plan that provides the details necessary to implement management strategies identified in the comprehensive conservation plan (“Draft Service Manual” 602 FW 1.5).

strategy—A specific action, tool, or technique or combination of actions, tools, and techniques used to meet unit objectives (“Draft Service Manual” 602 FW 1.5).

submergent—A vascular or nonvascular hydrophyte, either rooted or nonrooted, that lies entirely beneath the water surface, except for flowering parts in some species.

threatened species, federal—Species listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, that are likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of their range.

threatened species, state—A plant or animal species likely to become endangered in a particular state within the near future if factors contributing to population decline or habitat degradation or loss continue.

travel corridor—A landscape feature that facilitates the biologically effective transport of animals between larger patches of habitat dedicated to conservation functions. Such corridors may facilitate several kinds of traffic including frequent foraging movement, seasonal migration, or the once in a lifetime dispersal of juvenile animals. These are transition habitats and need not contain all the habitat elements required for long-term survival or reproduction of its migrants.

trust resource—*See* federal trust resource.

trust species—*See* federal trust species.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service, USFWS, FWS)—The principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish and wildlife and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 93-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System comprised of more than 530 national wildlife refuges and thousands of waterfowl production areas. It also operates 65 national fish hatcheries and 78 ecological service field stations, the agency enforces federal wildlife laws, manages migratory bird populations, restores national significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, administers the Endangered Species Act, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the federal aid program that distributes millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state wildlife agencies.

USFWS—*See* U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)—A federal agency whose mission is to provide reliable scientific information to describe and understand the earth; minimize loss of life and property from natural disasters; manage water, biological, energy, and mineral resources; and enhance and protect our quality of life.

USGS—*See* U.S. Geological Survey.

vision statement—A concise statement of the desired future condition of the planning unit, based primarily on the Refuge System mission, specific refuge purposes, and other relevant mandates (“Draft Service Manual” 602 FW 1.5).

visual obstruction—Pertaining to the density of a plant community; the height of vegetation that blocks the view of predators and conspecifics to a nest.

visual obstruction reading (VOR)—A method of visually quantifying vegetative structure and composition.

VOR—*See* visual obstruction reading.

wading birds—Birds having long legs that enable them to wade in shallow water including egrets, great blue herons, black-crowned night-herons, and bitterns.

waterfowl—A category of birds that includes ducks, geese, and swans.

watershed—The region draining into a river, a river system, or a body of water.

wetland management district (WMD)—Land that the Refuge System acquires with Federal Duck Stamp funds for restoration and management primarily as prairie wetland habitat critical to waterfowl and other wetland birds.

WG—wage grade schedule (pay rate schedule for certain federal positions).

wildland fire—A free-burning fire requiring a suppression response; all fire other than prescribed fire that occurs on wildlands (“Service Manual” 621 FW 1.7).

wildlife-dependent recreational use—Use of a refuge involving hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, environmental education, or interpretation. The National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 specifies that these are the six priority general public uses of the Refuge System.

WMD—*See* wetland management district.

woodland—Open stands of trees with crowns not usually touching, generally forming 25–60 percent cover.

WUI—wildland–urban interface.

Appendix A

Key Legislation and Policies

This appendix briefly describes the guidance for the National Wildlife Refuge System and other policies and key legislation that guide the management of the Laramie Plains National Wildlife Refuges.

NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM

The mission of the Refuge System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.

National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997.

Goals

- Fulfill our statutory duty to achieve refuge purpose(s) and further the System mission.
- Conserve, restore where appropriate, and enhance all species of fish, wildlife, and plants that are endangered or threatened with becoming endangered.
- Perpetuate migratory bird, interjurisdictional fish, and marine mammal populations.
- Conserve a diversity of fish, wildlife, and plants.
- Conserve and restore, where appropriate, representative ecosystems of the United States, including the ecological processes characteristic of those ecosystems.
- Foster understanding and instill appreciation of fish, wildlife, and plants, and their conservation, by providing the public with safe, high-quality, and compatible wildlife-dependent public use. Such use includes hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation.

Guiding Principles

There are four guiding principles for management and general public use of the Refuge System established by Executive Order 12996 (1996):

- **Public Use**—The Refuge System provides important opportunities for compatible wildlife-dependent recreational activities involving hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation.
- **Habitat**—Fish and wildlife will not prosper without high-quality habitat, and without fish and wildlife, traditional uses of refuges cannot be sustained. The Refuge System will continue to conserve and enhance the quality and diversity of fish and wildlife habitat within refuges.
- **Partnerships**—America’s sportsmen and women were the first partners who insisted on protecting valuable wildlife habitat within wildlife refuges. Conservation partnerships with other federal agencies, state agencies, tribes, organizations, industry, and the general public can make significant contributions to the growth and management of the Refuge System.
- **Public Involvement**—The public should be given a full and open opportunity to participate in decisions regarding acquisition and management of our national wildlife refuges.

LEGAL AND POLICY GUIDANCE

Management actions on national wildlife refuges are circumscribed by many mandates including laws and executive orders, the latest of which is the Volunteer and Community Partnership Enhancement Act of 1998. Regulations that affect refuge management the most are listed below.

American Indian Religious Freedom Act (1978)—Directs agencies to consult with native traditional religious leaders to determine appropriate policy changes necessary to protect and preserve Native American religious cultural rights and practices.

Americans with Disabilities Act (1992)—

Prohibits discrimination in public accommodations and services.

Antiquities Act (1906)—Authorizes the scientific investigation of antiquities on federal land and provides penalties for unauthorized removal of objects taken or collected without a permit.

Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act (1974)—Directs the preservation of historic and archaeological data in federal construction projects.

Archaeological Resources Protection Act (1979), as amended—Protects materials of archaeological interest from unauthorized removal or destruction and requires federal managers to develop plans and schedules to locate archaeological resources.

Architectural Barriers Act (1968)—Requires federally owned, leased, or funded buildings and facilities to be accessible to persons with disabilities.

Clean Water Act (1977)—Requires consultation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (40 permits) for major wetland modifications.

Endangered Species Act (1973)—Requires all federal agencies to carry out programs for the conservation of endangered and threatened species.

Executive Order No. 7168 (1935)—Establishes Arrowwood Migratory Waterfowl Refuge “as a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wild life... to effectuate further the purposes of the Migratory Bird Conservation Act....”

Executive Order 11988 (1977)—Requires federal agencies to provide leadership and take action to reduce the risk of flood loss, minimize the impact of floods on human safety, and preserve the natural and beneficial values served by the floodplains.

Executive Order 12996, Management and General Public Use of the National Wildlife Refuge System (1996)—Defines the mission, purpose, and priority public uses of the National Wildlife Refuge System. It also presents four principles to guide management of the Refuge System.

Executive Order 13007, Indian Sacred Sites (1996)—Directs federal land management agencies to accommodate access to and ceremonial uses of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners, avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of such sacred sites, and where appropriate, maintain the confidentiality of sacred sites.

Federal Noxious Weed Act (1990)—Requires the use of integrated management systems to control or contain undesirable plant species and an interdisciplinary approach with the cooperation of other federal and state agencies.

Federal Records Act (1950)—Requires the preservation of evidence of the government’s organization, functions, policies, decisions, operations, and activities, as well as basic historical and other information.

Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (1958)—Allows the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to enter into agreements with private landowners for wildlife management purposes.

Migratory Bird Conservation Act (1929)—Establishes procedures for acquisition by purchase, rental, or gifts of areas approved by the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission.

Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act (1934)—Authorizes the opening of part of a refuge to waterfowl hunting.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act (1918)—Designates the protection of migratory birds as a federal responsibility; and enables the setting of seasons and other regulations, including the closing of areas, federal or nonfederal, to the hunting of migratory birds.

National Environmental Policy Act (1969)—Requires all agencies, including the Service, to examine the environmental impacts of their actions, incorporate environmental information, and use public participation in the planning and implementation of all actions. Federal agencies must integrate this Act with other planning requirements, and prepare appropriate documents to facilitate better environmental decision making. [From the “Code of Federal Regulations” (CFR), 40 CFR 1500]

National Historic Preservation Act (1966), as amended—Establishes as policy that the federal government is to provide leadership in the preservation of the Nation’s prehistoric and historical resources.

National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act (1966)—Defines the National Wildlife Refuge System and authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to permit any use of a refuge, provided such use is compatible with the major purposes for which the refuge was established.

National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997—Sets the mission and administrative policy for all refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System; mandates comprehensive conservation planning for all units of the Refuge System.

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (1990)—Requires federal agencies and museums to inventory, determine ownership of, and repatriate cultural items under their control or possession.

Refuge Recreation Act (1962)—Allows the use of refuges for recreation when such uses are compatible with the refuge’s primary purposes and when sufficient funds are available to manage the uses.

Rehabilitation Act (1973)—Requires programmatic accessibility in addition to physical accessibility for all facilities and programs funded by the federal government to ensure that any person can participate in any program.

Rivers and Harbors Act (1899)—Section 10 of this Act requires the authorization of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers prior to any work in, on, over, or under navigable waters of the United States.

Volunteer and Community Partnership Enhancement Act (1998)—Encourages the use of volunteers to assist in the management of refuges within the Refuge System; facilitates partnerships between the Refuge System and nonfederal entities to promote public awareness of the resources of the Refuge System and public participation in the conservation of the resources; and encourages donations and other contributions.

Appendix B

List of Preparers, Consultation, and Coordination

This document is the result of the extensive, collaborative, and enthusiastic efforts by the seven members of the Laramie Plains refuges planning team below. Many others contributed insight and support.

Planning Team

| <i>Team Member</i> | <i>Position</i> | <i>Work Unit</i> |
|--------------------|--|--|
| Andrea Cerovski | Wildlife biologist | Wyoming Game and Fish Department; Lander, WY |
| Mark Ely | Geographic information system (GIS) specialist | USFWS, Region 6; Lakewood, CO |
| Toni Griffin | Planning team leader | USFWS, Region 6; Lakewood, CO |
| Pam Johnson | Wildlife biologist | Arapaho NWR; Walden, CO |
| Mark Lanier | <i>Former</i> assistant refuge manager | Arapaho NWR; Walden, CO |
| Larry Roberts | Wildlife biologist | Wyoming Game and Fish Department; Casper, WY |
| Ann Timberman | Project leader | Arapaho NWR; Walden, CO |

Contributors

The Service would like to acknowledge the efforts of the following individuals and organizations toward the completion of this draft CCP and EA. The diversity, talents, and knowledge they contributed dramatically improved the vision and completeness of this document.

| <i>Name</i> | <i>Position</i> | <i>Work Unit</i> |
|---------------------------|---|------------------|
| BBC Research & Consulting | Socioeconomic impact studies | Contractor |
| Rick Coleman | Assistant regional director, refuge system | USFWS |
| Megan Estep | Chief hydrologist | USFWS |
| Sheri Fetherman | Chief, division of education and visitor services | USFWS |
| Wayne King | Biologist, refuge system | USFWS |
| Deb Parker | Writer-editor | USFWS |
| Dean Rundle | Refuge supervisor | USFWS |
| Richard Schroeder | Wildlife biologist | USGS |

| | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------------|
| Shapins Associates | Writer-editor; layout | Contractor |
| Michael Spratt | Chief, division of refuge planning | USFWS |
| Richard Sterry | Regional fire planner | USFWS |
| Meg VanNess | Regional archaeologist | USFWS |
| Dave Wiseman | Refuge supervisor, <i>retired</i> | USFWS |
| Wyoming Toad Recovery Team | Wyoming toad recovery | USFWS |

Appendix C

Public Involvement

Public scoping was initiated for the Laramie Plains refuges in a notice of intent (NOI) dated June 16, 2006. The NOI announced intent to prepare a comprehensive conservation plan and environmental assessment for the refuges and to obtain suggestions and information on the scope of issues to be considered in the planning process.

A public meeting was held in Laramie, Wyoming, on May 25, 2006. Approximately 31 people attended the meeting. Numerous written comments were received during the open comment period. Comments received identified biological, social, and economic concerns regarding refuge management. The mailing list for the CCP and EA follows.

Federal Officials

U.S. Representative Barbara Cubin, Washington DC

Rep. Cubin's Area Director, Cheyenne, WY

U.S. Senator Craig Thomas, Washington DC

Sen. Thomas's Area Director, Casper, WY

U.S. Senator Michael Enzi, Washington DC

Sen. Enzi's Area Director, Cheyenne, WY

Federal Agencies

Bureau of Land Management; Cheyenne, WY; Rawlins, WY

National Park Service, Omaha, NE

USFWS, Ecological Services, Cheyenne, WY

USFWS, National Wildlife Refuge System; Albuquerque, NM; Anchorage, AK; Arlington, VA; Atlanta, GA; Fort Snelling, MN; Hadley, MA; Portland, OR; Rawlins, WY; Sacramento, CA; Shepherdstown, WV; Washington DC

USGS-Fort Collins Science Center, Ft. Collins, CO

Tribal Officials

Arapaho Business Committee, Fort Washakie, Wyoming

Crow Tribal Council, Crow Agency, Montana

Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council, Lame Deer, Montana

Oglala Sioux Tribal Council, Pine Ridge, South Dakota

Shoshone Business Council, Fort Washakie, Wyoming

State Officials

Governor Dave Freudenthal, Cheyenne, WY

Representative Kermit Brown, Laramie, WY

Representative Kurt S. Bucholz, Saratoga, WY

Representative Jim Slater, Laramie, WY

Representative Jane Warren, Laramie, WY

Representative Kevin White, Laramie, WY

Senator Mike Massie, Laramie, WY

Senator Phil Nicholas, Laramie, WY

State Agencies

Wyoming Department of Agriculture, Cheyenne, WY

Wyoming Game and Fish Department; Casper, WY; Lander, WY; Laramie, WY

Wyoming Game Fish Commission, Cheyenne, WY

Wyoming Office of State Lands and Investments, Cheyenne, WY

Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office, Cheyenne, WY

Local Government

Albany County Commissioners, Laramie, WY

Laramie Rivers Conservation District, Safe Harbor Liaison, Laramie, WY

Mayor, Laramie, WY

Organizations

American Bird Conservancy, Plains, VA

American Rivers, Washington DC

Audubon Wyoming, Casper, WY; Laramie, WY; Tie Siding, WY

Biodiversity Conservation Alliance, Laramie, WY
Defenders of Wildlife, Washington DC
Ducks Unlimited, Memphis, TN
Izaak Walton League, Gaithersburg, MD
League of Women Voters of Wyoming, Laramie, WY
Murie Audubon Society, Casper, WY
National Audubon Society; Washington DC; New York, NY
National Trappers Association, New Martinsville, WV
National Wildlife Federation, Reston, VA
National Wildlife Refuge Association, Washington DC
Sierra Club; San Francisco, CA; Sheridan, WY
The Nature Conservancy, Boulder, CO
The U.S. Humane Society, Washington, DC
The Wilderness Society, Washington DC
Union Pacific Railroad, Omaha, NE
Wildlife Management Institute; Fort Collins, CO; Corvallis, OR; Washington DC
Wyoming Natural diversity Database, Laramie, WY
Wyoming Outdoor Council, Logan, UT

Universities, Colleges, and Schools

University of Wyoming, Real Estate Operations, Laramie, WY
University of Wyoming, School of Environment and Natural Resources, Laramie, WY

Media

Casper Star Tribune, Casper, WY
Daily Boomerang, Laramie, WY
KCGY, Laramie, WY
KIMX, Laramie, WY
KISS, Casper, WY
KKTY, Douglas, WY
Rawlins Daily Times, Rawlins, WY
Wyoming Public Radio, Laramie, WY

Individuals

71 individuals

Appendix D

Divestiture Analysis

Introduction

During the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) process, Bamforth National Wildlife Refuge was identified as a candidate for divestiture from the National Wildlife Refuge System (Refuge System). The refuge was analyzed by the planning team to determine whether or not it warranted status as a national wildlife refuge.

The divestiture model represents a set of criteria for measuring the value of a refuge. Designed as a preplanning tool, the model allows planners and refuge managers to determine whether or not a refuge or easement refuge should be considered for divestiture. If the model indicates that a refuge should be considered for divestiture, the process and consequences of divestiture will be studied further during the CCP process.

In the case of Bamforth NWR, the planning team did not have enough knowledge of the refuge resources to answer the model questions with a high degree of confidence. Following the analysis, the planning team decided to retain Bamforth NWR in the Refuge System due to the lack of knowledge and understanding of the refuge's resources and the role the refuge serves in supporting the mission of the Refuge System.

The Divestiture Model

Region 6's divestiture model was developed during a two-day workshop held December 14–15, 2004, at the regional office in Denver, Colorado. The purpose of the workshop was to develop a standard policy in region 6 for identifying which refuges to consider for divestiture. The model consists of a set of nine questions that must be addressed when considering a refuge for divestiture.

Since its development, the model has been used to evaluate a number of refuges for divestiture consideration with analysis resulting in the recommendation of some refuges for divestiture and others to be retained in the Refuge System.

Divestiture Model Applied to Bamforth NWR

1. Does the refuge achieve one or more of the Refuge System goals?

Yes, but none clearly so.

To fulfill our statutory duty to achieve refuge purpose(s) and further the System Mission: Refuge is a breeding ground for birds, but not necessarily due to refuge management, since none has occurred, or is it any better than /different from surrounding lands.

Conserve, restore where appropriate, and enhance all species of fish, wildlife, and plants that are endangered or threatened with becoming endangered: *A memo dated March 31, 2005, shows the potential threatened and endangered species for Bamforth NWR as bald eagle, black-footed ferret, and Ute ladies'-tresses. Records indicate that no surveys have been conducted for these species on the refuge. Prairie dog numbers are not known, but the paved state highway running through the refuge and I-80 immediately south would seem to preclude the area as a likely ferret recovery area. Alkaline soils of the refuge would likely preclude Ute ladies'-tresses from use of the refuge.*

Perpetuate migratory bird, interjurisdictional fish, and marine mammal populations: *In good water years, some colonial nesting bird use.*

Conserve a diversity of fish, wildlife, and plants: *Management options are limited in trying to increase existing diversity. Unknown what diversity is there currently due to lack of knowledge of existing refuge resources.*

Conserve and restore as appropriate representative ecosystems of the United States, including the ecological processes characteristic of those ecosystems: *No. Too small an area to affect ecological processes characteristics.*

To foster understanding and instill appreciation of native fish, wildlife, and plants, and their conservation, by providing the public with safe, high-quality, and compatible wildlife-dependent public use. Such use includes hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation: *Refuge is currently closed to all public use.*

2. Does the refuge meet its purpose (fulfilling the refuge's intent and statutory purpose)?

Yes.

3. Does the refuge provide substantial support for migratory bird species, provide important sheltering, feeding, and breeding habitat for threatened and endangered species, or support species identified in authorizing legislation?

No, but more research is needed. Early 1990s annual narrative discusses 200 white pelicans produced. The importance of Bamforth NWR to area pelican nesting should be known to answer this question with a degree of confidence.

4. Does the refuge have biological integrity; if not, is it feasible to restore the biological integrity of the converted or degraded habitat?

Unknown. The refuge is located in a basin in a low-precipitation zone, with poor soils and low vegetative potential. Most vegetation on the refuge is native, but it is unknown whether the area has been farmed or degraded by other management actions (development of irrigation ditches, water control structures, overgrazing, and so forth).

5. Does the refuge contribute to landscape conservation, provide a stepping stone for migratory birds, or serve a unique habitat patch important to the conservation of a trust species?

The refuge may serve as a stepping stone for migratory birds as there are several lakes and mud flats in the Laramie Plains refuges, but specific migratory bird use is unknown at this time due to lack of information. Refuge habitat types are

plentiful in the region and similar to adjacent lands; the refuge does not serve as a unique habitat patch important to the conservation of a trust species.

6. Is there such significant community interest support for the refuge that divestiture would result in unacceptable long-term public relations?

No.

7. Do we have or can we acquire the jurisdiction to meet the refuge purpose, NWRS mission and goals, and prevent incompatible uses?

Yes. Refuge lands are owned in fee title by the Service.

8. Can someone else achieve most or all of the purposes of the refuge without the Service having to incur costs?

Unknown.

9. Cost/liability

Costs are limited to staff time and fuel for 1–4 trips to the refuge annually. No known liability issues exist.

Appendix E

Fire Management Program

The Service has management and administrative responsibility, including fire management, for the Laramie Plains refuges, which covers approximately 4,860 acres in south-central Wyoming.

THE ROLE OF FIRE

In ecosystems of the Great Plains, vegetation has evolved under periodic disturbance and defoliation from grazing, fire, drought, and floods. This periodic disturbance is what kept the ecosystem diverse and healthy while maintaining significant biodiversity for thousands of years.

Historically, natural fire and Native American ignitions have played an important disturbance role in many ecosystems by removing fuel accumulations, decreasing the impacts of insects and diseases, stimulating regeneration, cycling nutrients, and providing a diversity of habitats for plants and wildlife.

When fire and/or grazing are excluded from prairie landscapes, fuel loadings increase due to a build-up of thatch and invasion of woody vegetation. This increase in fuel loadings leads to an increase in a fire's resistance to control which threatens firefighter and public safety as well as federal and private facilities.

However, fire when properly utilized, can:

- reduce hazardous fuels build-up in both wildland-urban interface (WUI) and non-WUI areas;
- improve wildlife habitats by reducing density of vegetation and/or changing plant species composition;
- sustain and/or increase biological diversity;
- improve woodlands and shrublands by reducing plant density;
- reduce susceptibility of plants to insect and disease outbreaks;
- improve quality and quantity of livestock forage;
- improve the quantity of water available for municipalities and activities dependent on wildlands for their water supply.

WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT POLICY AND GUIDANCE

In 2001, an update of the 1995 "Federal Fire Policy" was completed and approved by the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture. The 2001 "Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy" directs federal agencies to achieve a balance between fire suppression to protect life, property, and resources and fire use to regulate fuels and maintain healthy ecosystems. In addition, it directs agencies to use the appropriate management response for all wildland fire regardless of the ignition source. This policy provides eight guiding principles that are fundamental to the success of the fire management program:

- Firefighter and public safety is the first priority in every fire management activity.
- The role of wildland fires as an ecological process and natural change agent will be incorporated into the planning process.
- Fire management plans (FMPs), programs, and activities support land and resource management plans and their implementation.
- Sound risk management is a foundation for all fire management activities.
- Fire management programs and activities are economically viable, based on values to be protected, costs, and land and resource management objectives.
- FMPs and activities are based on the best available science.
- FMPs and activities incorporate public health and environmental quality consideration.
- Federal, state, tribal, local, interagency, and international coordination and cooperation are essential.
- Standardization of policies and procedures among federal agencies is an ongoing objective.

The fire management considerations, guidance, and direction should be addressed in the land use resource plans (for example, the CCP). FMPs are step-down processes from the land use plans and

habitat plans, with more detail on fire suppression, fire use, and fire management activities.

MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

The Laramie Plains refuges will protect life, property, and other resources from wildland fire by safely suppressing all wildfires. Prescribed fire as well as manual and mechanical fuel treatments will be used in an ecosystem context to protect both federal and private property and for habitat management purposes. Fuel reduction activities will be applied in collaboration with federal, state, private and NGO partners. In addition, fuel treatments will be prioritized based on the guidance for prioritization established in the goals and strategies outlined in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wildlife Refuge System Wildland Fire Management Program Strategic Plan 2003–2010 and the R6 Refuges Regional Priorities FY07–11. For WUI treatments, areas with community wildfire protection plans (CWPPs) and communities at risk (CARs) will be the primary focus.

All aspects of the fire management program will be conducted in a manner consistent with applicable laws, policies, and regulations. The Laramie Plains refuge stations will maintain an FMP to accomplish the fire management goals described below. Prescribed fire, manual, and mechanical fuel treatments will be applied in a scientific way under selected weather and environmental conditions.

Fire Management Goals

The goals and strategies of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wildlife Refuge System Wildland Fire Management Program Strategic Plan are consistent with Department and Service policies, National Fire Plan direction, President Bush's Healthy Forest Initiative, the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy and Implementation Plan, National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Guidelines, initiatives of the Wildland Fire Leadership Council, and Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations.

The R6 Refuges Regional Priorities FY07–11 are consistent with the refuges' vision statement for region 6: "to maintain and improve the biological integrity of the region, ensure the ecological condition of the region's public and private lands are better understood, and endorse sustainable use of habitats that support native wildlife and people's livelihoods." The fire management goals for the Laramie Plains refuges are to use prescribed fire, manual, and mechanical treatments to: (1) reduce the threat to life and property through hazardous fuels reduction treatments, (2) meet the habitat goals and objectives identified in this CCP, and (3)

reintroduce fire to ecosystems that evolved with fire as a disturbance factor.

Fire Management Objective

The objective of the fire management program is to utilize prescribed fire, manual, and mechanical treatment methods to treat between 10 and 500 acres over the life of the plan.

Strategies

Strategies and tactics that consider public and firefighter safety as well as resource values at risk will be used. Wildland fire suppression, prescribed fire methods, manual and mechanical means, timing, and monitoring are described in more detail within the step-down FMP(s).

All management actions would use prescribed fire, manual and/or mechanical means to reduce hazardous fuels, restore and maintain desired habitat conditions, control non-native vegetation, and control the spread of woody vegetation within the diverse ecosystem habitats. The fuels treatment program will be outlined in the FMP for the refuges. Prescribed fire burn plans will be developed site specific following the Interagency Prescribed Fire Planning and Implementation Procedures Reference Guide (2006) template.

Prescribed fire temporarily reduces air quality by reducing visibility and releasing components through combustion. The refuges will meet the Clean Air Act emission standards by adhering to the "Wyoming State Implementation Plan" requirements during all prescribed fire activities.

FIRE MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION, CONTACTS, AND COOPERATION

Qualified fire management technical oversight for the refuges will be established by region 6 of the Service, using the fire management district approach. Under this approach, fire management staff will be determined by established modeling systems based on the fire management workload of a group of refuges, and possibly that of interagency partners. The fire management workload consists of historical wildland fire suppression activities as well as historical and planned fuels treatments.

Depending on budgets, fire management staffing and support equipment may be located at the administrative station or at other refuges within the district and shared between all units. Fire management activities will be conducted in a coordinated and collaborative manner with federal and nonfederal partners.

On approval of this CCP, new FMP(s) will be developed for the Laramie Plains refuges. The FMP(s) may be done as: (1) an FMP that covers each individual refuge, (2) an FMP that covers the refuges within this CCP, (3) an FMP that covers the administrative district, or (4) an interagency FMP.

Appendix F

List of Plant Species

The following plant species that occur at the Laramie Plains refuges are listed in alphabetic order of their scientific names. Species may be found on one or more of the three refuges.

| Scientific Name | Common Name |
|--|--------------------------|
| <i>Achillea millefolium</i> | Common yarrow |
| <i>Achnatherum hymenoides</i> | Indian ricegrass |
| <i>Agoseris glauca</i> | Mountain dandelion |
| <i>Agropyron cristatum</i> | Crested wheatgrass |
| <i>Agrostis stolonifera</i> | Creeping bentgrass |
| <i>Alopecurus arundinaceus</i> | Creeping meadow foxtail |
| <i>Antennaria microphylla</i> | Littleleaf pussytoes |
| <i>Argentina anserina</i> | Silverweed cinquefoil |
| <i>Artemisia frigida</i> | Fringed sage |
| <i>Artemisia tridentata wyomingensis</i> | Wyoming big sagebrush |
| <i>Artemisia tridentata vaseyana</i> | Mountain big sagebrush |
| <i>Aster ascendens</i> | Western aster |
| <i>Aster falcatum</i> | White prairie aster |
| <i>Astragalus agrestis</i> | Field milkvetch |
| <i>Astragalus bodinii</i> | Bodin's milkvetch |
| <i>Astragalus</i> spp. | Milkvetch |
| <i>Atriplex gardneri</i> | Gardner's saltbush |
| <i>Bouteloua gracilis</i> | Blue grama |
| <i>Brassicaceae</i> spp. | Mustard |
| <i>Bromus tectorum</i> | Cheatgrass |
| <i>Calamagrostis stricta</i> | Reedgrass |
| <i>Camelina microcarpa</i> | Littlepod false flax |
| <i>Carex nebrascensis</i> | Nebraska sedge |
| <i>Carex praegracilis</i> | Clustered field sedge |
| <i>Chenopodium rubrum</i> | Red goosefoot |
| <i>Chrysothamnus</i> spp. | Rabbitbrush |
| <i>Cirsium arvense</i> | Canada thistle |
| <i>Cirsium canescens</i> | Prairie thistle |
| <i>Cleome serrulata</i> | Rocky mountain bee plant |
| <i>Conyza canadensis</i> | Canadian horseweed |
| <i>Crepis runcinata</i> | Hawk's beard |
| <i>Cryptantha</i> spp. | Cryptantha |
| <i>Cryptantha thyrsoiflora</i> | Calcareous cryptantha |
| <i>Delphinium geyeri</i> | Geyer's larkspur |
| <i>Deschampsia caespitosa</i> | Tufted hairgrass |
| <i>Descurainia sophia</i> | Flixweed |

| Scientific Name | Common Name |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Distichlis spicata</i> | Saltgrass |
| <i>Elymus triticoides</i> | Alkali wildrye |
| <i>Eleocharis fallax</i> | Creeping spikerush |
| <i>Eleocharis</i> spp. | Spikerush |
| <i>Elymus lanceolatus</i> | Thickspike wheatgrass |
| <i>Elymus</i> spp. | Wheatgrass |
| <i>Elymus trachycaulus</i> | Slender wheatgrass |
| <i>Epilobium ciliatum</i> | Fringed willowherb |
| <i>Equisetum laevigatum</i> | Smooth horsetail |
| <i>Erigeron</i> spp. | Fleabane |
| <i>Eriogonum brevicaulis</i> | Shortstem buckwheat |
| <i>Eriogonum flavum</i> | Alpine golden buckwheat |
| <i>Eriogonum ovalifolium</i> | Cushion buckwheat |
| <i>Eriogonum</i> spp. | Buckwheat |
| <i>Erysimum capitatum</i> | Sanddune wallflower |
| <i>Erysimum</i> spp. | Wallflower |
| <i>Festuca</i> spp. | Fescue |
| <i>Gentianella amarella</i> | Autumn dwarf gentian |
| <i>Glaux maritima</i> | Sea milkwort |
| <i>Grindelia squarrosa</i> | Curlycup gumweed |
| <i>Gutierrezia sarothrae</i> | Broom snakeweed |
| <i>Hesperostipa comata</i> | Needleandthread |
| <i>Heterotheca subaxillaris</i> | Camphorweed |
| <i>Hippuris vulgaris</i> | Common mare's-tail |
| <i>Hordeum jubatum</i> | Foxtail barley |
| <i>Iris missouriensis</i> | Rocky Mountain iris |
| <i>Juncus balticus</i> | Baltic rush |
| <i>Juncus bufonius</i> | Toad rush |
| <i>Juncus compressus</i> | Roundfruit rush |
| <i>Juncus longistylis</i> | Longstyle rush |
| <i>Juncus nevadensis</i> | Sierra rush |
| <i>Juncus torreyi</i> | Torrey's rush |
| <i>Koeleria macrantha</i> | Prairie Junegrass |
| <i>Krascheninnikovia lanata</i> | Winterfat |
| <i>Lappula</i> spp. | Stickseed |
| <i>Lepidium densiflorum</i> | Common pepperweed |
| <i>Lepidium perfoliatum</i> | Clasping pepperweed |
| <i>Lepidium</i> spp. | Pepperweed |
| <i>Linanthus pungens</i> | Granite prickly phlox |
| <i>Lesquerella ludoviciana</i> | Foothill bladderpod |

| Scientific Name | Common Name |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Lesquerella</i> spp. | Bladderpod |
| <i>Lygodesmia juncea</i> | Rush skeletonplant |
| <i>Melilotus officinalis</i> | Yellow sweetclover |
| <i>Melilotus</i> spp. | Sweetclover |
| <i>Mentha arvensis</i> | Wild mint |
| <i>Mertensia</i> spp. | Bluebells |
| <i>Mimulus glabratus</i> | Roundleaf monkeyflower |
| <i>Mirabilis linearis</i> | Narrowleaf four o'clock |
| <i>Muhlenbergia filiformis</i> | Pullup muhly |
| <i>Oenothera coronopifolia</i> | Crownleaf evening-primrose |
| <i>Opuntia</i> spp. | Pricklypear |
| <i>Orobanche fasciculata</i> | Clustered broomrape |
| <i>Orobanche ludoviciana</i> | Louisiana broomrape |
| <i>Oxytropis deflexa</i> | Nodding locoweed |
| <i>Oxytropis</i> spp. | Locoweed |
| <i>Parnassia palustris</i> | Marsh grass of Parnassus |
| <i>Paronychia sessiliflora</i> | Creeping nailwort |
| <i>Pascopyrum smithii</i> | Western wheatgrass |
| <i>Phleum pratense</i> | Timothy |
| <i>Phlox hoodii</i> | Hood's phlox |
| <i>Physaria</i> spp. | Twinpod |
| <i>Plantago eriopoda</i> | Redwool plantain |
| <i>Poa juncifolia</i> | Sandberg bluegrass |
| <i>Poa pratensis</i> | Kentucky bluegrass |
| <i>Poa</i> spp. | Bluegrass |
| <i>Poa trivialis</i> | rough bluegrass |
| <i>Polygonum aviculare</i> | Prostrate knotweed |
| <i>Polygonum ramosissimum</i> | Bushy knotweed |
| <i>Potentilla bipinnatifida</i> | Tansy cinquefoil |
| <i>Potentilla</i> spp. | Cinquefoil |
| <i>Primula incana</i> | Silvery primrose |
| <i>Pseudoroegneria spicata</i> | Bluebunch wheatgrass |
| <i>Puccinellia nuttalliana</i> | Nuttall's alkaligrass |
| <i>Pyrrocoma lanceolata</i> | Lanceleaf goldenweed |
| <i>Ranunculus cymbalaria</i> | Alkali buttercup |
| <i>Rumex crispus</i> | Curly dock |
| <i>Rumex maritimus</i> | Golden dock |
| <i>Salix plantifolia</i> | Planeleaf willow |
| <i>Salsola kali</i> | Russian thistle |
| <i>Salsola collina</i> | Slender Russian thistle |

| Scientific Name | Common Name |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Salsola</i> spp. | Russian thistle |
| <i>Sarcobatus vermiculatus</i> | Greasewood |
| <i>Scirpus americanus</i> | American bulrush |
| <i>Scirpus nevadensis</i> | Nevada bulrush |
| <i>Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani</i> | Softstem bulrush |
| <i>Scutellaria galericulata</i> | Marsh skullcap |
| <i>Senecio hydrophiloides</i> | Tall groundsel |
| <i>Sisyrinchium implicatum</i> | Blueeyed grass |
| <i>Sisyrinchium pallidum</i> | pale blue-eyed grass |
| <i>Sium suave</i> | Hemlock waterparsnip |
| <i>Sonchus palustris</i> | Marsh sowthistle |
| <i>Sparganium</i> spp. | Bur-reed |
| <i>Sphaeralcea coccinea</i> | Scarlet globemallow |
| <i>Sporobolus cryptandrus</i> | Sand dropseed |
| <i>Stuckenia filiformis</i> | Fineleaf pondweed |
| <i>Stuckenia pectinata</i> | Sago pondweed |
| <i>Tetradymia canescens</i> | Spineless horsebrush |
| <i>Townsendia hookeri</i> | Hooker's townsendia |
| <i>Tragopogon dubius</i> | Yellow salsify |
| <i>Trifolium hybridum</i> | Alsike clover |
| <i>Trifolium repens</i> | White clover |
| <i>Triglochin maritima</i> | Seaside arrowgrass |
| <i>Triglochin palustris</i> | Marsh arrowgrass |
| <i>Valeriana edulis</i> | Tobacco root |

Appendix G

List of Potentially Occurring Bird Species

The following bird species potentially occur at the Laramie Plains refuges. Species may be found on one or all three refuges.

| Scientific Name | Common Name |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Accipiter cooperii</i> | Cooper's hawk |
| <i>Accipiter gentilis</i> | Northern goshawk* |
| <i>Accipiter striatus</i> | Sharp-shinned hawk* |
| <i>Actitis macularia</i> | Spotted sandpiper |
| <i>Aechmophorus clarkii</i> | Clark's grebe |
| <i>Aechmophorus occidentalis</i> | Western grebe |
| <i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i> | Red-winged blackbird |
| <i>Aix sponsa</i> | Wood duck |
| <i>Anas acuta</i> | Northern pintail |
| <i>Anas americana</i> | American wigeon |
| <i>Anas carolinensis</i> | Green-winged teal |
| <i>Anas clypeata</i> | Northern shoveler |
| <i>Anas cyanoptera</i> | Cinnamon teal |
| <i>Anas discors</i> | Blue-winged teal |
| <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i> | Mallard |
| <i>Anas strepera</i> | Gadwall |
| <i>Anthus rubescens</i> | American pipit |
| <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> | Golden eagle |
| <i>Ardea herodias</i> | Great blue heron |
| <i>Asio flammeus</i> | Short-eared owl* |
| <i>Athene cunicularia</i> | Burrowing owl* |
| <i>Aythya affinis</i> | Lesser scaup |
| <i>Aythya americana</i> | Redhead |
| <i>Aythya collaris</i> | Ring-necked duck |
| <i>Aythya marila</i> | Greater scaup* |
| <i>Aythya valisineria</i> | Canvasback |
| <i>Bombycilla cedrorum</i> | Cedar waxwing* |
| <i>Bombycilla garrulus</i> | Bohemian waxwing* |
| <i>Botaurus lentiginosus</i> | American bittern |
| <i>Branta canadensis</i> | Canada goose |
| <i>Bubo virginianus</i> | Great horned owl* |
| <i>Bubulcus ibis</i> | Cattle egret |
| <i>Bucephala albeola</i> | Bufflehead |
| <i>Bucephala clangula</i> | Common goldeneye |
| <i>Bucephala islandica</i> | Barrow's goldeneye* |

| Scientific Name | Common Name |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Buteo jamaicensis</i> | Red-tailed hawk |
| <i>Buteo lagopus</i> | Rough-legged hawk |
| <i>Buteo regalis</i> | Ferruginous hawk |
| <i>Buteo swainsoni</i> | Swainson's hawk |
| <i>Butorides virescens</i> | Green heron* |
| <i>Calamospiza melanocorys</i> | Lark bunting |
| <i>Calcarius ornatus</i> | Chestnut-collared longspur |
| <i>Calcarius sandwichensis</i> | McGown's longspur |
| <i>Calidris alba</i> | Sanderling* |
| <i>Carduelis pinus</i> | Pine siskin |
| <i>Carduelis tristis</i> | American goldfinch |
| <i>Cathartes aura</i> | Turkey vulture |
| <i>Catharus guttatus</i> | Hermit thrush* |
| <i>Charadrius montanus</i> | Mountain plover* |
| <i>Charadrius vociferus</i> | Killdeer |
| <i>Chen caerulescens</i> | Snow goose* |
| <i>Chen rossii</i> | Ross's goose* |
| <i>Chlidonias niger</i> | Black tern |
| <i>Chondestes grammacus</i> | Lark sparrow |
| <i>Chordeiles minor</i> | Common nighthawk |
| <i>Circus cyaneus</i> | Northern harrier |
| <i>Cistothorus palustris</i> | Marsh wren |
| <i>Coccothraustes vespertinus</i> | Evening grosbeak* |
| <i>Colaptes auratus</i> | Northern flicker |
| <i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i> | American crow |
| <i>Corvus corax</i> | Common raven |
| <i>Cygnus columbianus</i> | Tundra swan |
| <i>Dendroica coronata</i> | Yellow rumped warbler |
| <i>Dendroica nigrescens</i> | Black-throated gray warbler* |
| <i>Dendroica petechia</i> | Yellow warbler |
| <i>Egretta thula</i> | Snowy egret |
| <i>Eremophila alpestris</i> | Horned lark |
| <i>Erolia alpina</i> | Dunlin* |
| <i>Erolia bairdii</i> | Baird's sandpiper |
| <i>Erolia mauri</i> | Western sandpiper |
| <i>Erolia minutilla</i> | Least sandpiper |
| <i>Euphagus carolinus</i> | Rusty blackbird* |
| <i>Euphagus cyanocephalus</i> | Brewer's blackbird |
| <i>Falco mexicanus</i> | Prairie falcon |
| <i>Falco peregrinus</i> | Peregrine falcon |
| <i>Fulica americana</i> | American coot |

| Scientific Name | Common Name |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>Gallinago delicata</i> | Wilson's snipe |
| <i>Gavia immer</i> | Common loon |
| <i>Geothlypis trichas</i> | Common yellowthroat |
| <i>Grus canadensis tabida</i> | Sandhill crane |
| <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> | Bald eagle |
| <i>Himantopus mexicanus</i> | Black-necked stilt* |
| <i>Hirundo rustica</i> | Barn swallow |
| <i>Hydroprogne caspia</i> | Caspian tern* |
| <i>Larus argentatus</i> | Herring gull* |
| <i>Larus californicus</i> | California gull |
| <i>Larus delawarensis</i> | Ring-billed gull* |
| <i>Larus philadelphia</i> | Bonaparte's gull |
| <i>Larus pipixcan</i> | Franklin's gull |
| <i>Lanius ludovicianus</i> | Loggerhead shrike |
| <i>Leucosticte atrata</i> | Black rosy finch |
| <i>Leucosticte australis</i> | Brown-capped rosy finch* |
| <i>Leucosticte tephrocotis</i> | Gray-crowned rosy finch* |
| <i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i> | Long-billed dowitcher |
| <i>Limosa fedoa</i> | Marbled godwit |
| <i>Lophodytes cucullatus</i> | Hooded merganser* |
| <i>Melanitta deglandi</i> | White-winged scoter* |
| <i>Melospiza melodia</i> | Song sparrow |
| <i>Mergus merganser</i> | Common merganser |
| <i>Micropalmata himantopus</i> | Stilt sandpiper* |
| <i>Molothrus ater</i> | Brown-headed cowbird |
| <i>Numenius americanus</i> | Long-billed curlew* |
| <i>Numenius phaeopus</i> | Whimbrel* |
| <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i> | Black-crowned night-heron |
| <i>Oreoscoptes montanus</i> | Sage thrasher |
| <i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i> | Ruddy duck |
| <i>Passer domesticus</i> | House sparrow |
| <i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i> | Savannah sparrow |
| <i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i> | American white pelican |
| <i>Petrochelidon pyrrhonota</i> | Cliff swallow |
| <i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i> | Double-crested cormorant |
| <i>Phalaropus lobatus</i> | Red-necked phalarope |
| <i>Phalaropus tricolor</i> | Wilson's phalarope |
| <i>Pica hudsonia</i> | Black-billed magpie |
| <i>Pipilo chlorurus</i> | Green-tailed towhee |
| <i>Piranga ludoviciana</i> | Western tanager |
| <i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i> | Snow bunting* |

| Scientific Name | Common Name |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Plegadis chihi</i> | White-faced ibis |
| <i>Podiceps auritus</i> | Horned grebe* |
| <i>Podiceps grisegena</i> | Red-necked grebe* |
| <i>Podiceps nigricollis</i> | Eared grebe |
| <i>Podilymbus podiceps</i> | Pied-billed grebe |
| <i>Poecile atricapilla</i> | Black-capped chickadee |
| <i>Pooecetes gramineus</i> | Vesper sparrow |
| <i>Porzana carolina</i> | Sora |
| <i>Quiscalus quiscula</i> | Common grackle |
| <i>Rallus limicola</i> | Virginia rail |
| <i>Recurvirostra americana</i> | American avocet |
| <i>Riparia riparia</i> | Bank swallow |
| <i>Salpinctes obsoletus</i> | Rock wren* |
| <i>Sayornis saya</i> | Say's phoebe |
| <i>Selasphorus platycercus</i> | Broad-tailed hummingbird |
| <i>Selasphorus rufus</i> | Rufous hummingbird |
| <i>Sialia currucoides</i> | Mountain bluebird |
| <i>Spizella breweri</i> | Brewer's sparrow |
| <i>Spizella passerina</i> | Chipping sparrow |
| <i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i> | Northern rough-winged swallow |
| <i>Sterna forsteri</i> | Forster's tern |
| <i>Sterna hirundo</i> | Common tern* |
| <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> | European starling |
| <i>Sturnella magna</i> | Eastern meadowlark* |
| <i>Sturnella neglecta</i> | Western meadowlark |
| <i>Tachycineta bicolor</i> | Tree swallow |
| <i>Tachycineta thalassina</i> | Violet-green swallow |
| <i>Toxostoma rufum</i> | Brown thrasher |
| <i>Tringa flavipes</i> | Lesser yellowlegs |
| <i>Tringa melanoleuca</i> | Greater yellowlegs |
| <i>Tringa semipalmata</i> | Willet |
| <i>Tringa solitaria</i> | Solitary sandpiper |
| <i>Troglodytes aedon</i> | House wren* |
| <i>Turdus migratorius</i> | American robin |
| <i>Tyrannus tyrannus</i> | Eastern kingbird |
| <i>Tyrannus verticalis</i> | Western kingbird |
| <i>Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus</i> | Yellow-headed blackbird |
| <i>Zenaida macroura</i> | Mourning dove* |
| <i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i> | White-crowned sparrow |

*Signifies rare sighting

Appendix H

List of Potentially Occurring Amphibian and Reptile Species

The following amphibian and reptile species potentially occur at the Laramie Plains refuges. Species may be found on one or more of the three refuges.

| Scientific Name | Common Name |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Amphibians | |
| <i>Ambystoma tigrinum</i> | Tiger salamander |
| <i>Bufo baxteri</i> | Wyoming toad |
| <i>Phrynosoma platyrhinos</i> | Horned lizard |
| <i>Pseudacris triseriata maculata</i> | Boreal chorus frog |
| Reptiles | |
| <i>Crotalus viridis</i> | Prairie rattlesnake |
| <i>Pituophis catenifer</i> | Bull snake |

Appendix I

List of Potentially Occurring Mammal Species

The following mammals potentially occur at the Laramie Plains refuges. Species may be found on one or more of the three refuges.

| Scientific Name | Common Name |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Antilocapra americana</i> | Pronghorn |
| <i>Canis latrans</i> | Coyote |
| <i>Cervus canadensis</i> | Elk |
| <i>Chaetodipus hispidus</i> | Hispid pocket mouse |
| <i>Cynomys leucurus</i> | White-tailed prairie dog |
| <i>Lepus townsendii</i> | White-tailed jack rabbit |
| <i>Mephitis mephitis</i> | Striped skunk |
| <i>Microtus pennsylvanicus</i> | Meadow vole |
| <i>Mustela frenata</i> | Long-tailed weasel |
| <i>Mustela vison</i> | Mink |
| <i>Myotis lucifugus</i> | Little brown myotis |
| <i>Odocoileus hemionus</i> | Mule deer |
| <i>Ondatra zibethicus</i> | Muskrat |
| <i>Perognathus fasciatus</i> | Wyoming pocket mouse |
| <i>Peromyscus maniculatus</i> | Deer mouse |
| <i>Procyon lotor</i> | Common raccoon |
| <i>Reithrodontomys megalotis</i> | Western harvest mouse |
| <i>Sorex cinereus</i> | Masked shrew |
| <i>Spermophilus elegans</i> | Wyoming ground squirrel |
| <i>Spermophilus tridecemlineatus</i> | Thirteen-lined ground squirrel |
| <i>Sylvilagus audubonii</i> | Desert cottontail |
| <i>Tamias minimus</i> | Least chipmunk |
| <i>Taxidea taxus</i> | American badger |
| <i>Thomomys talpoides</i> | Northern pocket gopher |
| <i>Vulpes vulpes</i> | Red fox |
| <i>Zapus hudsonius preblei</i> | Preble's meadow jumping mouse |

Appendix J

Draft Compatibility Determination for Wildlife Observation and Wildlife Photography

Uses: Wildlife observation and wildlife photography

Refuge Name: Hutton Lake NWR

County: Albany County, Wyoming

Establishing and Acquisition Authorities:

Migratory Bird Conservation Act, Executive Order 5782

Refuge Purposes:

- “As a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wild animals.” (Executive Order 5782, dated January 28, 1932)
- “For use as an inviolate sanctuary, or for any other management purpose, for migratory birds.” (16 U.S.C. § 715d [Migratory Bird Conservation Act])

National Wildlife Refuge System Mission

The mission of the System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.

Description of Uses

Provide opportunities that support wildlife-dependent recreation.

Wildlife observation and wildlife photography would be allowed year-round. This CCP proposes to continue the above uses and add the following to improve wildlife observation and wildlife photography:

- Update and improve refuge signs.
- Develop visitor services plan.
- Establish a formal parking area with informational kiosks and brochures.
- Provide walk-in access and accessible trails with markers to designate walking trails to the best wildlife viewing areas.

- Close roads where necessary to facilitate implementation of visitor services plan and decrease disturbance to wildlife, discourage illegal hunting, and improve maintenance.
- Update existing refuge informational brochures and wildlife list to Service standards.
- Construct accessible photography blinds on Lake George and Rush and Hutton lakes.
- Provide educational materials on wildlife photography techniques.
- Provide an annual educational opportunity with experienced wildlife photographers sharing their expertise.

The refuge would be open for wildlife observation and wildlife photography. Their supporting use (access) would be controlled and regulated through the publication of refuge “tear sheets” and brochures, and through information posted at the kiosks.

Wildlife observation and wildlife photography are two of the six wildlife-dependent, priority public uses specified in the Improvement Act. These uses and their supporting access-related uses can be allowed at the refuge without interfering with the migratory bird resource.

Availability of Resources

Currently, the programs for wildlife observation and wildlife photography are administered using available resources. Implementing new programs, activities, and facilities outlined in this CCP is tied to funding requests in the form of RONS and SAMMS projects.

Anticipated Impacts of the Uses

Short-term impacts: Temporary disturbance may exist to wildlife near the activity. Direct, short-term impacts may include minor damage from traffic to refuge roads and trails when wet and muddy, minor damage to vegetation, littering, increased maintenance activity, and potential conflicts with other visitors. These activities would have only minor impacts on wildlife and would not detract from the primary purposes of the refuge.

Long-term impacts: None.

Cumulative impacts: There would be no direct or indirect cumulative impacts anticipated with these uses.

Public Review and Comment

This compatibility determination was prepared concurrently with the draft CCP and EA for the refuge. Public review and comment will be achieved concurrently with the public review and comment period for the draft CCP and EA.

Determination

Wildlife observation and wildlife photography, along with their supporting uses, are compatible uses at Hutton Lake NWR.

Stipulations Necessary to Ensure Compatibility

Stipulations regarding the public use program would be made available in published refuge brochures. Dates, closed areas, and other information would be specified:

- Restrict vehicles to designated roads and trails.
- Monitor vehicle use for wildlife disturbance, law enforcement violations, and so forth.
- Monitor use, regulate access, and maintain necessary facilities to prevent habitat degradation and minimize wildlife disturbance.

Justification

Based on the anticipated biological impacts above and in the EA, wildlife observation and wildlife photography on the Hutton Lake NWR would not interfere with the habitat goals and objectives or purposes for which the refuge was established.

Wildlife observation and wildlife photography are priority wildlife-dependent public uses acknowledged in the Improvement Act. These uses promote an appreciation for the natural resources at the refuge. Increased public stewardship will support and complement the Service’s actions in achieving the purposes of the refuge and the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Signature

Ann Timberman
Project Leader, Arapaho NWR
USFWS, Region 6

Date

Review

Dean Rundle
Refuge Supervisor
USFWS, Region 6

Date

Concurrence

Richard A. Coleman, PhD
Assistant Regional Director
National Wildlife Refuge System
USFWS, Region 6

Date

Mandatory 15-Year Reevaluation Date: 2022



Appendix K

Draft Compatibility Determination for Environmental Education and Interpretation

Use: Environmental education and interpretation

Refuge Name: Hutton Lake NWR

County: Albany County, Wyoming

Establishing and Acquisition Authorities:

Migratory Bird Conservation Act, Executive Order 5782

Refuge Purposes:

- “As a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wild animals.” (Executive Order 5782, dated January 28, 1932)
- “For use as an inviolate sanctuary, or for any other management purpose, for migratory birds.” (16 U.S.C. § 715d [Migratory Bird Conservation Act])

National Wildlife Refuge System Mission

The mission of the System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.

Description of Uses

The uses would be continuation of interpretative and environmental education programs at enhanced and expanded levels. Environmental education consists of activities conducted by refuge staff and partnerships. Interpretation occurs in less formal activities through exhibits, signs, and brochures. Visiting school and nonprofit groups would use the refuge as an outdoor classroom and tour site.

This CCP proposes to continue with the above uses and add the following to improve environmental education and interpretation activities for visitors:

- Update and improve refuge signs.
- Update existing brochures to the Service’s graphic standards.
- In cooperation with University of Wyoming, Wyoming Audubon, and others,

offer scheduled environmental education opportunities at Hutton Lake NWR.

- Create programs for students and volunteers to assist in refuge management activities.
- Provide educational opportunities to local youth organizations such as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

These activities would be held during the daytime, most frequently while school is in session (September–May). Less frequently, nonprofit groups would be hosted during the summer months.

Refuge staff would provide the instruction and host classroom tours in most cases. When someone other than refuge personnel leads activities, a special use permit may be issued.

Interpretation and environmental education are two of the six wildlife-dependent, priority public uses specified in the Improvement Act. These uses can be allowed at the refuge without interfering with the migratory bird resource.

Availability of Resources

Currently, environmental education and interpretation programs are conducted using available resources. Implementing new programs, activities, and facilities outlined in this CCP is tied to funding requests in the form of RONS and SAMMS projects.

Anticipated Impacts of the Uses

Short-term impacts: Minimal disturbance to wildlife and wildlife habitat will result from these uses at the current and proposed levels. Adverse impacts are minimized through careful timing and placement of activities. Wildlife near the activities may experience temporary disturbances. Minor damage to vegetation, littering, and increased maintenance may occur. These activities will have only minor impacts on wildlife and will not detract from the primary purposes of the refuge.

Long-term impacts: These activities would increase local support of the refuge and increase knowledge of stewardship of natural resources to students young and old.

Cumulative impacts: There would be no direct or indirect cumulative impacts anticipated with the continuation of these uses.

Public Review and Comment

This compatibility determination was prepared concurrently with the draft CCP and EA for the refuge. Public review and comment will be achieved concurrently with the public review and comment period for the draft CCP and EA.

Determination

Interpretation and environmental education are compatible uses at Hutton Lake NWR.

Stipulations Necessary to Ensure Compatibility

Allow environmental education and interpretation only in designated areas or under the guidance of refuge staff, partnerships, a volunteer, or a trained teacher to ensure minimal disturbance to wildlife, minimal damage to vegetation, and minimal conflicts between user groups.

Disturbance is almost an unavoidable impact of the interpretive and environmental education programs. However, it is through these activities that visitors would receive an understanding of proper etiquette and the impact people have on habitat and wildlife. This information and refuge-specific regulations would be available through visitor contacts, brochures, and kiosks. Periodic law enforcement would ensure compliance with regulations and area closures.

Justification

Based on the anticipated biological impacts above and in the EA, it is determined that environmental education and interpretation on the Hutton Lake NWR will not interfere with the habitat goals and objectives or purposes for which it was established.

Environmental education and interpretation are priority wildlife-dependent public uses acknowledged in the Improvement Act. These uses promote an appreciation for the natural resources at the refuge. Increased public stewardship will support and complement the Service's actions in achieving the purposes of the refuge and the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Signature

Ann Timberman
Project Leader, Arapaho NWR
USFWS, Region 6

Date

Review

Dean Rundle
Refuge Supervisor
USFWS, Region 6

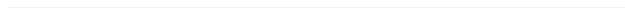
Date

Concurrence

Richard A. Coleman, PhD
Assistant Regional Director
National Wildlife Refuge System
USFWS, Region 6

Date

Mandatory 15-Year Reevaluation Date: 2022



Appendix L

Draft Compatibility Determination for Grazing

Use: Prescribed grazing

Refuge Name: Hutton Lake NWR

County: Albany County, Wyoming

Establishing and Acquisition Authorities:
Migratory Bird Conservation Act, Executive Order 5782

Refuge Purposes:

- “As a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wild animals.” (Executive Order 5782, dated January 28, 1932)
- “For use as an inviolate sanctuary, or for any other management purpose, for migratory birds.” (16 U.S.C. § 715d [Migratory Bird Conservation Act])

National Wildlife Refuge System Mission

The mission of the System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.

Description of Uses

Prescribed grazing is the use of livestock, usually cattle, to remove standing vegetation, reduce vegetative litter, suppress woody vegetation or noxious weeds, open up vegetation-choked wetlands, or open up areas to sunlight and encourage native grass seedlings and growth. Prescribed grazing is carefully timed, and usually of short duration (usually 2–4 weeks), to target certain species for grazing impacts in order to benefit other species for growth after the competing vegetation has been removed.

Due to the arid climate, when it is determined refuge grasslands will benefit from prescribed grazing, this treatment will occur in the fall of the year (July–October). Grazing will be offered on a bid system to interested landowners with stipulations for eligibility. Mid-season grazing (July) removes litter and encourages some fall regrowth. Grazing later in the season (August–October) removes litter and encourages spring vegetation growth. Late-season grazing also concentrates livestock in heavier

vegetation (rushes) in the refuge ponds due to the upland grasse’s curing and becoming less palatable, which can facilitate providing water openings in the vegetation.

Fence construction and maintenance (often a temporary electric fence) and control and rotation of the livestock are the responsibility of the cooperating private party. Market rate grazing fees are determined by the regional office, but may include standard deductions for fence construction and maintenance, frequent livestock rotations, construction of water gaps, or hauling/providing additional water in dry pasture.

The frequency and duration of prescribed grazing on the refuge will be based on site-specific evaluations of the grassland being managed.

This CCP proposes to continue with the above use and add the following to improve management of refuge upland habitats:

- Conduct upland vegetation surveys.
- Evaluate grazing program to determine appropriate stocking rates, duration, and so forth of grazing program.
- Install and maintain fencing to appropriately manage grazing program.

Availability of Resources

Developing grazing plans and special use permits (SUPs) and monitoring compliance and biological effects require some Service resources. Most grazing management costs (fencing labor, monitoring and moving livestock, hauling water) are provided by the cooperator or permittee. Evaluating the grasslands for grazing prescriptions and grassland response is already a part of the refuge grassland management responsibilities. Some alternative form of grassland management, prescribed burning or haying, may be used if the areas are not treated with prescribed grazing. Managing grasslands through permitted haying has comparable costs to managing a prescribed grazing program. Managed mowing would be more expensive, since all labor costs would be assumed by the Service. Prescribed fire can be an effective grassland management tool, but there are personnel and weather limitations on a burning program, as well the fact that some tracts are not suited to burning management. In addition, there is an ecological benefit to rotating grassland management techniques, such as grazing, burning, and haying, at different seasons, rather than just relying on one technique.

Anticipated Impacts of the Uses

Short-term impacts: Grazing by domestic livestock has the short-term effect of removing some or much of the standing vegetation from a tract of grassland. Properly prescribed, the effect of this removal of vegetation increases the vigor of the grassland, stimulates the growth of desired species of grass and forbs, and reduces the abundance of targeted species such as cool-season exotics, woody species, noxious weeds or invasive species, or cattails. Grazing in the spring may cause the loss of some bird nests due to trampling, and may cause some birds not to nest in areas being grazed. Grazing on public wildlife lands can create an aesthetic issue of concern for some people or visitors who do not understand grassland management. Prescribed grazing is usually of short duration and enhanced, most diverse and vigorous grassland habitats are the end result. Grazing livestock may create a minor and temporary disturbance to wildlife, but generally do no harm. There is a slight potential for conflict between the visiting public and the livestock or the permittee.

Public Review and Comment

This compatibility determination was prepared concurrently with the draft CCP and EA for the refuge. Public review and comment will be achieved concurrently with the public review and comment period for the draft CCP and EA.

Determination

As this activity is an economic use, it must meet the compatibility threshold of “contributing to the Mission and Purposes” of the Refuge System and refuge area. Prescribed grazing is used to improve and manage grassland habitats on refuges and benefit the migratory birds and other wildlife that use these habitats.

The use of grazing as a habitat management tool is compatible at Hutton Lake NWR with the following stipulations.

Stipulations Necessary to Ensure Compatibility

- SUPs will specify the stocking rates, dates of use, and timing for each unit or grazing cell on the refuge.
- The standard grazing fee, as determined for each state by the regional office, and any standard deductions for any labor or work done on Service lands will be included on the SUP.
- Grazing permittees must comply with all applicable State Livestock Health Laws.

- No supplemental feeding will be allowed without authorization from the project leader/refuge manager.
- Control and confinement of livestock will be the responsibility of the permittee.
- The permit is issued subject to the revocation and appeals procedure contained in Title 50, Part 25 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Justification

Controlled grazing by domestic livestock will not materially interfere or detract from the purposes for which the refuge was established. Prescribed livestock grazing creates temporary disturbances to vegetation. Many of these disturbances are desirable for grassland management. Grazing produces an undesirable, but short-term impact to grassland nesting birds and site aesthetics. In the long term, prescribed grazing increases grassland vigor, species diversity, and habitat quality. Prescribed grazing is an alternative management tool that can be used to replace or complement prescribed fire, mowing, or haying of Service grasslands. Without periodic disturbance caused by grazing the health of the grassland community would decline.

Signature

 Ann Timberman
 Project Leader, Arapaho NWR
 USFWS, Region 6

 Date

Review

 Dean Rundle
 Refuge Supervisor
 USFWS, Region 6

 Date

Concurrence

 Richard A. Coleman, PhD
 Assistant Regional Director
 National Wildlife Refuge System
 USFWS, Region 6

 Date

Mandatory 10-Year Reevaluation Date: 2017

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