

WAUBAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE COMPLEX

**including
Waubay National Wildlife Refuge
and
Waubay Wetland Management District**

**DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION PLAN
AND
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

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Prepared by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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Summary

Waubay National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge), comprised of 4,650 acres, is located in Day County in northeastern South Dakota (Map 1). The Refuge's mix of lakes, wetlands, prairie, forests, and cropland is home to a diversity of wildlife. More than 100 bird species nest on this small piece of habitat, with 37 mammals also calling it home. Waubay National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) was established by President Roosevelt in 1935 as "a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife."

Waubay Wetland Management District (WMD) protects over 250,000 acres of wetlands and prairie in six counties of northeastern South Dakota. The area's mix of native grass, planted grasses, cropland, and wetlands support a variety of wildlife. Wildlife communities are dependent on the abundant grasslands or wetlands, or both. The WMD is home to 247 species of birds, 43 species of mammals, and over 20 species of amphibians and reptiles. Breeding waterfowl and grassland-dependent passerines are two groups that are especially prominent.

Comprehensive planning is being undertaken for the Refuge and the Wetland Management District (Complex) to guide management for the next 15 years. When completed, the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) will provide clear goals and objectives, implementation strategies, and recommended staffing and funding for the Complex. This Plan will meet the planning requirements of the National Wildlife Refuge Improvement Act of 1997.

The main goals set forth in the CCP for the Waubay Complex are:

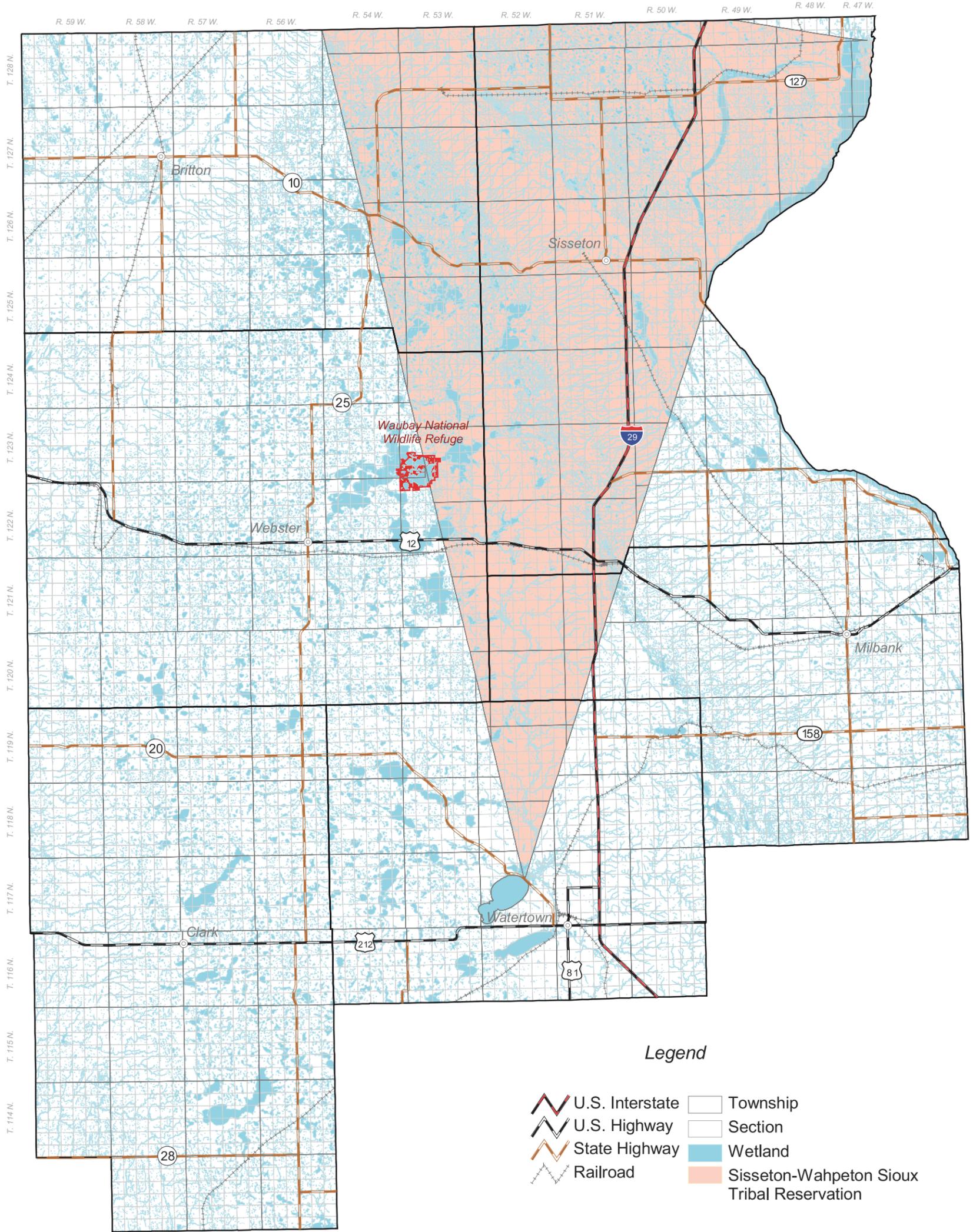
- *Habitat Goal: To preserve, restore and enhance the ecological diversity of grasslands, wetlands, and native woodlands of the Prairie Pothole Region of the Great Plains on Waubay National Wildlife Refuge Complex.*
- *Wildlife Goal: To promote a natural diversity and abundance of native flora and fauna of the Prairie Pothole Region of the Great Plains on Waubay National Wildlife Refuge Complex.*
- *Cultural Resources Goal: Protect and interpret significant historic and prehistoric cultural resources associated with Waubay National Wildlife Refuge Complex.*
- *Wildlife-dependent Recreation Goal: To foster an understanding and appreciation of the ecology and management of the fauna and flora and of the role of humans in the Prairie Pothole Region of the Great Plains by providing Complex visitors of all abilities with compatible wildlife-dependent recreational experiences.*

These goals will help fulfill the mission and goals of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the National Wildlife Refuge System. In an ecosystem setting, Waubay Complex CCP actions will also help meet the goals of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, Partners in Flight, The Nature Conservancy's Tallgrass Prairie Ecoregional Plan and others. Only by working together can we improve the biological, social, and economic status of the northeastern corner of South Dakota and the Great Plains.

"Like wind and sunsets, wild things were taken for granted until progress began to do away with them. Now we face the question whether a still higher 'standard of living' is worth its cost in things natural, wild and free. For us of the minority, the opportunity to see geese is more important than television, and the chance to find a pasque-flower is a right as inalienable as free speech."
Aldo Leopold

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 stipulates that a written assessment must be made of any action proposed by an agency of the Federal Government that significantly affects the quality of the human environment or has significant impacts on the affected State or Federal land. NEPA also requires Federal decision makers to study, develop, and describe appropriate alternatives to the recommended action. Views of other Federal and State agencies and the public are solicited during the decision making process. An Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to accompany this CCP. It is published after the Plan and before the Appendices. The proposed action is to prepare and implement the CCP, or enhanced management alternative.

Waubay National Wildlife Refuge Complex Vicinity Map



Legend

- U.S. Interstate
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- Railroad
- Township
- Section
- Wetland
- Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribal Reservation

Map Location

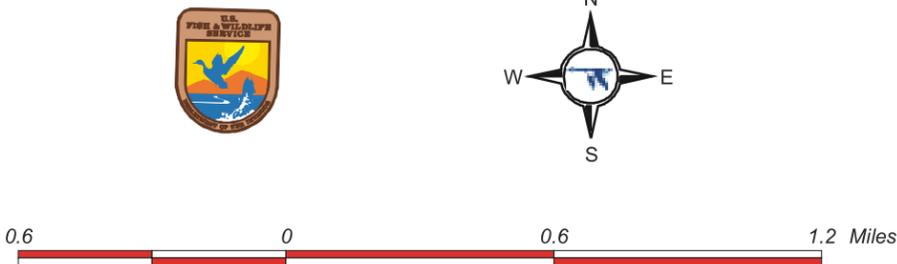
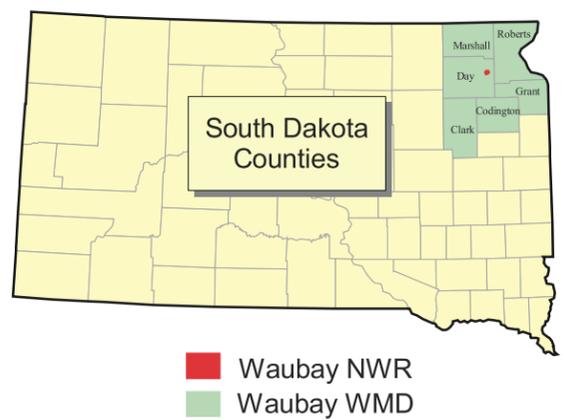


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