

Planning Update

Comprehensive Conservation Plan Quivira National Wildlife Refuge

Issue 1, February 2010

The National Wildlife Refuge System

Quivira National Wildlife Refuge in Kansas is part of the National Wildlife Refuge System (Refuge System).

The Refuge System began in 1903 when President Theodore Roosevelt established Pelican Island in Florida as the nation's first bird sanctuary and went on to establish many other sanctuaries for wildlife during his presidency.

This small network of sanctuaries continued to expand and became the National Wildlife Refuge System—the largest system of lands in the world dedicated for the conservation of wildlife.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), an agency within the Department of the Interior, administers the Refuge System.

Quivira National Wildlife Refuge

The refuge encompasses 22,135 acres and is primarily located in Stafford County in central Kansas. Quivira National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1955 to provide food, water, and nesting areas for migratory waterfowl.

Located in what was historically a region of sand prairie, the refuge contains large areas of salt marsh, which is an unusual inland habitat. Two large marshes, Big Salt Marsh and Little Salt Marsh, cover more than 2,000 acres. Upland areas remain primarily in sand prairie and are often on old sand dune formations. Rattlesnake Creek, a large permanent stream, courses through the refuge before eventually emptying into the Arkansas River to the northeast.



Salt marsh at Quivira National Wildlife Refuge.

USFWS

The refuge's marshes and other wetlands serve as staging, resting, and feeding areas for large numbers of ducks, geese, and shorebirds. During peak migration periods in spring and fall, more than one million ducks, geese, and sandhill cranes may use the refuge. Quivira National Wildlife Refuge is a nesting ground for the interior least tern, an endangered species. In addition, the refuge is a migration stopover for another endangered species, the whooping crane.

Visitors can access the refuge through more than 40 miles of public roads, as well as on several miles of hiking trails.

What is a Comprehensive Conservation Plan?

In 1997, Congress passed the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act (Improvement Act). This legislation provides clear guidance for management of the Refuge System including this new mission statement.

The mission of the National Wildlife 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.

The Improvement Act directs the Service to manage the Refuge System as a national system of lands and waters

devoted to the conservation of wildlife and maintenance of the biological integrity of ecosystems.

To support and fulfill this mission, the Improvement Act also requires that, by 2012, the Service will have developed a comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) for each national wildlife refuge in the Refuge System at the time of the act. To meet this requirement, the Service has started work on a CCP for Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. This 15-year plan will provide long-range guidance and management direction for all refuge programs. The plan will outline a vision statement and supporting goals, objectives, and strategies. It will be a "living" document that is updated every 15 years.

The CCP and the accompanying environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (as required by the National Environmental Policy Act) will describe management alternatives considered and their effects on the environment.

In summary, the CCP will do the following:

1. Outline a vision.
2. Guide management decisions.
3. Outline goals, objectives, and strategies to achieve the refuge's vision and purposes.
4. Provide other agencies and the public with an understanding of the management strategies to be carried out at the refuge.



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White pelican.

Why Did You Receive This Update?

This planning update is being widely distributed to generate interest in the planning process and collect ideas and thoughts from the public, state and local governments, organizations, and other partners.

You are receiving this update because you were identified as someone who may want to be kept informed or share ideas about the future management of Quivira National Wildlife Refuge.

Since this mailing list is subject to the Freedom of Information Act, your permission is needed to place your name on the permanent mailing list. If you do not request to be on the mailing list, the Service will assume that you do not wish to receive further information on the planning process.

If you would like to continue receiving planning updates, please complete the enclosed "mailing list consent" form and return it to the address under Contact Information. You may also phone, fax, or email Toni Griffin (planning team leader) and request that your name be placed on the mailing list. Her contact information is on this page.

Public Involvement and Scoping

Three public scoping meetings are scheduled for the first week of March 2010. These meetings are essential to developing a list of issues that the CCP will address. The meetings will follow an informal open-house format. You are invited to drop by anytime between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. to meet with Service personnel, learn more about the CCP process, and provide input.

Meeting Schedule

March 8, 2010

- Stafford, Kansas
Senior Center
130 South Main

March 9, 2010

- Great Bend, Kansas
The Front Door
1615 Tenth Street

March 10, 2010

- Wichita, Kansas
Great Plains Nature Center
6232 East 29th Street North



Service personnel tour the refuge to start the planning process.

Draft Vision Statement

The draft vision below will likely change to reflect input that we receive from the public and others. The final vision statement will help guide the CCP process for the refuge.

At the base of the Rattlesnake Creek basin in central Kansas, water remains the great driver of a diverse complex of native sand prairie and various aquatic communities composing Quivira National Wildlife Refuge.

Here, climate and land use support a healthy, sustainable system of recurring extremes: hot-cold, wet-dry, briny-fresh, calm pools-surging riffles, and rolling hills-level plains.

A medley of dune, stream, meadow, and marsh with touches of native trees and shrubs awaken the senses, notably in spring and fall when many different birds inhabit these systems to replenish essential reserves for their journeys to and from breeding and wintering grounds.

And with subtle and rare experiences, each moment is unique—the smell of sweet nectar, moist earth, or salty air; the primitive call of a whooping crane; a glimpse of a secretive rail; or the discovery of a distinct pattern or design in nature.

By generations of land stewards transcending refuge boundaries, the integrity of this environment is conserved with awe, respect, and appreciation of the gifts it offers.

Project Timeline



Contact Information

Service staff are available to provide additional information about the refuge's history, goals, and accomplishments and to answer questions about the planning process.

Public comments relating to the scoping portion of the planning process will be accepted by written letter or email through March 31, 2010, and can be sent to the following postal or electronic addresses or by fax:

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For information about the refuge:
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Black-necked stilt.

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For information about the planning process: www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/planning/ccp.htm



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