

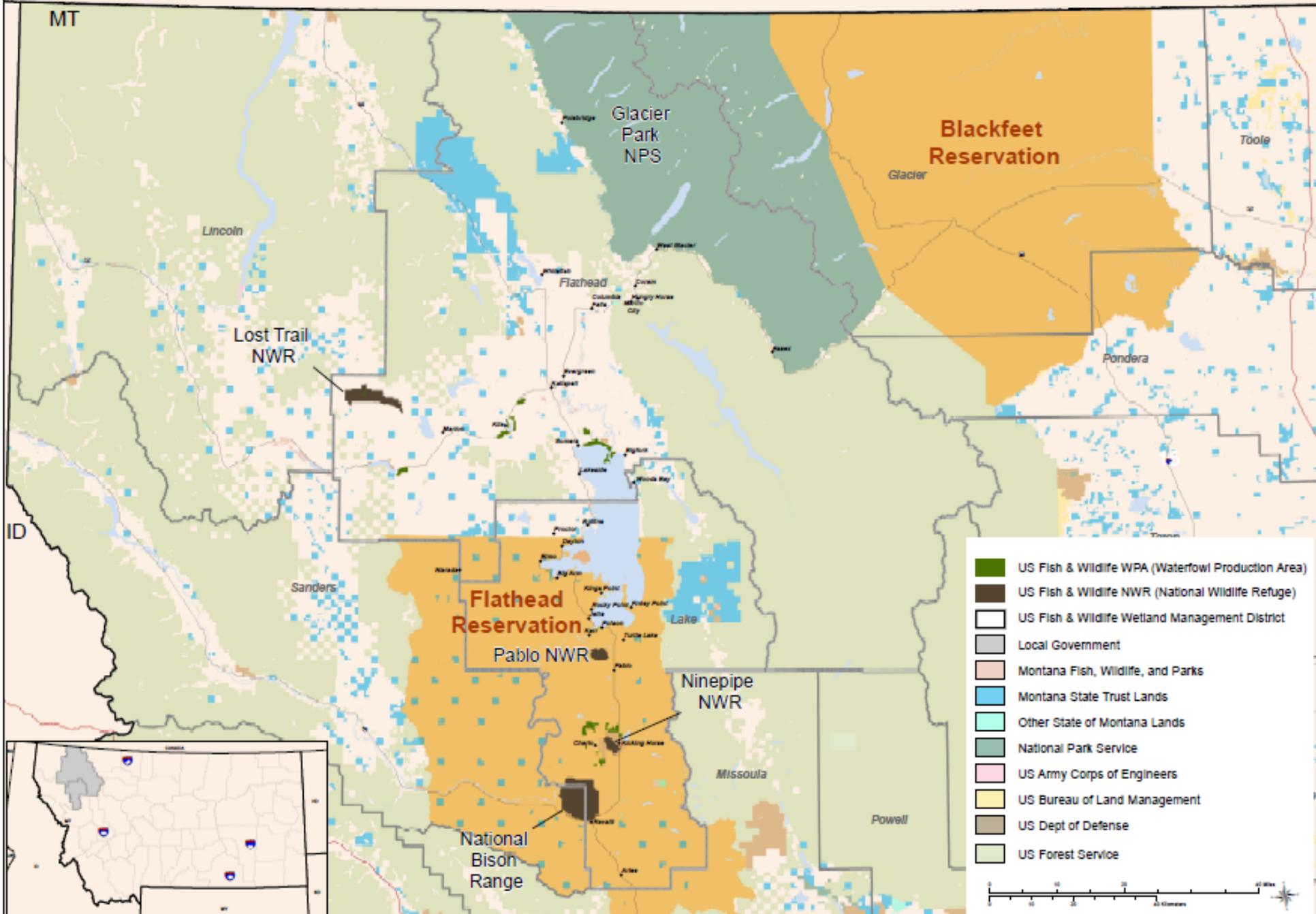


U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

National Bison Range Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plans

MT

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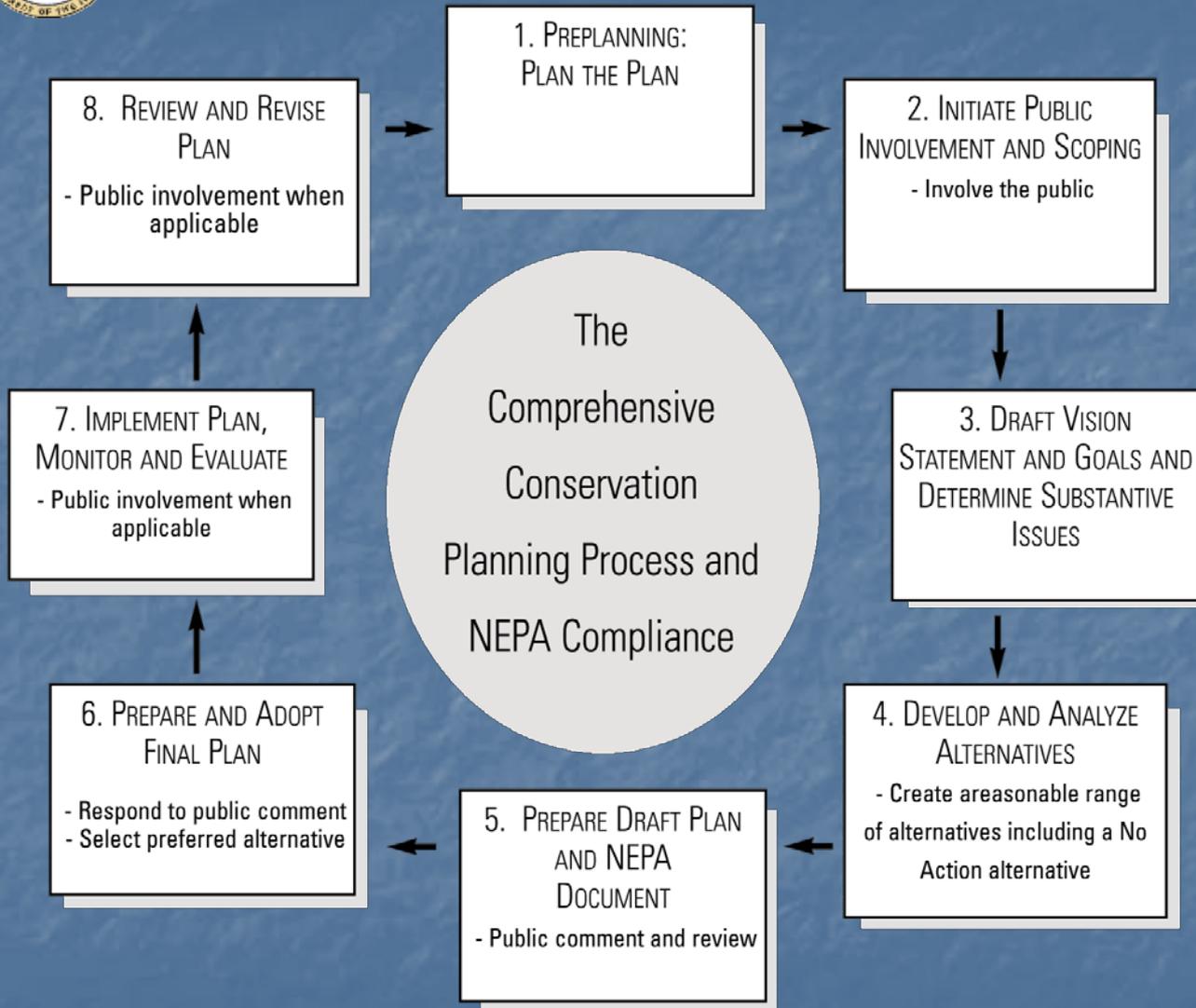


- US Fish & Wildlife WPA (Waterfowl Production Area)
- US Fish & Wildlife NWR (National Wildlife Refuge)
- US Fish & Wildlife Wetland Management District
- Local Government
- Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
- Montana State Trust Lands
- Other State of Montana Lands
- National Park Service
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- US Bureau of Land Management
- US Dept of Defense
- US Forest Service

0 10 20 30 40 Miles



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Planning Team

The Planning Team developing the Comprehensive Conservation Plans for the units of the National Bison Range Complex includes representatives from the following:

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks

Lake and Sanders Counties

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (NBR Complex & Region 6 Regional Office staffs)

The Planning Team has met twice in Polson to work together to develop the draft vision, goals and alternatives for which we are seeking your comments. This team will meet again at the end of the summer (2018) to assess the environmental consequences of the alternatives and select a preferred alternative from which to develop the draft CCPs for the units of the Complex.



NATIONAL BISON RANGE NWR COMPLEX DRAFT VISION STATEMENT

Relax and take a deep breath while you step back in time to reflect on what was, what is and what is yet to come. Immerse yourself in the inter-montane valleys of northwestern Montana shaped by glacial forces and steeped in rich cultural history.

This is a special landscape important to people age after age, where we pay tribute to the persons and peoples who set aside the lands, conserved the wildlife and plants, and were stewards of various components that make up the complex.

Visitors from all over the world travel to the NBRC which seeks to provide an opportunity to learn and experience varied habitats, abundant wildlife and the natural beauty of these lands.

NBRC safeguards these values and preserves connectivity across the landscape, forming continuity through time for future generations to treasure.

Each unit is unique, and collectively they have, and will continue, to contribute to the NBRC and the NWRS.

Partners foster cultural and natural resources conservation where the cultural history is expressed across the landscape. Unique opportunities to work with partners benefit many of the units within the Flathead Indian Reservation and other units located within traditional homelands of the Salish, Upper Pend d'Oreille, and Kootenai Tribes.

National Bison Range Complex

Draft CCP Goals

Wildlife Management Goal

Protect, maintain, and restore healthy and diverse wildlife populations with respect to species that are endemic, migratory, and mandated species of concern.

Habitat Management Goal

Conserve, restore, and promote biological integrity in functional and sustainable ecologically diverse habitats of the inter-montane ecosystem of western Montana

Invasive Species Goal

Prevent, reduce, and contain the invasion and spread of noxious, invasive, and harmful nonnative species within the Complex while working with partners to address off-Complex infestations within the surrounding landscape.

National Bison Range Complex

Draft CCP Goals

Research and Science Goal

Encourage high quality research and promote the use of scientifically sound management decisions.

Monitoring and Adaptive Management Goal

Through the life of this plan, we will monitor and evaluate the consequences of our actions and use adaptive management to reach desired outcomes.

Public Use Goal

Provide compatible, wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities, for persons of all abilities, to learn, enjoy, and appreciate the inter-montane landscape of western Montana, the fish and wildlife and plants.

Cultural Resources Goal

Preserve and value the cultural resources and history of the National Bison Range Complex to connect staff, visitors, and community to the area's past and continuing traditions.

National Bison Range Complex

Draft CCP Goals

Partnerships and Collaboration Goal

Maintain and cultivate partnerships that help achieve the vision and supporting goals and objectives of the NBR Complex to support wildlife and habitat conservation, research, foster awareness and appreciation of natural and cultural resources and provide education along with all necessary infrastructure of the inter-montane ecosystem of western MT.

Recognizing its importance, we will collaborate with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and other Tribal governments in a manner consistent with the Service's Native American policy and with other Federal, State, and local government entities in a manner consistent with applicable Service policies.

Administration and Operations Goal

Effectively use funding, staff, partnerships, volunteers, and equipment to restore and manage Complex habitats, conduct programs, and improve and maintain all necessary infrastructure to the benefit of the Complex and the Refuge System.



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Alternative A: Current Management (No Action)

Under this alternative we would continue all the current management activities, and maintain funding, infrastructure, all programs, and staffing at existing levels.





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Alternative B:

Maximize the Quality of Public Experiences

This alternative emphasizes managing habitat and wildlife populations to provide quality, wildlife-dependent opportunities for the public.

All programs of the Complex would foster public support and appreciation for the resources of our land and our waters.

The Service would maximize these recreational opportunities by providing improved access, facilities, interpretive materials, and environmental education.

The Service would aim to maintain natural processes and healthy wildlife populations through partnerships to enhance the quality of the public's experience.





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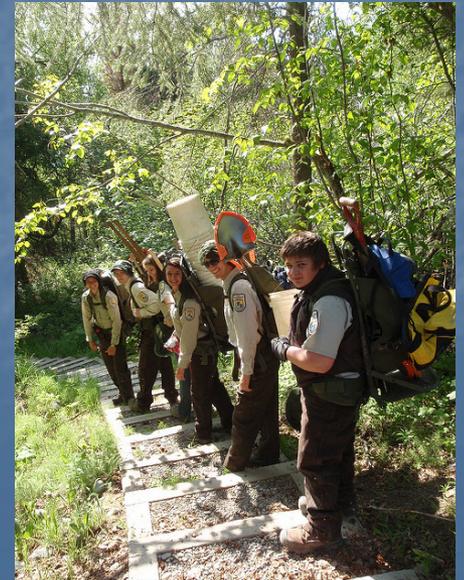
Alternative C:

Manage for Ecological Sustainability

This alternative emphasizes maintaining and/or enhancing ecological communities, recognizing ever-changing environmental conditions.

In cooperation with our partners, the Service would use a prioritization framework to identify and define future conditions that will drive management actions to:

- Build ecological community resiliency
- Promote species diversity
- Increase integrity of habitats
- Restore natural processes





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Alternative D: Species-Focused Management

Under this alternative, carrying capacity for target species would generally drive management of wildlife and plant population numbers. Lands would be managed under a corridor concept for transient species populations (e.g. wolverine, lynx, grizzlies, wolves).

Carrying capacity for bison would be determined in concert with carrying capacities for other species. Bison population management would also involve genetic diversity considerations.

Targeted species populations (e.g. Spalding's catchfly, trumpeter swans, and bighorn sheep) would be managed with individualized considerations (e.g. disease, threatened and endangered species, and habitat).

Management objectives would include managing for a diversity of species, including plant species.





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Alternative E:

Collaborative/Partner-Based Landscape Level Conservation

Units of the Complex are separated by significant distance across the landscape. All are part of the Northwestern Montana ecosystem.

To provide connectivity with the larger landscape and preserve unique components of each small unit, this alternative seeks to facilitate collaborative, cooperative, and coordinated management of the Complex with our federal, tribal, state, local, public, and private partners.

This alternative seeks to increase opportunities for public use and education. It seeks to provide better opportunities for fish, plant, and wildlife habitat on lands outside the boundaries of our units by creating corridors for habitats, conducive to wildlife migration and movement. It also seeks to incorporate the expertise, resources, and efforts of our partners to help facilitate the benefits of a broader functioning landscape.

This approach promotes the shared responsibility of managing actions across the landscape.





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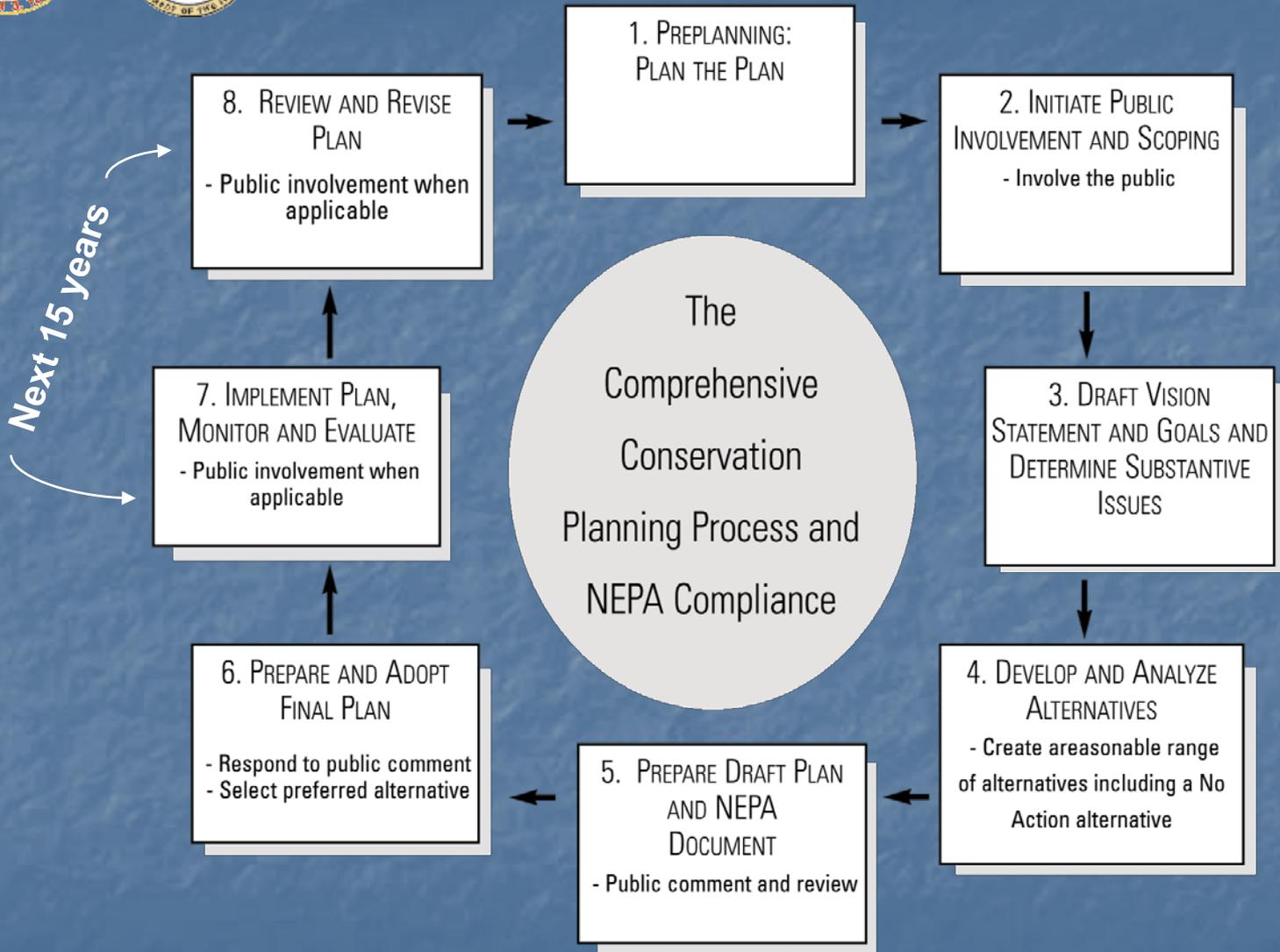
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Questions?



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We want YOUR feedback!

We suggest the following for you to provide us your input:

Comments that are solution oriented and provide specific examples will be more effective than those that simply voice opposition or support.

We appreciate your unique perspective and input. Numerous comments that repeat the same basic message of support or opposition will typically be responded to collectively.

Details on relevant background or environmental effects are more helpful to the planning team than general statements.

Substantive comments are of much greater help than simply a 'vote' for one of the alternatives.

You may provide us your comments in one of the following ways:

- Fill out our comment form or any other comment form you may want to use and:
 - Give it to us tonight, or
 - Send it via postal service to:
 - Vanessa Fields, USFWS, 922 Bootlegger Trail, Great Falls, MT 59404
 - Bernardo Garza, USFWS, 134 Union Blvd., Room 300, Lakewood, CO, 80228, or
 - Send it via fax to (303) 236-4712, attention Bernardo Garza, or
 - Send it via email to:
 - scoping_NBR@fws.gov (for comments on the CCP/EIS for the NBR)
 - scoping_pablo_ninepipe@fws.gov (for comments on the CCP/EA for the other units)