

Planning Update

Comprehensive Conservation Plan Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge

Issue 1, July 2013

The National Wildlife Refuge System

The Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge—located in the heart of the City of Arvada, Colorado—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. We, as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, an agency within the Department of the Interior, administer the Refuge System.

In 1997, the U.S. Congress passed the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act (Improvement Act). This law 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 us 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.



Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge has abundant wildlife in a serene setting.

USFWS

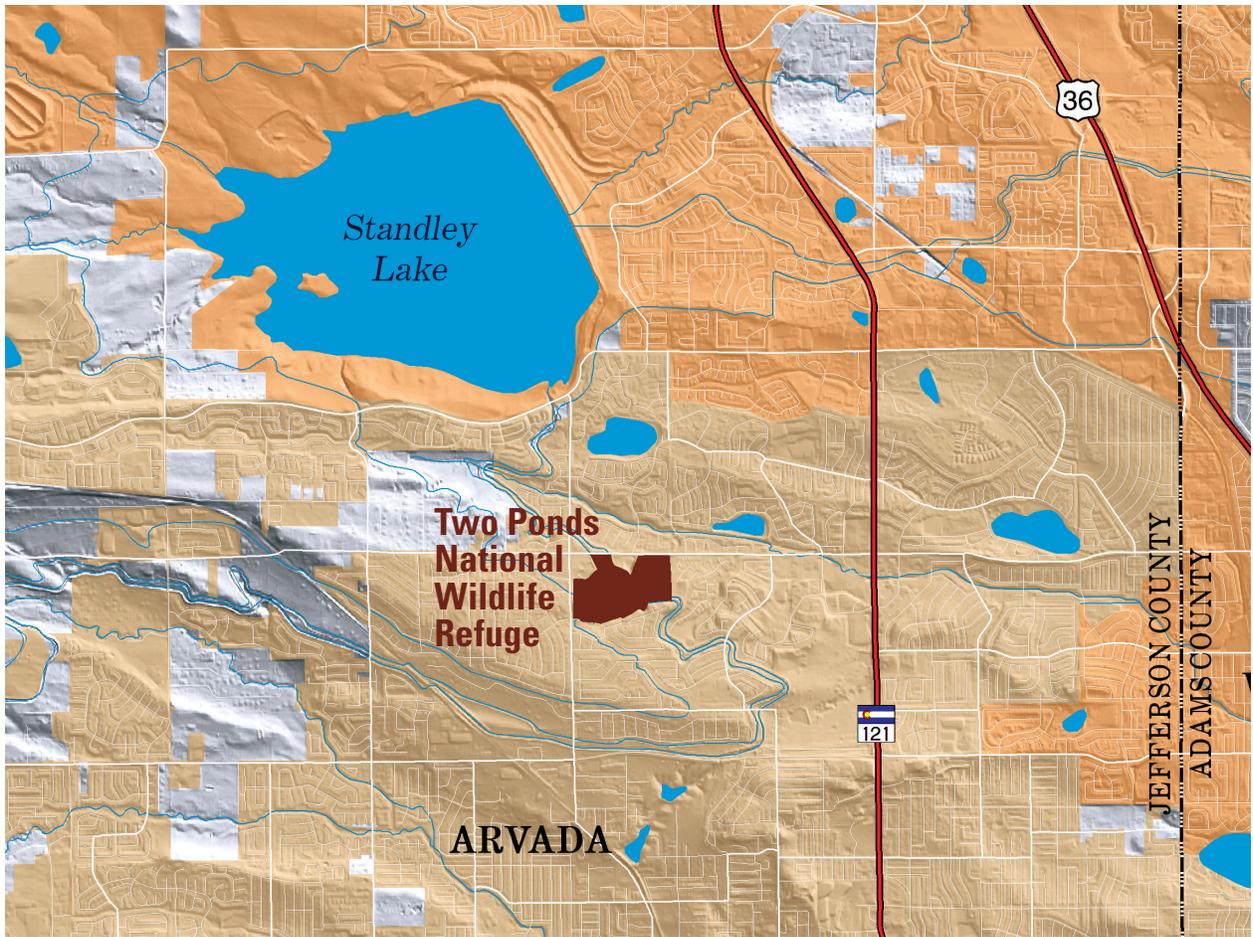
Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge

The Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge is the smallest urban unit in the Refuge System and is part of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge Complex. The refuge is about 72 acres in size and consists of important fish and wildlife habitats such as native shortgrass prairie, native mixed-grass prairie, and wetland. Two Ponds Refuge supports many animals, including the following:

- more than 120 species of birds
- coyote and red fox
- muskrat, raccoon, and beaver
- deer
- several species of small mammals, amphibians, reptiles, and fish

In 1990, a local citizen's group—the Two Ponds Preservation Foundation—was instrumental in saving this site from development. The group's efforts contributed to the establishment of the Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge in 1992. Since then, we have been committed to restoring, enhancing, and preserving a diversity of upland and wetland habitats for migratory and resident wildlife, along with providing many visitor experiences.

Located conveniently within the Denver metro area, the refuge provides a unique opportunity for people to connect with their natural environment. A variety of wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities is available annually to more than 15,000 visitors—people can hike trails, observe and photograph wildlife, participate in environmental education programs, volunteer their talents, and join in a diverse array of community service projects.



Seth Beres/USFWS

Boy Scouts in a viewing blind on the refuge quietly search for wildlife.

What is a Comprehensive Conservation Plan?

To support and fulfill the mission of the Refuge System, the Improvement Act requires that we manage all national wildlife refuges under a comprehensive conservation plan. To meet this requirement, we have started work to revise the 1997 comprehensive management plan for the Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge. A draft plan and accompanying environmental assessment (as required by the National Environmental Policy Act) will describe management alternatives and their effects on the environment.

This 15-year plan for the Two Ponds Refuge will provide long-range guidance and management direction for all refuge programs, as follows:

- Outline a vision for the refuge.
- Guide management decisions.
- Set goals and specify objectives and strategies to achieve the refuge’s vision and purposes.
- Provide other agencies and the public with an understanding of the management we will carry out at the refuge.

The comprehensive conservation plan will be a “living” document that we update every 15 years.

Public Involvement and Scoping

We are holding a public meeting in August to begin the scoping process—gathering information, concerns, and ideas about the Two Ponds Refuge. The meeting will give you a chance to meet with us, learn more about the planning process, and provide your ideas and comments on the refuge and its future management. This meeting is essential to developing a list of issues that we will address in the comprehensive conservation plan.

Public Meeting

Tuesday, August 13, 2013
6 p.m.–8 p.m.
Arvada Public Library
7525 W. 57th Avenue
Arvada, CO 80003

We invite you to drop by any time after 5 p.m. The meeting will begin at 6 p.m. with a formal presentation, followed by time for informal discussion.

Public Comments

You can give us your ideas and comments during this scoping portion of the planning process. We will accept written letters through postal mail, email, and fax (refer to Contact Us below).

We need to receive your comments by Friday, October 11, 2013.

Planning Timeline

Spring 2013	✓ Preplanning
Summer 2013	—Public Involvement and Scoping
Fall 2013	—Vision and Goals
Fall 2014	—Alternative Development and Analysis
Spring 2015	—Public Review of Draft Plan and Environmental Impact Statement
Fall 2015	—Plan Completion
Fall 2015	—Implementation

Why Did You Receive This Update?

We are widely distributing this planning update to generate interest in the planning process and to collect ideas and thoughts from the public, State and local governments, organizations, and other partners.

Since the mailing list is subject to the Freedom of Information Act, we



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A black-crowned night-heron at rest.

need your permission to place your name on the permanent mailing list. If you do not request to be on the mailing list, we will assume that you do not wish to receive further information on the planning process for the Two Ponds Refuge.

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 Us below.

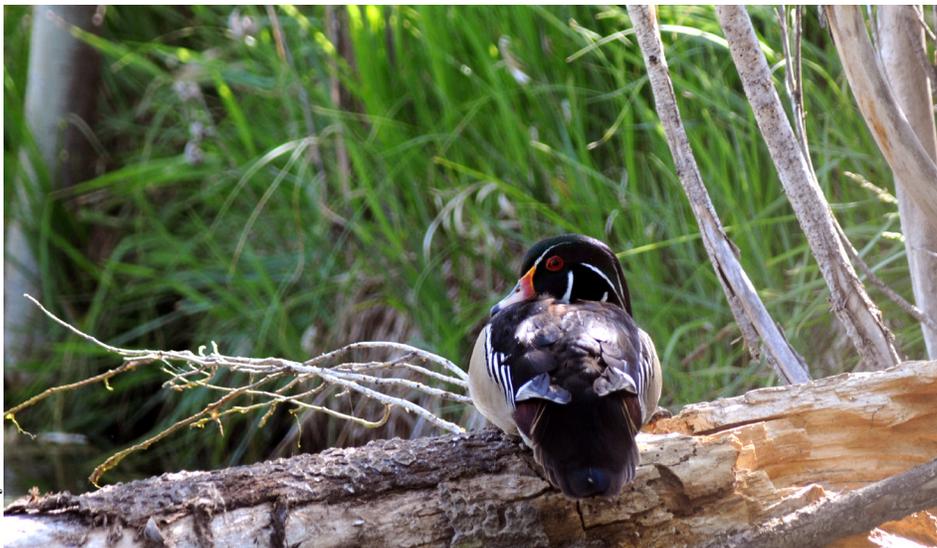
Contact Us

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Wood ducks are common at Two Ponds Refuge.

Two Ponds Refuge Planning Web Site

www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/planning/ccp/co/twp/twp.html

Information on the Planning Process

www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/planning/ccp.htm

Find Out More About the Refuge

www.fws.gov/twoponds

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