



## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

### Lake Andes National Wildlife Refuge Complex (Lake Andes NWR, Karl E. Mundt NWR, and Lake Andes Wetland Management District)

Comprehensive Conservation Plan & Environment Assessment, *Update 1, Nov. 2006*

#### The National Wildlife Refuge System

All the units of the Lake Andes NWR Complex are part of the National Wildlife Refuge System (System). This System began in 1903 when President Theodore Roosevelt protected Pelican Island (FL) from feather collectors who were destroying colonies of nesting pelicans, herons, ibis, and spoonbills. He established Pelican Island as the nation's first bird sanctuary and went on to establish many other sanctuaries for wildlife. This small network of sanctuaries continued to expand, later becoming the National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) System, the largest system of lands in the world dedicated to conservation of wildlife. This system is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service).

#### What is a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP)?

In 1997, Congress passed the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act (Act), legislation which provides clear guidance for the management of the System. The Act included a new statutory mission statement (see below) and directed the Service to manage the System as a national system of lands and waters devoted to conserving wildlife and maintaining biological integrity of ecosystems.



Karl E. Mundt NWR

*"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."*

In order to support and fulfill this mission, this Act also required that by 2012, the Service will have developed a comprehensive conservation plan for each national wildlife refuge in the System at the time of the Act.

To meet this requirement the Service has starting work on a Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Lake Andes National Wildlife Refuge Complex. This 15-year plan will provide long-range guidance and management direction for all the complex programs. The plan will outline a vision statement and supporting goals, objectives, and strategies. It is "living" document that will be updated every 15 years.

The accompanying environmental assessment (EA), required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), will describe management alternatives considered and their effects on the environment.

#### **In summary, the CCP will:**

1. Outline a vision
2. Guide management decisions
3. Outline goals, objectives and strategies to achieve the vision and purpose(s) of the complex

4. Provide other agencies and the public with an understanding of the management strategies to be implemented on this complex.



Lake Andes NWR entrance sign

#### What are the steps and estimated completion dates for this planning process?

1. Preplanning, July 2006--September 2006
2. **Public Involvement**, November 2006 – January 2007
3. Finalize Vision Statement and Goals, May 2007
4. Develop and Analyze Alternatives for addressing issues and achieving goals, June 2007
5. Prepare Draft CCP and NEPA Document, July 2007 – April 2008
6. Public Review of Draft CCP and NEPA Document, July 2008
7. Develop Final CCP and NEPA Document, August-September 2008

#### Why did we send you this update?

This planning update is being distributed to generate interest in the planning process and collect ideas and thoughts from the general 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 their ideas about the future management of all the units that comprise the Lake Andes NWR Complex.



## Lake Andes NWR Complex Purposes and Background

### Lake Andes National Wildlife Refuge

- Legislative purpose: created *“as a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife”*

(Executive Order 7292 dated Feb. 14, 1936)

- Lake Andes NWR is 5,639.43 acres in size (in fee title and lake easement)

- The vast majority of Lake Andes is owned by the State of South Dakota and managed by the Complex through an easement

### Karl E. Mundt National Wildlife Refuge

- Legislative purpose: created to *“conserve fish, wildlife, or plants which are listed as endangered or threatened species”*

(authority for designation and for lands acquisition from the Endangered Species Act, 16 USC 1531-1543)

- Karl Mundt NWR is 1,063.21 acres in size (in fee title and easement lands) and is managed for bald eagles

### Lake Andes Wetland Mgmt District

- The district manages 84 WPAs (20,654 acres in fee title), all open to public use

- WMD administers 65,381 easement acres WPAs and easements are purchased with Duck Stamp dollars

Purposes:

- *“for conservation purposes...”* (7 USC 2002 Consolidated Farm & Rural Development Act)

- *“... as Waterfowl Production Areas”,* subject to *“... all of the provisions of such Act ... except the inviolate sanctuary provisions...”* (16 USC 718c – Migratory Bird Conservation Act)

- *“for any other management purposes, for migratory birds”* (16 USC 715d – Migratory Bird Conservation Act)



Lake Andes NWR Complex headquarters

## Why is it important that the public participate in this planning process?

Throughout the planning process we want to make sure that neighboring landowners and communities as well as partners stay informed and involved in this planning process. The complex has limited management capabilities due to private lands and rights of way throughout the planning area. Furthermore, the planning area is vast, covering 15 counties in South Dakota and one in Nebraska. The planning process will include the two refuges, 84 WPAs and 1,106 easement tracts within one plan. The lands within the complex include a variety of grassland and wetland habitats which are managed with grazing, haying, rest, burning, restoration, tree plantings, invasive plant control, and very limited application of water level manipulation

## How can you participate in this process and provide comments?

We have enclosed a comment form for you to share your ideas with the planning team. We will also accept emails and other written formats. All written comments must be postmarked by January 15, 2007 to be considered. You may also wish to participate in our open houses. These will be held on Tuesday, November 28 at the Golden Pheasant in Plankinton, Wednesday, November 29 in the Community Room of the Turner County Courthouse in Parker, and Thursday, November 30 in the Community Center in

downtown Lake Andes. Each meeting will be held from 5 P.M. to 8 P.M. A short presentation will be given at 7 P.M.

## Will you be getting future updates?

If you would like to continue to receive periodic planning updates, please provide your information in the mailing list consent form during one of the public meetings or send us a letter or email requesting to be included in the mailing list. Since this mailing list is subject to the Freedom of Information Act, we need your permission to place your name on the permanent mailing list. If you do not return this form, we will assume you do not wish to receive any further updates.

## Additional Information and Contacts:

To learn more about Lake Andes National Wildlife Refuge Complex please visit their website at: <http://lakeandes.fws.gov/>

**For questions or to provide comments by email, please contact the Lake Andes NWR office:** (605) 487-7603 or [LakeAndes@fws.gov](mailto:LakeAndes@fws.gov)

## Written Comments may be faxed or mailed to:

Bernardo Garza, Planning Team Leader  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
P.O. Box 25486, DFC  
Denver, CO 80225-9912  
(303) 236-4792 – fax



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,  
National Wildlife Refuge System, May 2006

