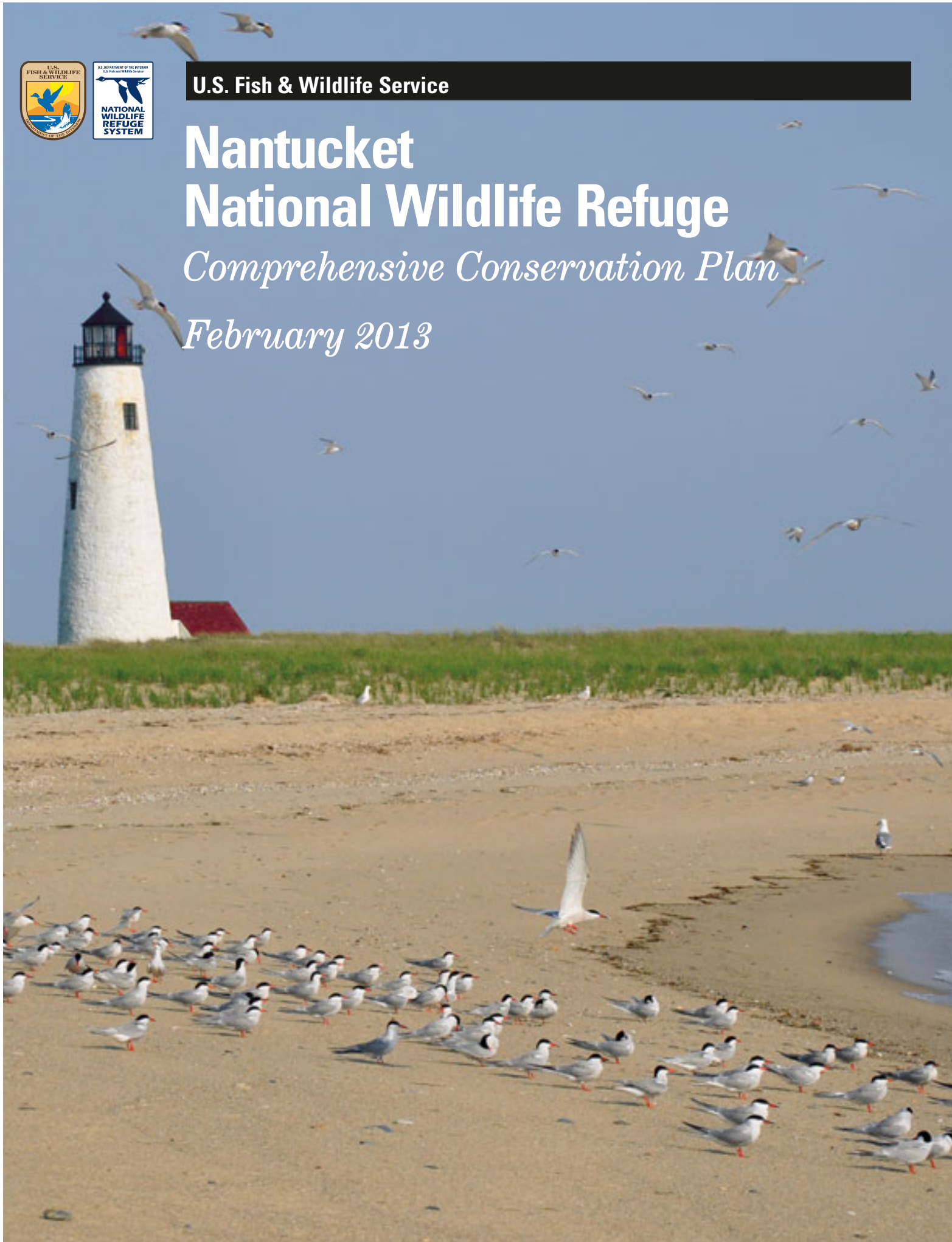




U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Nantucket National Wildlife Refuge

Comprehensive Conservation Plan
February 2013



Front cover:

Terns staging with the Great Point Lighthouse as a backdrop

Amanda Boyd/USFWS

Back cover:

Terns at Great Point

Amanda Boyd/USFWS



*This blue goose, designed by
J.N. “Ding” Darling, has become
the symbol of the National Wildlife
Refuge System.*

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the National Wildlife Refuge System comprised of over 150 million acres including over 560 national wildlife refuges and thousands of waterfowl production areas. The Service also operates 70 national fish hatcheries and 86 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, administers the Endangered Species Act, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance Program which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state wildlife agencies.

Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCPs) provide long-term guidance for management decisions on a refuge and set forth goals, objectives, and strategies needed to accomplish refuge purposes. CCPs also identify the Service's best estimate of future needs. These plans detail program levels that are sometimes substantially above current budget allocations and, as such, are primarily for Service strategic planning and program prioritization purposes. CCPs do not constitute a commitment for staffing increases, operational and maintenance increases, or funding for future land acquisition.



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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Active



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Nantucket National Wildlife Refuge

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February 2013

Vision Statement

Nantucket National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), though diminutive in size, is an important part of a larger area aptly named Great Point. It has great value to the wildlife that uses its beaches, from coastal birds including piping plovers and terns, to mammals including gray seals. Situated at the tip of a peninsula, it is surrounded by a diverse assemblage of coastal, intertidal, wetland, and marine habitat, attracting a great diversity of fauna. It will continue to be managed as a special place for breeding, wintering, and migratory wildlife.

We will continue to provide opportunities for quality, compatible, wildlife-dependent experiences for the public. Nantucket NWR is recognized internationally as a premier fishing location, and the presence of its lighthouse provides the public with a destination that offers cultural perspective and panoramic views. Through strong partnerships, we will promote ecologically responsible use of the property, and continue to promote public awareness about the intrinsic value of dynamic coastal ecosystems.



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Nantucket National Wildlife Refuge

Comprehensive Conservation Plan

February 2013

Summary

Type of Action: Administrative—Development of a Comprehensive Conservation Plan

Lead Agency: U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service

Location: Nantucket National Wildlife Refuge
Nantucket, MA

Administrative Headquarters: Eastern Massachusetts National Wildlife Refuge Complex
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This Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the 21-acre Nantucket National Wildlife Refuge is the culmination of a planning effort that included participation from the Massachusetts Division of Fish and Wildlife, the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah), the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, and local partners. This CCP establishes 15-year management goals and objectives for wildlife and habitats, public use, and administration of this important refuge.

Under this plan, we emphasize landscape-level conservation of coastal dune and beach habitat for sea and land birds of high conservation concern, including those listed as Federal or State endangered or threatened. An increased Service presence on the refuge, along with working more closely with our partners, will further advance conservation and result in more consistent and cooperative management on the peninsula. We will collaborate with others on research, inventory, and monitoring programs to ensure management is effective in achieving our goals and objectives. Pursuit of a 2,036-acre refuge expansion, acquiring high resource value lands in fee or easement from willing sellers, will also contribute significantly to protecting and conserving Federal trust resources on the island. Finally, we will work with our partners to protect resources while also providing quality, wildlife-dependent, recreational opportunities, including fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation.

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