

Chapter 1. Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

The Oregon Coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex (Complex) comprises six individual National Wildlife Refuges (NWRs or Refuges) that span the coast of Oregon and support a rich diversity of wildlife habitats including coastal rocks, reefs, and islands; forested and grass-covered headlands; estuaries; and freshwater marshes. The six National Wildlife Refuges include Cape Meares, Oregon Islands, Three Arch Rocks, Bandon Marsh, Nestucca Bay, and Siletz Bay. This Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) applies only to Oregon Islands, Three Arch Rocks, and Cape Meares NWRs. A Wilderness Stewardship Plan (WSP) is also part of this document; it applies to Oregon Islands and Three Arch Rocks Wilderness Areas only. We may refer to this document as the CCP/WSP. The CCPs for the Complex's other three NWRs will be developed under a separate planning effort.

1.1.1 Oregon Islands NWR

The scenic and rugged Oregon Islands NWR includes 1,854 rocks, reefs, and islands, and two headland units, and spans 320 miles of the Oregon Coast, from Tillamook Head near Seaside south to the California border (Figures 1-1 North Coast Overview, 1-2 Central Coast Overview, and 1-3 South Coast Overview). With the exception of Tillamook Rock, all of the rocks, reefs, and islands within the Refuge are included in the Oregon Islands Wilderness. The two headlands are not designated wilderness areas. Most of Oregon's estimated 1.2 million nesting seabirds are found on this Refuge. A large percentage of Oregon's pinniped population use the Refuge for haul-out and/or pupping, including more than 5,000 harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*), 4,000 California sea lions (*Zalophus californianus*), 4,000 threatened Steller sea lions (*Eumetopias jubatus*) and 100 northern elephant seals (*Mirounga angustirostris*).

1.1.1.1 Islands Unit

Each of the 1,854 Refuge islands that make up the Islands Unit can be categorized as a reef, rock, or island. Reefs are defined as low-elevation, essentially bare rocks that are awash during storms at higher tides. Rocks are taller, essentially bare rocks that may or may not be inundated. These usually have rather precipitous sides and are used by wildlife in the same way as reefs. Grassy islands are generally the highest islands. They usually have precipitous sides and are extensively used for nesting by seabirds. Some pinniped use occurs on the lower portions of islands. These reefs, rocks, and islands are used as breeding habitat for 13 species of seabirds and as haul-out and pupping sites by four species of pinnipeds.

1.1.1.2 Coquille Point Unit

Nineteen-acre Coquille Point (see Figure 1-3), the first mainland addition to Oregon Islands NWR, was acquired from 1991 to 1992 and is located on the western edge of the City of Bandon. The intent of this mainland unit is to protect seabird nesting colonies on the adjacent rocks, restore native habitat, and provide a highly visible public use area for environmental education and interpretation. Coquille Point is the only unit of Oregon Islands NWR that is open to the public. Although Coquille Point has limited wildlife use, its primary values are providing a buffer zone between mainland development and the islands, and serving as an important interpretive site

for Oregon Islands NWR. The adjacent rocks contain substantial and observable populations of seabirds that are easily viewable from the headland.

Coquille Point Unit consists of a headland jutting toward the ocean and overlooking part of the Islands Unit of Oregon Islands NWR. A beach stretches to the north and another to the south from the point. The bluff portion of the headland is covered with native and non-native plants. The northern portion of the property is a low-lying stabilized dune with invasive European beachgrass (*Ammophila arenaria*) and a mixture of native plants. A 1-acre emergent wetland, formed from groundwater seepage from the base of the bluff, exists between the bluff and the beach at the north end of the Coquille Point Unit.

1.1.1.3 Crook Point Unit

The 134-acre Crook Point Unit (see Figure 1-3), a second mainland addition, was acquired in 2000 and is located along the southern Oregon coast approximately 12 miles south of Gold Beach. Crook Point contains rare plant species, undisturbed cultural resource sites, unique geological formations, and 1 mile of pristine beach with interspersed rocky intertidal habitat, and it serves to protect major seabird colonies. It is immediately adjacent to the Mack Reef archipelago, which supports the second-largest concentration of nesting seabirds in Oregon.

Crook Point consists of a mosaic of habitats including grassland, meadows, coniferous forest, rock formations, and barren ground; it is also one of the windiest locations on the Pacific Coast. Geologic formations and the presence of numerous landslides indicate that the area is highly unstable, and much of the area is naturally unvegetated. The extreme western tip of Crook Point consists of a rock outcrop that forms a large rock pinnacle. Numerous seeps and springs can be found throughout.

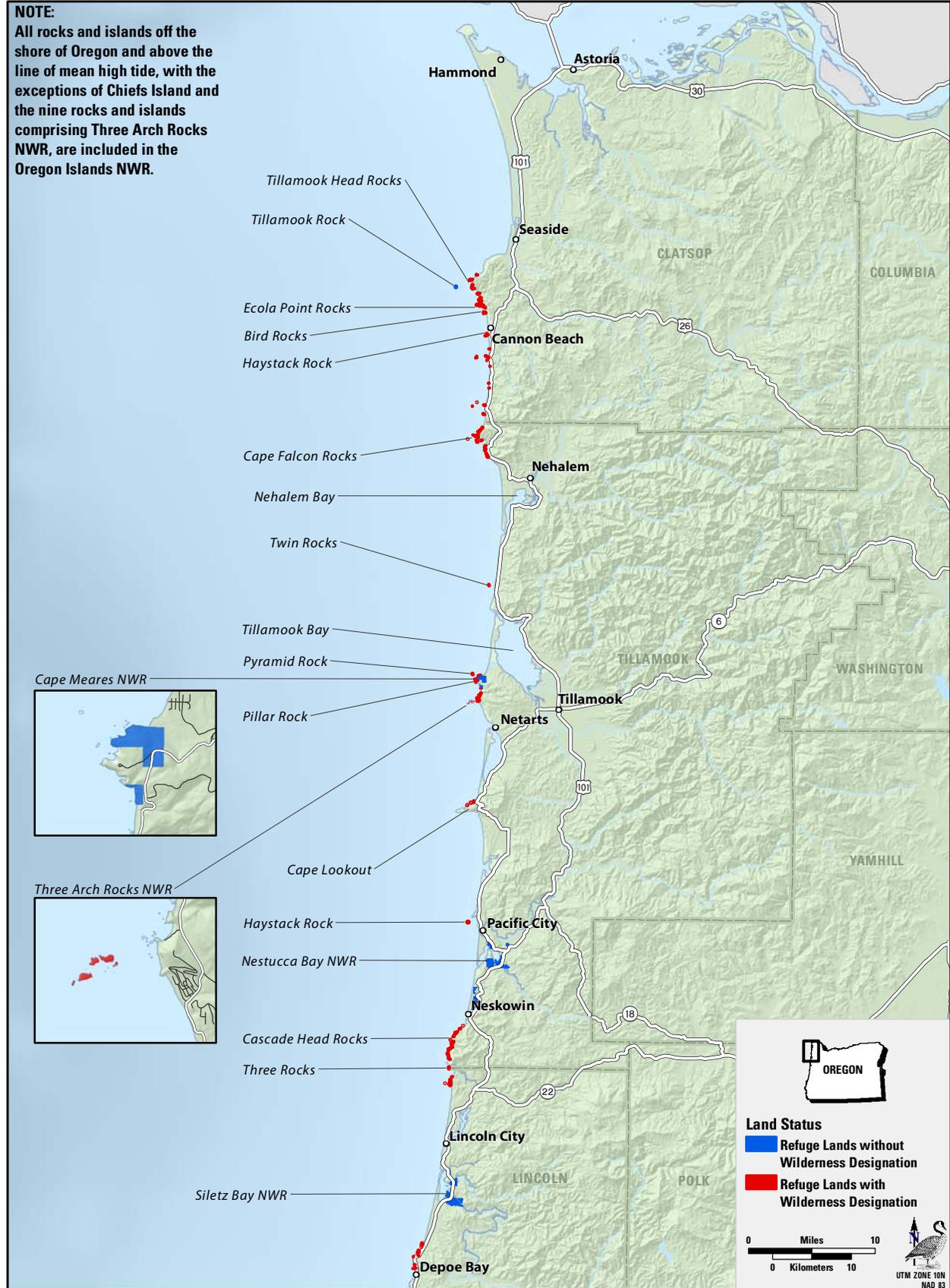
1.1.2 Three Arch Rocks NWR

Three Arch Rocks NWR is located in the Pacific Ocean one-half mile west of the town of Oceanside in Tillamook County, Oregon (see Figure 1-1). The Refuge comprises nine rocks and islands with a total land area of 15 acres and supports one of the largest colonies of breeding seabirds—mainly tufted puffins (*Fratercula cirrhata*) and common murre (*Uria aalge*)—in Oregon. The Refuge is also a designated wilderness area known as Three Arch Rocks Wilderness. The three largest rocks have various amounts of soil accumulation, and vegetative growth is limited due to extreme rockiness, steep cliffs, and harsh weather. The six smaller rocks are devoid of soil and vegetation, and some are awash when high tides and large swells coincide. This is the only breeding site for the threatened Steller sea lion on the north coast of Oregon.

1.1.3 Cape Meares NWR

Cape Meares is located on Oregon's Pacific Coast between Tillamook Bay and Netarts Bay, approximately 1.75 miles north of Oceanside and 6 miles west of Tillamook. The Refuge comprises two units separated by Cape Meares State Scenic Viewpoint (see Figure 1-1). Cape Meares NWR consists of vertical coastal cliffs, rock outcroppings, and rolling headlands with old-growth forest dominated by Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*) and western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*). A 20-acre section east of the Three Capes Scenic Route consists of early seral-stage forest adjacent to a clearcut. This section is undergoing natural regeneration following a complete blowdown of the old-growth. This small Refuge protects one of the last stands of old-

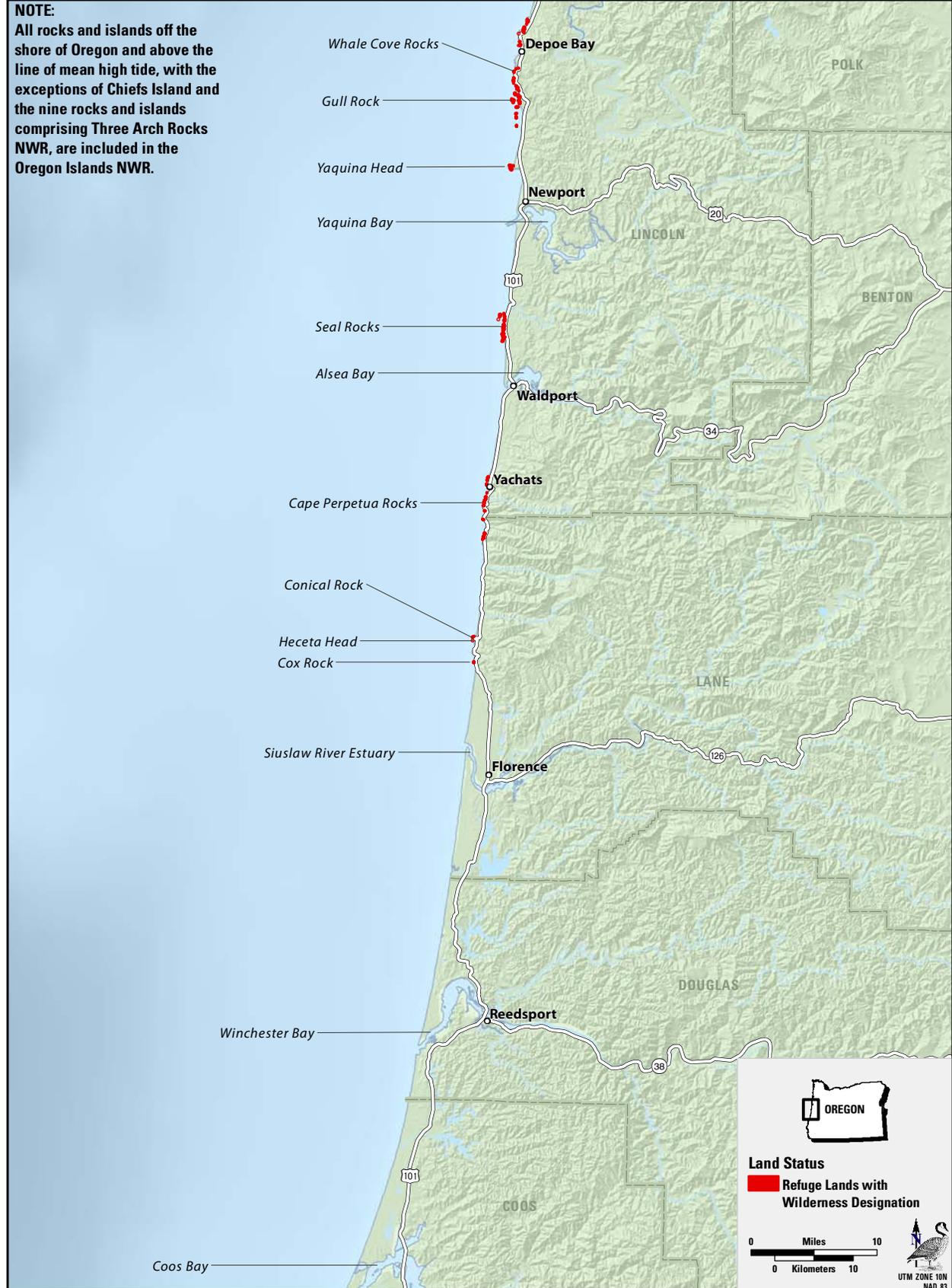
Figure 1-1. North Coast National Wildlife Refuges and Wilderness Areas



Data Sources: Refuge Boundaries from USFWS/R1; Roads from ESRI; County Boundaries from BLM; Hydrology from NOAA and USGS; Elevation from USGS

The back sides of maps are blank to improve readability.

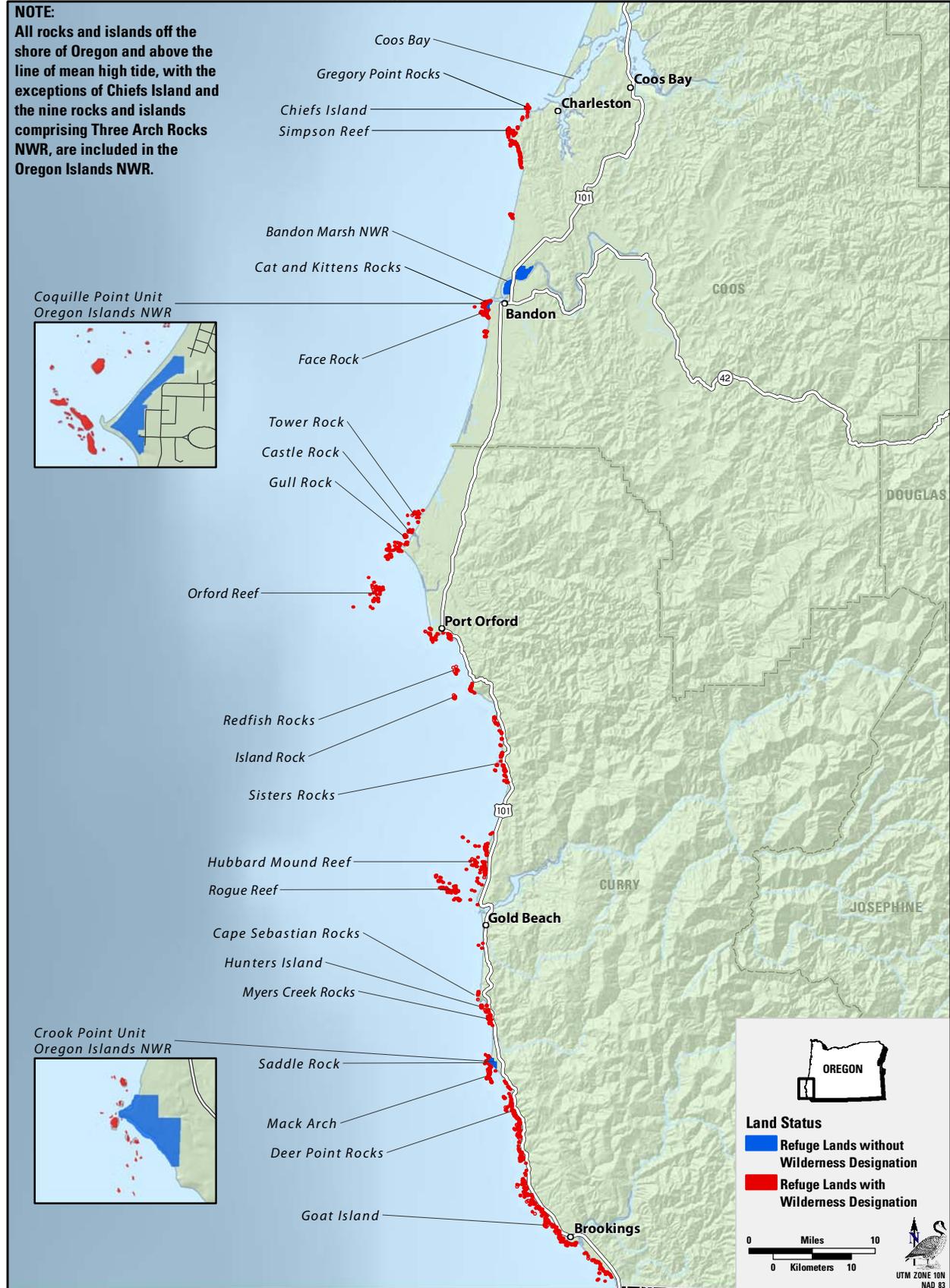
Figure 1-2. Central Coast Overview - Oregon Islands NWR and Wilderness Area



Data Sources: Refuge Boundaries from USFWS/R1; Roads from ESRI; County Boundaries from BLM; Hydrology from NOAA and USGS; Elevation from USGS

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Figure 1-3. South Coast Overview - Oregon Islands NWR and Wilderness Area



Data Sources: Refuge Boundaries from USFWS/R1; Roads from ESRI; County Boundaries from BLM; Hydrology from NOAA and USGS; Elevation from USGS

The back sides of maps are blank to improve readability.

growth coastal forest in Oregon and serves, in effect, as an “island” ecosystem. The vertical seacliffs around this headland support nesting seabird populations including tufted puffins, common murre, pigeon guillemots (*Cephus columba*), pelagic cormorants (*Phalacrocorax pelagicus*), and others. Peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*) nest on the cliffs, and the recently delisted bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) forages on the headland.

1.2 Purpose and Need for the CCP

The purpose of the CCP is to provide the Complex, the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS or System), partners, and citizens with a management plan for improving fish and wildlife habitat conditions and refuge infrastructure, for wildlife and public use on Cape Meares, Oregon Islands, and Three Arch Rocks NWRs over the next 15 years. An approved CCP will ensure that the Complex manages these Refuges to achieve the individual Refuge purposes, vision, goals, and objectives, to help fulfill the mission of the NWRS. The CCP updates management direction so that it is consistent with the Improvement Act of 1997 (Improvement Act or NWRSA) and with the Oregon Islands and Three Arch Rocks Wilderness designations.

The CCP will provide reasonable, scientifically grounded guidance for managing and improving the Refuges’ coastal rocks, reefs, islands, cliffs, and forested and grass-covered headlands, for the long-term conservation of native plants and animals and migratory birds. Appropriate actions will be identified for protecting and sustaining the cultural, biological, and wilderness features of the coastal rocks, reefs, and islands; protecting major nearshore seabird breeding colonies and pinniped pupping and haul-out sites; and preserving the existing cliff and old-growth forest habitat in an unaltered, natural condition. The CCP will also evaluate the priority public use activities on the Refuges, including wildlife observation, photography, environmental education, and interpretation.

The CCP is needed for a variety of reasons. Primary among these is the need to reduce disturbance to wildlife using the Refuges. Equally as important is the need to determine biological data gaps for the Refuges, methods for acquiring this data, and strategies for incorporating findings into refuge management. The CCP also recognizes and identifies threats to coastal wildlife and habitats due to rapid development along the Oregon coast, invasive species, global climate change, and catastrophic human-induced events such as oil spills.

In an effort to improve refuge law enforcement, citizen involvement, and coordination with other agencies, and to better accomplish the Refuges’ and the Service’s goals and objectives, there is a need to identify future actions and partnerships. There is also a need to analyze public use programs for wildlife-dependent priority public uses and to determine what improvements or alterations should be made in the pursuit of higher quality programs and opportunities. Finally, there is a need to describe the steps that should be taken to better protect the habitats and wildlife through strategies to accomplish our goals.

1.3 Content and Scope of the CCP

This CCP provides guidance for management of the Refuges’ habitats and wildlife, and administration of public uses on refuge lands. Information in the CCP includes but is not limited to:

- An overall vision for the Refuges, their establishment history and purposes, and their role in the local ecosystem (Chapter 1).
- Goals and objectives for specific conservation targets and public use programs, as well as strategies for achieving the objectives (Chapter 2).
- A description of the physical environment of the Refuges (Chapter 3).
- A description of the conservation targets, their condition, and trends on the Refuges and within the local ecosystem; a presentation of the key desired ecological conditions for sustaining the targets; and a short analysis of the threats to each conservation target (Chapter 4).
- An overview of the Refuges' public use programs and facilities, a list of desired future conditions for each program, and other management considerations (Chapter 5).
- A comprehensive list of species known to occur on the Refuges and mentioned within the CCP (Appendix B).
- Evaluations of existing and proposed appropriate public and economic uses for compatibility with each Refuge's purposes (Appendix E).
- An outline of the updated WSP detailing where the plan components can be found within the CCP (Appendix F).
- An outline of the projects, staff, and facilities needed to support the CCP (Appendix G).

1.4 Planning and Management Guidance

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), an agency within the Department of the Interior, is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 96-million acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 548 NWRs, thousands of small wetlands, and other special management areas.

Refuges are guided by various federal laws and executive orders, Service policies, and international treaties. Fundamental are the mission and goals of the NWRS and the designated purposes of the Refuge unit as described in establishing legislation, executive orders, or other documents establishing, authorizing, or expanding a Refuge.

Key concepts and guidance of the Refuge System derive from the National Wildlife Refuge System Act of 1966 as amended (16 U.S.C. 668dd-668ee), the Refuge Recreation Act of 1962 (16 U.S.C. 460k-460k-4), as amended, Title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), and the Fish and Wildlife Service Manual. The NWRS Administration Act is implemented through regulations covering the NWRS, published in Title 50, subchapter C of the CFR. These regulations govern general administration of units of the Refuge System. This CCP is intended to comply with the Refuge Administration Act.

1.4.1 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service mission

The mission of the Service is *“working with others, to conserve, protect and enhance fish and wildlife and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.”* National natural resources entrusted to the Service for conservation and protection include migratory birds, endangered and threatened species, inter-jurisdictional fish, wetlands, and certain marine mammals. The Service also manages national fish hatcheries, enforces federal wildlife laws and

international treaties governing importing and exporting wildlife, assists with state fish and wildlife programs, and helps other countries develop wildlife conservation programs.

1.4.2 National Wildlife Refuge System

The NWRS is the world's largest network of public lands and waters set aside specifically for conserving wildlife and protecting ecosystems. From its inception in 1903, the NWRS has grown to encompass 548 national wildlife refuges and 10 waterfowl production areas located across the nation in all 50 states, covering more than 96 million acres of public lands. More than 36 million visitors annually fish, hunt, observe and photograph wildlife, or participate in environmental education and interpretive activities on these National Wildlife Refuges.

1.4.2.1 National Wildlife Refuge System mission and goals

The mission of the 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” (National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended)(16 U.S.C. 668dd).

Wildlife conservation is the fundamental mission of the Refuge System. The goals of the National Wildlife Refuge System, as articulated in the Mission Goals and Purposes Policy (601 FW1) are:

- Conserve a diversity of fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats, including species that are endangered or threatened with becoming endangered.
- Develop and maintain a network of habitats for migratory birds, anadromous and inter-jurisdictional fish, and pinniped populations that is strategically distributed and carefully managed to meet important life history needs of these species across their ranges.
- Conserve those ecosystems, plant communities, wetlands of national or international significance, and landscapes and seascapes that are unique, rare, declining, or underrepresented in existing protection efforts.
- Provide and enhance opportunities to participate in compatible wildlife-dependent recreation (hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation).
- Foster understanding and instill appreciation of the diversity and interconnectedness of fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats.

1.4.3 National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act

Of all the laws governing activities on National Wildlife Refuges, the Refuge Administration Act undoubtedly exerts the greatest influence. The Improvement Act amended the Refuge System Administration Act in 1997 by including a unifying mission for all National Wildlife Refuges to be managed as a System, a new process for determining compatible uses on refuges, and a requirement that each refuge will be managed under a Comprehensive Conservation Plan, developed in an open public process.

The Refuge Administration Act states that the Secretary shall provide for the conservation of fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats within the System, and ensure that the biological integrity, diversity, and environmental health of the System are maintained. House Report 105–106 accompanying the Improvement Act states “. . .the fundamental mission of our System is wildlife conservation: wildlife and wildlife conservation must come first.” Biological integrity, diversity, and environmental health are critical components of wildlife conservation. As later made clear in the Biological Integrity, Diversity and Environmental Health Policy, “the highest measure of biological integrity, diversity, and environmental health is viewed as those intact and self-sustaining habitats and wildlife populations that existed during historic conditions.”

Under the Refuge Administration Act, each refuge must be managed to fulfill the Refuge System mission and the specific purposes for which it was established. The Refuge Administration Act requires the Service to monitor the status and trends of fish, wildlife, and plants on each refuge.

Additionally, the Refuge Administration Act identifies six priority wildlife-dependent recreational uses—hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation. Under the Refuge Administration Act, the Service is to grant these six wildlife-dependent public uses special consideration in planning, managing, establishing, and expanding units of the NWRS. The overarching goal is to enhance wildlife-dependent recreation opportunities and access to quality visitor experiences on refuges while managing refuges to conserve fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats. New and ongoing recreational uses should help visitors focus on wildlife and other natural resources. These uses should provide an opportunity to make visitors aware of resource issues, management plans, and how the refuge contributes to the Refuge System and Service mission. When determined compatible on a refuge-specific basis, these six uses assume priority status among all uses of the refuge in question. The Service is directed to make extra efforts to facilitate priority wildlife-dependent public use opportunities.

When preparing a CCP, refuge managers must re-evaluate all general public, recreational, and economic uses (even those occurring to further refuge habitat management goals) proposed or occurring on a refuge for appropriateness and compatibility. No refuge use may be allowed or continued unless it is determined to be appropriate and compatible. Generally, an appropriate use is one that contributes to fulfilling the refuge purpose(s), the Refuge System mission, or goals or objectives described in a refuge management plan. A compatible use is a use that, in the sound professional judgment of the refuge manager, will not materially interfere with or detract from the fulfillment of the mission of the Refuge System or the purposes of the refuge. Updated Appropriateness Findings and Compatibility Determinations for existing and proposed uses for Oregon Islands, Three Arch Rocks, and Cape Meares NWRs are in Appendices D and E.

The Refuge Administration Act also requires that, in addition to formally established guidance, the CCP must be developed with the participation of the public. Issues and concerns articulated by the public played a role in guiding the development of the CCP, and together with the formal guidance, played a role in the final CCP. It is Service policy to invite public participation in CCP development, to carry out an open public CCP process, and secure public input throughout the process.

1.5 Relationship to Previous and Future Refuge Plans

Planning has been part of refuge operations since the Refuges were established. A number of plans have been completed over the years to guide managers. In recent history, additional

smaller step-down plans and or management agreements (plans addressing one program or resource) have been developed for Oregon Islands, Three Arch Rocks and Cape Meares NWRs individually or as a group. Current (completed since 2000) management plans include:

- Oregon Coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex HPAI (Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza) and Wildlife Disease Contingency Plan (2006)
- Fire Management Plans (2003; 2004)
- Station Safety Plan (2002, revised 2008)
- Mammalian Predator Damage Management to Protect Seabird Colonies on Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuge, Three Arch Rocks National Wildlife Refuge, and Adjacent Mainland Areas (2005a)
- Fire Dispatch Plans (updated annually)
- Oregon Coast NWRC IPM Plan (2009)

A Wilderness Management Plan was completed in 1980 (USFWS 1980). This CCP addresses all the current required elements of a Wilderness Stewardship Plan (610 FW 3) and serves as an updated Wilderness Plan for Oregon Islands and Three Arch Rocks designated wilderness areas.

1.6 Future Planning

The CCP will be revised every 15 years or sooner if monitoring and evaluation determine that changes are needed to achieve the Refuge's purposes, vision, goals, or objectives. The CCP provides guidance in the form of goals, objectives, and strategies for refuge program areas but may lack some of the specifics needed for implementation. Step-down management plans may be developed for individual program areas, as needed, following completion and approval of the CCP. Step-down plans may require additional National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other compliance.

1.7 Refuge Establishment and Refuge Purposes

The purpose for which a refuge was established or acquired is of key importance in refuge planning. Purposes must form the foundation for planning and management decisions. The purposes of a refuge are specified in or derived from the law, proclamation, executive order, agreement, public land order, donation document, or administrative memorandum establishing, authorizing, or expanding a refuge, refuge unit, or refuge subunit.

Unless the establishing law, order, or document indicates otherwise, purposes dealing with the conservation, management, and restoration of fish, wildlife, plants, and the habitats on which they depend take precedence over other purposes in the management and administration of any unit. Where a refuge has multiple purposes related to fish, wildlife, and plant conservation, the more specific purpose will take precedence in instances of conflict. When an additional unit is acquired under an authority different from the authority used to establish the original unit, the addition takes on the purpose(s) of the original unit, but the original unit does not take on the purpose(s) of the newer addition.

By law, refuges are to be managed to achieve their purposes. When a conflict exists between the Refuge System mission and the purpose of an individual refuge, the refuge purpose may supersede the Refuge System mission. Refuge purposes are also the driving force in the development of the refuge vision statements, goals, objectives, and strategies in the CCP and are

critical to determining the compatibility of all existing and proposed refuge uses. The purposes for the Oregon Islands, Three Arch Rocks, and Cape Meares NWRs follow.

1.7.1 Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuge purposes

(purposes are bold and italicized)

1.7.1.1 Rocks, reefs, and islands

Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuge was established by Executive Order (E.O.) 7035, dated May 6, 1935, with the designation of Goat Island Migratory Bird Refuge “***. . . as a refuge and breeding ground for wild birds and animals.***” This original purpose applies to all lands and waters within this Refuge. Additional islands were added to the Refuge from 1968 to 1996 through various Executive Orders, Public Laws and Public Land Orders “***. . . for use as an inviolate sanctuary, or for any other management purpose, for migratory birds.***” The rocks constituting Port Orford, Blanco, and Rogue River Reefs, when added to the existing Oregon Islands NWR, maintained an additional purpose as a “***refuge for the protection of sea lions. . .***” The Tillamook Rock Lighthouse Unit was added to the Refuge in 1992 through a Grant of Easement, which states that this addition is “***. . . suitable for seabird nesting and habitat, and the recognized theme and spirit of this Indenture is to offer nesting protection for these seabirds that annually nest here while not affecting the sensitivity of the current and projected ongoing usage as a non-visiting columbarium cemetery and historic lighthouse, which must remain the primary purpose of the land for which this Indenture is granted.***”



*Scenic and rugged rocks, reefs, and islands.
(Dave Ledig/USFWS)*

1.7.1.2 Mainland units

The Coquille Point Unit was purchased in 1991 to “***provide a buffer zone between mainland development and the coastal rocks and islands; protect the bluff zone for wildlife species; and provide one of the best opportunities along the Oregon coast for wildlife observation and environmental education.***” The Crook Point Unit was added in 1999 to “***provide permanent protection to one of the few remaining undisturbed headlands on the Oregon coast, resulting in increased protection to major nearshore seabird breeding colonies and pinniped pupping and haul-out sites within***”



Steller sea lions on Rogue Reef. (Roy W. Lowe/USFWS)

the Oregon Islands Refuge, unique geological formations, rare plants and cultural resource sites on the mainland, and a relatively undisturbed intertidal zone.”

Oregon Islands NWR and Wilderness is located along 320 miles of the coast of Oregon and includes 1,854 rocks, reefs, and islands and two headlands. The original purpose for federal withdrawal of certain rocks, reefs, and islands along the Oregon coast was to protect them from “settlement, location, sale or entry, for classification and in aid of proposed legislation.” Goat Island was the first unit of Oregon Islands NWR designated as a refuge, and all of the administratively withdrawn rocks, reefs, and islands were eventually added. Wilderness designation was conferred on this Refuge in 1970, 1978, and 1996 and applies to all rocks, reefs, and islands within Oregon Islands NWR, with the exception of Tillamook Rock. With the exception of Coquille Point Unit’s recreation purpose, Oregon Islands NWR lands were acquired to serve as a refuge and breeding ground for seabirds and pinnipeds, and wilderness designation was intended to complement and strengthen existing protections for wildlife.

Goat Island Migratory Bird Refuge was established by E.O. 7035 on November 26, 1934. The establishment was intended to effectuate further the purposes of the Migratory Bird Conservation Act (ch. 257, 45 Stat. 1222). Goat Island was withdrawn from settlement, location, sale, entry, or other form of appropriation under the public-land laws and reserved and set apart for the use of the Department of Agriculture as a refuge and breeding ground for wild birds and animals. It was declared unlawful within this reservation to “take or disturb any wild animal or bird, or their nests or eggs; to destroy any natural growth; or to burn it.” The Refuge was also closed to all public entry. In 1940, Presidential Proclamation 2416 changed the name from Goat Island Migratory Bird Refuge to Oregon Islands NWR. At that time Goat Island was still the only land within the Refuge.

Beginning in 1968, a series of Public Land Orders, Public Laws, and Acts largely revoking earlier pre-Goat Island withdrawals, added numerous rocks, reefs, and islands to Oregon Islands NWR. Prior to Goat Island/Oregon Islands NWR establishment, numerous rocks and islands were withdrawn from settlement but not placed into any system. The Executive Order that withdrew Proposal Rock (E.O. 4082, 1924) and “all unreserved rocks and pinnacles situated in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of Oregon” (E.O. 4774, 1927) did not state a wildlife purpose.

Executive Order 4364 (1926) withdrew numerous named and unnamed islands and rocks “pending the passage of legislation to provide for the permanent reservation of the islands and rocks, in whole or in part, for recreational purposes or for the creation of permanent reservations of such rocks or islands as have long been occupied by breeding waterfowl and other native birds.” Port Orford, Blanco, and Rogue River Reefs were withdrawn in 1931 (E.O. 5702) specifically as a refuge for the protection of sea lions. In 1968 Public Land Order (P.L.O.) 4395 added a total of 346.06 acres of rocks, reefs and islands to Oregon Islands NWR. A 1976 amendment to P.L.O. 4395 revoked or partially revoked the earlier withdrawals, and all the islands that had not been already made a part of the Refuge were added through the P.L.O. amendment.

On October 23, 1970, certain lands within Oregon Islands NWR were accorded wilderness status through Public Law (P.L.) 91-504. The Wilderness Act of 1964 had directed the Secretary of the Interior, within 10 years, to review every roadless area of 5,000 acres or more and every roadless island (regardless of size), and recommend to the President the suitability of each such area or island for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. Twenty-one acres within Oregon Islands NWR were found to be suitable and were accorded Wilderness designation

through P.L. 91-504. The purposes of Oregon Islands NWR were not altered with this designation, as recorded in the public hearing records on the wilderness proposal: “the Wilderness Act provides that the establishment of a refuge wilderness area is ‘supplemental’ to the purpose for which a unit of the wildlife refuge system was established in the first place, so that protection of wildlife would only be strengthened.”

The Wilderness Management Plan completed in 1980 (USFWS 1980) includes this statement regarding the relationship of wilderness to refuge objectives: “The Wilderness Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-577) defines a wilderness as ‘. . .an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area. . .without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions. . .’ This definition of wilderness is compatible with refuge objectives. It has little, if any, effect on refuge programs since the original intent was to preserve these islands in a near-natural state with only minimal human intrusions. Authorized entry under specific conditions is detailed in the Wilderness Management Plan. Public use is not allowed as it is incompatible with the primary objectives.” Wilderness designation provides an additional level of protection for the wilderness portions of this Refuge, but does not open the area to public access or use, nor does it change or supersede the original purposes for establishing the Refuge.



Common murre colony. (Roy W. Lowe/USFWS)

Public Land Orders and Public Laws from 1978 through 1996 completed the Oregon Islands NWR and Wilderness. On October 11, 1978, P.L. 95-450 added additional islands to the Refuge, and 459 acres already within Oregon Islands NWR were added to the Oregon Islands Wilderness. Public Land Order 6287 of June 16, 1982, withdrew additional “rocks, reefs, islets and islands lying within three geographical miles off the coast of Oregon and above mean high tide,” and designated these as Oregon Islands NWR. On November 12, 1996, P.L. 104-333

transferred additional islands under Bureau of Land Management (BLM) jurisdiction, to Oregon Islands NWR, and designated all “federally owned named, unnamed, surveyed and unsurveyed rocks, reefs, islets and islands lying within three geographic miles of the coast of Oregon and above mean high tide” as Oregon Islands NWR and Wilderness.

The 1991 Environmental Assessment for a Proposed Addition to Oregon Islands NWR, Coos County, Oregon covered the acquisition of the Coquille Point Unit (USFWS 1991a). The purposes of this acquisition were to provide a buffer zone between mainland development and Oregon Islands NWR’s offshore islands, protect the bluff zone for wildlife species dependent on it, and provide one of the best opportunities along the Oregon coast for wildlife observation. Authority for this acquisition was through the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 (16 U.S.C. 742f-a-5), using funds

made available through the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, and through the Recreational Use of Conservation Areas Act of 1962, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460k-1). The Coquille Point Unit is the only unit of Oregon Islands NWR with a specific on-site public recreation purpose and is not included in the Oregon Islands Wilderness.



String of islands accorded wilderness status. (Roy W. Lowe/USFWS)

On July 7, 1992, a Grant of Easement was signed which granted an easement and right of use to the Service of privately owned Tillamook

Rock to be maintained as a seabird nesting and habitat area in perpetuity as part of Oregon Islands NWR. The Grant states that “the land. . .is wholly suitable for seabird nesting and habitat and the recognized theme and spirit of this Indenture is to offer nesting protection for these seabirds that annually nest here while not affecting the sensitivity of the current and projected ongoing usage as a non-visiting columbarium/cemetery and historic lighthouse, which must remain the primary purpose of the land for which this Indenture is granted.” The grantors of this easement are permitted to utilize Tillamook Rock as a columbarium between September 1 and March 15, while “maintaining the spirit and theme of this Indenture.” Tillamook Rock does not qualify for Wilderness designation due to the human alterations of the rock, which includes the presence of buildings.

The Crook Point Unit of Oregon Islands NWR was acquired in 2000 with Land and Water Conservation Fund monies to protect sensitive seabird nesting colonies and pinniped haul-out sites located within Oregon Islands NWR from human disturbance and trespass. The purposes of acquisition were to provide permanent protection to one of the few remaining undisturbed headlands on the Oregon coast, resulting in increased protection to major nearshore seabird breeding colonies and pinniped pupping and haul-out sites within the Oregon Islands NWR, and to protect a relatively undisturbed intertidal zone, unique geological formations, rare plants and cultural resource sites. This acquisition was accomplished through a Categorical Exclusion because it involved a willing seller and there were no proposed changes to the existing uses of Oregon Islands NWR. Wildlife observation and photography, environmental education and interpretation were determined compatible uses for this unit during the interim period between acquisition and CCP development, but only in the form of extremely limited, guided tours by refuge staff, and dependent on available funding. Crook Point did not contain the necessary wilderness features to qualify for wilderness study after acquisition.

A statement of overall goals for the Oregon Coast NWR Complex Refuges was drafted in 1997. These broad goals will continue to be used as general guidance for the Complex’s biological and public use programs; however, the goals articulated within the CCP will supersede the 1997 goals. The 1997 goals are as follows: (1) Protect, restore, and develop habitats for and otherwise support recovery of federally listed endangered and threatened species and help prevent the listing of

candidate species and species of management concern; (2) Provide a diversity of habitats and maintain sanctuary status on coastal rocks, islands, and reefs along the Oregon coast sufficient to support nesting seabird populations and breeding and loafing pinniped populations; (3) Protect, restore, and develop a diversity of habitats for migratory birds such as shorebirds, wading birds, and neotropical songbirds, with special emphasis on waterfowl; (4) Protect, restore, and develop a diversity of native habitats for indigenous fish, wildlife, invertebrate, and plant species of the Oregon coastal ecosystem; and (5) Provide high quality opportunities for wildlife-dependent recreation to enhance public appreciation, understanding, and enjoyment of fish, wildlife, habitat, and cultural resources. Figures 1-1, 1-2 and 1-3 show the existing Refuge boundaries.

1.7.2 Three Arch Rocks National Wildlife Refuge purposes

(purposes are bold and italicized)

Three Arch Rocks was established in 1907 “***as a preserve and breeding ground for native birds and animals.***” On October 14, 1907, President T. Roosevelt signed E.O. 699 establishing the Three Arch Rocks Reservation to protect existing habitat for colonial nesting seabirds. The name and land status, but not the purpose, were changed to the Three Arch Rocks NWR by E.O. 2416 signed July 25, 1940.



Three Arch Rocks NWR. (Betsy Rosenbaum/USFWS)

On October 23, 1970, Three Arch Rocks NWR was accorded wilderness status through P.L. 91-504. At 15 acres, Three Arch Rocks Wilderness is one of the smallest designated wilderness areas in the country. The Wilderness Act of 1964 had directed the Secretary of the Interior, within 10 years, to review every roadless area of 5,000 acres or more and every roadless island (regardless of size) and to recommend to the President the suitability of each such area or island for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. All rocks and islands within Three Arch Rocks NWR were found to be suitable and were accorded Wilderness designation through P.L. 91-504. The purposes of Three Arch Rocks NWR were not altered with this designation, as recorded in the public hearing records on the wilderness proposal: “the Wilderness Act provides that the establishment of a refuge wilderness area is ‘supplemental’ to the purpose for which a unit of the wildlife refuge system was established in the first place, so that protection of wildlife would only be strengthened.” Figure 1-1 shows the existing Refuge boundary.

1.7.3 Cape Meares National Wildlife Refuge purposes

(purposes are bold and italicized)

Originally named Cape Meares Migratory Bird Refuge, Cape Meares NWR was established in 1938 “***as a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife***” by E.O. 7957, dated August 19, 1938, and signed by President F. Roosevelt. The name and land status, but not the purpose, were changed to Cape Meares National Wildlife Refuge by E.O. 2416, signed July 25, 1940. Cape Meares NWR has been managed in cooperation with Oregon Parks and Recreation

Department (OPRD) since its establishment. A Special Use Permit dated November 9, 1938, granted permission to the Oregon State Parks Commission to “use Cape Meares Migratory Bird Refuge for the purpose of cooperating with the Bureau of Biological Survey in administering the area as a joint National Wildlife Refuge and State Park Project,” subject to supervision and “dominant use” by the Bureau of Biological Survey. This agreement was superseded by a memorandum of agreement (MOA) dated February 21, 1986, through which Cape Meares NWR is managed cooperatively with OPRD as a joint NWR and State Scenic Viewpoint. Specifically, the MOA is for “the Use of Cape Meares National Wildlife Refuge for State Park Purposes.” Forest resource management is administered by the Service, except that State Parks pays the annual fire patrol assessment to Oregon Department of Forestry.



*Spruce on Cape Meares NWR.
(Robert Reed/USFWS)*

On June 11, 1987, the Service designated the NWR (excluding the hiking trail) a Research Natural Area (RNA) to further protect its unique vegetation, geology, and wildlife habitat in a naturally functioning ecosystem. Authority to designate RNAs on NWRs is delegated to the Service director by the National Wildlife Refuge Administration Act of 1966. RNAs are areas where natural processes are allowed to predominate without human intervention. Activities on RNAs are limited to research, study, observation, monitoring, and educational activities that are non-destructive, non-manipulative, and maintain unmodified conditions. The RNA designation for Cape Meares NWR was supported as an example of Sitka spruce forest communities and coastal headland shrublands on the north Oregon coast, and was considered an important site for inclusion into the RNA program as it is one of the few remaining stands of old-growth Sitka spruce along the northern Oregon coast.

A Refuge Management Plan was completed for Cape Meares in 1987 (USFWS 1987). In this plan, overall refuge goals and objectives for Cape Meares NWR were articulated as (1) to protect and preserve the existing cliff habitat and the Cape Meares old-growth forest in an unaltered, natural condition to support migratory bird and other wildlife populations; (2) to maintain the integrity of the Refuge as a Research Natural Area, allowing natural processes to continue without interference from humans; (3) to provide monitoring and to cooperate with other agencies, institutions of higher education, private organizations, and individuals in providing research opportunities; and (4) to provide, in cooperation with Oregon State Parks and Recreation, opportunities for quality wildlife-dependent recreation, interpretation, and outreach to enhance public appreciation, understanding, and enjoyment of refuge resources. These broad goals will continue to be used as general guidance for Cape Meares biological and public use programs; however, the goals articulated within the CCP will supersede the 1987 Management Plan goals.

The goals and objectives for Cape Meares NWR as a Research Natural Area are in addition to the 1987 Refuge Management Plan goals and objectives and are as follows: (1) to preserve an example of a significant natural ecosystem for comparison with those influenced by humans; (2) to provide an educational and research area for ecological and environmental studies; and (3) to preserve gene pools of typical and endangered plants and animals. RNA goals have been incorporated into the CCP goals. Figure 1-1 shows the existing Refuge boundary.

1.8 Relationship to Ecosystem Management Goals or Plans

One of the major purposes of this CCP is to ensure that refuge management is focused on achieving not only the refuge purposes, but also national, regional, and state goals for the preservation and enhancement of wildlife and habitats. These goals are stated in various plans that pertain to the Pacific Northwest and especially the Oregon coast and the California Current System. The following is a list of the major plans that were considered in the development of the CCP goals and objective.

1.8.1 Habitat

- Oregon Natural Heritage Plan (ONHP 2003). The Oregon Natural Heritage Plan is a product of the Oregon Natural Heritage Program, whose mission is to conserve the full range of Oregon's native plants, animals and ecosystems through voluntary and cooperative action. The Program uses science to identify high quality and representative examples of native Oregon habitats and species and works to protect these natural treasures through voluntary and cooperative habitat conservation agreements. The Oregon Natural Heritage Plan has three roles: (1) Describe the components of Oregon's natural heritage; (2) Identify natural areas of exceptional value for conservation; and (3) Provide opportunities for voluntary conservation on both public and private lands.
- Pacific Northwest Coast Ecoregion Assessment (Vander Schaaf et al. 2006). This Assessment is a resource to help conservation agencies, planners, and organizations direct their resources to the most important places for supporting the ecoregion's biodiversity. It describes a portfolio of priority conservation areas that are of exceptional biological value and are the most likely places for conservation to succeed based on their current condition, land use, and other factors.
- Oregon Nearshore Strategy (ODFW 2005a). The Nearshore Strategy, prepared by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Marine Resources Program, complements the statewide Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (ODFW 2005b) by providing additional information on nearshore marine fish and wildlife, and their habitats. The Nearshore Strategy identifies a broad spectrum of resource management concerns and issues in order to ensure all issues that may affect fish and wildlife have been considered. Many of these issues cut across the jurisdiction of multiple agencies; however, this Strategy is focused on providing recommendations for action within ODFW's jurisdiction. The mission of Oregon's Nearshore Strategy is to promote actions that will conserve ecological functions and nearshore marine resources to provide long-term ecological, economic, and social benefits for current and future generations of Oregonians.
- Oregon Territorial Sea Plan (LCDC 1994). This Plan was developed by the Ocean Policy Advisory Council (OPAC). During development of the Plan OPAC held statewide public input meetings, worked with federal partners, and used the earlier Ocean Plan as a framework. This Plan focuses on state waters out to three nautical miles. It established policies and procedures, coordination between state agencies, and provided a strategy for protecting rocky shores. The Plan was approved as part of Oregon's Coastal Management Plan in 1994 and was amended in May 2001.

- Oregon’s Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (ODFW 2005b). The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife prepared a Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS) in response to two federal programs—the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program and the State Wildlife Grant Program. The CWCS includes information on the distribution and abundance of priority wildlife and habitats; provides strategies for conserving and monitoring wildlife and habitat; and provides for coordination with federal, state, tribal, and local agencies and the public. The CWCS emphasizes proactive measures to conserve declining species and habitats, and to “keep common species common.”

1.8.2 Birds

- Birds of Conservation Concern 2002 (USFWS 2002). Based on the efforts and assessment scores of three major bird conservation efforts (Partners in Flight, the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan, and the North American Waterbird Conservation Plan), this report identifies, by Service Region and by Bird Conservation Region (BCR), the bird species most in need of conservation attention. The Refuges of the Complex are located within BCR Region 5.
- Recovery Plan for the Threatened Marbled Murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*) in Washington, Oregon, and California (USFWS 1997). The interim objective of the Recovery Plan is to set strategies for stabilizing population size at or near current levels by maintaining and/or increasing productivity and removing and/or minimizing threats to the species survival.
- A Conservation Strategy for the Northern Spotted Owl (Interagency Scientific Committee 1990). The Conservation Strategy for the northern spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*) proposes a two-part conservation strategy. The first stage prescribes and implements the steps needed to protect habitat in amounts and distribution that will adequately ensure the owl’s long-term survival. The second stage calls for research and monitoring to test the adequacy of the strategy and to seek ways to produce and sustain suitable owl habitat in managed forests.
- California Brown Pelican Recovery Plan (USFWS 1983). This Recovery Plan describes the biology of the California brown pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis californicus*), the reasons for its decline, and the actions needed to recover and delist the species.
- Pacific Bald Eagle Recovery Plan (USFWS 1986). This recovery plan, one of five such plans, outlines the steps needed for recovery and maintenance of bald eagle populations in the seven-state Pacific recovery area.
- Aleutian Canada Goose Recovery Plan – Second Revision (USFWS 1991b). This Recovery Plan, prepared in 1979 with a first revision in 1982, described the biology of the Aleutian Canada goose (*Branta hutchinsii leucopareia*) (now Aleutian cackling goose, delisted in 2001) and the habitat requirements and limiting factors, and the actions needed to recover and delist the species.
- Regional Seabird Conservation Plan (USFWS 2005b). This Plan identifies the Service’s priorities for seabird management, monitoring, research, outreach, planning, and

coordination. It serves as a guide to coordinate Service activities for seabird conservation at the Regional scale. The Plan includes a review of seabird resources and habitats, a description of issues and threats, and a summary of current management, monitoring, and outreach efforts. All species are prioritized by conservation concern at the regional scale and recommendations for conservation actions are identified and prioritized. Brief profiles for each breeding species provide a summary of current information on population size, status, ecology, distribution, habitats, threats, and recommended conservation actions.

- U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan: Northern Pacific Coast Regional Shorebird Management Plan (Drut and Buchanan 2000). The national Shorebird Plan, which provides a scientific framework to determine species, sites, and habitats that most urgently need conservation action, includes 11 regional plans reflecting major shorebird flyways and habitats within the United States. This regional plan addresses shorebird management needs on a regional basis while considering Pacific Flyway and National levels of need.
- Waterbird Conservation for the Americas: North American Waterbird Conservation Plan, Version 1 (Kushlan et al. 2002). The North America Waterbird Conservation Plan provides a continental-scale framework for the conservation and management of 210 species of waterbirds, including seabirds, coastal waterbirds, wading birds and marshbirds utilizing aquatic habitats in 29 areas throughout North America, Central America, the islands and pelagic waters of the Caribbean Sea, western Atlantic and U.S.-associated Pacific Islands, and pelagic waters of the Pacific Ocean.
- Partners in Flight North American Landbird Conservation Plan. (Rich et al. 2004). Partners in Flight (PIF) is an international coalition of government agencies, conservation groups, academic institutions, private organizations, and citizens dedicated to the long-term maintenance of healthy populations of native landbirds. PIF's goal is to focus resources on the improvement of monitoring and inventory, research, management, and education programs involving birds and their habitats. The PIF strategy is to stimulate cooperative public and private sector efforts in North America and the neotropics to meet these goals. Specific strategies for accomplishing the goals are contained in regional landbird conservation plans. These plans describe priority habitats and species, and provide recommended management actions to conserve those habitats and species.
- Partners in Flight Continental Priorities and Objectives defined at the State and Bird Conservation Regional Levels; Oregon (Rosenberg 2004). The Oregon regional and state PIF plans identify priority species and habitats, set goals and objectives, discuss local issues and opportunities, and outline strategies for local or regional partners to implement bird conservation objectives.
- The California Current Marine Bird Conservation Plan version 1 (Mills et al. 2005). This Plan addresses seabird conservation from an ecosystem perspective, synthesizing information on multiple species, multiple habitats, ecological interactions, and the issues and threats that affect the health of seabirds, their prey and their environments.

1.8.3 Mammals

- Recovery Plan for the Steller Sea Lion (*Eumetopias jubatus*) (NMFS 2008). The Recovery Plan serves as the blueprint for recovery and eventual de-listing of the Steller sea lion from the list of threatened and endangered species under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

1.8.4 Global climate change

- Strategic Habitat Conservation (USFWS and USGS 2006). Strategic Habitat Conservation will involve working collaboratively with partners to develop and implement a landscape approach to habitat conservation. The program employs strategic habitat conservation principles to provide landscape-level conservation and planning assistance to abate the impacts of growth and development related to climate change and/or sea-level rise. Activities focus on ensuring habitat connectivity; mitigating the effects of climate change, such as flooding or storm surge; and coastal land protection and conservation.

1.9 Planning and Issue Identification

The public scoping period for preparation of the Draft CCP for Oregon Islands, Three Arch Rocks, and Cape Meares NWRs opened in October 2006 when the Complex mailed approximately 300 copies of Planning Update #1 to local conservation and interest groups, conservation and research organizations, government agencies, Tribes, and others who expressed an interest in the planning process. The planning update was posted on the Complex website. Planning Update #1 described the CCP process, explained refuge purposes, identified preliminary issues, and helped us expand our mailing list.

Five public meetings were held in coastal Oregon communities during November 2006 where Complex staff explained the CCP process; refuge purposes, vision, and management; and preliminary management issues, concerns and opportunities that had been identified early in the planning process. Public comments were documented during these meetings. Issues and concerns articulated by the public were considered while we formulated the CCP, and together with the formal guidance, played a role in the final CCP.

The second planning update was mailed on April 18, 2007. This update summarized the issues, concerns, and opportunities identified by the Service, its partners, and the public during initial public scoping. A summary of public involvement is in Appendix I.

1.9.1 Issues to be addressed in the CCP

The core planning team evaluated the issues and topics documented during the scoping process. Issues are defined as matters of controversy, dispute, or general concern over resource management activities, the environment, land uses, or public use activities. Issues are important to the planning process because they identify topics to be addressed in the CCP, pinpoint the types of information to gather, and help define CCP alternatives. Numerous issues, concerns, and opportunities were raised, and all are addressed in some manner in the CCP. It is the Service's responsibility to focus CCP planning on the major issues. Major issues typically suggest different actions or alternative solutions and are those within the Complex's jurisdiction that have a positive or negative effect on the resource. The major issues, concerns, and opportunities identified by the CCP planning team and the public are presented in the sections that follow.

1.9.1.1 Issue 1. Disturbance of wildlife

- *What actions should the Service take to reduce low-flying aircraft disturbance events impacting highly vulnerable seabirds and marine mammals?*

Reports of low-flying aircraft disturbing seabird colonies and pinniped haul-outs continue along locations on the coast, and at Oregon Islands and Three Arch Rocks NWRs. The Complex is actively managing low-level aircraft disturbance through guidelines published on Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) pilot maps, educational posters, and material distributed to airports and pilots associations, and through educational pilot training opportunities. The CCP outlines strategies and levels of effort to reduce wildlife disturbance by aircraft.

- *What actions should the Service take to reduce boating disturbance events impacting seabirds and marine mammals? Is the existing seasonal buffer zone closure around Three Arch Rocks NWR effective in protecting breeding seabirds and marine mammals and if so, could and should the buffer zone be replicated around other rocks and islands to protect valuable habitat?*

Boats, both motorized and non-motorized, are reported regularly disturbing wildlife on rocks and islands along the coast. To reduce or eliminate watercraft disturbance events to wildlife, the Refuge manages watercraft at Three Arch Rocks NWR with a seasonal buffer zone closure. For Oregon Islands NWR the Refuge posts public boat ramps at coastal locations with informational and warning placards. The CCP outlines strategies and levels of effort, including replication of buffer zones, to reduce disturbance to wildlife by motorized and non-motorized watercraft.

1.9.1.2 Issue 2. Law enforcement

- *What actions and partnerships can the Service pursue to improve law enforcement on the Refuges?*

Local citizens often notify the Refuge of trespass and wildlife disturbance. Due to limited staff, past and current enforcement coverage has by necessity relied on informal arrangements and coordination with other law enforcement agencies. The CCP outlines strategies and levels of effort for pursuing law enforcement capabilities and partnerships with other agencies.

1.9.1.3 Issue 3. Management of public access and use

- *What types and level of recreational opportunities should be provided? Are existing public use opportunities adequate and appropriate?*

Interest in public recreation on the Refuges is increasing. This interest involves priority wildlife-dependent public uses (hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, environmental education and interpretation) that have priority over other public uses as mandated by the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended. Specifically, the CCP considers how to best meet those priority public use needs while also protecting the habitat/wildlife the Service is mandated to protect.

1.9.1.4 Issue 4. Research and monitoring

- *Based on Refuge System, ecosystem, and refuge goals, what management-oriented research is needed and what partnerships and methods for accomplishing high-priority research are feasible?*

Existing baseline data and inventory of plant and animal species found on Oregon Islands, Three Arch Rocks, and Cape Meares NWR's habitats are currently inadequate for monitoring trends in these communities. Emphasis of research should focus on understanding the cause of reduced or declining wildlife populations and development of tools and techniques to aid recovery of threatened or endangered species. The CCP proposes various strategies and levels of effort for identifying and fulfilling inventory, monitoring, and research needs as well as research partnership opportunities, and considers how this information can be incorporated into management of the Refuges.

1.9.1.5 Issue 5. Climate change

- *What is known about global climate change and how it affects the species and ecosystems that depend on the Refuges? Which of these issues can be further studied at the Refuge and ecosystem level, and how can this information be incorporated into wildlife management on the Refuges?*

Over the coming years, effects of climate change, such as flooding, storm surge, and coastal erosion due to sea-level rise will impact the Refuges. Through the CCP process we assessed what is known about global climate change and how it affects the species and ecosystems that depend on the Refuge; this information was used to determine which issues can be further studied at the refuge and ecosystem level, and identify how this information can be incorporated into refuge management.

1.9.1.6 Issue 6. Invasive species

- *What invasive plant and animal species are present on the Refuges, how are they impacting seabird and other important wildlife habitats, and how can the Refuges deal with them?*

Negative impacts of invasive species on wildlife populations and habitat continue to be a major factor in the management of the Refuges. The CCP considers different strategies and levels of effort to determine the presence of invasive plant and animal species, and establish management strategies to reduce or eliminate them.

1.9.1.7 Issue 7. Human-caused catastrophic events

- *What actions can the Complex take to initiate or improve contingency planning for catastrophic events such as shipwrecks, oil spills, and rat spills; concentrations of marine debris; diseases such as West Nile virus and avian flu; and wildfire?*

Public concerns over the impacts of wildland fires, wildlife diseases, and oil spills and other human-induced wildlife catastrophic events have increased in recent years. The CCP incorporates existing Contingency Plans and addresses contingency planning for other potential disasters.

1.9.1.8 Issue 8. Cooperative efforts

- *What jurisdictions and management responsibilities overlap within the Refuges' administrative boundaries and in Marine Protected Areas and how can the Complex's resources and management benefit from multiple-agency involvement in resource protection?*

There are many community groups, federal and state agencies, and other entities that assist the Refuges in accomplishing their mission. The CCP proposes strategies for improving the Refuges' resource management capabilities through partnerships with other agencies, organizations, groups, and media.

1.9.2 Issues outside the scope of the CCP

The CCP is not an appropriate forum for discussion of all issues. The following issues are not analyzed in this CCP because they are not under the jurisdiction of these Refuges.

- Regarding future specific plans for Oil Spill Mitigation funds, refuge staff will engage in Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) programs when applicable and will provide input, including strategies and priorities for restoration projects.
- The issue of land acquisition, such as the establishment of new refuges to offset impacts of coastal development or the acquisition of forest habitat for marbled murrelets, is not feasible at this time.
- Snowy plover management on beaches, the potential for sea otter reintroduction along the Oregon coast, and management of other listed species not occurring on refuge lands are not within the scope of this CCP/WSP because they fall under the jurisdiction of other Service programs.
- Wildlife disturbance on lands and waters not included within the Refuges' boundaries will be part of cooperative management discussions with other resource agencies but are not a target for analysis within the CCP/WSP.

1.10 Refuge Vision Statements

1.10.1 Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuge

Spanning the Oregon coast, the wilderness islands and windswept headlands of Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuge are celebrated for their wildlife and rugged grandeur. Rocky islands and sheer cliffs provide critical breeding and resting habitat for diverse communities of birds, mammals, and plants along the wave-battered coastline. The isolated Crook Point headland continues to be reshaped by the geologic forces that fashioned it, while visitors are drawn to the Coquille Point headland by the exceptional opportunities to observe and learn about coastal wildlife and the National Wildlife Refuge System.

With our friends and partners, we will apply sound scientific principles for monitoring, managing, and protecting the biological integrity of Pacific coastal wildlife and habitats. We envision the continued development and enhancement of inspiring viewing opportunities for hundreds of thousands of visitors, providing them with a window into this living heritage, while the island

breeding grounds and Crook Point will continue to provide a secluded wildland haven for wildlife and plants, in sight of and just out of reach of human influence.

1.10.2 Three Arch Rocks National Wildlife Refuge

A testament to seabird conservation, Three Arch Rocks National Wildlife Refuge sustains the largest and most diverse seabird colony in Oregon and is an important breeding site for Steller sea lions. Early protection of the nine offshore rocks that define this remote wilderness habitat set a precedent for conservation along the resource-exploited Pacific coastline, symbolizing a change in the way the American public protects and views these marine species. Formed by pre-historic lava flows and shaped by continuous oceanic forces, this Wildlife Refuge will be managed as wilderness in perpetuity, for the benefit of wildlife and the American people.

1.10.3 Cape Meares National Wildlife Refuge

A remnant of once vast old-growth Pacific temperate rainforest, the fog-shrouded Sitka spruce and western hemlock forests of Cape Meares National Wildlife Refuge loom over precipitous coastal cliffs providing seabirds, falcons, and a wealth of endemic coastal wildlife with protected sanctuary. In cooperation with OPRD, we envision natural processes continuing to unfold in the most remote sections of the Refuge while visitors are welcomed to the viewing decks and trails and invited to observe and learn about this rare, intact functioning coastal ecosystem.

1.11 Refuge Goals

Goal 1: Preserve and protect all rocks, reefs, and islands within Oregon Islands and Three Arch Rocks NWRs for the benefit of seabirds, shorebirds, waterfowl, other migratory birds, pinnipeds, and native plants.

Goal 2: Maintain and protect native coastal habitats within the Crook Point Unit of Oregon Islands NWR for the benefit of rare plants, migratory birds, and other native wildlife.

Goal 3: Protect rocks and islands within Oregon Islands NWR by maintaining a mainland buffer zone at Coquille Point Unit for the benefit of seabirds, shorebirds, waterfowl, other migratory birds, pinnipeds, and native plants.

Goal 4: Collect scientific information (inventories, monitoring, feasibility studies, assessments, and research) to support adaptive management decisions (Goals 1–3) on Oregon Islands and Three Arch Rocks NWRs.

Goal 5: Oregon Islands NWR: Promote protection, stewardship and enjoyment of Oregon's seabirds and pinnipeds and their wilderness habitats by providing opportunities for wildlife observation, photography, interpretation, and environmental education on appropriate mainland areas.

Goal 6: Three Arch Rocks NWR: Promote protection, stewardship and enjoyment of Oregon's seabirds and pinnipeds and their wilderness habitats, and the historical significance of the Refuge to marine wildlife conservation.

Goal 7: Preserve and protect the wilderness character of Oregon Islands Wilderness and Three Arch Rocks Wilderness including their untrammelled nature, naturalness, and undeveloped condition.

Goal 8: At Cape Meares NWR, protect and maintain coastal habitats characteristic of Pacific Northwest old-growth Sitka spruce forest to allow natural succession to occur consistent with Research Natural Area designation, for the benefit of these habitat types and the plant and animal species associated with them.

Goal 9: Collect scientific information (inventories, monitoring, feasibility studies, assessments, and research) to support adaptive management decisions (Goal 8) on Cape Meares NWR and RNA.

Goal 10: In cooperation with OPRD, provide on- and off-site opportunities for visitors to enjoy wildlife observation, photography, and environmental education and interpretation while limiting disturbance to wildlife. Visitors will be able to gain an understanding of the basic ecological concepts of the coastal cliffs and old-growth Sitka spruce and western hemlock forests of Cape Meares and appreciate wildlife and wildlands that are being protected.

Goal 11: Promote conservation of cultural resources on refuge lands through effective coordination and cooperation with Tribes having adjoining ownership or management responsibilities.

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