



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge *Comprehensive Conservation Planning*

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has recommenced the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) process for the Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). The purpose of this planning effort is to develop a 15-year management plan for the refuge that addresses the conservation of fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their related habitats and describes appropriate and compatible wildlife-dependent recreation for the refuge. The CCP will cover the lands and waters owned and/or managed by the Crystal River NWR which includes several islands and small parcels of lands surrounded by the spring-fed waters of Kings Bay, Three Sisters Springs, Paradise Point, and marsh and bottomlands south of the Homosassa River. With your input, we will develop a vision statement for the refuge's desired conditions and the actions needed to achieve that vision. Public involvement is an integral part of plan development. The planning process includes a two-way sharing of information and ideas between us and you—the public, refuge neighbors, cooperating agencies, conservation partners, and others. Your input improves our effectiveness and the quality of our decisions. Over the next year, we will provide periodic planning updates that will inform you of our progress and how you can be involved in the various phases of plan development – from participating in a public meeting to submitting written comments.

Why is a Comprehensive Conservation Plan being prepared?

The National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 requires that a CCP be prepared for each refuge in the Refuge System. Both the Service and the public will benefit from this requirement, as the CCP process provides many opportunities for ensuring that the long-term vision and goals for individual refuges will be evaluated, developed, and achieved. The act's most important principles are (1) to maintain the biological integrity, diversity, and environmental health of a refuge or district; and (2) to facilitate compatible wildlife-dependent recreation.



The eight-step planning process ensures fundamental values:

• A logical, trackable rationale

Each plan tracks the decision making, beginning with the purpose of the refuge or district and a broad vision shared with the public, followed by detailed decisions about specific actions.

• A thorough analysis

We base our decisions on scientific and scholarly data and analyses and take into account the surrounding area.

• Public involvement

We base our decisions on understanding and in consideration of public interests.



Our goal is to prepare a CCP that:

- ✓ Provides a clear vision of the desired future conditions for the refuge;
- ✓ Establishes refuge management priorities for the next 15 years that are consistent with achieving the desired future conditions;
- ✓ Ensures that management decisions will fulfill the mission of the Refuge System, as well as the specific purposes for which the refuge was established;
- ✓ Thoroughly evaluates the full range of views and comments provided by those individuals, groups, and governmental agencies that participated in the planning process;
- ✓ Incorporates an ecosystem approach into the management strategies for habitat protection, enhancement, and restoration;
- ✓ Identifies which public uses are appropriate and compatible with the purposes of the refuge and the vision and goals that are established; and
- ✓ Gives fish and wildlife conservation first priority.

To learn more about the Refuge visit: https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Crystal_River/

Connect with our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/CrystalRiverComplex/>

To learn about the National Wildlife Refuge System visit: <https://www.fws.gov/refuges/>