Chincoteague and Wallops Island National Wildlife Refuges
Comprehensive Conservation Plan
October 2015
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 555 national wildlife refuges and thousands of waterfowl production areas. The Service also operates 70 national fish hatcheries and 81 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 Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration 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.
Chincoteague and Wallops Island National Wildlife Refuges

Comprehensive Conservation Plan
October 2015

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Refuge Vision Statement

Our vision statement for the refuges is a synthesis of the refuges’ purposes, the National Wildlife Refuge System mission and goals, and other biological, legal, and social concerns in which the refuge has a role. It is intended to be an expression of what the refuge will be like in the future in terms of natural resources and visitor experience. Our vision for the refuge, developed to help provide the core component of management strategies hereafter, is as follows:

*Chincoteague and Wallops Island National Wildlife Refuges encompass extraordinary and ever-changing lands at the edge of the sea, a place where unique habitats and wildlife flourish. In partnership with others, the refuges are a vital part of a larger system of protected lands and waters on the Delmarva Peninsula critical to migratory birds. People from around the world can visit the refuges to learn, recreate, refresh themselves, be inspired by wildlife and wild lands, and renew their connection with nature.*
Type of Action: Administrative – Development of a Comprehensive Conservation Plan

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

Location: Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge
Wallops Island National Wildlife Refuge
Chincoteague, Virginia

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This final Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the 14,032-acre Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge and 373-acre Wallops Island National Wildlife Refuge is the culmination of a planning effort involving Virginia state agencies, Federal partners including the National Park Service, local partners, and the local community. This plan establishes 15-year management goals and objectives for wildlife and habitats, public use, and administration and facilities.

This plan sets forward the management direction that we think best achieves the refuges' purposes, vision, and goals, and responds to public issues. Under this plan, we will provide greater opportunities for the refuges to contribute to the conservation of fish, wildlife, and habitat in the region, and provide the means to better respond to changing ecological conditions within the surrounding environment through a balanced and integrated approach.
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