

Conserving the Future

Wildlife Refuges and the Next Generation

Implementation Plan



education principles including understanding create important priorities strategic established people connect interpretation restoration uses agencies ensure



existing recreational partnerships inspire management challenges appropriate community landscape efficiencies urban outdoors boundaries recognize future success approach wilderness habitats protection better service develop leaders areas excellence benefits natural groups actions scientific environmental contribute new responsibilities science continue goals project integrity objectives shared species waters articulate appreciate improve

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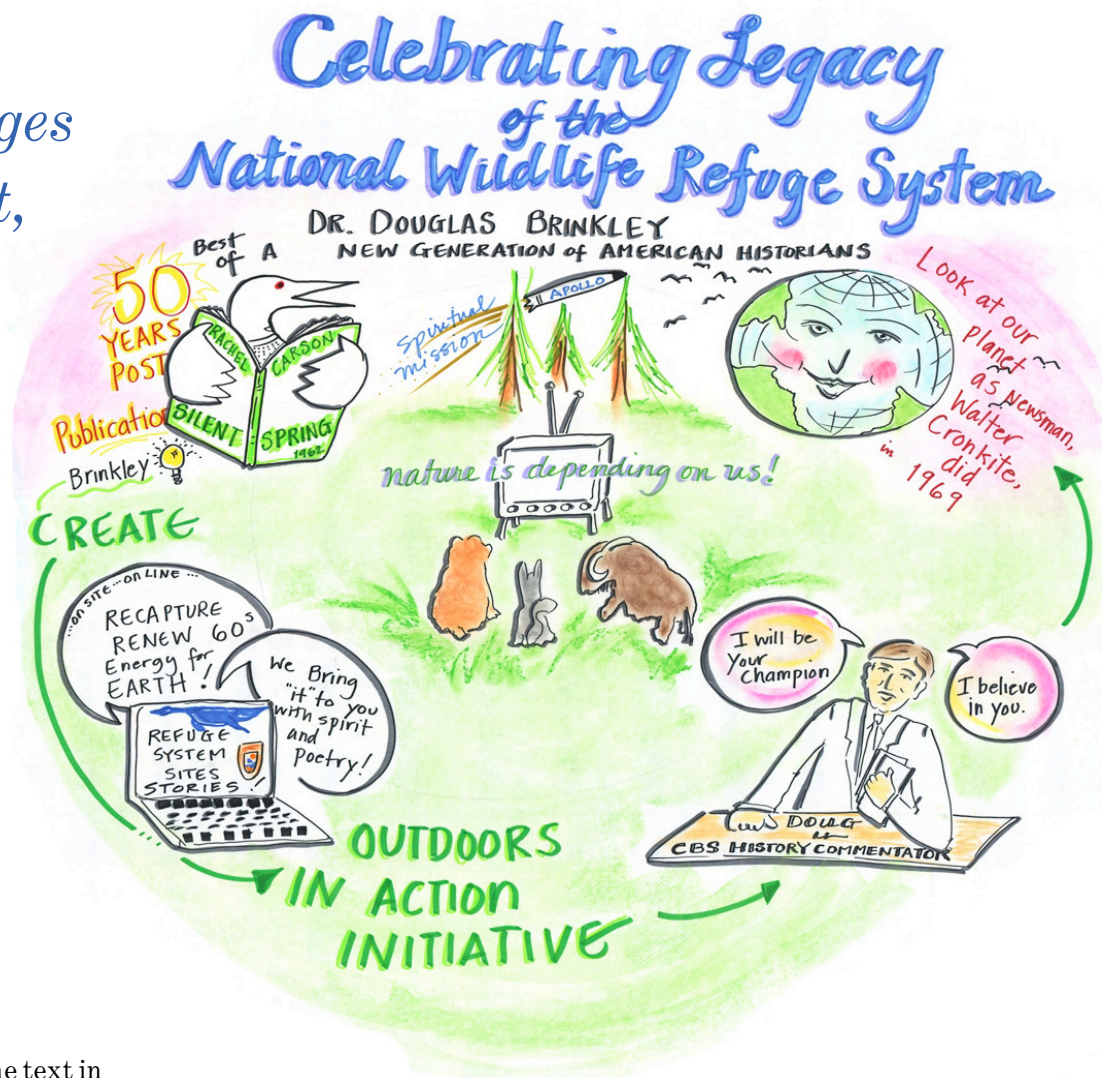
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Conserving the Future was written by you and for you – the next generation of conservation leaders... Now this story compels you to add your own chapter and take your place among a long line of conservation heroes.

Which challenges will you accept, and which future will you make?



On the cover: A “tag cloud” of the text in *Conserving the Future*. In a tag cloud, the more often a word appears in the text of a document, the larger the font of that word is in the image.

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CONSERVING WILDLIFE REFUGES and the NEXT GENERATION

the future

Background

In the summer of 2010, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service employees began the process of charting the course for the National Wildlife Refuge System's next decade. Their charge was to build on the foundation of the System's last strategic plan, *Fulfilling the Promise: the National Wildlife Refuge System*, and create an updated vision for the future of America's national wildlife refuges.

Five "Core" teams of over 70 Service employees crafted a renewed vision with input from hundreds more who participated in online webinars and discussion forums. The draft vision document was released for public review in February of 2011.

Over 10,000 comments and ideas were received regarding the draft, most through on-line social media and discussion threads. In July of 2011, an updated vision draft formed the core of discussion topics for the over 1,000

Service employees and conservationists who attended the *Conserving the Future* conference in Madison, Wisconsin. At the Madison conference, a series of facilitated workshops and discussions generated additional information and feedback.

There, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe signed the charter, which established the Executive Implementation Council (Council). The Council, comprised of the Chief of the National Wildlife Refuge System, and the National Wildlife Refuge System Leadership Team, is responsible for guiding the implementation of the vision's twenty-four recommendations.

Finally, on October 20, 2011, the finished vision document, *Conserving the Future: Wildlife Refuges and the Next Generation* was released to the public.

This Implementation Plan describes the Council's overall strategies, tasks and deadlines for implementation of the recommendations contained in *Conserving the Future*.

Overview of *Conserving the Future*

Service employees developed *Conserving the Future* in partnership with stakeholders through a transparent public participation process.

Although focused on the Refuge System, this process catalyzed a national discussion on conservation that transcended the Refuge System. Several recurring themes emerged: relevance to a changing America, the impact of a changing climate, the need for conservation at the landscape scale, the necessity of partnership and collaboration, and the absolute importance of scientific excellence. These themes are woven throughout the document's three main chapters.

Chapter 1 – Conserving the Future: Wildlife and Wildlands

This chapter contains the foundational elements of the Refuge System's conservation design and delivery. The vision is to embrace a scientific, landscape-level approach to conserving, managing and restoring refuge lands and waters, and work to facilitate conservation benefits beyond Refuge System boundaries. This chapter contains ten recommendations.

Chapter 2 – A Connected Conservation Constituency

This chapter addresses the Refuge System's evolving relationship with people. The Refuge System's conservation actions – however well intended – will fall short without the support of the American public. The Refuge System seeks to foster a more informed citizenry that actively supports and understands the value of conservation and the role of the Refuge System. This chapter contains ten recommendations.





Chapter 3 – Leading Conservation into the Future

This chapter is devoted to leadership and organizational excellence, and includes an explicit challenge to the entire Service to continually refine our organizational structure to maximize conservation delivery and demonstrate excellence in the stewardship of public funds. This chapter contains four recommendations.

You can download a digital copy of the publication on-line at www.AmericasWildlife.org/vision.

Recommendations:

Conserving the Future contains twenty-four recommendations. The recommendations range from defining a specific direction (e.g. # 8. Create a new quadrennial report in 2015) to more broadly stated objectives (e.g. # 6. Provide Refuges with resources to implement the principles of adaptive management).

All twenty-four recommendations are listed in [Appendix 1](#) of this Implementation Plan or can be downloaded on-line at www.AmericasWildlife.org/vision.

Distribution of the Vision Document

The final document was released to the public in October 2011. It was posted on Service websites and on www.AmericasWildlife.org.

A print edition of 10,000 copies was also distributed in January 2012. Copies were shipped to all staffed Service offices, with distribution caches housed in Regional Offices and in Headquarters. Copies were mailed to partner organizations, key congressional staff, and other key stakeholders as identified in a document distribution plan. An Executive Summary handout is also available in print and digitally.

Implementation Approach

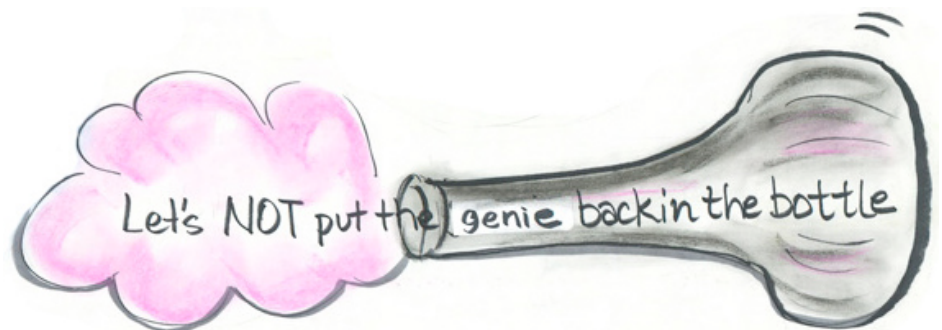
Implementation of the recommendations will be complex and multi-layered. Some actions may require policy or organizational change. Some require review of ongoing activities and refocusing efforts. Others may initiate broad new programs.

The Executive Implementation Council (Council) is responsible for the overall implementation of all twenty-four recommendations. The EIC is chaired by the Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System, and is comprised of the Deputy Chief, each of the eight Regional Refuge Chiefs, Headquarters Division Chiefs, and a Council Coordinator. As articulated in

the Executive Implementation Council Charter ([Appendix 2](#)) the Council is responsible for:

- Guiding development of proposed actions to be taken in response to the recommendations.
- Establishing Implementation Teams to work specifically on one or more recommendations.
- Developing communication methods for informing stakeholders of implementation progress.
- Following Service protocol for actions that need Director approval.
- Reviewing, adapting, or refocusing recommended actions as appropriate.
- Being ‘change agents’ within the organization as positive changes are furthered.
- Reporting on a regular basis to the Service Directorate on progress.
- Ensuring that implementation actions are complete or in progress within five years (October 2016).

The Council will have a coordinator located in Headquarters who will be the primary contact for Council activities, logistics and process management. In addition to serving on the Council, Regional Chiefs and Division Chiefs serve as co-chairs of individual Implementation Teams.



Implementation Teams:

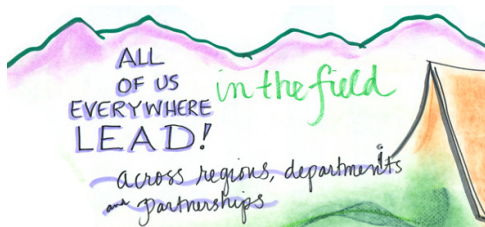
Implementation Teams are comprised of Service employees from throughout the agency, and represent a wide range of positions, experiences, and backgrounds. Implementation Team (Team) members were self-nominated and appointed by the Council. In order to help balance team composition with a diversity of experience, additional members were appointed.

Implementation Teams are guided by specific charters that describe team tasks, deliverables, and deadlines. The Council reviewed the twenty-four recommendations and grouped them into logical assemblages for assignment to an Implementation Team or to a specific Headquarters Division office.

These groupings resulted in the establishment of nine Implementation Teams that are addressing twenty-one of the recommendations. The other three recommendations are assigned to specific Headquarters Division offices.

These nine Implementation Teams, team membership, and their specific assignments are described in the teams' charters. These charters include a brief description of the major tasks expected of the team. Copies of their specific team charters are included in [Appendix 3](#).

The Implementation Teams' assigned recommendations are:



Planning

- **Recommendation 1:** Direct next iteration of Refuge System comprehensive conservation plans.

Strategic Growth of the Refuge System

- **Recommendation 3:** Rapid assessment of existing refuge land protection projects.
- **Recommendation 4:** Ensure quantifiable population objects for future land protection efforts.
- **Recommendation 5:** Work beyond refuge boundaries to achieve conservation objectives.

Scientific Excellence

- **Recommendation 6:** Implement adaptive management.
- **Recommendation 7:** Nationally coordinated inventory and monitoring.
- **Recommendation 9:** Articulate research agenda for Refuge System.
- **Recommendation 10:** Contribute to scientific knowledge.

Community Partnerships

- **Recommendation 11:** Friends group or community partnership for every refuge or complex.
- **Recommendation 12:** Develop strategy for volunteer program expansion.

Urban Wildlife Refuge Initiative

- **Recommendation 13:** Develop urban refuge program.

Communications

- **Recommendation 14:** Create strategic communications plan.



- **Recommendation 15:** Integrate web-based and new technologies into communication and outreach programs.

Hunting, Fishing and Outdoor Recreation

- **Recommendation 17:** Develop strategies for increasing Refuge System hunting and fishing opportunities.
- **Recommendation 18:** Develop strategies to enhance or expand wildlife recreation opportunities on Refuge System.

Interpretation and Environmental Education

- **Recommendation 19:** Develop an interpretation strategy for Refuge System.
- **Recommendation 20:** Develop environmental education strategy.

Leadership Development Council

- **Recommendation 21:** Report on potential organizational efficiencies.
- **Recommendation 22:** Increase workforce diversity.
- **Recommendation 23:** Reinvigorate leadership development.
- **Recommendation 24:** Develop mentorship.

Three recommendations (numbers 2, 8, and 16) are task specific and are assigned to the Headquarters office to implement. The assigned Divisions may seek assistance from others as they develop their implementation approaches.

Division of Natural Resources and Conservation Planning

- **Recommendation 2:** Develop Refuge System Climate Change implementation plan. *Assigned to Refuge System Climate Change Coordinator.*
- **Recommendation 8:** Publish a quadrennial report on the State of the Refuge System. *Assigned to Natural Resource Program Center in Fort Collins, Colorado.*

Division of Refuge Law Enforcement

- **Recommendation 16:** Update analysis of refuge law enforcement program.

Team Operations

Implementation Teams work independently under the direction of their co-chairs. Their initial membership is listed in the Charters. Under the direction of the co-chairs, the teams may be supplemented with other Service employees to work on sub-team assignments. This assistance should be coordinated with supervisors' approval.

Teams are self-facilitated and self-directed. It is likely that they will have frequent and recurring telephone conference calls, and/or webinars. Face to face meeting(s) may be important and necessary particularly early in their discussions. The teams use an Intra-network website that only Department of

Interior employees can view to share documents or work collaboratively.

There are no special or supplemental funds from the Washington Office to cover the costs for travel or other activities associated with Team activities. Regions may choose to supplement station budgets to cover travel costs as deemed necessary.

Background information has been provided to the teams, including notes from the facilitated meetings at the Madison conference and the list of 'bold ideas' generated by on-line discussion groups.

Teams will keep the Council Coordinator, in Headquarters, advised of significant activities.

As the Implementation Teams establish sub-teams, taskforces for special projects, or other supplemental bodies, they should be encouraged to include individuals outside of the U.S.

Fish and Wildlife Service in their deliberations as they discuss implementation activities.

Non-governmental representatives may not serve on the Implementation Teams themselves or be part of any direct deliberations or actions that result in a policy decision due to federal regulations concerning how non-government entities are consulted in formulating policy. However they should be broadly approached for their perspectives, expertise, and assistance through appropriate partnerships.

Implementation Teams should be open to employees and partners with good ideas relevant to the vision and

their recommendations. The charters for the teams give them and their Co-Chairs broad authority to adopt a wide range of approaches or processes to meet their objectives. Teams are encouraged to think broadly and outside typical ways of doing business, particularly with regards to leveraging social media, technology, and partnerships.

Part of team operations is to engage with the Federal Advisory Committees with responsibility in the areas that may relate to the work of an implementation team. In particular, teams should coordinate with the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council (WHHCC) and the Sport Fish and Boating Partnership Council (SFBPC) for items related to hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation – as appropriate per the Charters of the WHHCC and SFBPC.





- Recommendations for process improvement
- Evaluation of using a standard planning document template
- Examination of existing policy with recommendations, if needed

June 2012 – Draft report of activities to the Council addressing recommendations.

April 2013 – Finalize implementation strategies and complete any requisite policy updates.

Community Partnerships

February 2012 – Report to the Council on how it plans to address Recommendations #11 and #12.

- Define success
- Develop an associated timeline and brief description of strategy

June 2012 – Draft report to the Council that includes a national volunteer strategy.

- Address how to reach a broader set of potential partner organizations

June 2012 – Specific recommendations on how to build and nurture Friends organizations for staffed refuges that do not now have a Friends organization.

April 2013 – Finalize implementation strategies and complete any requisite policy updates.

Urban Wildlife Refuge Initiative

Convene a summit of existing urban wildlife refuge managers (timeline open).

Implementation Timeline:

The Director requested that implementation actions or partial actions on all recommendations happen within at least five years (by October 2016). Some recommendations have set deadlines; others are less specific.

Listed in the Implementation Team Charters are set performance objectives, major deadlines, products and deliverables, and sunset dates for team activities. It is expected that as teams begin to analyze their assignments, and craft implementation approaches, that these performance objectives and deadlines may be adjusted upon approval by the Council.

Summary of the products and deliverables for the Implementation Teams (see Charters in Appendix 3 for detailed charges):

Planning

February 2012 – Report to the Council with a plan to address the recommendation.

July 2012 – Complete an assessment of the CCP and HMP development process and plans, along with:

- Best practices

October 2012 – Presentation of initial findings and draft recommendations to the Council

April 2013 – Finalize implementation strategies and complete any policy updates

Strategic Growth of the Refuge System

May 2012 – Complete a prioritization assessment of land acquisition projects (i.e., Recommendation #3).

May 2012 – Provide recommendations to the Council for accomplishing Recommendation #4 and #5.

October 2012 – Present a framework to the Council for implementing Recommendation #3, #4, and #5.

October 2012 (i.e., end of FY2012) – Complete blueprint for strategic growth of the Refuge System and draft any relevant policy.

Scientific Excellence

February 2012 – Report to the Council on each of the four recommendations, providing project accomplishment dates and deliverables.



June 2012 – Bring specific recommendations to the Council on:

- Standards for excellence for urban wildlife refuges
- Evaluation processes
- Other relevant recommendations

October 2012 – Draft blueprint for urban wildlife refuges.

December 2012 – Produce strategies for developing an urban presence in communities without a refuge land base.



Communications

February 2012 – Report to the Council a schedule for completion of the integrated, long-term communications strategy.

June 2012 – Present draft communications strategy to the Council, which should include:

- Improve branding and image program
- Web-based media and emerging technologies
- Appropriate partnerships with private organizations

April 2012 – Finalize the communications strategy and

complete any requisite policy updates.

Hunting, Fishing and Outdoor Recreation
February 2012 – Report to the Council on how it plans to address Recommendations #17 and #18.

June 2012 – Present draft recommendations and implementation strategies to the Council that.

- Increase participation by youth in hunting and fishing on refuges
- Best practices and strategies for increasing accessible opportunities
- Expand recreational opportunities on refuges in a systematic manner
- Monitor and evaluate success

April 2013 – Finalize strategies.

Interpretation and Environmental Education

February 2012 – Report to the Council on how it plans to address Recommendations #19 and #20.

June 2012 – Present draft recommendations and implementation strategies to the Council that:

- Use multiple approaches, formats, and media for effective interpretation
- Monitor and evaluate effectiveness of these interpretative programs
- Provide best practices reports for successful interpretation and environmental education programs

April 2013 – Finalize strategy reports for interpretation and environmental education



Leadership Development Council

January 2012 – Establish appropriate sub teams that will development strategies to implement the recommendations.

March 2012 – Report progress to the Council.

Recommend policy; develop and implement necessary planning documents and programs (timeline open).

Reporting and Communications

All implementation teams are expected to complete initial assessments of their assignments and present a summary work plan to the Council at the February 2012, Refuge System Leadership Meeting. These work plans will contain a more fully developed list of objectives, deliverables, communication strategies, timelines and completion dates. These work plans will be one to two pages in length, and will be reviewed and approved by the Council (see [Appendix 4](#) for format).

Team co-chairs or designees will provide updates on activities and accomplishments at least twice each year to the Council. The Council may approve modifications and adjustments to their work plans.

Communications plans will be developed iteratively throughout the

Embrace the future get on line and share your stories

implementation process as needed. A general framework or plan for communications is included in this Implementation Plan ([Appendix 5](#)). The Communications Framework will address how the Service will communicate implementation progress internally and externally.

Key implementation milestones will be posted on-line from www.AmericasWildlife.org.

Key national partner organizations (i.e. Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement member organizations) will be kept informed through direct communication with Headquarters employees and the Council. State, Tribal and other governmental stakeholders will similarly receive direct and substantial contact. Additionally, key updates will be communicated to the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council (WHHCC) and Sport Fish and Boating Partnership Council (SFBPC) as part of our continued collaboration with the organizations those councils represent.

Service employees will receive periodic updates through Service publications (e.g., *Refuge Update*) and on-line means, such as the Service's Intranet InsideFWS and webinars, as key milestones are reached.

Communication tools (i.e. PowerPoint, video presentations) are available to the teams and others to use at appropriate Service and non-Service meetings and gatherings. A DVD with these resources has been mailed to all Refuge System offices and are available to download from the www.AmericasWildlife.org website.

The Chief of the National Wildlife Refuge System will provide quarterly



reports on implementation activities to the Service Directorate. The first such report will be published in April 2012 and subsequently every three months (i.e., April, July, October of 2012 and January 2013 for the next year). Communication plans will be employed for the release of each report emphasizing the significance of major milestones for that quarter (e.g., July 2012 is the one-year anniversary of the *Conserving the Future* Conference).

Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation

Each implementation team is expected to complete implementation tasks within the set timetables. But, prior to sun setting, each team is expected to develop and institutionalize monitoring metrics and protocols that will provide an

objective record of how well implementation actions are achieving the stated goals articulated in *Conserving the Future*. Appropriate Headquarters employees will review these results and report to Refuge Leadership annually.

The Council is responsible for providing quarterly progress reports to the Service Directorate and stakeholders. The first progress report will be published in April 2012. Prior to the sunset of the Council (2016), a final report on implementation actions will be prepared and submitted to the Director. This report may help set the stage for the next time, in ten or fifteen years, that the Service renews a vision process for the National Wildlife Refuge System.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: List of Recommendations in *Conserving the Future: Wildlife Refuges and the Next Generation*.

Appendix 2: Executive Implementation Council Charter.

Appendix 3: Implementation Team Charters (nine charters)

Appendix 4: Implementation Team “Work Plan” suggested format.

Appendix 5: Communication Framework

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Appendix 1

List of Recommendations in
Conserving the Future:
Wildlife Refuges and the Next
Generation

Conserving the Future

Wildlife Refuges and the Next Generation

Recommendation 1: Incorporate the lessons learned from our first round of CCPs and HMPs into the next generation of conservation plans, and ensure these new plans view refuges in a landscape context and describe actions to project conservation benefits beyond refuge boundaries.

Recommendation 2: Develop a climate change implementation plan for the National Wildlife Refuge System that dovetails with other conservation partners' climate change action plans and specifically provides guidance for conducting vulnerability assessments of climate change impacts to refuge habitats and species as well as direction for innovation in the reduction of emissions and improved energy efficiency on federal lands.

Recommendation 3: Undertake a rapid top-to-bottom assessment of the status of all Refuge System land protection projects and complete a report that will inform development of a plan for the strategic, future growth of the Refuge System.

Recommendation 4: Ensure future land protection efforts are based on explicit priorities, rigorous biological planning and conservation design that support achieving quantifiable conservation and population objectives that are developed in cooperation with state fish and wildlife agencies.

Recommendation 5: Use all of the Service's conservation tools, especially Partners for Fish and Wildlife, to work nationwide to project conservation benefits beyond refuge boundaries, leveraging resources through partnerships with other governmental agencies, conservation groups and private landowners and achieving mutually shared and scientifically sound restoration and protection goals around refuges.

Recommendation 6: Provide each refuge with access to resources to fully implement the principles of adaptive management.

Recommendation 7: Institutionalize a purpose-driven, nationally coordinated effort to inventory and monitor wildlife and habitats to obtain data that inform planning and management decisions; and develop a state-of-the-art data management system that can be integrated with the broader scientific community and key partners.

Recommendation 8: Create a new, quadrennial report on the state of the Refuge System starting in 2015, as part of an effort to report on the status and trends of wildlife and habitat in the System and ensure that all data gathered are easily accessible and shared widely among the Service, the scientific community and the public.

Recommendation 9: Develop and clearly articulate a research agenda for the Refuge System that is management-oriented and grounded in the testing of assumptions, with the explicit purpose of reducing uncertainty in our planning and management decisions.

Recommendation 10: Become a major contributor to the scientific community by sharing information and data; publishing scientific findings; participating in professional societies; and engaging with local, regional and national organizations and communities to solve conservation problems.

Recommendation 11: Develop and nurture active and vibrant Friends groups or community partnerships for every staffed refuge or refuge complex.

Recommendation 12: Develop a national strategy for recruiting, coordinating and supporting a more self-sustaining volunteer corps, while creating new opportunities for community involvement in implementing refuge priorities.

Recommendation 13: Create an urban refuge initiative that defines excellence in our existing urban refuges, establishes the framework for creating new urban refuge partnerships and implements a refuge presence in 10 demographically and geographically varied cities across America by 2015.

Recommendation 14: Create a strategic communications plan that educates the public about our mission and accomplishments, and creates a positive, professional 'brand' for the System.

Recommendation 15: Develop integrated mechanisms for using web-based and other emerging technologies to store and share data, communicate within the System, and inspire and educate visitors and the public.

Recommendation 16: Conduct a new, independent analysis of refuge law enforcement to measure progress and identify needed improvements.

Recommendation 17: The Service will work closely with state fish and wildlife agencies to conduct a review of its current hunting and fishing opportunities, especially opportunities currently offered for youth and people with disabilities. Based on this review, the Service and states will work cooperatively to prepare a strategy for increasing quality hunting and fishing opportunities on national wildlife refuges.

Recommendation 18: Support and enhance appropriate recreation opportunities on national wildlife refuges by partnering with state fish and wildlife agencies, other governmental bodies, conservation organizations and businesses; and by updating relevant policies and infrastructure.

Recommendation 19: Develop an interpretation strategy that builds upon current Service standards and guidelines, takes advantage of multiple modes of delivering messages, reaches diverse audiences, and measures the effectiveness of our programs in partnership with key government agencies, the National Association for Interpretation and other professional organizations.

Recommendation 20: Develop an environmental education strategy that inventories existing efforts, identifies priorities for investment of staff and funds, and outlines basic standards for all refuges.

Recommendation 21: Assemble an evaluation team consisting of Service and Refuge System leaders to report to the Service Directorate on opportunities for organizational realignments or programmatic efficiencies.

Recommendation 22: Within the next 10 years, make our workforce match the diversity in the civilian labor workforce. Recruit and retain a workforce that reflects the ethnic, age, socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, and language diversity of contemporary America.

Recommendation 23: Revisit *Fulfilling the Promise* and seek innovative ways to address the recommendations therein to reinvigorate our commitment to leadership development.

Recommendation 24: Develop and mentor Refuge System employees so they are fully equipped to accept the responsibilities of leadership at all levels in the Service.





Appendix 2

Executive Implementation Council Charter

Conserving the Future: Wildlife Refuges and the Next Generation

Executive Implementation Council Charter

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Council is to facilitate the successful implementation of *Conserving the Future: Wildlife Refuges and the Next Generation*, a strategic vision for the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS).

2. SCOPE

The Council is charged with guiding the timely and appropriate development and implementation of follow-up actions emanating from recommendations adopted in the *Conserving the Future* vision.

3. COUNCIL COMPOSITION

The *Conserving the Future* Council is chaired by the Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System, and consists of the NWRS Leadership Team and a Council Coordinator. With the exception of the Council Coordinator, which is a dedicated full-time position, all other Council members are incorporating and prioritizing this activity within their existing duties. Anyone serving as an “Acting” automatically participates as an Alternate with full authority.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Council Chair:

- ✓ Has the overall lead for the effective operation of the Council.
- ✓ Keeps the Director, Assistant Directors, and national stakeholders informed and involved.
- ✓ Appoints a Council Coordinator to assist in managing activities, workflow, and progress of the Council.
- ✓ Approves establishment of Implementation Teams.

The Council:

- ✓ Guides development of proposed actions to be taken in response to recommendations in the *Conserving the Future* vision.
- ✓ Within 90 days of publication of the final *Conserving the Future* document, develops an overall implementation strategy which would identify teams or individuals with specific tasks and deadlines to enable implementation of recommendations.

- ✓ Establishes, coordinates, and provides guidance to individuals or implementation teams empowered to develop recommended implementation actions.
- ✓ Reviews and adopts or refocuses recommended actions as they are brought forward for implementation.
- ✓ Follows normal U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) protocols in bringing recommended actions to the Director for approval and implementation.
- ✓ Champions implementation actions emanating from the *Conserving the Future* vision by being positive change agents and adopting and adapting as positive changes are furthered.
- ✓ Regularly reports on the status and results of actions under development or implemented under the *Conserving the Future* vision.
- ✓ Celebrates successes and acknowledges and rewards participant contributions as appropriate.

Assistant Regional Directors/Refuge Chiefs:

In addition to roles and responsibilities described above for the Council, Regional Chiefs in particular will:

- ✓ Recommend field staff to serve on Implementation Teams to develop implementation actions from the *Conserving the Future* vision.
- ✓ Keep the Regional Director, Assistant Regional Directors, Refuge Managers, and regional stakeholders informed and involved.
- ✓ Execute initiatives/policies emerging from the *Conserving the Future* effort upon approval by the Director.

The Council Coordinator:

- ✓ Provides a primary point of contact on Council activities.
- ✓ Drafts the implementation plan and various other documents related to Council activities.
- ✓ Provides organizational logistics and support by arranging Council meetings and calls.
- ✓ Provides logistical support in assembling Implementation Teams including development of a project charter for each team at outset of its establishment.
- ✓ Monitors progress against the implementation plan and drafts reports and communications on overall progress and action.
- ✓ Serves as the document manager for all documents related to Council activities.

Implementation Teams:

- ✓ Will consist of appropriate field, regional, and Washington office representation, and States and Partners, as appropriate, to ensure diverse perspectives.
- ✓ One Regional representative and one Washington Office representative from the Leadership Team will co-lead each implementation team.
- ✓ The purpose and composition of each implementation team will be determined by the Council and approved by the Chief of the NWRS.

- ✓ Teams will participate in activities as an extension of their existing duties and, to the extent possible, will devote high priority to their role on the *Conserving the Future* effort.
- ✓ Implementation teams are accountable to the Council and will exist until their individual tasks are completed.

5. DELIVERABLES

The Council is responsible for delivering the following:

- ✓ Complete an implementation plan within 90 days of publication of the final *Conserving the Future* document.
- ✓ Develop methods of keeping internal and external stakeholders informed and involved.
- ✓ Provide quarterly progress reports to the Directorate and stakeholders.
- ✓ Within the next 5 years, implement actions or partial actions on all *Conserving the Future* recommendations.
- ✓ Provide a final report outlining the key decisions and implementation actions.

6. DECISION MAKING METHOD

Decision-making by the Council will be by consensus after employing normal decision-making aids such as discussion, alternatives analysis, and priority ranking. A consensus is defined as a group decision that everyone on the team can “live with.”

7. REPORTING RELATIONSHIP

The Council reports to the Service Directorate.

8. COUNCIL OPERATING COSTS

Costs for travel or any other activities associated with operations of the Council or associated action teams will be covered by base budgets. To simplify administrative requirements, there will not be a national operating fund established specific to management of Council activities.

~~APPROVAL~~

 Dan Ashe

DIRECTOR

 7.14.11

DATE

Appendix 3

Implementation Team Charters

**National Wildlife Refuge System
Planning: Conserving the Future
Recommendation #1**

Charter

Purpose

Develop guidance and processes for improving the second generation of Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCP), and Habitat Management Plans (HMP).

The Team is responsible for researching lessons learned from the first round of CCP development, and ensuring the next round of plans consider refuges in a landscape context and describe actions to project conservation benefits beyond refuge boundaries. This Team addresses *Conserving the Future Recommendation #1*.

The team is empowered to:

Develop recommendations, plans, strategies, policy, and decision support tools as necessary to improve refuge management planning processes.

Form sub-teams to address particular elements of the vision.

Host calls, meetings, webinars, etc. as deemed necessary by the co-chairs to carry out the responsibilities of the team.

Participants:

The Team will be co-chaired by a Regional Refuge Chief and a Washington Office Division or Branch Chief. Membership must have representation from planning professionals. The team will communicate closely with the Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCC) network, States, and partners for information, assistance, and collaboration. The team should coordinate with larger agency planning initiatives as needed.

Membership of this team may change over time to meet the team's needs. Changes in membership can be approved by the Executive Implementation Council without amendment to this charter.

Initial Team Membership:

J. Rupert/Chief TBD	Co-Chair	Headquarters Office
Rick Coleman	Co-Chair	Region 6
Mike Marxen	Branch Chief, VSC	Region 1, Visitor Services
Monica Kimbrough	Nat. Res. Planner	R2 RO
Cathy Henry	Refuge Manager	Port Louisa NWR
Ken Litzenberger	Refuge Manager	SE LA Complex
Kathryn Owens	Dpty Project Leader	Back Bay NWR
Mike Dixon	Land Prot. Planner	R6 RO Planning
Jenifer Kohout	Div. Chief FES	R7 RO
Winnie Chan	Refuge Planner	San Francisco Bay NWR
Ross Alliston	Refuge Planning Spec	Headquarters, Refuges
Noah Kahn	Performance Manager	Headquarters, Refuges

Products and Deliverables: By February, 2012 the Team will report back to the EIC how it plans to address the recommendation, providing project accomplishment dates, and deliverables.

By July, 2012, the team will complete an assessment of the CCP and HMP development process and plans, and will identify best practices gleaned from the past 15 years of refuge planning. The team will make recommendations for process improvement, and will evaluate the efficacy of using a standard planning document template. The team will also examine existing planning policy and make recommendations for changes if needed

The next round of management plans must include explicit wildlife objectives, and articulate refuge contribution to larger regional or landscape fish and wildlife objectives. This assessment will also include a status check of wilderness management plans, and other step-down management plans. Lastly, the next round of plans must be made with realistic budget projections for refuge operations, maintenance, and construction.

Initial findings, and draft recommendations will be presented to the EIC by October, 2012.

By April 2013, team will finalize implementation strategies, and

complete any policy updates with consideration for proper public input into revised planning processes and policies.

Reporting Relationships:

The Team reports to the NWRS Executive Implementation Council, chaired by the Assistant Director - National Wildlife Refuge System. The Regional Chief and Washington Office co-chairs will keep the Assistant Director and other EIC members informed of the status of team progress, activities, and recommendations.

Period of Operation:

The tasks set forth to guide planning that must be developed and institutionalized within the Refuge System. This team will sunset three years from the date of this charter unless otherwise amended.

James W. Kurth

25 OCT 2011

Assistant Director – National Wildlife Refuge System Date

**National Wildlife Refuge System
Strategic Growth of the NWRS: Conserving the Future
Recommendations #3 and #4**

Charter

Purpose

Develop a plan, associated relevant policies, and decision support tools to guide strategic growth of the National Wildlife Refuge System in a landscape context.

The Team is responsible for developing the blueprint and associated policies and decision support tools to comply with the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997; and implement *Conserving the Future* recommendations #3 and #4.

The team is empowered to:

Develop recommendations, plans, strategies, policy, and decision support tools as necessary to implement the vision for strategic growth of the National Wildlife Refuge System set forth in *Conserving the Future*.

Form sub-teams to address particular elements of the vision.

Host calls, meetings, webinars, etc. as deemed necessary by the co-chairs to carry out the responsibilities of the team.

Participants:

The Team will be co-chaired by a Regional Refuge Chief and a Washington Office Executive Implementation Council (EIC) member. Membership will include up to 9 additional members. The team will communicate closely with the Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCC) network, States, and partners for information, assistance, and collaboration.

Membership of this team may change over time to meet the team's needs. Changes in membership can be approved by the Executive Implementation Council without amendments to this charter.

Initial Team Membership:

Jeff Rupert / A. Eric Alvarez	Co-Chair, Washington Office
Rick Schultz	Co-Chair, Chief, R3
Jonathan Bloomfield	Realty Specialist, R1
Kelly McDowell	Project Leader, R2
Stacy Salvevold	Private Lands Biologist, R3
James Burnett	Project Leader, R4
Joseph McCauley	Realty Chief, R5

Will Meeks
Rob Campellone
Bill Uihlein

Project Leader HAPET, R6
Planning Branch, WO
ARD Science, R4

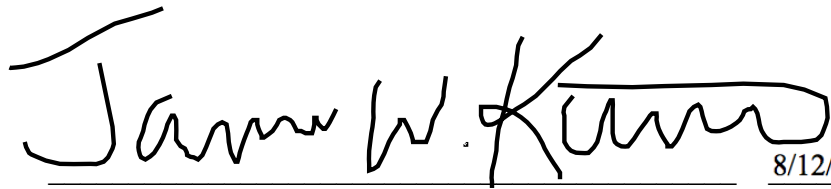
Products and Deliverables: By May 2012, the team will complete a prioritization of assessment of land acquisition projects as set forth in recommendation #3 and provide recommendations to the EIC for accomplishing *Conserving the Future* Recommendation #4.

By October 2012, the Team will present the EIC with a framework for implementing *Conserving the Future* Recommendation #3 and #4.

By the end of FY12, the team will have a blueprint for strategic growth of the System and any relevant draft policy completed.

Reporting Relationships: The Team reports to the NWRS Executive Implementation Council, chaired by the Assistant Director - National Wildlife Refuge System. The Regional Chief and Washington Office co-chairs will keep the Assistant Director and other EIC members informed of the status of team progress, activities, and recommendations.

Period of Operation: The tasks set forth to guide strategic growth in the NWRS, must be developed quickly and institutionalized within the Refuge System. Therefore, this team will sunset in two years from the date of this charter unless otherwise amended.



Assistant Director – National Wildlife Refuge System

8/12/2011

Date

**National Wildlife Refuge System
Strategic Growth of the NWRS: Conserving the Future
Charter**

Amendment # 1

The Charter for the Strategic Growth of the National Wildlife Refuge System is hereby amended.

In addition to addressing recommendations numbers 3 and 4, this Team will also address recommendation #5 in *Conserving the Future: Wildlife Refuges and the Next Generation*.

To address recommendation # 5, this Team will develop strategies for working in a landscape context and beyond refuge boundaries to achieve habitat protection and wildlife conservation goals using the full array of available conservation programs, especially the expertise and contacts of the Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife program.

The Team may communicate with other Service staff (e.g. from Partners and Coastal programs) as they address this recommendation.

Products and Deliverables will include how to implement recommendation #5.

Reporting Relationships and Period of Operation are unchanged.



Assistant Director – National Wildlife Refuge System

25 OCT 2011

Date

**National Wildlife Refuge System
Scientific Excellence: Conserving the Future
Recommendations #6, 7, 9, and 10**

Charter

Purpose

Create within the National Wildlife Refuge System a culture of commitment to scientific excellence based on the highest standards of scientific integrity. The team is to inform development of a science program in the National Wildlife Refuge System that develops the vision set forth in *Conserving the Future*. The purpose is to clearly articulate the standards of scientific integrity and accountability that apply to all of our work and define the NWRS and the Service as a science-based organization.

A robust and successful science program will provide increased certainty and support for our field stations' management decisions, inform landscape conservation issues, and contribute to the broader scientific community. For research to be meaningful, it must be developed in collaboration with partners at the landscape level and within the context of the strategic habitat conservation framework. While team efforts will focus on the specific recommendations related to science, a coordinated and systematic science program will permeate our efforts related to all the recommendations of *Conserving the Future* and enhance the credibility, and therefore effectiveness, of the NWRS and Service as a whole.

The team is empowered to:

Develop recommendations, plans, strategies, and propose policy as may be necessary to implement the vision for scientific excellence set forth in *Conserving the Future*;

Form sub-teams to address particular elements of the vision;

Host calls, meetings, webinars, etc. as deemed necessary by the co-chairs, to carry out the responsibilities of the team.

Participants:

The Team will be co-chaired by a Regional Refuge Chief and a Washington Office Division or Branch Chief. Membership may include an additional 10 members, of which a minimum of 3 will be refuge managers and or refuge supervisors. The team will communicate with other FWS programs and offices (e.g, Office of the Science Advisor) or other agencies and organizations for information and assistance.

Membership of this team may change over time to meet the needs of the team. Changes in membership can be approved by the Executive Implementation Council without amendments to this charter.

Initial Team Membership:

Aaron Archibeque	Co-Chair	Region 2
Mark Chase	Co-Chair	Headquarters, Ft. Collins
Deb Rocque	Co-Chair	Headquarters
David Drescher	Sup Geographer	Portland RO
Grant Harris	Chief, Biol Resources	R2 RO RW
Adam Zerrenner	ES Field Supervisor	Austin ESFO
Joe Robb	Refuge Manager	Big Oaks NWR
Keenan Adams	Depty Project Leader	Pelican Island NWR
Stephanie Koch	WL Biologist	Eastern MA NWR
Chris Swanson	WL Biologist	Kulm WMD
Andy Loranger	Refuge Manager	Kenai NWR
Heather Abbey	FW Biol.	Ventura ESFO
Jana Newman	I/M Manager	Fort Collins Res .Center

Products and Deliverables: By February, 2012 the Team will report back to the EIC how it plans to address each of the four recommendations, providing project accomplishment dates, and deliverables.

By June, 2012 the Team will present a draft report of activities to the EIC addressing these recommendations.

By April 2013, team will finalize implementation strategies, and complete any requisite policy updates.

Reporting Relationships: The Team reports to the NWRS Executive Implementation Council, chaired by the Assistant Director - National Wildlife Refuge System. The Regional Chief and Washington Office co-chairs will keep the Assistant Director and other EIC members informed of the status of team progress, activities, and recommendations.

Period of Operation:

The expectation is that excellence in science will become quickly institutionalized within the Service and Refuge System and duties will be carried out by existing staff and teams in both Fort Collins and the Regions. Therefore, this team will sunset in two years from the date of this charter unless otherwise amended.

James W. Kurtke

Assistant Director – National Wildlife Refuge System

25 OCT 2011

Date

**National Wildlife Refuge System
Community Partnerships: Conserving the Future
Recommendations 11 and 12**

Charter

Purpose

Develop guidance and put into practice processes that broaden and strengthen our conservation constituency by: a) developing refuge partnerships with non-traditional groups, b) ensuring that every staffed refuge or refuge complex is supported by a Friends Group or community partnership, c) creating new opportunities for community involvement, and d) by exploring ways to increase volunteer opportunities on refuges.

The Team will develop policy recommendations, reports on best practices, and provide leadership with specific guidelines on how to implement *Conserving the Future* recommendations 11 and 12.

The team is empowered to:

Develop recommendations, plans, strategies, policy, and decision support tools as necessary to improve volunteer and community partnerships within the Refuge System.

Form sub-teams to address particular elements of the vision.

Host calls, meetings, webinars, etc. as deemed necessary by the co-chairs to carry out the responsibilities of the team.

Participants:

The Team will be co-chaired by a Regional Refuge Chief and a Washington Office Division or Branch Chief. Membership will include up to 10 additional members. The team will communicate closely with other FWS program offices, States, and partners for information, assistance, and collaboration. The team will coordinate with the Strategic Growth Team to provide assistance in addressing best approaches to working with land conservation alliances.

Membership of this team may change over time to meet the team's needs. Changes in membership can be approved by the Executive Implementation Council (EIC) without amendment to this charter.

Initial Team Membership:

Marge Kolar	Co-Chair	Region 8
Ken Grannemann	Co-Chair	Headquarters
Sue McDonald	VS Specialist	Mid Columbia NWR
Juliette Gutierrez	Ast RF Manager	Buenos Aires NWR
Mary Stefanski	Refuge Manager	Upper Miss NWR
Anne Morkill	Refuge Manager	Key Deer NWR
Beth Goettel	Refuge Manager	Maine Coastal Is NWR
Raul Molina	Maint Worker	N Black Foot Ferret Con.
Brian Salem	Ast RF Manager/ LE	Lostwood NWR
Kristen Gilbert	Vol/Youth Coord	R7 RO
Chris Barr	Deputy Refuge Mgr	Sacramento NWR
Joanna Webb	Friends Coord.	Headquarters

Products and Deliverables: By February, 2012 the Team will report back to the EIC how it plans to address recommendations 11 and 12 from *Conserving the Future*. This initial report will consist of two parts: a) define success by describing specific actions or products that are needed to successfully deliver on the recommendations; and b) develop an associated timeline and brief description of the team's strategy to complete recommended final actions or products.

By June, 2012 the Team will present a draft report to the EIC that includes a national strategy for recruiting, coordinating, and supporting a sustainable volunteer program with particular attention to the engagement of a growing number of retiree volunteers. The Team will also address how to reach a broader set of potential partner organizations, and will provide specific recommendations on how to build and nurture Friends groups for staffed refuges that do not now have a Friends organization.

By April 2013, team will finalize implementation strategies, and complete any requisite policy updates.

Reporting Relationships: The Team reports to the NWRS Executive Implementation Council, chaired by the Assistant Director - National Wildlife Refuge System. The Regional Chief and Washington Office co-chairs will keep the Assistant Director and other EIC members

informed of the status of team progress, activities, and recommendations.

Period of Operation:

The tasks set forth will broaden the base of our conservation constituency and will become institutionalized within the Refuge System. This team will sunset two years from the date of this charter unless otherwise amended.

James W. Kurth

25 Oct 2011

Assistant Director – National Wildlife Refuge System Date

National Wildlife Refuge System
Urban Wildlife Refuge Initiative: Conserving the Future Recommendation
#13

Charter

Purpose

Build an urban wildlife refuge program in the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS) that implements the vision set forth in *Conserving the Future*. The purpose is to clearly articulate the standards of excellence for our urban refuges' outreach activities; develop measures and an evaluation processes to evaluate our efforts and measure progress; identify new partnership approaches that can provide a refuge and wildlife conservation presence in urban areas without a refuge land base and, provide the roadmap for success for our wildlife refuges - individually and collectively.

A robust and successful urban wildlife refuge program will not only raise awareness and appreciation for our conservation mission, but will bring the Service's conservation capacities together to engage an expanding and diverse conservation constituency.

The team is empowered to:

Develop recommendations, plans, strategies, and policy as necessary to implement the vision for an urban wildlife refuge initiative set forth in *Conserving the Future*.

Form sub-teams to address particular elements of the vision.

Host calls, meetings, webinars, etc. as deemed necessary by the co-chairs, to carry out the responsibilities of the team.

Participants:

The Team will be co-chaired by a Regional Refuge Chief and a Washington Office Executive Implementation Council (EIC) member. Membership will include at least three refuge managers or senior education specialists from our large urban wildlife refuges. The team will communicate with other U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) programs and offices (or other agencies and organizations for information and assistance).

Membership of this team may change over time to meet the team's needs. The Executive Implementation Council can approve changes in membership without amendments to this charter.

Initial Team Membership:

Cynthia Martinez	Co-Chair, R9
Scott Kahan	Co-Chair, Chief, R5
Kim Strassburg	VS Manager, R1
Ken Garrahan	VS Regional Chief, R2
Charlie Blair	Project Leader, R3
Sharron Fuller	Outreach Specialist, RO R4
Sharon Marino	Project Leader, R5
Lorrie Beck	VS Specialist, R6
Kenton Moos	Project Leader, R7
Chantel Jimenez	Environ Ed Specialist, R8
Mendel Stewart	Project Leader, R8
Steve Suder	Transportation Coord, R9
Brad Bortner	Div Chief, Mig Birds R9

Products and Deliverables: Convene a summit of our existing urban refuge managers to help the Team define what constitutes excellence in an urban wildlife refuge outreach initiative addressing, at a minimum, the elements of urban school partnerships, reaching diverse populations, integrating with local urban green-space planning, volunteer opportunities, youth employment opportunities, telling the Refuge System story, establishing a presence in urban areas that do not have a national wildlife refuge, environmental education, and interpretation for urban wildlife refuges. Simply, this task is to define what the Service should be doing in urban areas (on and off refuges) to engage the members of the community in conservation efforts that likely extend beyond the NWRS and FWS as well as constitute excellence in our urban wildlife refuge outreach programs.

By June 2012, the team will bring specific recommendations to the EIC regarding the standards for excellence, processes for evaluation of activities, and other relevant recommendations the team deems necessary to fully realize the vision for our urban wildlife refuge initiative.

By October 2012, the team will produce a draft blueprint for our urban wildlife refuges (target audience is our urban refuge staffs) detailing how our urban wildlife refuges can achieve these standards.

By December 2012, the team will produce strategies for developing an urban presence in communities without a refuge land base (e.g., Wildlife on Wheels, technical assistance programs, joint information centers, green space planning, etc.)

Reporting Relationships:

The Team reports to the NWRs Executive Implementation Council, chaired by the Assistant Director - National Wildlife Refuge System. The Regional Chief and Washington Office co-chairs will keep the Assistant Director and other EIC members informed of the status of team progress, activities, and recommendations.

Period of Operation:

The expectation is that excellence in urban wildlife refuges and urban presence will become quickly institutionalized within the Service and Refuge System. Therefore, this team will sunset in three years from the date of this charter unless otherwise amended.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James H. ...". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

8/12/2011

Assistant Director – National Wildlife Refuge System Date

**National Wildlife Refuge System
Communications: Conserving the Future
Recommendations 14 and 15**

Charter

Purpose

Develop a comprehensive strategy that effectively builds communication between the Refuge System and all Americans. By gaining a better understanding of the values and interests of a more diverse public, the Service and the Refuge System can better articulate the benefits of healthy fish and wildlife habitats to the American people. This strategy must include a comprehensive assessment of how to effectively communication through social media and web based applications.

The Team will develop policy recommendations, reports on best practices, and provide leadership with specific guidelines on how to implement *Conserving the Future* recommendations 14 and 15.

The team is empowered to:

Develop recommendations, plans, strategies, policy, and decision support tools as necessary to improve the communications between the Service and a broad cross section of Americans.

Form sub-teams to address particular elements of the vision.

Host calls, meetings, webinars, etc. as deemed necessary by the co-chairs to carry out the responsibilities of the team.

Participants:

The Team will be co-chaired by a Regional Refuge Chief and a Washington Office Division or Branch Chief. Membership will include approximately 10-12 additional members. The team will communicate closely with other FWS program offices, States, and partners for information, assistance, and collaboration.

Membership of this team may change over time to meet the team's needs. Changes in membership can be approved by the Executive Implementation Council without amendment to this charter.

Initial Team Membership:

David Viker	Co-Chair	Region 4
Martha Nudel	Co-Chair	Headquarters
Lisa Langelier	Refuge Manager	Inland NW NWR
Cynthia Eichhorn	I/M Data Mgr. GIS	R2 RO RW
Maggie O'Connell	Chief, Vis. Services	R3 RO RW
Kevin Foerster	Refuge Manager/Sup	Upper Miss NWR
Bruce Butler	LE Zone Officer	Caribbean Complex NWR
Andrew Gude	Refuge Manager	L. Suwannee NWR
Catherine Hibbard	WL Refuge Specialist	R 5 RO RW
Theresa Waswick	Admin Officer	Tewaukon NWR
Ryan Mollnow	Refuge Manager	Tetlin NWR
Justin Epting	GIS Specialist	R8 RO RW
Susan Morse	Writer/Editor	Headquarters
Kyla Hastie (Advisor)	Assistant Reg. Dir.	R5 External Affairs

Products and Deliverables: By February, 2012 the Team will report back to the EIC a schedule for completion of the integrated, long-term communications strategy.

By June, 2012 the Team will present a draft communications strategy to the EIC.

Some elements that need to be addressed in this plan include:

- A review of and recommendations for improving the Refuge System branding and image program (signs, brochures, web interface).
- How the Refuge System will use web-based media and other emerging technologies to help people learn about and enjoy the Refuge System
- How to appropriately partner with private organizations to communicate with the public the values and benefits of the Refuge System.

By April 2013, team will finalize the communication strategy, and complete any requisite policy updates.

Reporting Relationships:

The Team reports to the NWRS Executive Implementation Council, chaired by the Assistant Director - National Wildlife Refuge System. The Regional Chief and Washington Office co-chairs will keep the Assistant Director and other EIC members informed of the status of team progress, activities, and

recommendations.

Period of Operation:

Improved communications will broaden the base of our conservation constituency and will become institutionalized within the Refuge System. This team will sunset two years from the date of this charter unless otherwise amended.

James W. Kurth

Assistant Director – National Wildlife Refuge System

25 Oct 2011

Date

National Wildlife Refuge System
Hunting, Fishing, and Outdoor Recreation: Conserving the Future
Recommendations 17 and 18

Charter

Purpose

Work with state conservation agencies and organizations to provide appropriate and compatible new hunting and fishing and other wildlife dependent recreational opportunities in the Refuge System.

The Team will develop policy recommendations, reports on best practices, and provide leadership with specific guidelines on how to implement *Conserving the Future* recommendations 17 and 18.

The team is empowered to:

Develop recommendations, plans, strategies, policy, and decision support tools as necessary to improve recreational access and opportunities on national wildlife refuges to a broad cross section of Americans.

Form sub-teams to address particular elements of the vision.

Host calls, meetings, webinars, etc. as deemed necessary by the co-chairs to carry out the responsibilities of the team.

Participants:

The Team will be co-chaired by a Regional Refuge Chief and a Washington Office Division or Branch Chief. Membership will include up to 10 additional members. The team will communicate closely with other FWS program offices, States, and partners for information, assistance, and collaboration. The Team may invite comment and have dialog with the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council, the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership and with State agencies.

Membership of this team may change over time to meet the team's needs. Changes in membership can be approved by the Executive Implementation Council without amendment to this charter.

Initial Team Membership:

Robin West	Co-Chair	Region 1
James Hall	Co-Chair	Headquarters
Dianna Ellis	Refuge Manager	Kootenai NWR
Tony Booth	Refuge Manager	Wichita Mountains NWR
Bruce Freske	Refuge Manager	Morris WMD
Keith Weaver	Refuge Manager	Central AK Complex NWR
Virginia Rettig	Refuge Manager	Forsythe NWR
Casey Stemler	Chief, Mig. Birds	R6 RO MB
Noreen Walsh	Deputy RD	R6 RO
Roger Kaye	Wilderness Spec.	Arctic NWR
Sarah Swenty	I/E Specialist	Sacramento ES FWO
Rob Miller	Chief, Facilities Mgmt.	Headquarters

Products and Deliverables: By February, 2012 the Team will report back to the EIC on how it plans to address recommendations 17 and 18, and propose project accomplishment schedules, timelines and deliverables.

By June, 2012 the Team will present draft recommendations and implementation strategies to the EIC.

Some elements that need to be addressed in these strategies include:

- How to increase participation by youth in hunting and fishing on refuges.
- Best practices and strategies for increasing accessible opportunities for hunters and anglers with disabilities.
- How to expand recreational opportunities on refuges in a systematic manner, building upon the model of the Refuge System Birding Initiative.
- Recommendations on how the Service can monitor and evaluate the success of these implementation actions towards achieving the purposes of the recommendations.

By April 2013, team will finalize strategies.

Reporting Relationships: The Team reports to the NWRS Executive Implementation Council, chaired by the Assistant Director - National Wildlife Refuge System. The Regional Chief and Washington Office co-chairs will keep the Assistant Director and other EIC members informed of the status of team progress, activities, and

recommendations.

Period of Operation:

Improved and expanded compatible recreation opportunities will broaden the base of our conservation constituency and will become institutionalized within the Refuge System. This team will sunset two years from the date of this charter unless otherwise amended.

James W. Kurtz

25OCT2011

Assistant Director – National Wildlife Refuge System Date

National Wildlife Refuge System
Interpretation and Environmental Education: Conserving the Future
Recommendations 19 and 20

Charter

Purpose

Develop strategies for both interpretation and environmental education programs for the Refuge System. The interpretation program will provide memorable and personal experiences which increase visitors' enjoyment and understanding of wildlife refuges. The environmental education program will create pathways to understanding nature and provide tangible contributions to community schools.

The Team will develop strategy documents that include policy recommendations, reports on best practices, specific guidelines on how to implement *Conserving the Future* recommendations 19 and 20.

The team is empowered to:

Develop recommendations, plans, strategies, policy, and decision support tools as necessary to provide quality interpretation and environmental education to a broad cross section of Americans.

Form sub-teams to address particular elements of the vision.

Host calls, meetings, webinars, etc. as deemed necessary by the co-chairs to carry out the responsibilities of the team.

Participants:

The Team will be co-chaired by a Regional Refuge Chief and a Washington Office Division or Branch Chief. Membership will include up to 10 additional members. The team will communicate closely with other FWS program offices, States, and partners for information, assistance, and collaboration. The Team may seek comment and input from professional organizations including the National Association for Interpretation, and the North American Association for Environmental Education as appropriate.

Membership of this team may change over time to meet the team's needs. Changes in membership can be approved by the Executive Implementation Council without amendment to this charter.

Initial Team Membership:

Mitch Ellis	Co-Chair	Region 7
Kevin Kilcullen	Co-Chair	Headquarters
Laura Beauregard	Refuge Planner	Hawaii NWR
Jennifer Owen-White	Refuge Manager	Santa Anna NWR
Cindy Samples	VS Manager	Upper Miss. NWR
Stacy Armitage	VS Manager	R4 RO Refuges
Sarah Bevilacqua	VS Manager	Silvio O. Conte NWR
Jennifer Jewett	ED Specialist	Des Lacs NWR
Marianne Aplin	Park Ranger	AK Maritime NWR
Angelina Yost	VS Manager	Desert NWR
Georgia Jeppesen	Education Specialist	NCTC
Mike Carlo	VS Specialist	Headquarters

Products and Deliverables: By February, 2012 the Team will report back to the EIC on how it plans to address recommendations 19 and 20, and propose project accomplishment schedules, timelines and deliverables.

By June, 2012 the Team will present draft recommendations and implementation strategies to the EIC.

Some elements that need to be addressed in these strategies include:

- How the Service will use multiple approaches, formats and media, to more effectively interpret refuge fish and wildlife resources and management activities.
- How the Service will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these interpretive programs, and improve interpretive and education programs based on lessons learned.
- Provide best practices reports for successful interpretation and environmental education programs, and incorporate these models into appropriate training programs for Service staff.

By April 2013, team will finalize these two strategy reports.

Reporting Relationships:

The Team reports to the NWRS Executive Implementation Council, chaired by the Assistant Director - National Wildlife Refuge System. The Regional Chief and Washington Office co-chairs will keep the Assistant Director and other EIC members

informed of the status of team progress, activities, and recommendations.

Period of Operation:

Improved and expanded compatible interpretation and environmental education opportunities will broaden the base of our conservation constituency and will become institutionalized within the Refuge System. This team will sunset two years from the date of this charter unless otherwise amended.

James W. Kurth

25 OCT 2011

Assistant Director – National Wildlife Refuge System Date

National Wildlife Refuge System
Leadership Development Council: Conserving the Future
Recommendations #21, 22, 23 and 24

Charter

Purpose:

The purpose of the Leadership Development Council (LDC) is to transition the National Wildlife Refuge System into a more diverse, streamlined, efficient organization that promotes leadership in all positions. The LDC will develop programs and policies to enhance diversity recruiting and retention, provide pathways for career development, provide leadership training and development for the next generation of leaders, enhance mentoring, and evaluate the potential for and effectiveness of leadership at all levels. The LDC will also implement efficiencies to improve organizational excellence.

Recommendations will be specific to the Refuge System, but there are also efficiencies and career pathways that may be applicable Servicewide.

Specifically, the LDC is to build on *Fulfilling the Promise* recommendations L1-L6 and implement *Conserving the Future* recommendations 21-24.

The team is empowered to:

Develop recommendations, plans, strategies, and policy as necessary to implement the vision for leadership and organizational excellence set forth in *Conserving the Future*.

Form sub-teams to address particular elements of the vision;

Host calls, meetings, webinars, etc. as deemed necessary by the chair, to carry out the responsibilities of the team.

Participants:

The Team will be co-chaired by a Deputy Assistant Director, and a Deputy Regional Director. Membership will include up to an additional 13 members, representing a diverse array of programs, occupational series', and regions. The team will communicate with other FWS programs and offices or other agencies and organizations for information and assistance. The LDC will coordinate closely with the Service's "Deputies Group."

Membership of this team may change over time to meet the team's needs. Changes in membership can be approved by the Executive Implementation Council without amendments to this charter.

Initial Team Membership:

Jim Kurth	Co-Chair, Deputy Chief, NWRS
Mark Musaus	Co-Chair, Deputy Regional Director, R4
Miel Corbett	Assistant Field Supervisor, R1
Jana Grote	Fisheries Program Supervisor, R1
Tom Harvey	Refuge Supervisor, R2
Jason Wilson	Project Leader, R3
Holly Gaboriault	Deputy Area Manager, R4
Rebekah Martin	Deputy Refuge Manager, R5
Kathleen Burchett	Project Leader, R6
Tracey McDonnell	Refuge Supervisor, R7
Shaun Sanchez	Project Leader, R8
Gloria Bell	Deputy Assistant Director Training, NCTC

Products and Deliverables: By January 2012, the team will establish the appropriate sub-teams (Council's discretion) that will develop strategies to implement CTF recommendations 21-24 and establish timelines and products for such teams.

The Co-chairs should be prepared to report progress to the Executive Implementation Council by March 2012.

The LDC will recommend policy. The LDC will also develop and implement planning documents and programs necessary to accomplish its mission.

Reporting Relationships: The Team reports to the NWRS Executive Implementation Council, chaired by the Assistant Director – National Wildlife Refuge System. The Deputy Assistant Director and Deputy Regional Director Co-chairs will keep the Assistant Director, other EIC members, informed of the status of team progress, activities, and recommendations.

Period of Operation: Leadership and organizational excellence is a continued goal of the Service and the NWRS, therefore this team does not have a sunset clause.


Assistant Director – National Wildlife Refuge System 8/2/2011
Date



Appendix 4

Implementation Team “Work
Plan” suggested format

Implementation Team Name:

Date:

Implementation Team Work Plan

List Team Recommendation(s) Assignment:

List Specific Product(s) or Deliverable(s) for each Recommendation: (e.g. Policy Draft, Report, etc.) It is expected that there may be several different deliverables for each recommendation.

For Each Product or Deliverable:

- Briefly describe approach to completion (e.g. sub-teams assigned, contracts administered, etc.).
- List major milestones expected in process for deliverable with a specific timeline and dates.
- Describe internal and external communication approach (if any).
- List possible metrics or evaluation method to assessing success of recommended action.

Approval: [Executive Implementation Council (EIC) approval, signed by Deputy Chief NWRS]

Date:

NOTE: Please keep work plans to one to two pages in length.

Appendix 5

Communications Framework

Communications Framework for *Conserving the Future*

The Communications Framework provides an overview of tools that will be used to communicate about the implementation process and the themes that guide the stories and news. Described in this framework are the target audiences along with the avenues to be used to reach them, including electronic and printed communications.

All U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service employees are encouraged to participate in and stay informed about the implementation process. Employees can access a website on the Service's Intranet site InsideFWS – <https://inside.fws.gov/vision> – for updated information, including points of contacts for each team, as well as how to get involved on the sub-teams of the nine implementation teams.

The public can participate in the implementation process in a variety of ways. For external audiences, the www.AmericasWildlife.org website – maintained by the National Wildlife Refuge Association in partnership with the Service – will be updated regularly with implementation news, blogs, and other resources.

We have also created an e-mail account, conservingthefuture@fws.gov, for both internal and external audiences, as a direct connection to the implementation coordinators in the Washington Office. People can ask questions, make suggestions, add comments, or address concerns by using this e-mail account. The public and Service employees can also view information and links related to implementation from the Refuge System's website at www.fws.gov/refuges and its social media accounts on Facebook.com and Twitter.com.

Communication Tools

The following communications tools have been developed as places for individuals to find information about implementation:

Websites: www.AmericasWildlife.org

www.fws.gov/refuges

Intranet (FWS): <https://inside.fws.gov/vision>

E-mail: conservingthefuture@fws.gov

Social Media for AmericasWildlife.org:

■ Facebook: www.facebook.com/AmericasWildlife

■ Twitter: @americaswild

■ YouTube: www.youtube.com/AmericasWildlife

■ Flickr: www.flickr.com/photostream/AmericasWildlife

Social Media for the Refuge System:

■ Facebook: www.facebook.com/USFWSRefuges

■ Twitter: @USFWSRefuges

Publications and Listservs:

■ *Refuge Update*, bimonthly printed newsletter also available on-line. The newsletter 2012-focus topics will focus on implementation.

■ *Friends Forward*, quarterly printed newsletter also available on-line. The publication, aimed specifically at Friends organizations, will carry an implementation story in each issue.

■ Articles submitted to *Fish & Wildlife News*, quarterly magazine published by the Service.

■ *News from Washington*, electronic newsletter distributed about every three weeks (Refuge System employees only).

■ *Friends Newswire*, electronic service that provides fully written news stories to Friends organizations for use in their on-line or printed publications.

Communications Products (available on-line at www.AmericasWildlife.org/extras/fact-sheets/):

■ *Fact sheet*

- *Presentation files* (.ppt and .key formats)
- *List of Recommendations*
- *Executive Summary*
- *Video montage from Conserving the Future conference* (also available on YouTube channel)
- *Illustrations from Conserving the Future conference*

Service employees, members of Friends organizations, and partners are strongly encouraged to use these tools to be “ambassadors” for the vision and its inspiring content. Outreach should focus predominantly on organizations and constituencies that have an active interest in the material of the 24 recommendations contained in *Conserving the Future*.

Key Messages and Themes

Communications and messaging about *Conserving the Future* should always aim to be inspiring and relevant in its tone, as opposed to strictly informative. Passion for conservation and a belief in a better future for the planet are at the core of the vision’s scope and charge. Our messaging and the stories we tell should make obvious why the audience should care about the vision.

We offer no pat slogans or key phrases for implementation communications. Instead, we offer a number of key messages commonly used in vision communications about implementation:

- We share the belief that we must change the world to conserve the future of America’s wildlife and our planet for generations to come.
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service created a vision for the National Wildlife Refuge System as part of a larger movement for strategic, science-based landscape conservation and expanding a connected conservation constituency.

- We need your help and heart to make the vision a reality.

To get a sense of other language used to describe the vision process, implementation teams, and other aspects of implementation, see the outreach products that have been posted on-line.

You can also use content from the vision document itself. For example, the final charge to the reader – “Which challenges will you accept, and which future will you make?” – is used in a variety of vision-related communications that have been published.

When communicating about *Conserving the Future*, reference the vision as a *Service* vision for the Refuge System. Although partners, Friends organizations, and Service employees in the Refuge System were key in its development, the final publication represents the entire Service.

In addition, a number of themes will be used during 2012 around which to organize stories about implementation. These themes are being used as the focus topics of *Refuge Update*, which is the primary print resource with information about implementation.

- **January/February:** Implementing the Vision
- **March/April:** Wildlife and Wildlands
- **May/June:** Recreation on Refuges
- **July/August:** Partnerships that Work
- **September/October:** Shoring up Science
- **November/December:** Urban Wildlife Refuges

These themes should provide some general guidance to communications and social media professionals in the Service and partner organizations seeking to coordinate communications about *Conserving the Future* in the next 12 months. Stories and messaging does

not have to strictly adhere to these themes, particularly if there is an opportunistic or strategic justification.

Communications Timeline and Milestones

January/February 2012

Theme: *Implementing the Vision*

- Release of the Implementation Plan – January 20
- Implementation Teams to Spotlight: Leadership Development Council and Communications

March/April

Theme: *Wildlife and Wildlands*

- Implementation Team Work Plans developed – mid-March
- Anniversary of the Refuge System – March 14
- First Implementation Quarterly Progress Report – April
- Implementation Teams to Spotlight: Planning and Strategic Growth of the Refuge System

May/June

Theme: *Recreation on Refuges*

- Implementation Teams to Spotlight: Hunting, Fishing & Outdoor Recreation and Interpretation & Environmental Education

July/August

Theme: *Partnerships that Work*

- Anniversary of the *Conserving the Future* Conference in Madison, Wisconsin – July 14
- Second Implementation Quarterly Progress Report – July
- Implementation Teams to Spotlight: Community Partnerships

September/October

Theme: *Shoring Up Science*

- Anniversary of the *Conserving the Future* publication release – October 20

- Third Implementation Quarterly Progress Report – October ■ Implementation Team (and Recommendation) to Spotlight: Scientific Excellence and Recommendation 2: Climate Change

November/December

Theme: *Urban Wildlife Refuges*

- Implementation Team (and Recommendations) to Spotlight: Urban Wildlife Refuge Initiative, Recommendation 8: Quadrennial Report, and Recommendation 16: Refuge Law Enforcement Analysis

Monitoring and Evaluation

Washington Office staff will monitor the web and social media analytics at least quarterly. For major announcements, evaluation should be incorporated into any outreach plans developed. Additionally, a communications section should be included in all quarterly Implementation Progress Reports.

Questions, ideas for communications, or requests for products should be emailed to conservingthefuture@fws.gov.

**U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Wildlife Refuge System**

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service.

For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.

Information about Conserving the Future: Wildlife Refuges and the Next Generation can be found on at www.AmericasWildlife.org.

January 2012

