

**Activity: National Wildlife Refuge System**

		2007 Actual	2008 Enacted	2009			Change From 2008 (+/-)
				Fixed Costs & Related Changes (+/-)	Program Changes (+/-)	Budget Request	
Wildlife and Habitat Management	(\$000) FTE	159,418 1,241	180,536 1,249	+2,373 -	-930 -	181,979 1,249	+ 1,443 -
Refuge Visitor Services	(\$000) FTE	64,323 603	72,906 603	+1,165 -	-1,733 -	72,338 603	-568 -
Refuge Law Enforcement	(\$000) FTE	27,058 202	31,637 218	+452 -	+789 +6	32,878 224	+1,241 +6
Conservation Planning	(\$000) FTE	13,229 94	11,555 94	+234 -	-1,027 -	10,762 94	-793 -
<b>Subtotal Refuge Operations</b>	<b>(\$000) FTE</b>	<b>264,028 2,140</b>	<b>296,634 2,164</b>	<b>+4,224 -</b>	<b>-2,901 +6</b>	<b>297,957 2,170</b>	<b>+1,323 +6</b>
Refuge Maintenance	(\$000) FTE	134,187 705	137,490 707	+1,061 -	-2,384 -	136,167 707	-1,323 -
<b>National Wildlife Refuge System</b>	<b>(\$000) FTE</b>	<b>398,215 2,845</b>	<b>434,124 2,871</b>	<b>+5,285 -</b>	<b>-5,285 +6</b>	<b>434,124 2,877</b>	<b>0 +6</b>

**Summary of 2009 Program Changes for the National Wildlife Refuge System**

Request Component	(\$000)	FTE
Wildlife and Habitat Management		
• Ocean and Coastal Frontiers	+900	-
• Healthy Habitats & Populations	+77	-
• Invasive Species	-861	-
• Travel Reduction	-868	-
• Contract Reduction	-178	-
Visitor Services		
• Refuge Visitor Services	-500	-
• Volunteers	-973	-
• Travel Reduction	-228	-
• Contract Reduction	-32	-
Refuge Law Enforcement		
• Safe Borderlands	+1,000	+6
• Travel Reduction	-206	-
• Contract Reduction	-5	-

**Summary of 2009 Program Changes for the National Wildlife Refuge System-Cont'd**

<b>Request Component</b>	<b>(\$000)</b>	<b>FTE</b>
Conservation Planning		
• Comprehensive Conservation Plans	-984	-
• Travel Reduction	-29	-
• Contract Reduction	-14	-
Refuge Maintenance		
• Annual Maintenance	-2,185	-
• Travel Reduction	-109	-
• Contract Reduction	-90	-
<b>TOTAL Program Changes</b>	<b>-5,285</b>	<b>+6</b>

**Summary of Major 2009 Program Changes**

The 2009 Service request for the National Wildlife Refuge System is \$434,124,000 and 2,877 FTE, a net program change of -\$5,285,000 and +6 FTE from the 2008 Enacted. The request is described in detail within the sections for each subactivity.

**Wildlife and Habitat Management (-\$930,000)**

There are two major program changes. The budget proposes to eliminate the congressional add of \$861,000, which will return the program to the FY 2008 request level. This funding is redirected to the Ocean and Coastal Frontiers initiative (+900,000). This will be used to enhance management of estuarine and marine habitat at Midway Atoll and Palmyra Atoll National Wildlife Refuges. In addition, the request includes an increase of \$77,000 for the Healthy Habitats and Populations program to restore the pre-rescission level of funding for the program.

**Visitor Services (-\$1,733,000)**

The proposed program decrease of -\$1,733,000 will redirect resources to other high priority needs within the Fish and Wildlife Service. The budget request will allow the Refuge System to focus on basic visitor services strategic objectives of welcoming and orienting visitors, supporting volunteers and Friends, providing wildlife dependent recreation, and conserving cultural resources.

**Refuge Law Enforcement (+\$789,000/ +6 FTE)**

The Safe Borderlands initiative will add six Refuge Law Enforcement Officers along the southwest border to address the impacts of illegal border crossing and other illegal activities on refuges. Two officers will be assigned to South Texas NWR complex. The San Diego NWR, Cabeza Prieta NWR, Buenos Aires NWR will each receive one additional officer, and one officer will serve as a Southern California Zone Officer.

**Conservation Planning (-\$1,027,000)**

The proposed program decrease of -\$1,027,000 is a result of the efficiencies gained by Refuge System's management of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan program. Within the 2008 appropriation, the Refuge System continued to work towards the Congressional mandate of completing Comprehensive Conservation Plans for all 554 units of the Refuge System by 2012. The Refuge System will achieve the 2012 legislative mandate without the additional funding.

**Refuge Maintenance (-\$2,384,000)**

In response to initiatives under EO 13327 Federal Real Property Asset Management and initiatives related to energy conservation, the Refuge System is working hard to make our operations and maintenance activities as efficient as possible. Actions such as employing energy efficiency

measures for our buildings and other assets, disposing of assets that are only marginally contributing to our mission, and reducing the size of our vehicle fleet are being deployed to allow us to continue to deliver our mission at a reduced cost in our annual maintenance funding.

## **Program Overview**

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### **National Wildlife Refuge System**

The Fish and Wildlife Service's 96 million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System (Refuge System) is considered by many to be our nation's foremost commitment to conserving wildlife and biological diversity. The 548 refuges range from the tiny half-acre Mille Lacs National Wildlife Refuge, encompassing two rocky islands in Minnesota's Lake Mille Lacs, to the massive Arctic National Wildlife Refuge spanning 19.6 million acres of boreal forest, tundra, and estuary in Alaska. The Refuge System also encompasses 1.4 million acres managed under easement, agreement or lease, including 37 wetland management districts and 49 wildlife coordination areas. Thus, the Refuge System uses a variety of tools and legal arrangements to protect our nation's fish and wildlife.

Passage of the National Wildlife Refuge System Refuge Improvement Act of 1997 provided the Refuge System with a clear comprehensive mission, which 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."*

In 2008, the Refuge System supports the President's Migratory Bird initiative and the Secretary's Birds Forever initiative to improve and restore habitat at refuges that are important for migratory birds. The Refuge System provides a network of lands and waters critically important to the conservation of birds in the United States and the Americas. Wetland, grassland, and forested habitats on refuges provide key breeding, migrating, and wintering habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds, and wading birds and for nearctic and neotropical landbirds. The Refuge System's support of the initiative is aimed at conserving the 36 focal species identified in the initiative, and supporting important bird conservation efforts on refuges including wetland and native prairie restoration in the Midwest (benefiting nesting waterfowl and many declining grassland songbird species); restoration of bottomland forests in the Southeast (of great importance to neotropical songbirds); coastal wetland and estuarine restoration on the Atlantic, Pacific and Gulf coasts (benefiting many wetland-dependent birds); and control of invasive animals on islands critical to conservation of seabirds.

The Refuge System implements comprehensive conservation measures to maintain intact estuarine and marine ecosystems, including coral reef ecosystems, at 177 wildlife refuges and, where appropriate, restores degraded marine ecosystem components.

The Service's Refuge System fulfills its mission through the management of activities in five major areas –Wildlife and Habitat Management, Visitor Services, Refuge Law Enforcement, Conservation Planning, and Refuge Maintenance. Through these subactivities, the Refuge System monitors, restores, and protects wildlife and habitat, maintains facilities, supports wildlife-dependent recreation, and conducts other activities to achieve strategic goals. Each of these activities appeals to strategic and end outcome goals articulated in the DOI Strategic Plan, including:

**Resource Protection:**

- *Goal 1* - Improve Health of Watersheds, Landscapes, and Marine Resources that are DOI Managed or Influenced in a Manner Consistent with Obligations Regarding the Allocation and Use of Water
- *Goal 2* - Sustain Biological Communities on DOI Managed and Influenced Lands and Waters in a Manner Consistent with Obligations Regarding the Allocation and Use of Water
- *Goal 3* - Protect Cultural and Natural Heritage Resources

**Recreation:**

- *Goal 1* - Provide for a Quality Recreation Experience, including Access and Enjoyment of Natural and Cultural Resources on DOI Managed and Partnered Lands and Waters
- *Goal 2* - Provide For and Receive Fair Value in Recreation

**Serving Communities:**

- *Goal 1* - Protect Lives, Resources and Property

The Refuge System's programs support Service goals for resource conservation, protection, recreation, and service to communities. The Refuge System is also proud to work with other Federal agencies to conduct vital conservation projects to achieve these goals. For example, the Service is working with the U.S. Geological Survey to conduct ongoing biological monitoring of wildlife populations and habitat to improve refuge management.

**Refuge System Demonstrates Results: Rating Improved in Re-PART**

The National Wildlife Refuge System was re-evaluated by the Administration using the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) in 2007. The Refuge System made improvements compared to its 2003 review and improved its score from *Results not Demonstrated* to *Adequate*. This represents a major accomplishment for the Refuge System, the Service, and the Department.

In advance of the 2007 review, the Refuge System completed a wide range of improvements aimed at not only improving the program's PART score, but also at enhancing its operations, strategic planning, and performance measurement. In 2006, the Refuge System finalized a Strategic Plan that guides its long-term contributions towards conserving the nation's natural resources. The plan contains 12 long-term outcome goals that align with other Service activities and reflect the Refuge System's contributions to national conservation efforts such as those targeting migratory birds, endangered species, and aquatic resources. In association with these goals, the plan outlines more than 100 annual performance measures that track progress on a finer scale. This helps direct work on individual refuges towards accomplishing targets set by the annual performance measures; however, the outcome is delivery of the long-term goals. These annual performance measures and the long-term goals contribute to the delivery of the goals in both the Service's Operational Plan and the DOI's Strategic Plan.

The Refuge System has also implemented the Refuge Annual Performance Planning (RAPP) system, wherein every field station sets performance targets at the beginning of the coming year and reports actual performance accomplishments at the year's end. RAPP gives the Refuge System a solid structure for tracking its performance at all levels in the organization, thus insuring that major outcome goals, as established by the Service's leadership and the DOI Strategic Plan, are achieved.

The improvement in the Refuge System's PART score is due in no small part to field-level buy-in for the Strategic Plan and the performance system. Completing the Strategic Plan, instituting the RAPP, and obtaining a successful PART review are major milestones for the Refuge System, the Service and the Department. The Refuge System expects to continue achieving major milestones and advancing its business processes, performance, and planning.

### **Managing the Refuge System for Today and Tomorrow**

Since 2001, funding for the Refuge System has increased from \$300 million to \$434 million in FY 2008, an overall increase of \$134 million, or 44 percent, one of the largest increases in the FWS for any program. Increases have been provided for annual salary increases, rent, and other operating costs as well as the System's highest priorities including invasive species control, borderland security, and maintenance needs at targeted refuges. In 2005 the Service completed a study of refuge funding from FY 2001 to 2004 which indicated field station operational budgets rose by 30 percent. Because of the targeted nature of these increases, 201 field stations examined saw an increase in operations above inflation, and 86 stations had flat or declining operations budgets after factoring in inflationary costs.

The larger federal budget situation and higher costs for fuel, electricity, supplies, and repairs, present a challenge. The Service will manage the Refuge System and each refuge better and more effectively while meeting the President's Management Agenda goal of managing for outcome-based performance. The Service will need to redouble its efforts to achieve additional efficiencies and explore new ways to manage the Refuge System to ensure the mission is accomplished and performance goals are achieved.

To more proactively and efficiently manage this challenge, in recent years the Service has taken steps to deliver the Refuge System's mission in a performance-driven, priority-based manner. These steps have included embracing strategic planning from the Department of the Interior and Service leadership, distilling and focusing on projects Americans expect from the Refuge System, and implementing budget and performance systems that enable prudent management. The Refuge System has also taken steps to improve performance, including developing a five year strategic plan which integrates new performance measures and establishes performance targets; developing a process and schedule for independent program evaluations; and linking individual employee performance plans with goal-related performance targets for each fiscal year.

A funding increase of \$35.9 million in FY 2008 provides the Refuge System with unexpected funds to help better manage the challenge. That increase is retained in the FY 2009 Budget request. The System is not, however, going to abandon its efforts to ensure refuges improve management of their budgetary resources. This includes complexing some refuges, contracting out some services, and maintaining a proper allocation of operating funds to cover salaries and program costs to achieve program goals. To abandon these tools and the necessary management could lead to disastrous effects with salary costs eating up all of the operating budgets of individual refuges in a few short years.

### *Addressing Current Resource Management Goals*

The 1997 National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act directed the Service to manage national wildlife refuges with the principle goal of conserving wildlife resources for current and future generations. Trust resource management and protection of existing resources are the priority focus of workforce plans each region prepared. The plans prioritize refuges across three tiers in order to support allocation, staffing and performance decisions:

1. Focus Refuges - These are refuges where the Service will strive to maintain or enhance existing field operations. These refuges are identified because of the significance of the natural resources, important opportunities for priority wildlife-dependent recreation, or other highly significant values that make their operations top priorities for the Service.
2. Targeted Reduction Refuges - These refuges are identified as refuges that may have significant natural resources, opportunities for priority wildlife-dependent recreation, or other significant values, but their priority is less than focus refuges. These refuges are places where reductions in operations will likely occur.
3. Unstaffed Satellite Refuges - This includes both refuges that have never been staffed and those that will be destaffed because of higher priorities.

By reducing personnel at Unstaffed Satellite and Targeted Reduction Refuges, the Refuge System is making responsible management decisions to address priority needs of the System. The reductions will likely result in closures and reductions in public services at some refuges. Yet the plans will ensure most refuges continue to function and achieve priority objectives. The workforce plans also provide guidelines to assist decision-making associated with changing priorities and goals. The plan seeks to provide a systematic approach to properly align the current workforce with our most important mission objectives in an effort to move toward targeted ratios at field stations at the conclusion of the plans' three-year duration. The plans will be reviewed at least annually to chart progress and to make modifications as priorities dictate. The development and use of these plans demonstrates the responsible and strategic application of operational capacity, various tools, and available resources on behalf of the Refuge System and the Service overall for the benefit of wildlife, habitat, and the American people.

#### *Managing for the Future*

The Refuge System is reaching beyond personnel management to improve its operating position for the future. Management improvements continue to emphasize results and becoming more efficient. Using cost and performance data, the Refuge System is developing operational improvements and procedures to reduce costs and enhance performance. The Refuge System has established *Service Zones* in some regions for numerous functions including biology, law enforcement, and program administration. The creation of these zones have allowed expertise and personnel to impact a wider range of refuge issues and provide the necessary support for full-time law enforcement officers for example. In the future, the Refuge System intends to extend the use of the Service Zone model to the deployment of equipment to better address maintenance needs as documented in the Service Asset and Maintenance Management System (SAMMS). The Refuge System also continues to support the Director's desire to reduce facility costs through co-location of Service programs on refuges.

The Refuge System will address the goals captured in its Strategic Plan and improve the condition of wildlife and its habitat as reflected in the performance sections of this request. The Refuge System will continue to support migratory bird conservation through the restoration of more than 200,000 acres of wetland and upland habitats that are important to a wide array of species including migratory birds. The Refuge System provides important stopover habitat for these birds and are an important part of preserving our bird populations. The Refuge System will also improve its ability to protect the southwest border from the impacts of illegal immigration. These impacts include the accumulation of more than 300,000 pounds of trash, the theft of numerous government vehicles, and the destruction of habitat that is vital to endangered species (all of which have occurred at a single refuge).

### Use of Cost and Performance

The Refuge Maintenance program helps achieve the Refuge System mission by supporting a complex infrastructure including visitor, administrative, and maintenance facilities and a fleet of vehicles and heavy equipment necessary to conduct wildlife and habitat management activities and to provide nearly 40 million visitors with wildlife dependent recreation opportunities. Together, this facility infrastructure and mobile equipment fleet is valued at more than \$18 billion. Using principles embodied in Executive Order 13327, Federal Real Property Asset Management and the Department's Asset Management Plan, the Refuge System is managing its portfolio of facility and mobile equipment assets in a manner that focuses on accomplishment of our legislative mission while improving efficiency and effectiveness. Completing condition assessments for all assets in FY 2006 has improved management of the portfolio and will be used to allocate funds in FY 2008 and beyond to the highest priority maintenance needs.

The Refuge System considers costs and benefits when allocating maintenance funding to these assets. Through the Service Asset Maintenance and Management System (SAMMS), which operates on the DOI's MAXIMO platform, the Refuge System identifies assets that can most effectively be maintained by simultaneously applying an Asset Priority Index (API) and a Facility Condition Index (FCI). The API scores an asset according to how critical it is to achieving the Service mission while the FCI scores an asset according to repair versus replacement costs. These two scoring mechanisms are jointly applied whenever an asset is entered into SAMMS, thus enabling managers to see where they should apply funding to most efficiently manage the entire asset portfolio. This insight into asset management enables managers to make better cost/benefit decisions about related matters like lease space and new construction projects.

In FY 2006, the Refuge System completed its first set of condition assessments for all of its assets (20 percent of assets are assessed annually). The assessments were based on DOI guidance and applied specific valuation tools. Through these assessments, the Refuge System developed a full inventory of the assets, improving the quality of information regarding annual operations and maintenance costs. The assessments established baseline FCIs that validate costs for known deferred maintenance needs and documents new needs. The assessments also validate the current replacement value, which is necessary to determine the FCI. Regular assessments of the condition of assets and their contribution to the Refuge System mission assure that information used to allocate funding will contribute to effective asset management. By completing assessments for all facilities, the Refuge System improved its ability to provide maintenance, repair, and, where required, replacement costs with greater accuracy.

Asset management priorities are directly linked to the Service mission and strategic plan goals. As such, asset management decisions are based on input from field station managers, Regional asset management experts and national program managers who are familiar with the resource management impacts that result from asset investment decisions.

Understanding how each individual asset contributes to the mission, along with an understanding of its history, current condition, and its full life cycle costs combine to help prioritize and optimize allocations. Within the context of portfolio management activities, this approach allows for development of strong and well informed budget requests and identifies efficiencies to be gained during the budget execution phase. The Refuge System allocates Refuge Maintenance funding to its regional offices, and ultimately to its field stations, based on five-year averages of each region's maintenance backlog. Using five-year averages reduces fluctuations that would otherwise result from the annual appropriations process. Allocating funds in this manner allows regional and field managers to effectively plan maintenance activities.

In addition to achieving performance targets, proper support of the Refuge System's infrastructure is critical to mission accomplishments including wetland restoration, wildlife monitoring, and providing wildlife dependent recreation opportunities. The use of the condition assessments as well as the API and FCI has directed funding to the highest priority needs of the Refuge System. As a result, the condition of the Refuge System's conservation and biological facilities has improved by 9 percent and its recreation facilities condition has improved by 4 percent since 2005.

**Activity: National Wildlife Refuge System**  
**Subactivity: Wildlife and Habitat Management**

		2007 Actual	2008 Enacted	2009			Change from 2008(+/-)
				Fixed Costs & Related Changes (+/-)	Program Changes (+/-)	Budget Request	
Wildlife & Habitat Management (\$000)		149,712	168,617	+2,373	-1,007	169,983	+1,366
Healthy Habitats & Populations (\$000)		4,910	4,833		+77	4,910	+77
Challenge Cost Sharing Partnerships (\$000)		1,911	4,246			4,246	
Alaska Subsistence (\$000)		2,885	2,840			2,840	
<b>Total, Wildlife &amp; Habitat Management (\$000)</b>		<b>159,418</b>	<b>180,536</b>	<b>+2,373</b>	<b>-930</b>	<b>181,979</b>	<b>+1,443</b>
<i>FTE</i>		<b>1,241</b>	<b>1,249</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>1,249</b>	<b>-</b>

**Summary of 2009 Program Changes for Refuge Wildlife and Habitat Management**

Request Component	(\$000)	FTE
• Oceans and Coastal Frontiers	+900	-
• Healthy Habitats & Populations	+77	-
• Invasive Species	-861	-
• Travel Reduction	-868	-
• Contract Reduction	-178	-
<b>TOTAL, Program Changes</b>	<b>-930</b>	<b>-</b>

**Justification of 2009 Program Changes**

The 2009 budget request for the Refuge Wildlife and Habitat Management program is \$181,979,000 and 1,249 FTE, a net program change of -\$930,000 from the 2008 Enacted.

**Ocean and Coastal Frontiers (+\$900,000)**

The requested increase of \$900,000 within the Ocean and Coastal Frontiers initiative would be used to enhance management of estuarine and marine habitat at Midway Atoll and Palmyra Atoll National Wildlife Refuges. The Refuge System implements comprehensive conservation measures to maintain intact estuarine and marine ecosystems, including coral reef ecosystems, at 177 wildlife refuges and, where appropriate, restores degraded marine ecosystem components. The Refuge System will use the funds for projects that enhance coastal and marine habitats, such as:

- Launch Marine Debris Campaign (+\$500,000) – The Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (Monument) was established June 15, 2006, to preserve nearly 140,000 square miles of U.S. waters and lands in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, including two National Wildlife Refuges. The Monument is co-managed by the Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the State of Hawaii. Two of the primary threats to the Monument ecosystem are marine debris and derelict fishing gear. Midway Atoll is an accessible microcosm that demonstrates the issue. Current partnering agencies, including the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), Dow Chemical, NOAA, and the U.S. Coast Guard, focus on removal of in-water entanglement hazards and beach cleanups. Service staff



and volunteers have conducted reef and beach cleanup of large entanglement hazards for almost 20 years. Just since 1999, these partners have removed more than 100,000 pounds of derelict fishing nets and ropes from Midway's reefs and beaches. Midway's beaches reflect problems with floating plastics, for example, as Pacific Ocean currents carry debris from the Americas and Asia to the otherwise pristine beaches of the Midway Atoll. Feeding albatross inadvertently pick up plastics while feeding and transfer the debris to feeding chicks at Midway and elsewhere in the Monument. More than 9,000 pounds of plastic are brought to Midway by albatross and fed to chicks annually. This funding will be matched by partnership efforts with the NFWF, international corporations, and Monument co-trustees to remove and dispose of marine debris from the Monument. Funding would also help in the development of a marine debris research and monitoring program to assess the impacts of marine debris and formulate management objectives.

- Palmyra Atoll National Wildlife Refuge and Palmyra Atoll Research Consortium (PARC) (+\$400,000) – The \$0.4 million funding increase will support a unique cooperative conservation partnership, research program, and habitat restoration efforts between the Service, The Nature Conservancy, the U.S. Geologic Survey, and researchers from eight noted marine science institutions (Stanford University, Scripps, American Museum of Natural History, California Academy of Sciences, UC Santa Barbara, UC Irvine, University of Hawaii, and Victoria University, New Zealand). PARC was formed to capitalize on one of the most pristine coral reef atolls under U.S. jurisdiction. This funding will enhance a recent contribution of \$1.5 million in private funds for research efforts which will guide future management of the Palmyra Atoll National Wildlife Refuge. Palmyra has a future as a world-class site for scientific study focused on a range of issues from climate change to invasive species. Representing one of the most pristine coral reefs in the Pacific, Palmyra's diverse marine habitats represent a relatively pristine ecosystem supporting three times the number of coral species found in the Caribbean and Hawaii and five times as many coral species as the Florida Keys. Palmyra's reefs contain food webs dominated by an abundance of top predators, which have rapidly declined elsewhere. Thus, Palmyra Atoll NWR offers an extraordinary opportunity for scientific studies aimed at protecting coral reef ecosystems in the Pacific and around the world. Palmyra's unique location near the equator, its phenomenal biodiversity, and its history of minimal human impact make it an unparalleled laboratory to study vital issues affecting tropical island ecosystems, as well as global challenges such as climate change. Working together with the Fish and Wildlife Service, the PARC will help answer many questions about the ability of global coral reef environments to survive into the future.

#### **Healthy Habitats & Populations (+\$77,000)**

The requested increase of \$77,000 in 2009 will fund environmental contaminant investigations and cleanup on refuges, and address wildlife diseases found on refuges, such as chronic wasting disease. These activities will continue at the 2007 funding level, which was equal to the 2008 President's budget.

#### **Invasive Species (-\$861,000)**

A decrease of \$861,000 in the Invasive Species Program within the Refuge Wildlife and Habitat Management subactivity will continue the program at the FY 2008 enacted level, and will continue to support invasive species management and control activities. Specifically, the request eliminates the \$984,000 Invasives with Friends Congressional earmark and redirects \$123,000 to Invasive Species base funding. The Refuge System will treat over 255,000 acres infested with invasive plants, and control infestations on approximately 100,000 acres. Invasive Species Strike Teams will continue to prioritize early detection and rapid response to newly emerging infestations in Arizona and New

Mexico; south Florida; the Missouri-Yellowstone-Columbia basin; North Dakota; and Hawaii and the Pacific Islands. The Refuge System will continue to utilize its established network of volunteers to monitor and treat invasive plant infestations.

**Program Performance Change**

Performance Goal	2005 Actual	2006 Actual	2007 Actual	2008 Plan	2009 Base Budget (2008 Plan + Fixed Costs)	2009 President's Budget	Program Change Accruing in 2009	Program Change Accruing in Outyears
<b>Resource Protection: Landscapes and Watersheds</b>								
CSF 2.1 Number of FWS wetland acres restored to the condition specified in management plans - annual (GPRA)	40,027	49,765	24,889	23,999	23,999	28,484	+4,485 (+18.7%)	
CSF Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$10,287	\$8,032	\$7,931	\$7,931	\$9,639	\$1,708	
CSF Program Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$8,875	\$7,996	\$8,187	\$8,187	\$8,384	\$196	
Actual/Projected Cost Per Acre (whole dollars)	unk	\$207	\$323	\$330	\$330	\$338	\$8	
Comments:	Increased performance is due to a significant increase in funding.							
CSF 2.2 Number of FWS upland acres restored to the condition specified in management plans - annual (GPRA)	174,421	198,663	56,177	75,281	75,281	75,892	+612 (+0.8%)	
CSF Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$12,331	\$9,339	\$12,816	\$12,816	\$13,230	\$414	
CSF Program Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$10,316	\$9,293	\$9,516	\$9,516	\$9,744	\$228	
Actual/Projected Cost Per Acre (whole dollars)	unk	\$62	\$166	\$170	\$170	\$174	\$4	
CSF 2.3 Number of FWS coastal and marine acres restored to the condition specified in management plans - annual (GPRA)	214,428	5,903	7,159	11,499	11,499	11,593	+94 (+0.8%)	
CSF Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$1,910	\$1,348	\$2,217	\$2,217	\$2,289	\$72	
CSF Program Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$1,629	\$1,334	\$1,366	\$1,366	\$1,399	\$33	
Actual/Projected Cost Per Acre (whole dollars)	unk	\$324	\$188	\$193	\$193	\$197	\$5	
CSF 2.4 Number of FWS wetland acres managed or protected to maintain desired condition as specified in management plans - annual (GPRA)	1,150,276	21,357,697	21,624,566	31,805,704	31,805,704	31,829,898	+24,194 (+0.1%)	
CSF Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$79,404	\$67,435	\$101,565	\$101,565	\$104,081	\$2,517	
CSF Program Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$67,224	\$67,253	\$68,867	\$68,867	\$70,519	\$1,653	
Actual/Projected Cost Per Acre (whole dollars)	unk	\$4	\$3	\$3	\$3	\$3	\$0	
2.9.2 % of known contaminated sites on NWRS lands remediated during the FY (GPRA)	14%	20% (24 of 120)	43% (15 of 35)	32% (9 of 28)	32% (9 of 28)	32% (9 of 28)	0.0%	
Comment:	Denominator changes from 2006 to 2008 due to an improved reporting system and a more accurate definition of terms.							

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**Program Overview**

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The Wildlife and Habitat Management budget element addresses the ecological condition of the Refuge System, employing actions such as the inventory and monitoring of plant and animal populations; manipulating plant community successional stages through burning, haying and grazing; identifying and controlling the spread of invasive species; monitoring air quality; conducting contaminant investigations and cleanup; responding to wildlife disease outbreaks; and assessing water quality and quantity. These activities are integral to conserving, managing and restoring fish and wildlife resources and their habitats.

This budget element supports conservation on over 96 million acres that make up the Refuge System. Much of this important work is accomplished in partnership with adjacent landowners, local communities, non-government organizations, states, and other federal agencies. In addition, more than 250 organized groups of volunteers (known as “Friends” groups) help refuges meet public use and resource management goals. Volunteers contribute approximately 20 percent of the work hours performed on refuges.

The budget element supports achievement of five prominent goals defined in the DOI Strategic Plan which are also captured in the Refuge System’s strategic plan. Through efforts to combat invasive species and wildlife diseases (such as Chronic Wasting Disease and Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza), and to protect endangered species, the Refuge System supports the DOI’s performance pertaining to the conservation, management, and restoration of fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats.

The Refuge System also uses this funding to manage lands that hold special designations to preserve their unique values, including 75 wilderness areas, 10 wild and scenic rivers, and millions of acres of marine habitat, some of which are proposed for designation as marine protected areas.

Effective management of operations under this budget element supports the primary mission of the Refuge System as defined by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997. In so doing, it also contributes to Presidential priorities including: Invasive Species, the National Forest Plan, the Healthy Forest initiative, the U.S. Ocean Action Plan, Conserving America’s Wetlands, and the Cooperative Conservation initiative.

In 2008, the Refuge System supports the President’s Migratory Bird initiative to improve and restore habitat at refuges that are important for migratory birds. The Refuge System provides a network of lands and waters critically important to the conservation of birds in the United States and the Americas. Wetland, grassland, and forested habitats on refuges provide key breeding, migrating, and wintering habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds, and wading birds and for nearctic and neotropical landbirds. The Refuge System’s support of the initiative is aimed at conserving the 36 focal species identified in the initiative, and supporting important bird conservation efforts on refuges including wetland and native prairie restoration in the Midwest (benefiting nesting waterfowl and many declining grassland songbird species); restoration of bottomland forests in the Southeast (of great importance to neotropical songbirds); coastal wetland and estuarine restoration on the Atlantic, Pacific and Gulf coasts (benefiting many wetland-dependent birds); and control of invasive animals on islands critical to conservation of seabirds.

Due to the variety of habitat types within the Refuge System, including wetland, upland, and coastal habitats, the restoration and management activities required are equally diverse. Controlling invasive species, restoring marshes and grasslands, and managing forests and water levels are among the necessary management activities. The Refuge System’s restoration efforts will support the restoration

and improved management of several hundred thousand acres in the Refuge System. The Refuge System regularly restores habitat at a cost of less than \$200 per acre. Within the initiative, the Refuge System will contribute to the restoration of wetland acres and upland habitat, both of which are critical to the resting, breeding and nutritional needs of migratory birds. The Refuge System will cooperate with Federal, State and local entities to complete projects such as:

- Piping Plover Habitat Enhancement – In spring 2006, Cape May NWR worked with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to improve beach-nesting bird habitat, specifically for the federally-listed threatened piping plover. The creeping secondary dunes were pushed into the primary dune to an elevation that only allows flooding during extreme high tides, thus creating an overwash area. Within a few weeks, piping plovers and American oystercatchers nested in the cleared area. Refuges that provide beach-nesting bird habitat throughout the East Coast could benefit from similar enhancement work.
- Grassland Nesting Bird Restoration - Outstanding examples of how to effectively restore native grasslands and the imperiled bird species that nest in them already exist at numerous Midwestern refuges. Huron Wetland Management District, LaCreek National Wildlife Refuge, and Souris River Basin Refuges have all developed successful restoration and enhancement techniques that involve removing invasive woody species and/or reseeding native grasses and forbs.
- Invasive Plant Removal and Native Habitat Restoration – Saltcedar is one of several invasive plant species prevalent on western refuges that destroys native habitats on which ducks, geese, sandhill cranes, and other migratory birds depend. Saltcedar removal requires several seasons and involves mechanical and chemical techniques. A critical component of saltcedar management is to quickly replace native vegetation to prevent re-growth. Restored habitats include riparian forests, saltgrass meadows, wetlands, and agricultural fields that benefit waterfowl, songbirds, raptors, and the endangered Southwestern willow flycatcher, a migratory bird. Successful saltcedar removal and restoration is expensive, because of the amount of staff time, machinery costs (including fuel and repairs), and chemical application costs (often using aircraft). Bosque del Apache NWR has researched and developed combinations of techniques that are extremely successful in removing saltcedar and restoring habitats. These techniques can be applied to refuges throughout the southwest.
- Enhancement of Early Successional Habitat in the Midwest - A variety of techniques, including mechanical and prescribed fire treatments, were used to manage early successional forest habitats on Tamarac NWR for benefit of golden-winged warblers and American woodcock, both of which are listed as Birds of Conservation Concern by the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Conducting the treatments at this 43,000 acre refuge, as well as monitoring the habitat and the species response, was critical to reversing the declines of these priority species; and provided a model of how to improve management for these species across the Midwestern states.
- Coastal Wet Pine Savanna Enrichment - The wet pine savannas of the outer Gulf Coastal Plain include some of the highest plant diversities ever recorded at the ground level, 35-40 species per square meter. Only 2-3% of these unique and diverse communities remain, providing valuable habitat for an entire suite of declining grassland/savanna/open pineland birds, including the endangered Mississippi Sandhill crane. The Mississippi Sandhill Crane NWR has used frequent prescribed burning, mechanical vegetation treatments, hydrological restoration, and pest plant management to restore and enrich thousands of acres of these savannas. Conducting an aggressive but safe burn program is especially impressive

considering that the refuge is almost entirely in the wildland-urban interface - Interstate 10 bisects the refuge. The refuge cares for the largest remaining patches of these species-rich savannas in the southeast supporting not only the endangered crane, but also Henslow's sparrows, Bachman's sparrow, brown-headed nuthatch, yellow rail, northern bobwhite, red-headed woodpecker, loggerhead shrike, and species.

The Wildlife and Habitat Management program elements include:

**Refuge Wildlife and Habitat Management.** This program element includes management for a broad array of recurring wildlife and habitat management actions on millions of acres of refuge habitat every year, including: restoring wetlands, riparian zones, and uplands; managing extensive wetland impoundments and other bodies of water; and managing vegetative habitats through farming, prescribed burning, mowing, haying, grazing, forest harvest or selective thinning; and the control of invasive plants. In addition, this element also funds the operation of small-scale wildlife management facilities (valued at less than \$500,000) such as dikes, levees, pumps, spillways, access points, and water level control structures. This element also funds water rights protection and adjudication; and inventorying and monitoring of habitat. Management actions for wildlife populations include reintroducing imperiled species, erecting nest structures, controlling predators, banding and radiotracking wildlife, and monitoring species groups. Invasive species management is also critical, preventing the introduction and spread of invasive species, and controlling or removing them where they are already established. Use of integrated pest management techniques is applied wherever feasible but mechanical removal or herbicides are often necessary where extensive infestations occur. Early treatment of newly emerging problems is sought wherever possible to limit species expansion and prevent the need for more costly treatment regimes. This element also funds staff that review projects funded or permitted by the Service for compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act (some staff funded under the Refuge Visitor Services subactivity also perform these reviews). Reviews may include field surveys, archaeological testing, and site evaluations. The Refuge System employs a majority of the Service's cultural resource specialists and provides compliance reviews for projects funded by other programs, such as grants issued by the Ecological Services program.

**Healthy Habitats & Populations.** This program element includes funds directed to environmental contaminant investigations and cleanup on refuges, and for addressing wildlife diseases found on refuges, such as chronic wasting disease.

**Cost Sharing and Partnerships.** The Cooperative Conservation Initiative /Challenge Cost Share works with partners in a cost-sharing approach to accomplish wildlife and habitat objectives. Habitat restoration, wildlife inventories and monitoring, and geographic information system development (supporting Geospatial One Stop) are included under this program. Projects must have at least one non-Federal partner and require a minimum 1:1 Federal: non-Federal match of funding or in-kind services. The sponsored projects must occur on a refuge or directly benefit a refuge. The following table summarizes the 2009 request for the NWRs CCI/CCS components.

CCI / CCS Component	2009 Request	Change from 2008 Enacted
CCI/CCS Administration Salaries (Included in Wildlife and Habitat Management General Operations)	943	0
Wildlife and Habitat Management CCI / CCS	4,246	0
Visitor Services CCI / CCS	1,404	0
<b>Total NWRS CCI / CCS</b>	<b>6,593</b>	<b>0</b>

**Alaska Subsistence.** The Alaska Subsistence program manages subsistence uses by rural Alaskans on 237 million acres of federal lands by coordinating the regulation and management of subsistence harvests among five federal agencies (the Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the U.S. Forest Service), coordinating with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and providing technical and administrative support for 10 rural Regional Advisory Councils.

### 2009 Program Performance

The 2009 budget request will allow the Refuge System to enhance efforts to conserve core resources benefiting terrestrial and aquatic habitats for migratory and resident wildlife. The funding will strengthen the Refuge System's ability to contribute to the goals identified in the DOI's Strategic Plan to sustain biological communities and provide quality environments with adequate water supplies in FY 2009 and beyond. The Refuge System will support the continued management and restoration of wetlands, and address critical water resource needs. The Refuge System will implement 1,849 recovery actions for threatened and endangered species, complete 2 contaminant cleanup projects, and restore over 35,000 wetland and open water acres. These activities will not only benefit wildlife and habitat, but also support the continued provision of high quality wildlife-dependent recreation opportunities for approximately 37 million visitors. The Refuge System will also restore 64,289 upland habitat acres, an annual increase of more than 8,100 acres from FY 2007.

The Refuge System will continue to conduct traditional habitat management activities through methods such as water manipulation, haying, farming, grazing, timber harvest and selective thinning.

In 2009, the Refuge System will direct \$7.881 million to treat more than 320,000 acres infested with invasive plants. In addition, the Refuge System will control 345 invasive animal populations. Invasive species management and control activities include continuing the operation of five Invasive Species Strike Teams in Arizona and New Mexico, south Florida, the Missouri-Yellowstone-Columbia basin, North Dakota, and Hawaii and the Pacific Islands. Teams will focus on early detection and rapid response of newly emerging infestation.

**Program Performance Overview**

Performance Goal / Measure	2005 Actual	2006 Actual	2007 Plan	2007 Actual	2008 Plan	2009 President's Budget	Change from 2008 Plan to 2009	Long-term 2012 Target
<b>Resource Protection - Landscapes and Watersheds</b>								
CSF 1.1 Number of FWS riparian (stream/shoreline) (including marine and coastal) miles restored to the condition specified in management plans - annual (GPRA)	80	97	71	58	63	64	+1 (+1.6%)	64
CSF Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$2,997	unk	\$2,746	\$3,030	\$3,153	\$123	\$3,153
CSF Program Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$2,026	unk	\$2,328	\$2,384	\$2,441	\$57	\$2,441
Actual/Projected Cost Per Mile (whole dollars)	unk	\$31,045	unk	\$47,339	\$48,475	\$49,638	\$1,163	\$49,638
CSF 2.1 Number of FWS wetland acres restored to the condition specified in management plans - annual (GPRA)	40,027	49,765	35,316	24,889	23,999	28,484	+4,485 (+18.7%)	28,484
CSF Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$10,287	unk	\$8,032	\$7,931	\$9,639	\$1,708	\$9,639
CSF Program Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$8,875	unk	\$7,996	\$8,187	\$8,384	\$196	\$8,384
Actual/Projected Cost Per Acre (whole dollars)	unk	\$207	unk	\$323	\$330	\$338	\$8	\$338
Comments:	Performance increase is the result of a significant increase in funding.							
CSF 2.2 Number of FWS upland acres restored to the condition specified in management plans - annual (GPRA)	174,421	198,663	126,034	56,177	75,281	75,892	+612 (+0.8%)	75,892
CSF Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$12,331	unk	\$9,339	\$12,816	\$13,230	\$414	\$13,230
CSF Program Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$10,316	unk	\$9,293	\$9,516	\$9,744	\$228	\$9,744
Actual/Projected Cost Per Acre (whole dollars)	unk	\$62	unk	\$166	\$170	\$174	\$4	\$174
CSF 2.3 Number of FWS coastal and marine acres restored to the condition specified in management plans - annual (GPRA)	214,428	5,903	13,554	7,159	11,499	75,892	+94 (+0.8%)	75,892
CSF Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	--	\$1,910	--	\$1,348	\$2,217	\$13,230	\$72	\$13,230

Performance Goal / Measure	2005 Actual	2006 Actual	2007 Plan	2007 Actual	2008 Plan	2009 President's Budget	Change from 2008 Plan to 2009	Long-term 2012 Target
CSF Program Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	--	\$1,629	--	\$1,334	\$1,366	\$9,744	\$33	\$9,744
Actual/Projected Cost Per Acre (whole dollars)	--	\$324	--	\$188	\$193	\$174	\$5	\$174
CSF 2.4 Number of FWS wetland acres managed or protected to maintain desired condition as specified in management plans - annual (GPRA)	1,150,276	21,357,697	21,450,067	21,624,566	31,805,704	31,829,898	+24,194 (+0.1%)	31,829,898
CSF Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$79,404	unk	\$67,435	\$101,565	\$104,081	\$2,517	\$104,081
CSF Program Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$67,224	unk	\$67,253	\$68,867	\$70,519	\$1,653	\$70,519
Actual/Projected Cost Per Acre (whole dollars)	unk	\$4	unk	\$3	\$3	\$3	\$0	\$3
CSF 2.5 Number of FWS upland acres managed or protected to maintain desired condition as specified in management plans - annual (GPRA)	2,502,152	52,791,511	52,901,557	52,689,376	51,750,305	51,826,197	+75,893 (+0.1%)	51,826,197
CSF Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$58,652	unk	\$47,712	\$47,986	\$49,210	\$1,224	\$49,210
CSF Program Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$49,382	unk	\$47,444	\$48,583	\$49,749	\$1,166	\$49,749
Actual/Projected Cost Per Acre (whole dollars)	unk	\$1	unk	\$1	\$1	\$1	\$0	\$1
CSF 2.6 Number of FWS coastal and marine acres managed and protected to maintain desired condition as specified in management plans - annual (GPRA)	174,586	2,359,228	2,411,988	2,366,041	2,388,449	2,412,643	+24,194 (+1.0%)	2,412,643
CSF Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$22,586	unk	\$20,892	\$21,597	\$22,339	\$742	\$22,339
CSF Program Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$19,669	unk	\$20,849	\$21,349	\$21,861	\$512	\$21,861
Actual/Projected Cost Per Acre (whole dollars)	unk	\$10	unk	\$9	\$9	\$9	\$0	\$9
2.9.2 % of known contaminated sites on NWRS lands remediated during the FY (GPRA)	14%	20% (24 of 120)	37% (14 of 38)	43% (15 of 35)	32% (9 of 28)	32% (9 of 28)	0.0%	32% (9 of 28)



Performance Goal / Measure	2005 Actual	2006 Actual	2007 Plan	2007 Actual	2008 Plan	2009 President's Budget	Change from 2008 Plan to 2009	Long-term 2012 Target
<b>Resource Protection - Sustaining Biological Communities</b>								
CSF 6.1 Percent of all migratory bird species that are at healthy and sustainable levels (GPRA) (PART)	61.4%	61.4% (561 of 913)	61.7% (563 of 912)	61.5% (561 of 912)	62.3% (568 of 912)	62.3% (568 of 912)	0.0%	62.8% (573 of 912)
CSF Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$28,207	unk	\$23,239	\$24,094	\$24,672	\$578	\$24,889
CSF Program Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$8,651	unk	\$8,212	\$8,409	\$8,611	\$202	\$8,611
Actual/Projected Cost Per Species (whole dollars)	unk	\$50,280	unk	\$41,424	\$42,418	\$43,436	\$1,018	\$43,436
CSF 6.4 Percent of habitat needs met to achieve healthy and sustainable levels of migratory birds - cumulative (PART)	40.5%	45.9% (31,038,128 of 67,673,168)	58.0% (217,596,079 of 375,386,194)	51.5% (229,656,269 of 445,882,181)	52.1% (233,127,859 of 447,161,217)	55.6% (248,601,118 of 447,161,217)	+3.5% (+6.6%)	58.4% (278,433,252 of 477,161,217)
CSF Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$7,963	unk	\$29,861	\$31,039	\$33,894	\$2,855	\$37,961
CSF Program Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$498	unk	\$409	\$419	\$429	\$10	\$429
CSF 11.1 Percent of baseline acres infested with invasive plant species that are controlled (GPRA)	12%	12% (284,363 of 2,356,740)	12% (250,317 of 2,015,841)	14% (280,961 of 2,015,841)	11% (260,028 of 2,329,450)	11% (262,140 of 2,329,450)	+0.1% (+0.8%)	11% (262,140 of 2,329,450)
CSF Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$24,802	unk	\$23,311	\$22,092	\$22,806	\$714	\$22,806
CSF Program Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$18,710	unk	\$19,867	\$20,344	\$20,833	\$489	\$20,833
Actual/Projected Cost Per Acre (whole dollars)	unk	\$87	unk	\$83	\$85	\$87	\$2	\$87
CSF 12.1 Percent of invasive animal populations that are controlled (GPRA)	3%	6% (288 of 4,978)	7% (331 of 4,493)	7% (302 of 4,493)	7% (289 of 4,387)	7% (291 of 4,387)	+0.1% (+0.8%)	7% (291 of 4,387)
CSF Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$3,386	unk	\$2,470	\$2,420	\$2,499	\$78	\$2,499
CSF Program Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$1,842	unk	\$1,609	\$1,648	\$1,688	\$40	\$1,688
Actual/Projected Cost Per Populations (whole dollars)	unk	\$11,757	unk	\$8,179	\$8,375	\$8,576	\$201	\$8,576
<b>Management Excellence</b>								
CSF 52.1 Number of volunteer hours per year supporting FWS mission activities (GPRA)	1,404,064	2,164,648	1,930,175	2,328,109	1,963,849	1,958,684	-5,165 (-0.3%)	1,958,684
52.1.8.1 # of NWRs with Friends Groups	249	384	391	287	288	286	-2 (-0.8%)	291

**Activity: National Wildlife Refuge System**  
**Subactivity: Visitor Services**

		2007 Actual	2008 Enacted	2009			Change from 2008(+/-)
				Fixed Costs & Related Changes (+/-)	Program Changes (+/-)	Budget Request	
Refuge Visitor Services	(\$000)	62,162	69,794	+1,165	-760	70,199	+405
Visitor Facility Enhancements	(\$000)	0	0			0	
Volunteers	(\$000)	735	1,708		-973	735	-973
Challenge Cost Sharing Partnerships	(\$000)	1,426	1,404			1,404	
<b>Total, Visitor Services</b>	<b>(\$000)</b>	<b>64,323</b>	<b>72,906</b>	<b>+1,165</b>	<b>-1,733</b>	<b>72,338</b>	<b>-568</b>
	<i>FTE</i>	<b>603</b>	<b>603</b>		--	<b>603</b>	-

**Summary of 2009 Program Changes for Visitor Services**

Request Component	(\$000)	FTE
• Refuge Visitor Services	-500	-
• Volunteers	-973	-
• Travel Reduction	-228	-
• Contract Reduction	-32	-
<b>TOTAL, Program Changes</b>	<b>-1,733</b>	<b>-</b>

**Justification of 2009 Program Changes**

The 2009 budget request for the Refuge Visitor Services Program is \$72,338,000 and 603 FTE, a net program change of -\$1,733,000 from the 2008 Enacted.

**Refuge Visitor Services (-\$500,000)**

The proposed program decrease of \$500,000 will allow funding from the Visitor Services activity to be used for other high priority Fish and Wildlife Service needs. The Refuge System continues to maximize management efforts within the requested funds. The request will allow the Refuge System to maintain its current level of over 80 percent of refuges and wetland management districts that are open to priority recreation activities. The budget request will allow the Refuge System to focus on basic visitor services strategic objectives of welcoming and orienting visitors, supporting volunteers and Friends, providing wildlife dependent recreation, and conserving cultural and archaeological resources.

**Volunteers (-\$973,000)**

To offset higher priorities, a decrease of \$973,000 in the Volunteer Program within the Visitor Services subactivity will continue the program at the FY 2007 enacted level, and will continue to support the activities covered under the Volunteer and Community Partnership Enhancement Act of 1998. Volunteers contribute nearly 20 percent of the work hours performed on refuges. There are currently over 200 organized support organizations, or Friends organizations, assisting refuges in meeting visitor services and natural resource management goals.

**Program Performance Change**

Performance Goal	2005 Actual	2006 Actual	2007 Actual	2008 Plan	2009 Base Budget (2008 Plan + Fixed Costs)	2009 President's Budget	Program Change Accruing in 2009	Program Change Accruing in Outyears
<b>Recreation</b>								
15.2.8 % of NWRs/WMDs that have quality environmental education programs, where interpretation is compatible (PART)	64% ( 232 of 360 )	80% ( 373 of 465 )	80% ( 375 of 469 )	80% ( 378 of 474 )	80% ( 378 of 474 )	79% ( 375 of 474 )	-0.6% (-0.8%)	
15.2.8.1 # of NWRs/WMDs that have quality environmental education programs, where interpretation is compatible (PART)	232	373	375	378	378	375	-3 (-0.8%)	
15.2.8.2 total # of refuges with EE programs (PART)	360	465	469	474	474	474	0	
15.2.10 % of NWRs/WMDs with quality interpretative programs that adequately interpret key resources and issues, where interpretation is compatible (PART)	62% ( 252 of 409 )	87% ( 424 of 485 )	88% ( 427 of 483 )	88% ( 426 of 485 )	88% ( 426 of 485 )	87% ( 423 of 485 )	-0.7% (-0.8%)	
15.2.10.1 # of NWRs/WMDs with quality interpretative programs that adequately interpret key resources and issues, where interpretation is compatible (PART)	252	424	427	426	426	423	-3 (-0.8%)	
15.2.10.2 total # of refuges with interpretation programs (PART)	409	485	483	485	485	485	0	
15.2.20 % of visitors are satisfied with the quality of experience (GPRA)	unk	85% ( 85 of 100 )	85% ( 85 of 100 )	85% ( 85 of 100 )	85% ( 85 of 100 )	87% ( 87 of 100 )	+2.0% (+2.4%)	
15.2.21 % of customers satisfied with the value for fee paid (GPRA)	unk	85% ( 85 of 100 )	85% ( 85 of 100 )	85% ( 85 of 100 )	85% ( 85 of 100 )	87% ( 87 of 100 )	+2.0% (+2.4%)	
<b>Management Excellence</b>								
CSF 52.1 Number of volunteer hours per year supporting FWS mission activities (GPRA)	1,404,064	2,164,648	2,328,109	1,963,849	1,963,849	1,958,684	-5,165 (-0.3%)	
52.1.1 # of volunteer hours are annually contributed to NWRs (GPRA)	1,284,009	1,277,523	1,307,291	1,216,110	1,216,110	1,206,635	-9,475 (-0.8%)	

**Program Overview**

The Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 defines wildlife-dependent recreation as a prominent and important goal for the Refuge System. The Act recognizes the importance of a close connection between wildlife resources, the American character, and the need to conserve wildlife for future generations of Americans. It supports DOI strategic goals to provide access to wildlife refuges for recreation, where compatible, and to promote and enhance quality recreation opportunities. The Refuge System embraces the Act and weaves its mandates into our daily work to provide greater access to Refuge System lands, when appropriate and compatible.

The Refuge System's priority public uses, the "Big 6", are hunting, fishing, wildlife photography, wildlife observation, environmental education, and interpretation. The Refuge System Visitor Services program also includes recreation fees, cultural resource protection and interpretation, accessibility program, volunteers and Friends programs, special use permits, concessions management and a host of other activities designed to welcome and orient visitors.

The Visitor Services program creates quality experiences for the American public through adequate and knowledgeable staff, signs, and brochures; supplying safe and accessible facilities; and managing recreation fees in a manner that provides the government with a fair return on investments and visitors with exceptional value for fees paid. Local communities that have the ability to enjoy quality wildlife-dependent recreational experiences in the "wild" often carry that experience to the next level – a personal commitment and involvement in meeting the Refuge System's mission. Of the more than 40 million Refuge System visitors in FY 2007, more than 2 million came to hunt, 7 million to fish, and 25 million to observe wildlife from trails, observation towers, decks, and platforms. In addition, 5 million came to photograph wildlife, while almost one million participated in on-site and off-site environmental education activities. Moreover, more than 28 million visitors were involved in interpretive programs, which included 15 million who took advantage of our visitor centers and exhibits.

The focus under this budget element is to welcome and orient Refuge System visitors, support Friends and volunteer initiatives, and conserve cultural and archaeological resources. Under this budget element, the Refuge System will ensure that wildlife-dependent recreation opportunities are provided, where compatible.

Visitor Services program elements include:

- **Refuge Visitor Services.** This category includes the salary and base funding that supports recreational activities, with priority given to wildlife-dependent recreation as required by the *National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997*. The Refuge System provides wildlife-dependent recreation to the extent that it does not compromise the primary purpose of the refuge; non-wildlife dependent recreation (e.g., swimming, horseback riding) is considered to be a lower priority and must be determined to be appropriate and compatible with the Refuge System mission and individual refuge purpose. Interpretive activities include interpretive programs, tours, and staffed and un-staffed exhibits, and workshops to learn about bird-watching and natural resources management programs. Environmental education involves structured classroom or outdoor activities that help provide awareness and direct connections with wildlife and natural resource issues. Teacher workshops, which are particularly effective at reaching local school districts, provide a service that teachers can use in developing course materials and instruction for their students. The program also funds staff that review projects funded or permitted by the Service for compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act (some staff funded under Wildlife and Habitat Management also perform these reviews). These regulatory reviews may include field surveys, archaeological testing, and site evaluations and mitigation. The Refuge System employs a majority of the Service's cultural resource specialists and provides compliance reviews for projects funded by other programs, such as permits and grants issued by the Ecological Services program.
- **Visitor Facility Enhancements.** This program element includes the development and rehabilitation of small outdoor facilities that support quality visitor programs on refuges. Parking areas at trailheads, wildlife observation platforms, kiosks, fishing piers, interpretive signs, trails, and boardwalks are all examples of such enhancements.

- **Friends and Volunteers.** This program element encompasses activities directed by the *Volunteer and Community Partnership Enhancement Act of 1998*. Volunteers contribute nearly 20 percent of the work hours performed on refuges. More than 200 non-profit groups, or “Friends” organizations, assist refuges in meeting visitor services and natural resource management goals. Managing a good Friends and volunteer program requires developing projects and activities suitable for volunteers; maintaining communication and an organizational framework to ensure people with the right skills and capability are on the right job; and training and outfitting volunteers with the proper tools to perform quality work in a safe manner.

**Cost-Sharing Partnerships.** The part of the Challenge Cost Share program that includes recreational activities and public events is under this program element. This program element includes activities with partners that are recreational, interpretive and educational, or involve the public in other ways.

The Visitor Services Program aligns closely with the DOI and Refuge System strategic goals. The program uses its four elements to achieve the key strategic goals to:

- Welcome and orient visitors,
- Provide quality wildlife-dependent recreation and education opportunities,
- Facilitate partnerships and cooperative projects to engage other conservation agencies, volunteers, Friends, and partners in the Refuge System’s mission, and
- Ensure that unique cultural and historic resources are protected, used, and interpreted as specified by authorizing legislation and policies.

**Welcome and orient visitors.** Under this element, the Refuge System clearly identifies all wildlife refuges that are open to the public, and ensures that visitors understand who we are, what we do, and how to enjoy their visits. This provides for a unique brand identity that helps the public distinguish between the Service, including the Refuge System, and other land management entities. This identity can be heightened through clear and accurate signage, brochures, interpretive materials, uniforms, adequate and accessible recreational facilities, and knowledgeable staff or volunteers available to answer questions and describe the role of the individual refuge within the context of the Refuge System’s mission.

**Provide quality wildlife-dependent recreation and education opportunities.** Opportunities for compatible wildlife-dependent recreation (wildlife observation, hunting, fishing, nature photography, interpretation, and environmental education) are provided and evaluated by visitor satisfaction surveys to ensure that we offer quality experiences to enjoy America’s wild lands and fish, wildlife and plants. When those recreational activities are managed according to the principles of sound fish and wildlife management and administration on national wildlife refuges, they engender stewardship and a conservation ethic within the public. Quality environmental education engages the public in, and increases community support for, the conservation mission of the Refuge System; it makes fish, wildlife and wildlife habitat relevant, meaningful, and accessible to the American public, teachers, students and their families; and it focuses on refuges serving as “outdoor classrooms.”

The visitor facility enhancement program supports the development, rehabilitation, and construction of facilities such as parking areas at trailheads, wildlife observation platforms, kiosks, and other projects which are critical to environmental education.

**Facilitate partnerships and cooperative projects to engage other conservation agencies, volunteers, Friends and partners in the Refuge System's mission and to provide the public and partners with opportunities to participate directly in the achievement of the Refuge System's mission.**

- Support for volunteers and Friends is provided through on-site training, mentoring, workshops, and awards.
- The Challenge Cost Share Program includes partnerships that promote quality recreational programs, support public conservation events, and convey conservation messages through communication with the public.

**Ensure that unique cultural and historic resources are protected, used and interpreted as specified by authorizing legislation and policies.** The Refuge System protects many significant cultural and archaeological sites. The Refuge System has identified more than 20,000 archaeological and historical sites within its borders to date, with more yet to be discovered. Refuge System museum collections consist of approximately 5 million objects maintained in Service facilities or on loan to more than 200 non-federal repositories, such as qualified museums and academic institutions, for scientific study, public viewing and long-term care.

### **2009 Program Performance**

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The Refuge System will welcome more than 40 million visitors to enjoy educational and interpretive programs, hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, and photography. During 2009, funding available within this budget element will be used to develop recreational and other visitor programs and maintain visitor satisfaction rates, which are currently over 90 percent. The Refuge System will maintain this level of satisfaction by providing quality facilities, knowledgeable visitor services specialists and volunteers, and by introducing visitors to the Refuge System through programs that connect children with nature and promote bird watching, one of the country's fastest growing outdoor recreation activities.

Funding under this subactivity will also support nearly 30,000 volunteers that contribute more than 1.2 million hours to conservation and recreation programs within the Refuge System. The Refuge System will continue to support training programs for volunteer coordinators and provide support for refuges working with Friends organizations.

The Refuge System will provide services under this subactivity through the support and mentoring for new and existing Friends organizations, providing quality wildlife dependent recreation programs, effective refuge signage, brochures and web based information.

**Program Overview**

Performance Goal / Measure	2005 Actual	2006 Actual	2007 Plan	2007 Actual	2008 Plan	2009 President's Budget	Change from 2008 Plan to 2009	Long-term 2012 Target
<b>Recreation</b>								
CSF 15.2 Percent of NWRs/WMDs open to six priority NWRS recreation activities	52% ( 3 of 6 )	83% ( 5 of 6 )	83% (5 of 6)	83% ( 5 of 6 )	85% ( 5 of 6 )	85% ( 5 of 6 )	-0.4% ( -0.5% )	85% ( 5 of 6 )
CSF Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$55,779	unk	\$50,072	\$52,491	\$53,487	\$996	\$53,487
CSF Program Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$43,484	unk	\$43,316	\$44,355	\$45,420	\$1,065	\$45,420
Actual/Projected Cost Per NWRs/WMDs (whole dollars)	unk	\$11,170,377	unk	\$10,044,314	\$10,285,377	\$10,532,226	\$246,849	\$10,532,226
15.2.1 % of NWRs/WMDs open to six priority NWRS recreation activities (applies within constraints of compatibility standard): % open to hunting, % open to fishing, % open to wildlife observation & photography, % open to environmental education, % open to interpretation, and % open to other recreational uses (PART)	52% ( 3 of 6 )	83% ( 5 of 6 )	83% (5 of 6)	83% ( 5 of 6 )	85% ( 5 of 6 )	85% ( 5 of 6 )	-0.4% ( -0.5% )	85% ( 5 of 6 )
15.2.20 % of visitors are satisfied with the quality of experience (GPRA)	0%	85% ( 85 of 100 )	85% ( 85 of 100 )	85% ( 85 of 100 )	85% ( 85 of 100 )	87% ( 87 of 100 )	+2.0% ( +2.4% )	87% ( 87 of 100 )
15.2.20.1 # of surveyed visitors satisfied with the quality of their experience (GPRA)	0	85	85	85	85	87	+2 ( +2.4% )	87
15.2.23 Total # of visitors to NWRS - annual	37,608,868	38,376,013	---	40,301,562	40,267,063	40,267,063	0	40,267,063
15.2.26.2 total # of refuges open to the public (GPRA)	487	463	470	470	464	470	+6 ( +1.3% )	470
<b>Management Excellence</b>								
CSF 52.1 Number of volunteer hours per year supporting FWS mission activities (GPRA)	1,404,064	2,164,648	1,930,175	2,328,109	1,963,849	1,958,684	-5,165 ( -0.3% )	1,958,684
52.1.1 # of volunteer hours are annually contributed to NWRS (GPRA)	1,284,009	1,277,523	1,170,799	1,307,291	1,216,110	1,206,635	-9,475 ( -0.8% )	1,206,635

**Activity: National Wildlife Refuge System**  
**Subactivity: Refuge Law Enforcement**

		2007 Actual	2008 Enacted	2009			Change from 2008(+/-)
				Fixed Costs & Related Changes (+/-)	Program Changes (+/-)	Budget Request	
Refuge Law Enforcement	(\$000)	25,807	31,062	+452	-211	31,303	+241
Safe Borderlands	(\$000)	0	0		+1,000	1,000	+1,000
IMARS	(\$000)	1,251	575			575	
<b>Total, Refuge Law Enforcement</b>	<b>(\$000)</b>	<b>27,058</b>	<b>31,637</b>	<b>+452</b>	<b>+789</b>	<b>32,878</b>	<b>+1,241</b>
	<i>FTE</i>	<b>202</b>	<b>218</b>		<b>+6</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>+6</b>

**Summary of 2009 Program Changes for Refuge Law Enforcement**

Request Component	(\$000)	FTE
• Safe Borderlands	+1,000	+6
• Travel Reduction	-206	-
• Contract Reduction	-5	-
<b>TOTAL, Program Change</b>	<b>+789</b>	<b>+6</b>

**Justification of 2009 Program Changes**

The 2009 budget request for the Refuge Law Enforcement program is \$32,878,000 and 224 FTE, a net program change of +\$789,000 and +6 FTE from the 2008 Enacted.

**Safe Borderlands (+\$1,000,000/+6 FTE)**

The requested increase of \$1 million under the Safe Borderlands initiative will be used to increase security and habitat protection. In 2005, Refuge Law Enforcement Officers detained thousands of illegal border crossers in conjunction with the Department of Homeland Security. These officers also seized more than 167,000 pounds of marijuana. In the first six months of 2006, officers at the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge in Arizona recorded five homicides, two rapes, and discovered 18 deceased individuals on the refuge. They also attribute the theft of four government vehicles, five burglaries of refuge housing, and more than 100 abandoned vehicles to illegal immigration. These events have denuded native vegetation and scarred the landscape, impacting the refuge's wildlife, including endangered species. Additionally, illegal immigrants deposit tons of trash on the refuge annually, which degrades habitat and the wildlife-dependent experiences visitors seek.

The six Refuge Law Enforcement Officer positions will be added to the southwest border in California, Arizona, and Texas to enhance resource protection, public and employee safety, and security of government infrastructure.



The table below illustrates the intended deployment of new Refuge Law Enforcement officers.

**FY 2009 Refuge Law Enforcement Officer Deployment**

Location	Number of New FTE
Southern California Zone Officer	1
San Diego NWR	1
Cabeza Prieta NWR	1
Buenos Aires NWR	1
South Texas NWR complex	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>

**Program Performance Change**

Performance Goal	2005 Actual	2006 Actual	2007 Actual	2008 Plan	2009 Base Budget (2008 Plan + Fixed Costs)	2009 President's Budget	Program Change Accruing in 2009	Program Change Accruing in Outyears
<b>Sustaining Biological Communities</b>								
CSF 17.1 % of NWRs/WMDs having law enforcement staffing comparable to the need identified in the NWRS Law Enforcement Deployment Model	10%	8% (18 of 227)	8% (18 of 227)	8% (18 of 227)	8% (18 of 227)	11% (26 of 227)	+3.5% (+44.4%)	
CSF Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$48,585	\$44,633	\$45,704	\$45,704	\$67,602	\$21,898	
CSF Program Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$39,344	\$43,947	\$45,002	\$45,002	\$46,082	\$1,080	
Actual/Projected Cost Per NWRs/WMDs (whole dollars)	unk	\$2,699,172	\$2,479,627	\$2,539,138	\$2,539,138	\$2,600,078	\$60,939	
Comments:	Increase in staffing due to an increase in funding							

**Program Overview**

Refuge Law Enforcement supports the DOI Serving Communities mission through the strategic goal to safeguard lives, property, and assets. The Refuge System employs a professional cadre of law enforcement officers dedicated to natural resource protection and public safety. Refuge law enforcement officers also contribute to community policing, environmental education and outreach, and other activities supporting the Service's conservation mission. Refuge law enforcement officers are routinely involved with the greater law enforcement community in cooperative efforts to combat the Nation's drug problem, address border security issues, and other challenges.

While the Refuge System continues to improve its law enforcement operations through the hiring and training of full-time officers, dual-function officers continue to play a critical role in meeting law enforcement needs. Dual-function officers dedicate 25 to 50 percent of their time to law enforcement activities and spend the balance of their time on traditional conservation and wildlife-dependent

recreation programs. The Refuge System will eventually replace dual-function officers with full-time officers to improve effectiveness and efficiency. This will also allow current dual-function officers to focus on their primary duties. Refuges currently without full-time officers or with inadequate coverage also rely on partnerships with local, county, and State law enforcement officers and other federal agencies.

The Refuge System has also instituted a “Zone System” to provide critical law enforcement planning, deployment, and support to multiple wildlife refuges with maximum efficiency through experienced officers. A Zone Officer provides refuges within his or her designated zone with technical assistance on law enforcement, institutes reliable record-keeping and defensible reviews, enhances training, and promotes communication and coordination with other law enforcement agencies. The Refuge System implementation of the Zone System and transition to full-time law enforcement officers exemplify the strategic management of human capital within the President’s Management Agenda by linking human capital strategies to organizational mission, vision, core values, goals and objectives.

Refuge Law Enforcement Program elements include:

**Refuge Law Enforcement.** This program element includes funding for the Refuge Law Enforcement program. Included under the funding are zone officers, regional refuge law enforcement chiefs, field officers, training, equipment, and supplies.

**Incident Management Analysis Reporting System (IMARS).** The Refuge Law Enforcement program is working with the DOI to develop and implement the Department-wide Incident Management Analysis Reporting system (IMARS). The program will document all incidents occurring on refuges, and will be accessible at all levels of the organization (field, region, national headquarters, and Department). It will track not only different types of crimes, but also locations, which will allow us to be proactive in crime prevention. This information is necessary to prioritize law enforcement officer needs and to deploy officers in emergencies.

### **2009 Program Performance**

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The 2009 budget request will support 224 FTEs within the Refuge Law Enforcement program. These officers will provide for the security and safety of refuge visitors, government property, and natural resources. These officers will document more than 117,000 illegal incidents occurring on national wildlife refuges ranging from trespass and illegal taking of game to violations of Federal drug and immigration laws.

During FY 2009, the Division of Refuge Law Enforcement will continue to pursue advancement of the DOI Strategic Plan goal to “protect lives, resources, and properties.” The program will utilize the requested funding to dramatically increase its performance, particularly in high priority locations such as the southwest border. This will dramatically reduce the destruction of habitat and prevent illegal drug and immigration activities on refuges.

The Refuge System will continue to implement the DOI Incident Management, Analysis, and Reporting System (IMARS). The budget request includes \$575,000 for this Secretarial priority.

In addition, the Refuge Law Enforcement program will support monitoring of approximately 33,200 easement contracts, ensuring that the terms are met on at least 95 percent of the contracts. The program will also support the development of community policing programs including the development of policing agreements with state and local law enforcement organizations.

**Activity: National Wildlife Refuge System**  
**Subactivity: Conservation Planning**

		2007 Actual	2008 Enacted	2009			Change from 2008(+/-)
				Fixed Costs & Related Changes (+/-)	Program Changes (+/-)	Budget Request	
Refuge Planning	(\$000)	6,902	7,131	+234	-43	7,322	+191
Land Protection Planning	(\$000)	3,494	3,440			3,440	
Comprehensive Conservation Plans	(\$000)	2,833	984		-984	0	-984
<b>Total, Conservation Planning</b>	<b>(\$000)</b>	<b>13,229</b>	<b>11,555</b>	<b>+234</b>	<b>-1,027</b>	<b>10,762</b>	<b>-793</b>
	<b>FTE</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>94</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>-</b>

**Summary of 2009 Program Changes for Conservation Planning**

Request Component	(\$000)	FTE
• Comprehensive Conservation Plans	-984	-
• Travel Reduction	-29	-
• Contract Reduction	-14	-
<b>TOTAL, Program Changes</b>	<b>-1,027</b>	<b>-</b>

**Justification of 2009 Program Changes**

The 2009 budget request for the Conservation Planning program is \$10,762,000 and 94 FTE, a net program change of -\$1,027,000 from the 2008 Enacted.

**Comprehensive Conservation Plans (-\$984,000)**

The proposed program decrease of \$984,000 is a result of the efficiencies gained by Refuge System’s management of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan program. Within the 2008 appropriation, the Refuge System continues to work towards the Congressional mandate of completing Comprehensive Conservation Plans for all 554 units of the Refuge System by 2012. The Refuge System will complete 62 Comprehensive Conservation Plans during 2009 to bring the total completed to 420. The remaining 134 plans are scheduled for completion during the next 3 years and this schedule will allow the Refuge System to achieve the 2012 legislative mandate.

**Program Performance Change**

Performance Goal	2005 Actual	2006 Actual	2007 Actual	2008 Plan	2009 Base Budget (2008 Plan + Fixed Costs)	2009 President's Budget	Program Change Accruing in 2009	Program Change Accruing in Outyears
<b>Resource Protection - Landscapes and Watersheds</b>								
CSF 2.10 Sum of the number of NWRs/WMDs completing a Comprehensive Conservation Plan during the year and the number of NWRs/WMDs with a plan under development	211	225	221	204	204	174	-30 (-14.7%)	
CSF Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$14,701	\$14,516	\$13,721	\$13,721	\$11,984	(\$1,737)	
CSF Program Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$11,430	\$14,344	\$14,688	\$14,688	\$15,041	\$353	
Actual/Projected Cost Per NWRs/WMDs (whole dollars)	unk	\$65,339	\$65,683	\$67,259	\$67,259	\$68,873	\$1,614	
2.10.1 # of NWRs/WMDs with a Comprehensive Conservation Plan completed - cumulative	124	204	263	350	350	412	+62 (+17.7%)	
2.10.2 # of NWRs/WMDs with Comprehensive Conservation Planning underway at the end of the FY	171	128	166	112	112	112	0	
2.10.3 # of NWRs/WMDs with a Comprehensive Conservation Plan completed (during the year)	40	97	55	92	92	62	-30 (-32.6%)	

**Program Overview**

**Refuge Planning.** Activities include completion of major conservation planning in support of national wildlife refuges. More specifically, Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCP) and step-down management plans, such as Habitat Management and Visitor Services plans, are developed for individual refuges. This funding also provides Geographic Information System capability that supports planning and other refuge operations.

**Land Protection Planning.** Land protection planning evaluates potential land acquisitions to support the strategic growth of the Refuge System. Refuge field stations work in cooperation with others to identify and protect habitats for migratory birds and other important species. In some cases, Land Protection Plans will be prepared to expand existing refuges or to establish new refuges in order to address the needs of fish, wildlife, and plant communities. Specific activities include gathering background data, coordinating with state and local entities, involving the public, analyzing ecological, legal, and financial issues, and printing and distributing draft and final plan documents.

The Service has developed three draft policies to guide the strategic management of the Refuge System. When finalized, these policies will be incorporated into the Service Manual as sections on Strategic Growth, Land Protection Planning, and Land Acquisition Planning. The Strategic Growth policy provides guidance to identify areas of ecological importance for conservation and potential land acquisitions or exchange. The Land Protection Planning policy describes the specific procedures and documents used in the conservation planning processes. The Land Acquisition Planning policy provides criteria for prioritizing approved proposals for funding.

**Comprehensive Conservation Plans.** The National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 mandated that a CCP be completed for every field station in existence within 15 years of the Act's passage. There were 551 refuges at the time of the passage of the Act. Since then, Congress has mandated that the Service also complete CCPs for three newly established stations before the 2012 deadline. Thus, 554 field stations require completed CCPs by 2012. CCPs ensure that the unit is comprehensively managed to fulfill the purpose(s) for which it was established. Developing a CCP facilitates decisions regarding issues such as wildlife-dependent recreation, the construction of facilities, and the development of biological programs. It also helps refuge managers address any conflicting uses that may exist. Once a refuge finishes its CCP, it may develop subsequent "step-down" management plans to meet the CCP's goals and objectives. Examples of these step-down management plans include habitat management, visitor services, fire management, wildlife inventoring and monitoring, and wilderness management plans. Completed CCPs allow refuge managers to implement resource management actions that support State Wildlife Action Plans, improving the condition of habitat and benefiting wildlife. Refuge personnel also have the ability to improve and increase wildlife-dependent recreation opportunities which are critical to connecting people, particularly children, with nature.

The Refuge System uses CCP development as the primary method to conduct citizen-centered government, which is central to Executive Order 13352 on Cooperative Conservation. Developing these long-term plans relies on public participation. Local communities, State conservation agencies, and other partners help guide refuge management through the development of the CCP. Diverse private organizations, such as the National Rifle Association and Defenders of Wildlife, also participate in the CCP planning process.

### **2009 Program Performance**

The Service expects to achieve the Congressional mandate of completing CCPs for all 554 units of the Refuge System by 2012. At the end of FY 2009, the Refuge System will have completed CCPs for 412 refuges with CCPs for 142 refuges left to complete. The Refuge System will complete 62 CCPs during the fiscal year.

The Service began implementing the "*2012 Plan - An Action Plan to Meet Our Legislative Mandate*" in fiscal year 2006. The plan identifies 10 action items that the Service will implement in order to meet the Congressional deadline. Primary among these are implementing an on-line CCP Accomplishment Database that includes a CCP Completion Schedule and amending the performance plans of managers at all levels to include a critical element for completing CCPs on schedule.

The net effect of the *2012 Plan* is that CCPs are a high priority across the Refuge System, managers throughout the Refuge System are held accountable for their timely completion, and field staffs are redirected to complete them. These program improvements enhance the ability of the Refuge System to complete CCPs and achieve the 2012 Congressional mandate.

**Program Performance Overview**

Performance Goal / Measure	2005 Actual	2006 Actual	2007 Plan	2007 Actual	2008 Plan	2009 President's Budget	Change from 2008 Plan to 2009	Long-term 2012 Target
<b>Resource Protection - Landscapes and Watersheds</b>								
CSF 2.10 Sum of the number of NWRs/WMDs completing a Comprehensive Conservation Plan during the year and the number of NWRs/WMDs with a plan under development	211	225	226	221	204	174	-30 (-14.7%)	104
CSF Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$14,701	unk	\$14,516	\$13,721	\$11,984	(\$1,737)	\$7,163
CSF Program Total Actual/Projected Cost(\$000)	unk	\$11,430	unk	\$14,344	\$14,688	\$15,041	\$353	\$15,041
Actual/Projected Cost Per NWRs/WMDs (whole dollars)	unk	\$65,339	unk	\$65,683	\$67,259	\$68,873	\$1,614	\$68,873
2.10.1 # of NWRs/WMDs with a Comprehensive Conservation Plan completed - cumulative	124	204	281	263	350	412	+62 (+17.7%)	554
2.10.2 # of NWRs/WMDs with Comprehensive Conservation Planning underway at the end of the FY	171	128	156	166	112	112	0	55
Comments	The 55 CCPs noted in the 2012 column represent the first group of CCPs being re-reviewed.							
2.10.3 # of NWRs/WMDs with a Comprehensive Conservation Plan completed (during the year)	40	97	70	55	92	62	-30 (-32.6%)	49

**Activity: National Wildlife Refuge System**

**Subactivity: Refuge Maintenance**

		2007 Actual	2008 Enacted	2009			Change From 2008 (+/-)
				Fixed Costs & Related Changes (+/-)	Program Changes (+/-)	Budget Request	
Maintenance Support (\$000)		47,559	51,790	+1,061	-199	52,652	862
Annual Maintenance (\$000)		22,986	25,581	0	-2,185	23,396	-2,185
Equipment Replacement (\$000)		6,471	5,981	0	0	5,981	0
Heavy Equipment Replacement (\$000)		6,812	5,783	0	0	5,783	0
Deferred Maintenance (\$000)		44,146	42,239	0	0	42,239	0
Deferred Maintenance WO/RO Support (\$000)		6,213	6,116	0	0	6,116	0
<b>Total Refuge Maintenance (\$000)</b>		<b>134,187</b>	<b>137,490</b>	<b>+1,061</b>	<b>-2,384</b>	<b>136,167</b>	<b>-1,323</b>
<i>FTE</i>		<i>705</i>	<i>707</i>	-	-	<i>707</i>	-

**Summary of 2009 Program Changes for Refuge Maintenance**

Request Component	(\$000)	FTE
• Annual Maintenance	-2,185	-
• Travel Reduction	-109	-
• Contract Reduction	-90	-
<b>TOTAL, Program Change</b>	<b>-2,384</b>	<b>-</b>

**Justification of 2009 Program Changes**

The 2009 budget request for Refuge Maintenance is \$136,167,000 and 707 FTE, a net program decrease of \$2,384,000 from the 2008 Enacted.

**Annual Maintenance (-\$2,185,000)**

Annual maintenance funding supports four functions: 1) annual operations and maintenance of our portfolio of facility assets, 2) maintenance of our equipment and vehicle fleet; 3) replacement of small equipment (less than \$5,000), and 4) the Youth Conservation Corps, a temporary employment program for high school youth who work primarily in support of annual maintenance functions.

In response to initiatives under EO 13327 Federal Real Property Asset Management and initiatives related to energy conservation, the Refuge System is working hard to make our operations and maintenance activities as efficient as possible. Actions such as employing energy efficiency measures for our buildings and other assets, disposing of assets that are only marginally contributing to our mission, and reducing the size of our vehicle fleet are being deployed to allow us to continue to deliver our mission at a reduced cost in our annual maintenance funding.

Program Performance Change

Performance Goal	2005 Actual	2006 Actual	2007 Actual	2008 Plan	2009 Base Budget (2008 Plan + Fixed Costs)	2009 President's Budget	Program Change Accruing in 2009	Program Change Accruing in Outyears
<b>Resource Protection - Landscapes and Watersheds</b>								
CSF 2.11 Conservation and Biological Research Facilities Improvement: Overall condition of NWRS buildings and structures (as measured by the FCI) that are mission critical and mission dependent (as measured by the API) with emphasis on improving the condition of assets with critical health and safety needs (GPRA)	0.060	0.051 (245,325,994 of 4,836,456,971)	0.067 (422,736,509 of 6,337,408,107)	0.068 (448,100,700 of 6,590,882,843)	0.068 (448,100,700 of 6,590,882,843)	0.063 (341,180,309 of 5,373,436,045)	-0.004 ( -6.6% )	--
13.1.4 % of NWRS historic structures in FWS inventory that are in good condition (GPRA)	14%	19% (2,795 of 14,347)	1% ( 86 of 11,583 )	6% ( 130 of 2,181 )	6% ( 130 of 2,181 )	7% ( 296 of 4,476 )	+0.7% ( +10.9% )	--
13.1.6 NWRS Cultural and Natural Heritage-related Facilities Improvement: Overall condition of NWRS cultural and natural heritage facilities (as measured by the FCI) that are mission critical and mission dependent (as measured by the API) with emphasis on improving the condition of assets with critical health and safety needs (GPRA) (PART)	unk	0.108 (13,947,344 of 129,709,631)	0.114 (15,513,151 of 135,826,669)	0.116 (16,443,940 of 141,258,209)	0.116 (16,443,940 of 141,258,209)	0.109 (14,714,914 of 134,468,400)	-0.007 ( -6.0% )	--
<b>Recreation</b>								
15.2.26 % of priority recreation facilities that meet applicable accessibility standards (GPRA)	55%	63% (293 of 463)	67% ( 313 of 470 )	67% ( 309 of 464 )	67% ( 309 of 464 )	68% ( 318 of 470 )	+1.1% ( +1.6% )	--
CSF 54.1 Service-wide Comprehensive Facilities Improvement: Overall condition of buildings and structures (as measured by the FCI) that are mission critical and mission dependent (as measured by the API) with emphasis on improving the condition of assets with critical health and safety needs (GPRA)	0.203	0.085 (1,537,247,434 of 18,001,608,137)	0.127 (2,680,244,758 of 21,049,079,363)	0.130 (2,821,825,018 of 21,627,575,171)	0.130 (2,821,825,018 of 21,627,575,171)	0.131 (2,452,473,580 of 18,749,718,414)	0.000 ( +0.3% )	--



Performance Goal	2005 Actual	2006 Actual	2007 Actual	2008 Plan	2009 Base Budget (2008 Plan + Fixed Costs)	2009 President's Budget	Program Change Accruing in 2009	Program Change Accruing in Outyears
54.1.9 Percent of assets targeted for disposal that were disposed (GPRA)	unk	unk	unk	100% ( 17 of 17 )	100% ( 17 of 17 )	100% ( 17 of 17 )	0.0%	--

## Program Overview

The Refuge Maintenance program helps achieve the Refuge System mission by supporting a complex infrastructure including habitat management, visitor, administrative, and maintenance facilities and a fleet of vehicles and heavy equipment necessary to conduct wildlife and habitat management activities and to provide our 40 million visitors with access to our lands. Together, this facility infrastructure and mobile equipment fleet is valued at more than \$20 billion.

We operate with the clear understanding that adequately maintained facility and mobile equipment assets are enablers of our conservation mission. Our basic goal is to use a strategic, portfolio-based approach to manage these assets in a manner that informs decision-making and maximizes efficient and effective mission delivery and long-term protection of our investments. To further this goal we strive to accurately:

- know what we own
- know what it costs to operate and maintain each individual asset
- know the condition of assets
- plan and prioritize budgets to include disposal of any unneeded assets, and
- understand and plan for life-cycle costs for both existing and proposed new assets

Using principles embodied in E.O. 13327, Federal Real Property Asset Management and the Department's Asset Management Plan, the Refuge System is managing its portfolio of facility and mobile equipment assets in a manner that focuses on accomplishment of our legislative mission using the most cost-effective means possible. Developing a full inventory of what we own, understanding annual Operations and Maintenance costs, regularly assessing condition of assets and their contribution to our mission all contribute to effective management of our assets.

In addition to achieving performance targets for assets using the Facility Condition Index (FCI), proper support of the Refuge System's infrastructure is critical to achieving other performance targets for the entire range of mission accomplishments including wetland restoration, wildlife monitoring, and providing recreation opportunities. The Service uses the FCI, which is a measure of the ratio of the repair to the replacement costs for each asset, in combination with the Asset Priority Index (API), which indicates the relative importance of an asset to accomplishment of our mission, to prioritize the use of maintenance funding. The Refuge System continues to prioritize maintenance needs through improved data that underlies development of five-year budget plans, including the FCI and the API, which are key measures for the program and the DOI Asset Management Plan. The FCI for conservation facilities, for example, is currently 0.051, which industry standards rate as "fair." The Refuge System is using its Service Asset and Maintenance Management System, or SAMMS, to document assessments, facility maintenance histories, and maintenance schedules to improve its FCI average and reduce outyear project costs.

Using the latest maintenance management systems and business practices, the Refuge System maintenance program contributes to achieving the goals defined in the President's Management Agenda and the Department of the Interior's Strategic Plan. The Refuge System is using financial and performance data to improve its management of its facility infrastructure and its mobile equipment fleet. Based on workload drivers (including General Services Administration useful life standards, geographic location, utilization patterns, and interagency equipment sharing agreements) and generally accepted asset management principles, the Refuge System has developed an asset management plan to aid in management of our assets.

Over 3,500 Refuge System employees, 34,000 volunteers, and 40 million visitors depend on the maintenance program to help achieve Strategic Plan goals to:

- 1) Manage the 96-million acre land and water base in the Refuge System;
- 2) Actively manipulate about 4 million acres of land each year to achieve habitat goals;
- 3) Enable attention to fish, wildlife, plants, and associated natural features on refuge lands;
- 4) Conserve cultural and historical resources found on refuge lands;
- 5) Provide access and programs for 40 million visitors annually; and
- 6) Support specialized wildland fire prevention and suppression activities.

In addition to managing an extensive facility infrastructure with over 41,000 assets valued at \$19.5 billion (as of December 2007), the Service owns and maintains a variety of traditional and specialized mobile equipment items necessary to achieving the strategic goals.

- Most of the nearly 4,038 vehicles used on refuges are four-wheel-drive trucks and utility vehicles used for fire fighting, wildlife and habitat surveys, transporting equipment and tools to remote sites, and law enforcement. Thousands of refuge volunteers also rely on these vehicles for transportation.
- Agricultural, earthmoving, and construction equipment are used to maintain wetland impoundments and roads; enhance areas for wildlife habitat; control invasive plants; and maintain and construct facilities such as visitor centers, wildlife drives, and nature trails.
- Smaller, specialized equipment like all-terrain vehicles, boats, small tractors and snowmobiles are needed to access remote or rugged areas. Boats are also crucial on most refuges for law enforcement, public safety and wildlife population surveys.

The Refuge System restructured its budget in FY 2006 to more effectively integrate its budget with performance measures in support of the President's Management Agenda. The Refuge Maintenance budget now includes six program elements as described below.

**Refuge Maintenance Support.** This element includes salaries and associated funding for maintenance activities at refuge field stations. Maintenance staff support all refuge programs both indirectly, by maintaining functional facilities and reliable equipment needed to achieve our mission, and directly, by performing tasks such as mowing fields to provide habitat, removing unwanted woody vegetation from wetland impoundments, and removing invasive plants.

**Annual Maintenance.** Annual operation and maintenance encompasses all activities needed to keep our facility portfolio functioning for its intended purpose. It includes such items as utilities, custodial care, and snow removal for our office, administrative, and visitor buildings. It means repairing failures in the year they occur, and includes preventive and cyclic maintenance, maintenance supplies, and contracts. Preventive maintenance—including scheduled servicing, repairs, and parts replacement—results in fewer breakdowns and is required to achieve the expected life of facilities and equipment. Cyclic maintenance is preventive maintenance scheduled in periods greater than one year. Annual maintenance allows scheduled replacement of small equipment (less than \$5,000) and addresses problems cost-effectively, before they grow too expensive. The Youth Conservation Corps, a temporary employment program for high school youth, is also included under this category since their work supports annual maintenance.

**Equipment Replacement.** This includes repairing and replacing damaged and worn mobile equipment costing \$5,000 to \$25,000 including passenger vehicles and pickup trucks. Because it is difficult to access remote and rough terrain, the Refuge System needs a wide variety of vehicles and equipment to achieve our mission. Most of the 4,038 refuge vehicles are used for fire fighting, wildlife and habitat surveys, transporting equipment to remote work sites, and transporting

volunteers. Equipment replacement also includes a rental and leasing program that provides a cost-effective alternative to purchasing equipment. This allows refuge staff to complete vital projects while limiting the size and cost of the equipment fleet.

**Heavy Equipment Replacement.** Heavy equipment is any equipment item exceeding \$25,000 in replacement cost, excluding passenger vehicles and light trucks. The Refuge System owns about 3,750 heavy equipment items with a combined replacement value of about \$353 million. The Refuge System depends on reliable heavy equipment since 4 million acres are managed through water control, tillage, mowing, invasive species control, or farming for habitat management, wildfire prevention, and other goals. Visitor programs rely on heavy equipment for maintenance of roads, trails, boat ramps, and facilities, as well as managing habitat to draw wildlife to particular areas. This program element includes a rental and leasing program to provide a cost-effective alternative to purchasing equipment, allowing refuge staff to complete vital projects while limiting the size and cost of the heavy equipment fleet.

**Deferred Maintenance Projects.** Deferred maintenance includes repair, rehabilitation, disposal, and replacement of facilities. The Refuge System maintains an inventory of deferred maintenance and capital improvement needs for all field stations consistent with Federal Accounting Standards. Available funds are directed to the highest priority projects based upon FCI (Facility Condition Index, a ratio of repair to replacement cost) and API (Asset Priority Index, an indicator of individual assets' contribution to the refuge system mission) scores in accordance with the DOI Asset Management Plan. This category funds both Service engineers and temporary contract staff working on deferred maintenance projects. Through the Refuge Roads program, refuge public use roads (identified as Public Roads, Bridges, Parking) are authorized to receive \$29 million per year in funding support from the Federal Highway Administration.

**Deferred Maintenance Regional and Central Support.** This element includes management and coordination of the facility and equipment maintenance and improvement effort at the regional and national level. Primary activities include:

- Management and technical support for implementing SAMMS (the Service Asset and Maintenance Management System) through refining software, managing databases and servers, providing support via a "help desk", and training personnel to use the software.
- Completing condition assessments of facilities at field stations to ensure that real property data is accurate and complete. This program supports decision-making for facility management, and provides technical support and short-term assistance on deferred maintenance projects.
- Developing and implementing 5-year maintenance plans, including coordinating (and reporting on) project completions.
- Managing a heavy equipment program including operator safety training, budget planning, consolidated purchasing of replacement equipment, and coordination of equipment rental.

### **2009 Program Performance**

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The 2009 budget request will support maintenance staffing for field stations as well as provide annual preventive maintenance, including funds for supplies, materials, and contracts. These funds will allow the Refuge System to repair facilities and equipment and perform cyclical maintenance on schedule. The budget will also support replacement of mobile equipment assets and allow initiation of approximately 280 deferred maintenance projects which will improve the condition of Service assets

as measured by the FCI. These funds will allow the Refuge System to repair facilities and equipment within the year in which deficiencies occur and perform cyclical maintenance on schedule.

The Refuge System will use the assessments of its facilities conducted under its ongoing condition assessment program to focus maintenance activities on highest priority needs. By completing the assessment of all facilities, the Refuge System improved its ability to provide maintenance, repair, and, where required, replacement costs with greater accuracy. Under this subactivity, the Refuge System will also continue use of SAMMS to reduce these costs through improved maintenance management.

The Refuge System will also use maintenance funding to support refuge operations. The facilities and equipment utilized on refuges contributes to wildlife and habitat management goals to ensure that the Refuge System maintains at least 89% of its lands in desired conditions. Maintenance funding will also support visitor services functions by ensuring the safety of observation decks, trails, hunting blinds, and fishing piers. These facilities provide more than 30 million visitors with high quality, wildlife-dependent recreation opportunities.

**Program Performance Overview**

Performance Goal / Measure	2005 Actual	2006 Actual	2007 Plan	2007 Actual	2008 Plan	2009 President's Budget	Change from 2008 Plan to 2009	Long-term 2012 Target
<b>Resource Protection: Landscapes and Watersheds</b>								
CSF 2.11 Conservation and Biological Research Facilities Improvement: Overall condition of NWRS buildings and structures (as measured by the FCI) that are mission critical and mission dependent (as measured by the API) with emphasis on improving the condition of assets with critical health and safety needs (GPRA)	0.060	0.051 (245,325,994 of 4,836,456,971)	0.051 (257,592,294 of 5,078,279,819)	0.067 (422,736,509 of 6,337,408,107)	0.068 (448,100,700 of 6,590,882,843)	0.063 (341,180,309 of 5,373,436,045)	-0.004 (-6.6%)	0.063 (341,180,309 of 5,373,436,045)
<b>Resource Protection: Cultural and Natural Resources</b>								
13.1.4 % of NWRS historic structures in FWS inventory that are in good condition (GPRA)	14%	19% ( 2,795 of 14,347 )	1% ( 149 of 11,583 )	1% ( 86 of 11,583 )	6% ( 130 of 2,181 )	7% ( 296 of 4,476 )	+0.7% (+10.9%)	1% ( 87 of 11,583 )
13.1.6 NWRS Cultural and Natural Heritage-related Facilities Improvement: Overall condition of NWRS cultural and natural heritage facilities (as measured by the FCI) that are mission critical and mission dependent (as measured by the API) with emphasis on improving the condition of assets with critical health and safety needs (GPRA) (PART)	0.000	0.108 (13,947,344 of 129,709,631)	0.107 (14,495,149 of 136,001,031)	0.114 (15,513,151 of 135,826,669 )	0.116 (16,443,940 of 141,258,209 )	0.109 (14,714,914 of 134,468,400 )	-0.007 (-6.0%)	0.109 (14,714,914 of 134,468,400)
<b>Recreation</b>								
15.2.26 % of priority recreation facilities that meet applicable accessibility standards (GPRA)	55%	63% ( 293 of 463 )	62% ( 293 of 470 )	67% ( 313 of 470 )	67% ( 309 of 464 )	68% ( 318 of 470 )	+1.1% (+1.6%)	68% ( 318 of 470 )
<b>Management Excellence</b>								
CSF 54.1 Service-wide Comprehensive Facilities Improvement: Overall condition of buildings and structures (as measured by the FCI) that are mission critical and mission dependent (as measured by the API) with emphasis on improving the condition of assets with critical health and safety needs (GPRA)	0.203	0.085 (1,537,247,434 of 18,001,608,137)	0.085 (1,741,352,987 of 20,430,790,518)	0.127 (2,680,244,758 of 21,049,079,363)	0.130 (2,821,825,018 of 21,627,575,171)	0.131 (2,452,473,580 of 18,749,718,414)	0.000 (+0.3%)	0.131 (2,452,673,580 of 18,762,612,103)
54.1.9 Percent of assets targeted for disposal that were disposed (GPRA)	unk	unk	unk	unk	100% ( 17 of 17 )	100% ( 17 of 17 )	0.0%	100% ( 17 of 17 )