

# U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Annual Report of Lands

*As of September 30, 2015*



**On the Cover:**

*“Two downy woodpeckers evicting a red-headed woodpecker from their nest tree” taken by Richard Vernier at the Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge in Indiana.*

**Annual Photo Contest**

The winner of the Annual Photo Contest for FY 2015 is Richard Vernier, USFWS Volunteer. He took the winning photo, shown on the cover of this Annual Report of Lands, of two downy woodpeckers evicting a red-headed woodpecker from their nest tree at a newly acquired 9.7-acre tract at the Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge in Indiana.

Several other noteworthy photo submissions can be seen throughout the pages of this Annual Report.

Information on the Annual Photo Contest for FY 2016 will be posted here:  
[www.fws.gov/refuges/realty/contest.html](http://www.fws.gov/refuges/realty/contest.html).

**Photos of the Secretary and the Director of the Interior were provided by Flickr.com:**

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/blmoregon/8818704514/>

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Vickie Harman\USFWS

Yukon Flats NWR, Alaska

Compiled by the Headquarters Division of Realty



# Message from the Secretary



**Sally Jewell**  
Secretary of the Interior

*From its inception, the United States has been shaped by the wildlife and lands of North America. Our values, priorities, and identity as Americans are inextricably linked to the natural heritage bequeathed to us by our ancestors – a natural heritage protected and sustained by the world's premier system of public lands.*

*I am proud to lead the Department of the Interior and help guide the development and protection of our Nation's public lands, including the National Wildlife Refuge System (Refuge System). The 564 national wildlife refuges and 38 wetland management districts of the Refuge System encompass more than 150 million acres across all 50 states and U.S. territories, providing vital habitat for hundreds of native species and hosting more than 47 million visitors each year.*

*This annual report details the continued expansion and improvement of the Refuge System, which will play an increasingly important role for Americans of all ages and backgrounds in the years to come. Our Nation's youth are the biologists, conservationists, and public servants of the future. We have to help them understand the personal stake they have in sustaining healthy lands and waters.*

Matt Christenson/BLM

*In a rapidly urbanizing America, it is becoming increasingly difficult for millions of Americans to access nature and spend time in the outdoors. With 101 refuges within 25 miles of population centers of 250,000 or more people, the Refuge System is in a unique position to engage local urban communities. That is why we have made it our mission to expand opportunities for families and children to experience the wonders of the natural world at national wildlife refuges, national parks, and other public lands.*

*This key priority has shaped our land acquisition and program development priorities, detailed in this report. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) continues to expand its Urban Wildlife Conservation Program, creating partnerships in 17 major American cities, including Philadelphia, Houston, Los Angeles, San Diego, Atlanta, and Baltimore. In these and other cities, Service staff and volunteers are working with a broad array of community partners to create new opportunities for families and youth to spend time in nature and explore careers in wildlife conservation and other Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) fields.*

*The Service is also dedicating additional funding to support the development of pilot programs designed to engage urban families and youth in new and exciting ways. The first of these programs is the Southern California (SoCal) Urban Refuge Project, which encompasses activities of 5 refuges and serves 17 million people in the greater Los Angeles and San Diego areas. Created in 2014, the partnership has already worked with community partners to engage thousands of elementary school children in education and stewardship activities, while involving thousands more older children in activities focused on careers in STEM fields. Similar community-driven efforts are underway in the Portland/Vancouver area of Oregon through funding provided to Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge outside*

*Portland.*

*We have made significant progress in protecting vital habitat across the Nation using targeted land acquisition and easement purchases. The 3-year reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) will extend our ability to protect irreplaceable lands and waters, but permanent reauthorization and full funding of the LWCF are still needed.*

*Together with our partners, we are working hard to build on these accomplishments and continue to help the Refuge System evolve and adapt to our rapidly changing and diversifying planet.*



# Message from the Director



Patrick Comins/USFWS

**Dan Ashe**

Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

*My friend and colleague, the late Fish and Wildlife Service Director Mollie Beattie, once said, "What a nation chooses to protect is what that nation chooses to say about itself." In the case of the National Wildlife Refuge System, our nation continues to make a powerful statement about the importance of America's natural heritage to current and future generations.*

*Together with our partners, we have worked tirelessly to realize our shared Conserving the Future vision. This effort to reimagine our refuges to address the landscape-scale conservation challenges our world faces is reflected in the land protection, acquisition, and restoration work detailed in this report.*

*We are building and strengthening landscape-scale partnerships with state and federal agencies, community groups, conservation organizations, and private landowners to protect and connect a network of wildlife habitat on public and private lands through land acquisition from willing sellers, easements, and other voluntary conservation tools to magnify the impact of our refuges.*

*We are positioning the nation's wildlife refuges as hubs for broader interconnected conservation work,*

*leveraging our resources and expertise to benefit a broad array of native wildlife, while helping keep working families on the landscape. And we are working to welcome millions of Americans to these special places to enjoy the outdoors.*

*The newest additions to the National Wildlife Refuge System reflect these values and priorities, each created for a specific purpose and in service of larger strategic goals. For example:*

- \* The recently added Rio Mora National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area in New Mexico and the Sangre de Cristo Conservation Area in Colorado will ensure protection and restoration of the Mora River Watershed and the western Great Plains shortgrass prairie, one of the great prairie landscapes of North America.*
- \* Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge in the south valley of Albuquerque, New Mexico, is the Southwest's first urban refuge, providing incredible new opportunities for families and children to experience the natural world and ignite their passion for the outdoors.*
- \* Our newest national wildlife refuge for Fiscal Year 2015, Mountain Bogs National Wildlife Refuge in North Carolina, will conserve southern Appalachian mountain bogs, one of the rarest and most imperiled wildlife habitats in the United States.*

*We cannot succeed in our conservation mission acting alone, which is why we are accelerating our work with landowners and conservation partners interested in voluntarily improving the health and productivity of their property for wildlife and people. Over the past five years, private partners have donated 44,206 fee acres and 242,074 conservation easement acres. These totals represent nearly half the 620,976 acres added to the*

*Refuge System since July 1, 2011.*

*Much of this acreage occurs in some of North America's most vulnerable habitats—including more than 62,000 acres in the Crown of the Continent, the largest intact ecosystem in the nation encompassing parts of Montana and British Columbia and Alberta, Canada. Crown of the Continent features most of the same species of plants and animals that Lewis and Clark recorded in their famous expedition more than 200 years ago.*

*In addition to wildlife habitat, many of our refuges protect the sites of key events, people, and cultural milestones in United States history. They include the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Monument, part of which will be administered by Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge in Maryland. Blackwater encompasses land that Harriet Tubman worked as a slave in her youth.*

*Our mission is to sustain our nation's natural heritage for current and future generations, while providing opportunities for families and kids to encounter the wonders of nature. The more than 150 million acres of the Refuge System provide unparalleled opportunities for Americans of all walks of life to experience fishing, hunting, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation. We are expanding those opportunities whenever they are compatible with the purposes of the refuge.*

*We face enormous conservation challenges in the 21st century, but the National Wildlife Refuge System is positioned to help us meet those challenges with our partners, leaving a lasting legacy for our descendants.*



# All Fish and Wildlife Service Lands



Michael Picha/USFWS

Clearwater County WPA, Minnesota

The National Wildlife Refuge System is the world's most extensive network of public lands and waters dedicated to the conservation of fish, wildlife, and plants. The System is comprised of 563 national wildlife refuges, 209 waterfowl production areas, and 50 wildlife coordination areas totaling 150,393,936 acres of lands, waters, and interests in lands and waters administered by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

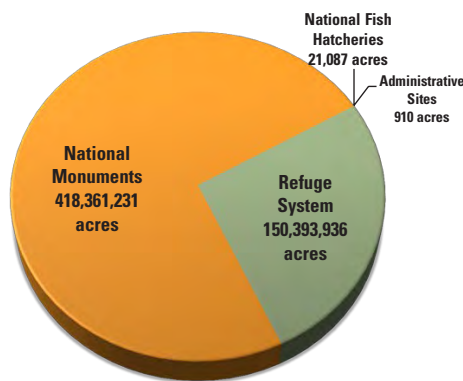
Waterfowl production areas are small natural wetlands and associated grasslands acquired under the authority of the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act. Located primarily in the upper Midwest of the United States, the 3,830,980 acres of waterfowl production areas are reported by county and are administered by the 38

wetland management districts.

Coordination areas are federal lands that the States manage as wildlife habitat under cooperative agreements. There are 257,739 acres of coordination areas.

In addition to the National Wildlife Refuge System, the Fish and Wildlife Service manages 418,361,231 acres of mostly submerged lands and waters outside refuge boundaries, mostly in four marine national monuments, Marianas Trench, Pacific Remote Islands, Papahānaumōkūākea, and Rose Atoll. The four marine monuments together encompass more than 473 million acres, of which the Service manages approximately 8,300 surface acres and nearly 55 million submerged acres within the boundaries of 15 national wildlife refuges. The Service manages the remaining 418 million submerged acres cooperatively with the Department of Commerce and/or the State of Hawaii.

Summary of All Service Lands



Summary of All Service Lands

Category and Unit Counts	PUBLIC LANDS AND WATERS								EASEMENTS			AGREEMENT OR LEASE	TOTAL ACRES		
	Reserved from Public Domain		Designated as Marine National Monuments	Acquired by Other Federal Agency		Purchased by FWS		Donated	Acquired by Other Federal Agency	Purchased by FWS				Donated	
	Primary Jurisdiction	Secondary Jurisdiction		Primary Jurisdiction	Secondary Jurisdiction	Acres	Cost(\$)			Acres	Cost(\$)				
National Wildlife Refuges	563	81,246,352.19	646,120.35	52,811,899.50	3,545,198.78	911,084.79	4,565,947.47	\$2,307,743,629.91	830,690.59	86,995.87	519,444.11	\$249,960,183.76	387,899.76	753,583.40	146,305,216.81
Waterfowl Production Areas	209	15,897.64	0.00	0.00	27,974.05	0.00	712,656.71	\$262,822,257.49	25,204.49	76,377.83	2,676,346.44	\$399,932,796.07	294,963.30	1,560.03	3,830,980.49
Coordination Areas	50	56,586.61	0.00	0.00	139,252.89	55,739.14	5,961.54	\$826,752.00	25.00	173.50	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	257,738.68
Administrative Sites	42	70.94	0.00	0.00	8.57	0.00	753.57	\$14,333,374.05	1.61	6.22	0.50	\$1,030,000.00	4.89	63.98	910.28
National Fish Hatcheries	70	3,607.09	827.81	0.00	2,013.19	3,475.66	5,424.46	\$3,595,679.59	1,359.64	362.26	503.81	\$246,846.06	3,184.25	328.52	21,086.69
National Monuments	6	0.00	0.00	418,328,265.94	0.00	32,965.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	418,361,230.94
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b>940</b>	<b>81,322,514.47</b>	<b>646,948.16</b>	<b>471,140,165.44</b>	<b>3,714,447.48</b>	<b>1,003,264.59</b>	<b>5,290,743.75</b>	<b>\$2,589,321,693.04</b>	<b>857,281.33</b>	<b>163,915.68</b>	<b>3,196,294.86</b>	<b>\$651,169,825.89</b>	<b>686,052.20</b>	<b>755,535.93</b>	<b>568,777,163.89</b>



# Fish and Wildlife Service Acquisitions in Fiscal Year 2015



USFWS

*Everglades Headquarters NWR and Conservation Area, Florida*

In FY 2015, the Service added 140,757 acres to the National Wildlife Refuge System, including 27,206 fee acres and 109,705 easement acres. These acres were added to 68 national wildlife refuges and 77 waterfowl production area counties, spanning 31 states.

Of these conserved lands, the Service purchased 11,303 fee acres and 93,219 easement acres at a cost of \$97,282,281. The Service received donations of 16,193 fee acres and 16,494 easement acres from partners and landowners interested in conserving wildlife habitat and providing public sources of wildlife-dependent outdoor recreation.

For a full list of FY 2015 acquisitions, please refer to the Table on page 22, or Table 2 of our online Appendix of Statistical Data Tables at [www.fws.gov/refuges/land/LandReport.html](http://www.fws.gov/refuges/land/LandReport.html).

## Mountain Bogs, North Carolina, the 563rd National Wildlife Refuge

In FY 2015, the Service established Mountain Bogs National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge, which will include land in 11 counties in western North Carolina and two counties in eastern Tennessee, is devoted to conserving southern Appalachian mountain bogs, one of the rarest and most imperiled habitats in the United States.

Mountain bogs are typically small and widely scattered across the landscape, often isolated from other wetlands. Important to wildlife and plants, mountain bogs are home to three endangered species, green pitcher plant, mountain sweet pitcher plant, and bunched arrowhead, and two threatened species, bog turtle and swamp pink (a lily). They also provide habitat for migratory birds and game animals,

including mink, woodcock, ruffed grouse, turkey, and wood duck.

The 563rd refuge may eventually grow to 23,000 acres, depending on the willingness of landowners to sell and the availability of funds to purchase those acres. To guide acquisition, and bog conservation in general, the Service has identified 30 sites, called Conservation Partnership Areas, containing bogs and surrounding lands.

The Service will look primarily within these Conservation Partnership Areas to acquire land and/or easements. For those acres that won't be acquired, the Service will work to support private landowners in their stewardship activities. Funding would likely come from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, funded by fees collected from the sale of publicly-owned offshore oil and gas drilling leases.

## Summary of Service Acquisitions in FY 2015

Category	PUBLIC LANDS AND WATERS					EASEMENTS					AGREEMENT OR LEASE	TOTAL ACRES
	Reserved from Public Domain	Acquired by Other Federal Agency	Purchased by FWS		Donated	Acquired by Other Federal Agency	Purchased by FWS		Donated			
			Acres	Cost (\$)			Acres	Cost (\$)				
National Wildlife Refuges	-272.03	-17.73	10,868.20	\$26,337,175.58	15,306.65	-7.60	46,813.23	\$26,483,630.70	5,278.33	3,845.62	81,814.67	
Waterfowl Production Areas	0.00	0.00	184.52	\$578,375.00	886.10	0.00	46,405.87	\$43,808,025.00	11,215.20	0.00	58,691.69	
Coordination Areas	0.00	0.00	250.25	\$75,075.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	250.25	
<b>Total of Refuge System</b>	<b>-272.03</b>	<b>-17.73</b>	<b>11,302.97</b>	<b>\$26,990,625.58</b>	<b>16,192.75</b>	<b>-7.60</b>	<b>93,219.10</b>	<b>\$70,291,655.70</b>	<b>16,493.53</b>	<b>3,845.62</b>	<b>140,756.61</b>	
Administrative Sites	0.00	0.00	17.94	\$467,600.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	17.94	
<b>Total outside Refuge System</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>17.94</b>	<b>\$467,600.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>17.94</b>	
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b>-272.03</b>	<b>-17.73</b>	<b>11,320.91</b>	<b>\$27,458,225.58</b>	<b>16,192.75</b>	<b>-7.60</b>	<b>93,219.10</b>	<b>\$70,291,655.70</b>	<b>16,493.53</b>	<b>3,845.62</b>	<b>140,774.55</b>	



# A Closer Look at Service Land Acquisition



Jonathan Bloomfield/USFWS

*Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually NWR, Washington*

The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and, where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans. The National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 directs the Service to “plan and direct the continued growth of the System in a manner that is best designed to accomplish the mission of the System, to contribute to the conservation of the ecosystems of the United States, to complement efforts of States and other Federal agencies to conserve fish and wildlife and their habitats, and to increase support for the System and participation from conservation partners and the public.”

The Service strategically grows the Refuge System through the acquisition of fee title lands and easements when other means of achieving its conservation mission are not appropriate, available, or effective. The Service acquires the minimum interest necessary to meet management objectives, which include conserving migratory birds, endangered

species, fish, wildlife, and plant habitat, wetlands, fisheries, and biodiversity, and providing public environmental education, interpretation, and wildlife-dependent recreation.

The Service acquires lands and waters from willing sellers under the authorities of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, the Migratory Bird Conservation Act, the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956, and the Refuge Recreation Act.

### **Funding to Protect Wildlife Habitat**

The Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund are the primary sources of funding for land acquisition for the National Wildlife Refuge System. In FY 2015, these two funds accounted for 90 percent of all expenditures to acquire fee lands or easements for the Refuge System.

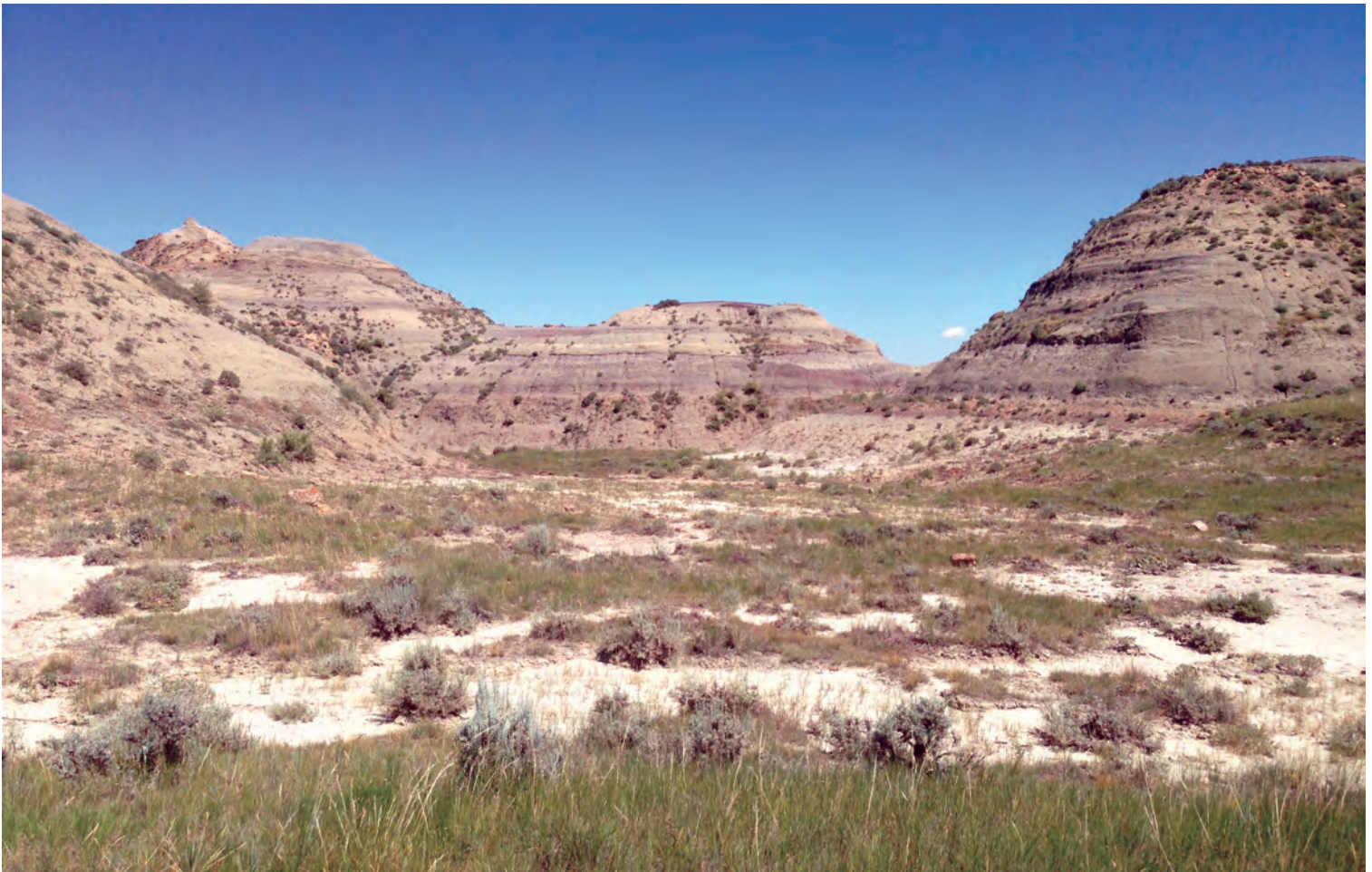
Congress created the **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)** in 1965 to provide funding for outdoor recreation projects and land acquisition by federal agencies. Today, it is the largest source

of federal money for parks, wildlife, and open space land acquisition. The LWCF is authorized to receive up to \$900 million annually, primarily from receipts for oil and gas drilling leases on the Outer Continental Shelf (submerged offshore lands under U.S. government jurisdiction and control). Each year, the Administration requests a portion of these funds to protect new lands in national wildlife refuges, and Congress appropriates funds.

Since 1967, the Service has spent \$1.6 billion in LWCF monies to protect nearly 1.7 million acres of wildlife habitat in 306 national wildlife refuges spanning all 50 states and the territories of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the U.S. Minor Outlying Islands. Since its inception, the LWCF has been the source of 63 percent of all funds used to purchase fee lands and easements for national wildlife refuges.

Congress created the **Migratory Bird Conservation Fund (MBCF)** in 1929 to protect waterfowl habitat in major migratory bird conservation areas. Under the authority of the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp





David Allen\USFWS

*Charles M. Russell NWR, Montana*

Act, the Service also uses the MBCF to protect small natural wetlands, known as waterfowl production areas, in the Prairie Pothole Region of the United States. The MBCF receives proceeds from the sale of Federal Duck Stamps and from import duties collected on arms and ammunition, as provided for under the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986.

Since 1934, the Service has used MBCF dollars, with the approval of the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission, to establish more than 120 national wildlife refuges. In all, the Service has spent more than \$1.3 billion in MBCF monies to permanently protect more than 5.7 million acres of important waterfowl habitat in 240 national wildlife refuges and 206 waterfowl production area counties in 45 states. In the Prairie Pothole Region alone, the Service has spent \$575 million in MBCF to protect more than 3.2 million acres of important waterfowl habitat, primarily through the purchase of conservation easements.

**The North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA)** provided \$2.4 million, or about 3.6%, of Service expenditures to conserve habitat

for the Refuge System in FY 2015. NAWCA grants are funded by general appropriations (federal tax revenue), interest earned on various federal accounts, federal excise taxes on small gasoline engines, and Migratory Bird Treaty Act fines.

Historically, other sources of funding for new wildlife habitat included the **Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (FLTFA)** and the **Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA)**. FLTFA provided funding for acquisition of new wildlife habitat using revenues generated from sales of federal lands that were authorized for disposal under the Federal Land Policy Management Act. SNPLMA allows the U.S. Government to sell federal land around Las Vegas, Nevada, with a portion of the proceeds going toward land acquisition for refuges and parks, as well as conservation initiatives and restoration projects. Other sources of funding include compensatory mitigation and other specific appropriations.

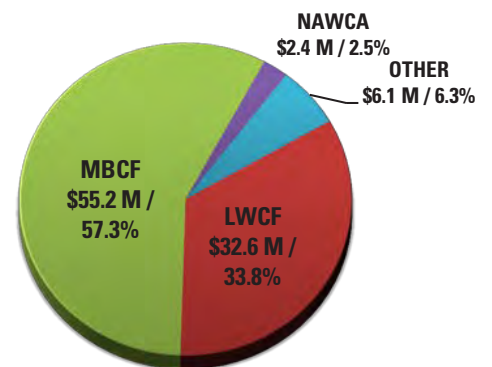
**Donations**

In FY 2015, private landowners and non-governmental organization conservation

partners donated over 32,000 acres—16,193 fee and 16,494 easement—to the National Wildlife Refuge System. To date, over 1.5 million acres—857,281 fee and 686,052 easement—have been donated.

The value of these donated lands is immeasurable, not only to fish, wildlife, and plants, but also as a reflection of the generosity of spirit that inspired the donors to provide a lasting legacy for the benefit of future generations of Americans.

**Sources of Funding  
Land and Easement Purchases  
in FY 2015**





# Migratory Bird Treaty Centennial 1916-2016

## *100 Years of Migratory Bird Conservation*



USFWS

*Stillwater NWR, Nevada*

The year 2016 marks the centennial of the Convention Between the United States and Great Britain (for Canada) for the Protection of Migratory Birds (also called the Migratory Bird Treaty), signed on Aug. 16, 1916. The Migratory Bird Treaty, and three others that followed, form the cornerstones of our efforts to conserve birds that migrate across international borders.

The Treaty connects the Service with our federal, state, private, non-governmental, tribal, and international partners, who share a long, successful history of conserving, protecting, and managing migratory bird populations and their habitats. Celebrating the centennial allows us to bring together those who have contributed to its success, and to galvanize efforts to protect migratory birds for generations to come.

The Treaty set the stage for many other key agreements and legislation, such as the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and the Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 1929 (MBCA), that solidified our commitment to conserving birds and other wildlife.

Since 1903, the Service has established more than 370 national wildlife refuges to conserve habitat for migratory birds. Under the authority of the MBCA and the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act of 1934, the Service has protected nearly 4.0 million fee acres and 3.2 million easement acres for migratory bird refuges, in the lower 48 states.

Below are examples of fiscal year 2015 acquisitions that contribute to this legacy:

### **Aransas NWR, Texas**

Aransas NWR was established in 1937 to serve as a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife. The refuge is unique in its presentation of four distinct habitats along the Texas Gulf Coast: barrier island, peninsula, coastal upland prairie, and shoreline, and plays a critical role in coastal habitat conservation and management. The refuge provides an inviolate sanctuary for thousands of migratory songbirds, raptors, shorebirds, waterfowl, and pollinators to rest and feed before continuing their annual arduous journeys to tropical destinations. The refuge also serves as wintering grounds for

threatened and endangered species, especially the endangered whooping crane.

At Aransas NWR, the Service received a donation of 667 fee acres as part of a Natural Resource Damage Assessment settlement. The donated acres are located in the Myrtle-Foester Whitmire Unit, the purpose of which is to protect important wetland habitat for migrating and wintering waterfowl and vital nesting habitat for resident mottled ducks.

### **Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually NWR, Washington**

Established in 1974 to protect the Nisqually River Delta and its diversity of fish and wildlife habitats, the Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually NWR is a landmark in the Pacific Northwest, located where the fresh water of the Nisqually River flows into Puget Sound, and protects one of the few relatively undeveloped large estuaries remaining in Puget Sound. The Nisqually estuary, mixing fresh and saltwater, is among the most productive ecosystems on earth. The Service has restored 762 acres of the estuary by removing dikes to restore tidal waters after a 100-year absence.





Vickie Harman\USFWS

*Yukon Flats NWR, Alaska*

The refuge has international significance as a staging area, sanctuary, and migration stopover for more than 275 species of migratory birds of the Pacific Flyway. The refuge also has regional importance as migration and rearing habitat for salmon, particularly the threatened Chinook salmon.

The Service acquired a 26-acre parcel at the refuge, in a small watershed that feeds into the Nisqually Delta. Because of its biological significance, the Secretary of the Interior designated the Nisqually Delta as a National Natural Landmark.

**Moosehorn NWR, Maine**

Moosehorn NWR was established in 1937, with the primary purpose of providing habitat for black ducks and breeding and nesting habitat for woodcocks. The refuge provides diverse wildlife habitats, including grasslands, forests, freshwater marshes, and rocky marine coastline.

The Service acquired a 278-acre tract at Moosehorn NWR. The tract has 3,100 feet of stream frontage; contributes to water quality for eastern brook trout and Atlantic salmon; provides breeding and nesting habitat for wood ducks, hooded mergansers, and black ducks; and supports all 26 species of Maine warblers.

**Petit Manan NWR, Maine**

Petit Manan NWR was established in 1974 to support the Service's national

migratory bird management program. The Service's primary focus at the refuge is restoration and management of habitat for colonial seabirds, including common, Arctic, and endangered roseate terns, Atlantic puffins, razorbills, black guillemots, Leach's storm-petrels, laughing gulls, and common eiders.

The Service acquired a five-acre tract at Petit Manan NWR that supports nesting double-crested cormorants, common eiders, black guillemots, and black-backed and herring gulls.

**Stillwater NWR, Nevada**

Water rights purchases for Stillwater NWR began in 1990 after Congress directed the Service to acquire enough water to maintain 25,000 acres of wetlands in Northern Nevada's Lahontan Valley. This year the Service acquired 2,278 acre-feet of water rights at the refuge, a substantial contribution toward that goal. Funding came from the Bureau of Reclamation and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

**Turnbull NWR, Washington**

Established in 1936, Turnbull NWR encompasses 18,217 acres of the Channeled Scablands; it contains a diverse landscape of more than 130 marshes, wetlands, and lakes, and represents some of the last quality breeding habitat for waterfowl in eastern Washington.

The Service acquired 303 acres at Turnbull NWR that will provide visitors with amazing views of migratory birds, waterfowl, and other wildlife. The property contains approximately 74 acres of wetlands, which, when restored, will provide habitat for a host of waterfowl species, including redhead, mallard, cinnamon teal, gadwall, and wood duck. The property also contains four and a half miles of the Columbia Plateau State Park Trail, which is a 130-mile multi-use Rails-to-Trails Conservancy project.

**Yukon Flats NWR, Alaska**

Yukon Flats NWR was established in 1980 by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) to conserve fish and wildlife populations and habitats in their natural diversity, including waterfowl, other migratory birds, dall sheep, bears, moose, wolves, wolverines, other furbearers, caribou, and salmon; to fulfill international treaty obligations; to provide for continued subsistence uses; and to ensure necessary water quality and quantity.

The Service acquired a 160-acre tract on the northerly shoreline of Kwittevunkud Lake in the northerly part of Yukon Flats NWR. Kwittevunkud Lake provides habitat for migrating shorebirds, nesting waterfowl, and resident species such as moose, muskrat, and beaver. The majority of the tract is comprised of spruce forest, which provides habitat for wolf, lynx, hare, and marten.



# Urban Refuges



Stuart Marcus/USFWS

*Trinity River NWR, Texas*

Urban refuges offer unique environmental education and recreation opportunities in highly populated areas, while promoting the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System to protect wildlife and their habitats for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans. Over 70 urban refuges are located within five miles of an urban population center. Each of these urban refuges supports the Service's urban wildlife refuge initiative to "Connect People with Nature." In an effort to enable the Service to fulfill the goals of working with community partners to establish a 21st century conservation ethic, and reconnecting people—especially young people—to the natural world, the Service acquired land at the following urban refuges during FY 2015:

## **Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually NWR, Washington**

The Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually NWR was established to protect the Nisqually River Delta and its diversity of fish and wildlife habitats. The refuge provides migration and nesting habitat for many waterfowl species, including American wigeon, mallards, wood ducks, northern pintails, American green-winged teal, and

Canada geese.

The Black River Unit of the refuge encompasses wetland and riparian habitats and surrounding uplands along the Black River; a slow-moving, spring-fed tributary of the Chehalis River south of Olympia, Washington. The purpose of the unit is to protect biological diversity and to enhance and manage unique wetland and riparian ecosystems for the benefit of anadromous salmonid production and rearing, migratory and resident waterfowl, migratory neotropical birds, wading birds, and other wetland-dependent wildlife. It is also one of only a few places in Washington where the federally threatened Oregon spotted frog can be found.

The Service acquired 16 fee acres at the Black River Unit of the refuge. The acquired acres are covered with a dense riparian forest containing approximately half an acre of the Black River; and consist almost entirely of wetlands and flood zones, providing habitat for wetland-dependent wildlife and also upland species such as bear.

## **Blackwater NWR, Maryland**

The Service and The Conservation Fund have worked together successfully to protect over 8,000 acres at Blackwater NWR. Most recently, this collaboration enabled the Service to purchase two tracts totaling 510 acres of high priority forested freshwater wetlands.

The 357-acre tract is one of the largest forest blocks in Dorchester County, Maryland; it contains a large part of the Kentuck Swamp, which helps maintain water quality in the Little Blackwater and Blackwater River drainages. Both tracts provide key habitats for forest interior dwelling songbirds and the Delmarva fox squirrel, and are critical stopovers along the Atlantic Flyway for migratory song-, marsh-, and waterbirds.

The Chesapeake Bay area has lost thousands of acres of tidal marsh habitat to sea level rise, subsidence, and coastal erosion. The newly acquired lands will play an important role in protecting the coastal refuge from the impacts of climate change because the Service will actively manage them for wetland migration and adaptation, to help provide a stronger, more resilient coast for both





Sarah Neal\USFWS Volunteer

*Valle de Oro NWR, New Mexico*

wildlife and people.

**San Bernard NWR, Texas**

The Service added 360 acres of bottomland hardwood forested wetlands along the San Bernard River to San Bernard NWR in Texas. The tract is 30 miles from the city limits of Houston, and will be an important site for environmental education programs and urban initiative outreach.

The San Bernard River is one of the few rivers in Texas that has not been impounded or channelized, and is lined with mature bald cypress trees, some of which are estimated to be over 1,200 years old. The tract protects high quality migratory bird habitat on the river and in a tributary backwater area, and helps conserve the forests and wetlands of the Columbia bottomlands, a southern floodplain forest formation on the Texas coast. The area is a critical stopover and staging habitat for Nearctic-Neotropical migratory songbirds, and the forested wetlands and open ponds of the tract are important wintering habitat for waterfowl, resident and migratory wading birds, and other wildlife.

Important partners on this acquisition included The Trust for Public Land, The Friends of Brazoria NWR, Houston Endowment, Tom Smith, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

**Trinity River NWR, Texas**

Trinity River NWR was established in 1994 to protect a remnant of the

bottomland hardwood forest found along the Trinity River in Texas, and is managed for wintering, feeding, and roosting waterfowl. Wood ducks, mallards, gadwall, and hooded mergansers are all found on the refuge.

The Service acquired 3,692 acres at the refuge. The Coastal Water Authority donated 2,982 of the acres in connection with the Luce Bayou Interbasin Transfer Project; the tract is heavily timbered with older growth bottomland hardwoods. The Service purchased the remaining 530 acres from a private landowner; that tract is entirely wooded, and contains old bottomland hardwoods and associated habitat for migrating, wintering, and breeding waterfowl.

**Valle de Oro NWR, New Mexico**

Valle de Oro NWR, located just south of Albuquerque, New Mexico, is the Southwest's first urban refuge, and is an oasis for wildlife and people. Through its continuing partnership with The Trust for Public Land, the Service acquired the remaining 29 acres of pre-1907 water rights, which are critical for restoration projects along the Rio Grande. These water rights will help the Service enhance the river corridor and fulfill the goals of President Obama's America's Great Outdoor Initiative by working with more than 150 community partners to establish a 21st century conservation ethic and to connect New Mexico's youth to the natural world.

Within the next few years, restoration

of native habitats will begin within an expansion of the bosque habitat into the refuge, the re-creation of wetlands, and the re-growth of naturally occurring grasses and brush. The variety of habitats within a small area will create rich opportunities for diverse wildlife viewing.

**Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge, Massachusetts**

As part of a multi-phased acquisition, the Service received a donation of two parcels totaling 98 acres in Longmeadow, Massachusetts, thereby establishing the Fannie Stebbins Unit of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge. The Service partnered with The Nature Conservancy on this acquisition.

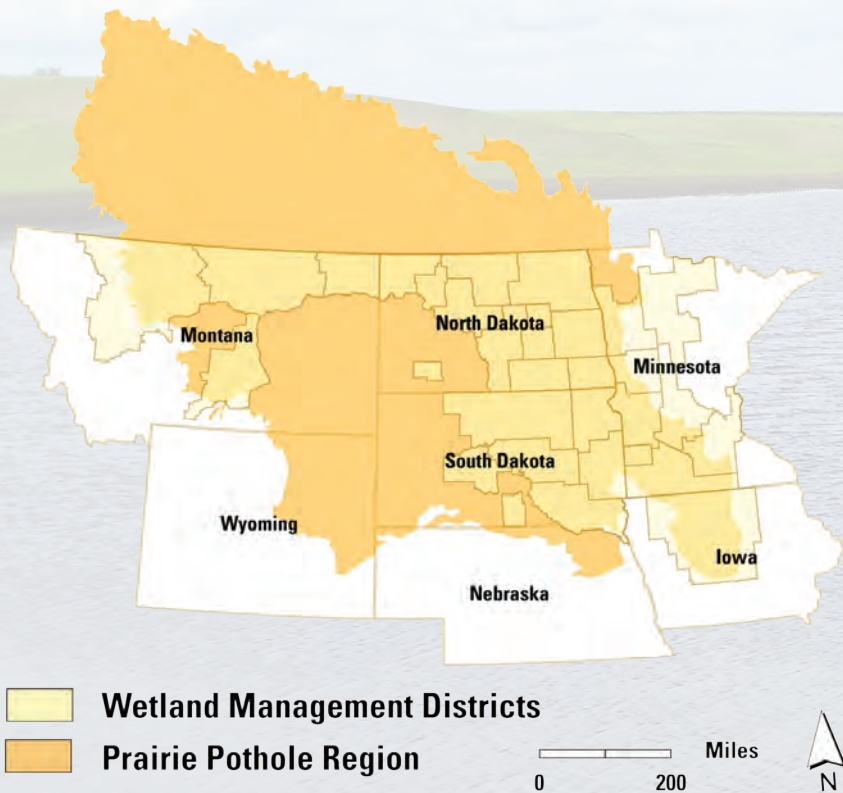
Fannie Stebbins was a nationally-recognized biologist and educator. Before becoming part of the Silvio O. Conte refuge, the 330-acre Fannie Stebbins Wildlife Refuge was managed by a local nonprofit organization, the Allen Bird Club of Springfield, Massachusetts, for over 60 years. In 1972, the National Park Service designated the Fannie Stebbins Wildlife Refuge a National Environmental Education Landmark.

The new unit provides a unique opportunity to connect residents of one of New England's largest cities, Springfield, to the National Wildlife Refuge System. The Service will work with nearby partners and residents to expand urban conservation efforts and engage local populations in conservation.



# Prairie Potholes and Waterfowl Production Areas

*Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota*



**Acquisition Program (SWAP)** acquires from landowners minimally restrictive grassland and wetland conservation easements that allow landowners to maintain working agricultural lands, while protecting resources.

Through the SWAP, the Service purchases grassland and wetland conservation easements from willing sellers in **waterfowl production areas**, using proceeds from the sale of Federal Duck Stamps and import duties collected on arms and ammunition. Waterfowl production areas acquired through the SWAP are managed by staff in the Service's 38 wetland management district offices.

Grassland easements restrict landowners from converting grassland to cropland, and require them to delay haying until after July 15 (after the nesting season). These easements do not restrict grazing.

Wetland easements restrict landowners from draining, filling, leveling, or burning a wetland basin, but allow farming, grazing, and haying.

These grassland and wetland conservation easements permanently protect habitat, but allow the landowner to retain ownership and most property rights, including the right of access. The easements not only allow ranching and livestock operations, but also they ensure the ecological integrity of the grasslands and wetlands by supporting the endemic plants, migratory birds, and other wildlife species.

In FY 2015, the Service conserved nearly 93,759 acres in the Prairie Pothole Region, including 2,087 fee acres and 91,671 easement acres, at a total cost of \$61.5 million. This total acreage includes 1,069 fee acres and 57,139 easement acres in waterfowl production areas acquired through the SWAP, as well as 1,018 fee acres and 34,533 easement acres in national wildlife refuges. These FY 2015 acquisitions included:

The **Prairie Pothole Region** of North America was once the largest expanse of grasslands and small wetlands on earth, extending from central Iowa through Minnesota, South Dakota, North Dakota, and Montana, and into Canada. The Region was covered with small wetlands, called prairie potholes, that were created when glaciers advanced and retreated over the area. These small wetlands, and the grasslands, aquatic plants, and invertebrates associated with them, provide the essential elements of an ideal nursery for waterfowl. For this reason, the Prairie Pothole Region has long been called the "duck factory" of North America.

Mallards, gadwall, blue-winged teal, northern shovelers, northern pintails, redheads, canvasbacks, and other waterfowl in North America's Central Flyway depend on grasslands and wetlands for breeding habitat. Recent

increases in commodity prices have led a growing number of landowners to convert their grasslands and wetlands into cropland. These large-scale land use changes are expanding rapidly into formerly secure grassland-wetland complexes and threatening this vital ecosystem.

Although more than half of the prairie potholes have been drained and converted to agricultural uses, the Region still produces 50% of the breeding duck populations in the United States.

The Service is undertaking a landscape-scale, strategic habitat conservation effort to preserve this unique, highly diverse, and endangered ecosystem. One effective technique to conserve the remaining wetlands and grasslands is to work with private landowners to conserve critical resources while still allowing them to earn a living on their property. The Service's **Small Wetlands**



### **Bowdoin and Northeast Montana WMDs, Montana**

Bowdoin Wetland Management District was established in 1973 to protect small wetlands in a four-county area in north-central Montana. The WMD includes 10 waterfowl production areas, four satellite refuges, and more than 180 grassland and/or wetland conservation easements.

Northeast Montana Wetland Management District was established in 1968 to provide breeding habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife. The WMD includes 44 waterfowl production areas and more than 230 wetland and/or grassland conservation easements.

The Service acquired seven conservation easements in northern Montana, conserving 6,166 acres of prairie grassland and prairie pothole wetlands. In addition to securing vital summer breeding habitat for migratory waterfowl, these conservation easements also protect habitat for grassland-dependent bird species such as Sprague's pipits and mammals such as pronghorns, black-tailed prairie dogs, and mule deer.

### **Dakota Grassland CA, North Dakota and South Dakota**

Established in 2011, Dakota Grassland Conservation Area protects critical grassland and wetland habitat for conservation priority bird species, including eight species of waterfowl, 22 species of shorebirds, ten species of waterbirds, and 20 species of grassland birds.

The Service acquired 16,467 acres of perpetual grassland conservation easements, adding to the nearly 28,000 acres of wildlife habitat already protected since 2011.

The landowners view the perpetual conservation easements as a benefit to their ranching lifestyle, allowing unrestricted grazing but preventing the native grasslands from being plowed for crop production.

One of the conservation easement acquisitions protects 861 acres of native grassland and 100 acres of temporary, seasonal, and permanent wetlands. This landscape-scale purchase is adjacent to the 22,300-acre Long Lake NWR, which is designated as a Globally Important Bird Area and a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network key site. Because of their importance as both a breeding and migratory stopover for more than 20,000 shorebirds annually, these grasslands and wetlands will

provide additional protected habitat for migrating sandhill and whooping cranes, Sprague's pipits, and western meadowlarks.

### **Giese WPA, Minnesota**

Pheasants Forever donated a number of fee-title properties to the Service for management as waterfowl production areas. One donation included the 320-acre John Giese Waterfowl Production Area in Murray County, Minnesota, which is now a part of the Windom Wetland Management District. The Giese WPA protects a rare 72-acre native prairie remnant and adjoins a large state wildlife management area.

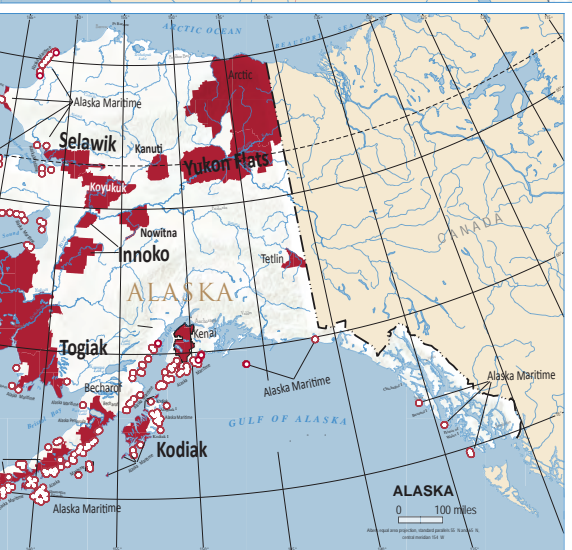
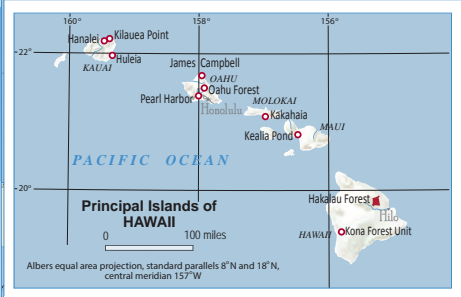
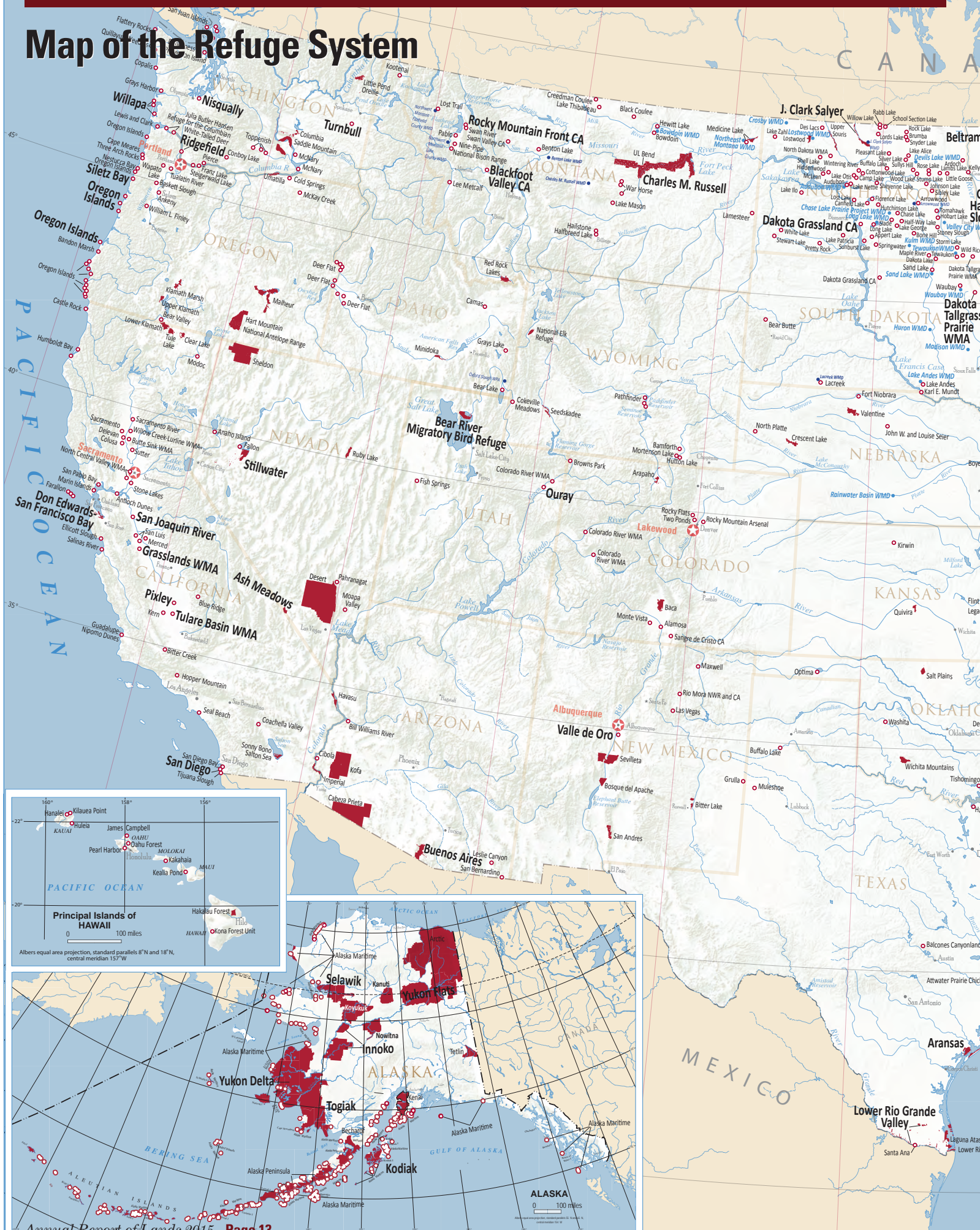
Reestablishment of the Giese WPA's original prairie pothole landscape began with a planting of diverse, local eco-type native grasses and wildflowers on almost 200 acres of former crop fields, followed by restoration of a well-rounded complex of temporary, seasonal, and semi-permanent wetlands totaling 55 acres. Restoration work has increased habitat for breeding and migratory waterfowl, as well as declining grassland species such as bobolinks and monarch butterflies, and boosted ring-necked pheasant numbers and public hunting opportunities.

The project was successful due to an extensive assemblage of conservation partners. In addition to Pheasants Forever, key partners included the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the Murray County Highway Department, the Murray County Soil and Water Conservation District, the Southwest Prairie Technical Service Area, the Harold Dittman Trust, and the Friends of the Windom Wetlands.

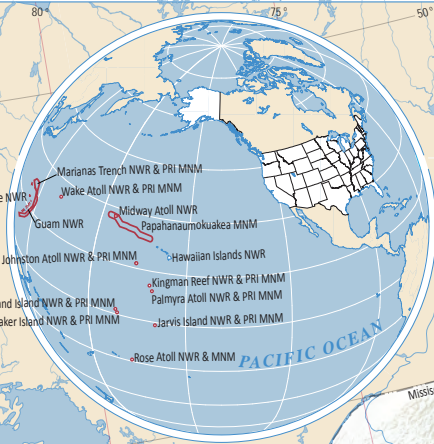
The WPA was named after the late Murray County Commissioner John Giese, who was a strong advocate for the Service's WPA acquisition program and a founding member of the Friends of the Windom Wetlands.



# Map of the Refuge System







**Refuge Units with FY2015 Acquisitions** ● Baca

**Refuge Units with no FY2015 Acquisitions** ○ Washita

**Wetland Management Districts with FY2015 Acquisitions** ● Crosby WMD

**Waterfowl Production Areas with no FY2015 Acquisitions** ● Carlton Pond WPA

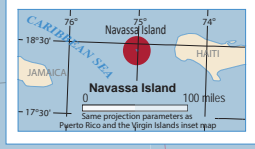
**Regional Offices** ★ Portland

*Refuges as shown may contain inholdings.*

**Abbreviations**

- CA: Conservation Area
- MNM: Marine National Monument
- NFWR: National Fish and Wildlife Refuge
- PRI & MNM: Pacific Remote Islands and Marine National Monument
- NWFR: National Wildlife and Fish Refuge
- NWR: National Wildlife Refuge
- WMA: Wildlife Management Area
- WMD: Wetland Management District Office
- WPA: Waterfowl Production Area

**For an interactive map visit: [www.fws.gov/refuges](http://www.fws.gov/refuges)**



SCALE 1:7,500,000

0 100 200 300 400 MILES

0 100 200 300 400 500 600 KILOMETERS

Albers equal area projection, standard parallels 29° 30'N and 45° 30'N, central meridian 96° W

Produced in the Division of Realty, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
 Base Map Source: U.S. Geological Survey  
 11-25-2014



# Working with Partners to Conserve Habitat



Tina Shaw/USFWS

## *Green Bay NWR, Michigan*

Without our invaluable conservation partners, the Service would not be able to achieve its conservation mission. The following are examples of the FY 2015 acquisition success stories that were made possible by collaboration with our partners:

### **Green Bay NWR, Michigan**

Consisting of the 325-acre Plum Island and the smaller Pilot and Hog Islands, Green Bay NWR was established in 1912 as habitat for migratory birds. Originally called Green Bay Reservation, the name was changed to Green Bay NWR in 1940.

In partnership with The Nature Conservancy, the Service expanded Green Bay NWR to include most of St. Martin Island and all of Rocky Island in Lake Michigan, adding another 1,290 acres to the 330-acre refuge. The islands are part of the Grand Traverse Island chain, which extends from Wisconsin's Door Peninsula to Michigan's Garden Peninsula. St. Martin Island is part of the Niagara Escarpment, and has significant bluffs that provide habitat for rare native snails and plants. The island has forests, wetlands, and an extensive cobblestone beach.

Both St. Martin and Rocky Islands, along with others in the refuge, provide important stopover habitat for birds that migrate through the Great Lakes area each spring and fall. 43 neo-tropical migrant birds and 26 species of greatest conservation need in Michigan use St. Martin Island either during migration or the breeding season, or both.

### **Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR, Minnesota and Iowa**

Spanning 85 counties in western Minnesota and northwestern Iowa, the Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR was established in 2000 to address the loss of America's grasslands, particularly tallgrass prairie, and the decline of grassland wildlife. The refuge hosts a myriad of fish and wildlife, including numerous pollinators such as the Dakota skipper; iconic species such as the greater prairie chicken; numerous neo-tropical migrants; waterfowl; and several game species.

The Service acquired 2,312 acres of easements and fee title lands at Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR that will contribute to the conservation of biodiversity in the tallgrass prairie, with

its complex web of plant and animal communities.

Acquired through a partnership with The Nature Conservancy and a multi-generational ranching family, a 447-acre easement lies in Pope County within the rugged Alexandria moraine, which is characterized by an undulating landscape of steeply sloped hills separated by valleys with wetlands, small lakes, and springs. This partnership effort demonstrates the power of collaboration using shared knowledge and expertise, despite limited resources.

### **Oregon Islands NWR, Oregon**

Oregon Islands NWR was established in 1935 as a refuge and breeding ground for seabirds and marine mammals. The refuge encompasses 762 acres of colossal rocks, reefs, islands, and headlands spanning 320 miles of the Oregon coast, and provides nesting habitat for most of Oregon's 1.2 million nesting seabirds. A large percentage of Oregon's seal and sea lion population use the refuge as a place to haul out and rest or to give birth to their pups.

Through a strong partnership with the





© Richard Hamilton Smith

*Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR, Minnesota and Iowa*

Oregon Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, the North Coast Land Conservancy, the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, and the landowners, the Service acquired a 14-acre tract that surrounds the oldest marine reserve in Oregon, where all marine life is protected. The property became the Whale Cove Unit of the refuge, on the central Oregon coast. The Whale Cove Unit will protect habitat for nesting seabirds, including black oystercatchers, pigeon guillemots, pelagic cormorants, and western gulls.

#### **Rainwater Basin WMD, Nebraska**

Established in 1963, Rainwater Basin WMD is a complex of wetlands scattered across a 21-county area of Nebraska. Comprised of 11 waterfowl production areas, the basin's name reflects both the basis of its wetland hydrology and natural precipitation cycles.

The wetlands are shallow basins that provide resting and feeding areas for millions of birds during spring and fall migration. Historically, bison and wildfire kept the wetlands open, with annual plants growing during dry summer months and droughts. Today, with bison gone and wildfire controlled, the Service must manage the wetlands to keep them in a condition favored by ducks, geese, and other waterbirds. The lands managed

by the WMD serve as an example of land stewardship mimicking natural processes, and they provide an array of wildlife-dependent public educational and recreational opportunities.

Through a partnership with Ducks Unlimited and The Nebraska Environmental Trust, the Service received a donation of 75 acres of waterfowl habitat at the WMD.

#### **Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge, New Hampshire**

The Service, with help from the National Wildlife Refuge Association, established the Mascoma River Division of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge in Canaan, New Hampshire, in 2015. The forests within the Mascoma River Division provide breeding areas for songbirds and habitat for wide-ranging mammals such as bobcat and black bear.

The Service acquired a 761-acre conservation easement that is nested within a large, unfragmented forest block containing a suite of rare species, exemplary natural communities, and valuable habitat for migrating and breeding birds, and is dominated by northern hardwood forest and interspersed with small amounts of wetland, grassland, and open water habitat.

#### **Willapa NWR, Washington**

Willapa NWR was established in 1937 to protect migrating birds and their habitats. The refuge encompasses diverse ecosystems, including salt marshes, muddy tidelands, forests, freshwater wetlands, streams, grasslands, coastal dunes, and beaches, and supports more than 200 species of birds, including more than 30 species of waterfowl and more than 30 species of shorebirds, as well as a broad diversity of plants and animals.

Forterra, a nonprofit conservation organization in Washington, donated 128 acres on Willapa Bay, within the recently expanded Nemah Unit of Willapa NWR, to the Service. The property includes approximately one mile of shoreline across the bay from Long Island. The property is the first addition to the Nemah Unit, and has set the stage for another Forterra donation that will be completed in 2016.

Although recently cut for timber production, this additional upland forested habitat, upon restoration, will not only support mammals, amphibians, reptiles, and invertebrates, but also will benefit the larger Willapa Bay estuary system by protecting part of the watershed.



# Conservation Easements and Working Landscapes

## *Protecting Habitat and Working Lands*



Matt Lloyd/USFWS

### *Grasslands WMA, California*

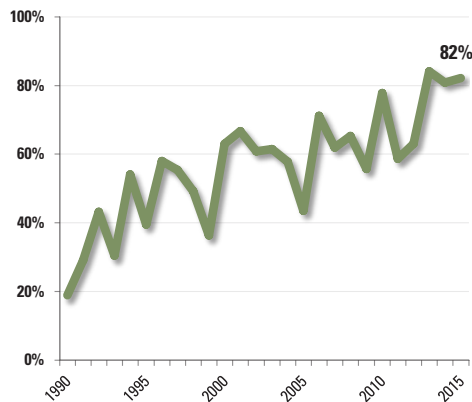
Conservation easements are voluntary legal agreements between a landowner and the Service that typically limit subdivision and development activities on the landowner's property. Conservation easements are particularly useful when properties have multiple, refuge-compatible uses. Landowners retain possession and most property rights such as continued residential and agricultural uses, and their properties remain on local tax rolls. The Service's operations and maintenance costs for conservation easements are minimal because the landowner retains responsibility for management of the land. Conservation easement agreements exemplify our partnerships with private landowners by supporting working lands while conserving large, biologically diverse landscapes.

### **Increased Acquisition of Conservation Easements**

The Service's acquisition of conservation easements has increased steadily over the past 20 years. Between 1990 and 1999, conservation easements accounted for 25 percent of the total number of acres protected, and 43 percent of acres protected through purchase.

Between 2000 and 2009, conservation easements accounted for 29 percent of acres protected, and 60 percent of acres protected through purchase. Since 2010, conservation easements have accounted for 65 percent of acres protected, and more than 74 percent of acres protected through purchase. The Service manages 124 national wildlife refuges with conservation easements, including 73 refuges on which conservation easements are the exclusive or primary method of protecting fish, wildlife, and plant habitat.

**Easements as a Percentage of Acres Purchased, 1990-2015**



Conservation easements are now the Service's primary tool to prevent fragmentation of landscapes. During FY 2015, the Service protected more than 109,705 acres through conservation easements, including conservation easement acquisitions at the following national wildlife refuges:

### **Anahuac NWR, Texas**

Anahuac NWR was established in 1963 to protect and manage the coastal marsh for migrating, wintering, and breeding waterfowl, shorebirds, and waterbirds, and to provide crucial nesting areas for neotropical songbirds migrating across the Gulf of Mexico. The meandering bayous of the refuge cut through ancient flood plains, creating vast expanses of coastal marsh and prairie bordering Galveston Bay in southeast Texas. The marshes and prairies are host or home to an abundance of wildlife, including migratory birds, alligators, bobcats, and more.

The Conservation Fund donated 1,116 fee acres at Anahuac NWR. The donated property contains wetlands, tidal flats, ponds, and Gulf of Mexico beachfront on the largest remaining undeveloped





*Anahuac NWR, Texas*

tract on Bolivar Peninsula in Galveston County. Bolivar Peninsula is a nationally and internationally recognized region for bird abundance and diversity. The donation will protect important habitat for migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds, and land birds.

The Service received an additional 886-acre conservation easement donation, which will enable the Service to protect more valuable waterfowl habitat. Principal nesting species include mottled ducks, black-bellied whistling ducks, fulvous whistling ducks, and blue-winged teal.

#### **Grasslands WMA, California**

Grasslands WMA, a component of the San Luis National Wildlife Refuge Complex, was established in 1979 to preserve wetland habitat for wintering waterfowl and other wetland-dependent wildlife. The WMA supports the largest remaining block of wetlands in the Central Valley. The area is extremely important to Pacific Flyway populations of 19 duck species and six goose species. Large concentrations of migratory waterfowl, wading birds, and shorebirds

are common and easily observed during late winter and early spring.

The Service acquired three conservation easements on 330 wetland acres within the Grasslands WMA. These conservation easements will benefit waterfowl, shorebirds, waterbirds, raptors, and other wetland-dependent wildlife, and will protect an important corridor of natural habitat within the Pacific Flyway.

#### **Lower Rio Grande Valley NWR, Texas**

Established in 1979 and located in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of South Texas, the Lower Rio Grande Valley NWR is extremely rich in flora and fauna on account of a combination of climate, geology, and topography. Four climates (temperate, desert, coastal, and subtropical) converge here, which, combined with the 365-day growing season and the rich soils of the Rio Grande delta, support more than 1,200 documented plant species. The plant diversity attracts and supports a diversity of wildlife.

During migration, birds from the Central and Mississippi Flyways converge in the

Lower Rio Grande Valley. Many Mexican bird species reach their northernmost range limit within this area.

The Service acquired a conservation easement at Lower Rio Grande Valley NWR through a multi-partner land exchange that included long-term conservation partners The Conservation Fund and the Friends of the Wildlife Corridor. The Service exchanged an isolated 2,701-acre fee tract with marginal wildlife habitat value for a 7,428-acre conservation easement on a property containing an expanse of woodlands, open pasture, and numerous pothole wetlands.

Preservation and protection of these conservation easement habitats are crucial for the biodiversity of wildlife species, and contribute to the recovery of endangered species. The new conservation easement not only benefits resident wildlife and migratory birds, but also is one of the most significant actions taken for the recovery of the critically endangered ocelot because the easement property supports one of the last two breeding populations of ocelots.



# Protecting Habitat for Threatened and Endangered Species



William McCoy/USFWS

*Patoka River NWR, Indiana*

National wildlife refuges are home to more than 380 of the nation's 1,311 threatened and endangered species. So far, 11 of those species have been removed from listing due to their recovery, and 17 others have improved in status from endangered to threatened. More than 500 listed species are now stable or improving.

59 national wildlife refuges have been created specifically to help threatened and endangered species. During FY 2015, the Service was able to acquire valuable habitat for threatened and endangered species, including the following acquisitions:

## **Driftless Area NWR, Iowa**

Driftless Area NWR was established in 1989 for the protection and recovery of the endangered Iowa Pleistocene snail and the threatened northern wild monkshood plant. These species occur on the rare and fragile algific (cold air producing) talus (loose rock) slopes, which support unique assemblages of glacial relict and boreal disjunct species. The refuge is comprised of 14 individual tracts scattered throughout northeastern

Iowa, totaling 1,186 acres.

At Driftless Area NWR, the Service acquired 30 acres, known as Mountain Maple Hollow, from The Nature Conservancy. Mountain Maple Hollow sits above the Yellow River and includes an immense algific slope on the north-facing hillside. The cold air flowing from fissures in the bedrock provide a cool, equable microclimate essential for the survival of the northern wild monkshood.

## **Patoka River NWR, Indiana**

Patoka River NWR was established in 1994 to provide resting, feeding, and nesting habitat for migratory birds; to maintain and increase biodiversity; to protect, restore, and manage the river corridor of bottomland hardwood wetlands; to improve river water quality; to develop public understanding and support for natural resources; and to provide wildlife-related public education and recreation. The refuge and satellite unit Cane Ridge Wildlife Management Area have both been designated as Important Bird Areas by the National Audubon Society because of large nesting populations of prothonotary warblers and

interior least terns.

The Service acquired two tracts totaling 119 acres at Patoka River NWR. These tracts connect to existing refuge lands, protect equal portions of bottomlands and uplands, and include a mile of riparian interface. Both tracts provide maternity and foraging habitat for the endangered Indiana bat.

## **Waccamaw NWR, South Carolina**

Waccamaw NWR is located in the coastal area or low country of South Carolina. A large portion of the refuge consists of historical rice plantations that have been permanently protected with the assistance of conservation organizations such as Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, and the Lowcountry Open Land Trust. As rice farming in the local area was abandoned, the fields were allowed to revert naturally to forested wetlands; some managed wetlands remain in active management for wintering waterfowl. Since 1997, the Service has acquired nearly 150 tracts, totaling approximately 28,000 acres.

Over the past 18 years, the refuge has





Tamra Lewis\USFWS

*Driftless Area NWR, Iowa*

become a diverse and versatile suite of habitats, with both consumptive and non-consumptive public uses such as hunting, fishing, hiking, boating, canoeing, kayaking, picnicking, photography, and environmental education. The visitor and environmental education center houses a state of the art education center, including a wet lab, an exhibit hall, and an auditorium.

The Service purchased 44 acres at Waccamaw NWR, consisting primarily of jurisdictional wetlands with daily tidal influence that have been used for many years for wildlife management and rural recreational purposes. The newly acquired property is comprised of historical broken rice fields; it abuts water bodies on three sides and a historic rice field dike on the fourth, and is traversed by a tidal creek. The tidal wetlands include wildflowers that are utilized by monarch butterflies and many other pollinators during the late summer and fall, and provide key habitats for secretive marsh birds, including the king rail.

#### **Walkkill River NWR, New Jersey**

Walkkill River NWR was created in 1990 to conserve and enhance populations of wildlife and their habitats, with a special emphasis on forest-dwelling and

grassland birds, migrating waterfowl, wintering raptors, and endangered species; to protect and enhance water quality; and to provide opportunities for wildlife-dependent recreation and research.

The Service acquired 19 acres of wetland, forested, and open field habitat at Wallkill River NWR. The tract's relatively small size belies its importance to wildlife and water quality in the area. The natural, spring-fed pond and upland wetlands on the tract are integrally linked to the wetland ecosystem on adjacent existing refuge lands. The tract's wetlands drain onto meadowlands on the refuge, which provide ideal habitat for the threatened bog turtle. Forested habitats surround and buffer the pond and wetlands, helping maintain high water quality. The tract's open fields also provide habitat for a variety of grassland nesting bird species.

#### **Willapa NWR, Washington**

Established in 1937 to protect migratory birds and their habitats, Willapa NWR includes sand dunes and beaches, intertidal mudflats, saltwater and freshwater marshes, grasslands, open water, and forested lands, providing habitat for more than 200 bird species. The refuge also supports wintering

populations of waterfowl in its wetlands; hosts some of the largest concentrations of shorebirds on the Pacific Coast during their migrations; provides nesting grounds for the federally-threatened snowy plover and streaked horned lark; and benefits multiple fish species and more than half of the state's native amphibians.

The Service acquired 389 acres of timberland at the southernmost end of Willapa Bay. The tract includes areas of riparian forest and some forested wetlands, and will contribute to the protection and overall health of the Bay watershed, which is the second largest estuary on the Pacific Coast. The forested areas provide habitat for the federally-threatened marbled murrelet and northern spotted owl, as well as black bear, black-tailed deer, Roosevelt elk, bat populations, bobcat, and grouse. The cool, wet climate in and around the tract also makes the area a hotspot of amphibian diversity.

This property has great potential for forest restoration; restoration of western red cedar forests to ultimately achieve late-successional old-growth quality will create habitat that will benefit a wide variety of species.



# Explanation of Statistical Data Tables

The Fish and Wildlife Service and its predecessors have published statistical data tables every year since 1946. These tables paint a comprehensive picture of Service lands and waters.

The hard copy version of the Annual Report contains only a sampling of these data tables, including:

**Table 1:** Summary of All Service Lands (Page 6)

Summary of **Table 2:** Service Acquisitions in FY 2015 (Page 7)

**Table 2** (abridged version): FY 2015 Acquisitions and Disposals – Acres by State and Unit (Pages 26-31)

The online appendix, which includes the full versions of ten tables, is available on the Service's web site: [www.fws.gov/refuges/land/LandReport.html](http://www.fws.gov/refuges/land/LandReport.html)

## Online Appendix:

Table 1: Summary of All Service Lands

Table 1A: All Service Lands – Acres by State or Territory

Table 2: Fiscal Year 2015 Acquisitions and Disposals – Acres by State and Unit

Table 3: National Wildlife Refuges – Acres by State and Unit

Table 4: Waterfowl Production Areas – Acres by State, WMD (if applicable), and Unit

Table 5: Coordination Areas – Acres by State and Unit

Table 6: Administrative Sites – Acres by State and Unit

Table 7: National Fish Hatcheries – Acres by State and Unit

Table 8: Wilderness Areas in National Wildlife Refuges

Table 9: Migratory Waterfowl Refuges on Federal Water Resource Projects

Table 10: National Monuments and Associated National Wildlife Refuges



**Fish and Wildlife Service Acquisitions and Disposals in Fiscal Year 2015**

**10/1/2014 - 9/30/2015**

State and Unit	PUBLIC LANDS AND WATERS										EASEMENTS				AGREEMENT OR LEASE	TOTAL ACRES
	Reserved from Public Domain		Acquired by Other Federal Agency		Purchased by FWS		Donated	Acquired by Other Federal Agency	Purchased by FWS		Donated					
	Primary Jurisdiction	Secondary Jurisdiction	Primary Jurisdiction	Secondary Jurisdiction	Acres	Cost (\$)			Acres	Cost (\$)						
<b>Alaska</b>																
Alaska Peninsula	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	-0.34		
Arctic	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	-0.19		
Innoko	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	79.96		\$60,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	79.96	
Kodiak	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	79.98	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	79.98	
McGrath	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-3.39		\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	-3.39	
Selawik	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	159.99	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	159.99	
Tetlin	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-1.38		\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	-9.02	-10.40	
Togiak	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	80.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	-0.23	79.77	
Tok	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	21.33		\$467,600.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	21.33	
Yukon Delta	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	359.85		\$256,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	359.85	
Yukon Flats	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	159.95		\$72,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	159.95	
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>616.32</b>		<b>\$855,600.00</b>	<b>319.97</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>-9.78</b>	<b>926.51</b>	
<b>Arizona</b>																
Buenos Aires	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.46		\$71,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	5.46	
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>5.46</b>		<b>\$71,000.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>5.46</b>	
<b>Arkansas</b>																
Cache River	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,275.89		\$2,806,933.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	1,275.89	
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,275.89</b>		<b>\$2,806,933.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,275.89</b>	
<b>California</b>																
Don Edwards San Fran. Bay	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	18.92		\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	18.92	
FSA Interest CA	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	12.40	
Grasslands	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$2,332,522.00	681.44	0.00	681.44	
Pixley	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.09		\$1,900.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	2.09	
San Diego	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	43.31		\$435,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	43.31	
San Joaquin River	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.00		\$25,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	10.00	
Tulare Basin	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	80.00		\$249,036.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	80.00	
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>154.32</b>		<b>\$710,936.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>12.40</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$2,332,522.00</b>	<b>681.44</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>848.16</b>	
<b>Florida</b>																
Everglades Headwaters	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,097.20		\$2,745,000.00	395.09	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	1,492.29	
J. N. Ding Darling	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		\$0.00	67.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	67.70	
Lake Wales Ridge	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00		\$27,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	
Lower Suwannee	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	206.80		\$432,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	206.80	
St. Marks	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-2.45		\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.56	
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,306.89</b>		<b>\$3,204,000.00</b>	<b>462.79</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,767.23</b>	
<b>Indiana</b>																
Patoka River	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	118.70		\$239,900.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	118.70	
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>118.70</b>		<b>\$239,900.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>118.70</b>	



**Fish and Wildlife Service Acquisitions and Disposals in Fiscal Year 2015**

**10/1/2014 - 9/30/2015**

State and Unit	PUBLIC LANDS AND WATERS										EASEMENTS					TOTAL ACRES
	Reserved from Public Domain		Acquired by Other Federal Agency		Purchased by FWS		Donated	Acquired by Other Federal Agency	Purchased by FWS		Donated	AGREEMENT OR LEASE				
	Primary Jurisdiction	Secondary Jurisdiction	Primary Jurisdiction	Secondary Jurisdiction	Acres	Cost (\$)			Acres	Cost (\$)						
<b>Iowa</b>																
Driftless Area	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	29.80	\$5,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	29.80
No. Tallgrass Prairie	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	149.00	\$494,195.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	149.00
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>178.80</b>	<b>\$499,195.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>178.80</b>
<b>Kentucky</b>																
Clarks River	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	9.27	\$22,250.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	9.27
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>9.27</b>	<b>\$22,250.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>9.27</b>
<b>Louisiana</b>																
Big Branch Marsh	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	9.00	\$7,200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	9.00
Black Bayou Lake	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	804.14	\$2,010,350.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	804.14
Red River	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,731.25	\$2,294,913.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,731.25
Tensas River	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,171.26	\$1,022,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,171.26
Upper Ouachita	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	480.80	\$560,743.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	480.80
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>4,196.45</b>	<b>\$5,895,206.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>4,196.45</b>
<b>Maine</b>																
Moosehorn	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	278.40	\$178,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	278.40
Petit Manan	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.11	\$255,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.11
Rachel Carson	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.58	\$164,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.58
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>287.09</b>	<b>\$597,000.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>287.09</b>
<b>Maryland</b>																
Blackwater	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	509.55	\$1,275,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	509.55
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>509.55</b>	<b>\$1,275,000.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>509.55</b>
<b>Michigan</b>																
Detroit River Int'l	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	17.30	\$19,500.00	34.99	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	52.29
Green Bay	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,279.00	\$428,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,279.00
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,296.30</b>	<b>\$447,500.00</b>	<b>34.99</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,331.29</b>
<b>Minnesota</b>																
Beltrami	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	250.25	\$75,075.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	250.25
Big Stone	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$154,450.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	118.42
Detroit Lakes	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7.50	\$210,000.00	162.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$147,675.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	299.86
Fergus Falls	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$138,700.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	109.04
Glacial Ridge	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	118.27	\$141,450.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	118.27
Hamden Slough	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	13.14	\$139,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	13.14
Litchfield	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	94.98	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$303,450.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	137.13
Minnesota Valley	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	126.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	126.14
Morris	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	36.02	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$1,726,125.00	102.80	0.00	0.00	0.00	932.94
No. Tallgrass Prairie	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	490.09	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,163.03
Tamarac	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$301,500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	400.60
Windom	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	407.62	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$905,300.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	631.33
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>389.16</b>	<b>\$565,525.00</b>	<b>1,317.10</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$3,677,200.00</b>	<b>1,775.74</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>5,300.15</b>







**Fish and Wildlife Service Acquisitions and Disposals in Fiscal Year 2015**

**10/1/2014 - 9/30/2015**

State and Unit	PUBLIC LANDS AND WATERS										EASEMENTS				AGREEMENT OR LEASE	TOTAL ACRES
	Reserved from Public Domain		Acquired by Other Federal Agency		Purchased by FWS		Donated	Acquired by Other Federal Agency	Purchased by FWS		Donated					
	Primary Jurisdiction	Secondary Jurisdiction	Primary Jurisdiction	Secondary Jurisdiction	Acres	Cost (\$)			Acres	Cost (\$)						
<b>North Dakota (Continued)</b>																
Long Lake	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	1,623.80	\$1,177,300.00	1,094.30	0.00	0.00	2,718.10	
Lostwood	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	6.00	\$7,300.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.00	
Tewauckon	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	364.00	\$779,900.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	364.00	
Valley City	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	52.20	\$127,775.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	973.45	\$2,154,375.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,025.65	
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>-15.28</b>	<b>75.54</b>	<b>\$152,525.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>33,583.70</b>	<b>\$27,909,100.00</b>	<b>6,539.54</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>40,163.50</b>	
<b>Ohio</b>																
Ottawa	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	19.50	\$32,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	19.50	
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>19.50</b>	<b>\$32,000.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>19.50</b>	
<b>Oregon</b>																
Oregon Islands	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	10.87	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.87	
Siletz Bay	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.29	\$1,625.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.29	
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>10.87</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1.29</b>	<b>\$1,625.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>12.16</b>	
<b>Pennsylvania</b>																
Cherry Valley	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	10.58	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.76	0.00	0.00	11.34	
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>10.58</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.76</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>11.34</b>	
<b>South Carolina</b>																
Cape Romain	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	19.28	\$45,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	19.28	
Waccamaw	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	44.00	\$86,700.00	156.96	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	200.96	
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>63.28</b>	<b>\$131,700.00</b>	<b>156.96</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>220.24</b>	
<b>South Dakota</b>																
Dakota Tailgrass Prairie	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,527.59	\$3,000,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,527.59	
Huron	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,374.15	\$5,371,225.00	1,986.98	0.00	0.00	8,361.13	
Lake Andes	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,962.60	\$3,763,589.57	158.01	0.00	0.00	3,120.61	
Madison	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-7.52	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	763.43	\$1,227,363.00	1,290.53	0.00	0.00	2,046.44	
Sand Lake	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.91	\$197,150.00	59.09	0.00	0.00	7,198.30	\$5,992,952.43	717.42	0.00	0.00	8,075.72	
Waubay	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,230.29	\$3,470,150.00	121.54	0.00	0.00	4,351.83	
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>93.39</b>	<b>\$197,150.00</b>	<b>59.09</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>25,056.36</b>	<b>\$22,825,280.00</b>	<b>4,274.48</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>29,483.32</b>	
<b>Texas</b>																
Anahuac	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	1,115.86	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	885.87	0.00	0.00	2,001.73	
Aransas	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	667.36	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	667.36	
Caddo Lake	0.00	0.00	109.91	-109.91	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Lower Rio Grande Valley	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-2,701.62	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,764.77	\$3,243,781.70	663.63	0.00	0.00	4,726.78	
San Bernard	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	530.21	\$1,868,681.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	35.48	0.00	0.00	565.69	
Trinity River	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	709.98	\$769,200.00	2,981.60	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,691.58	
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>109.91</b>	<b>-109.91</b>	<b>-1,461.43</b>	<b>\$2,637,881.50</b>	<b>4,764.82</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>6,764.77</b>	<b>\$3,243,781.70</b>	<b>1,584.98</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>11,653.14</b>	
<b>Utah</b>																
Bear River	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	359.08	\$1,080,400.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	359.08	
Ourray	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	-344.60	-344.60	
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>359.08</b>	<b>\$1,080,400.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>-344.60</b>	<b>14.48</b>	



# Fish and Wildlife Service Acquisitions and Disposals in Fiscal Year 2015

10/1/2014 - 9/30/2015

State and Unit	PUBLIC LANDS AND WATERS										EASEMENTS				TOTAL ACRES
	Reserved from Public Domain		Acquired by Other Federal Agency		Purchased by FWS		Donated	Acquired by Other Federal Agency	Purchased by FWS		Donated	AGREEMENT OR LEASE			
	Primary Jurisdiction	Secondary Jurisdiction	Primary Jurisdiction	Secondary Jurisdiction	Acres	Cost (\$)			Acres	Cost (\$)					
<b>Washington</b>															
Nisqually	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	45.63	\$330,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	45.63	
Ridgefield	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.14	\$22,867.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.14	
Turnbull	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	303.00	\$455,000.00	19.31	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	322.31	
Willapa	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	388.60	\$829,999.08	128.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	516.60	
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>737.23</b>	<b>\$1,614,999.08</b>	<b>147.31</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.14</b>	<b>\$22,867.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>884.68</b>	
<b>West Virginia</b>															
Canaan Valley	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	
<b>Wisconsin</b>															
St. Croix	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.43	\$18,700.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.43	
Trempealeau	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	18.50	\$42,200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	18.50	
Whittlesey Creek	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.03	\$20,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.03	
<b>State Total:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>29.96</b>	<b>\$80,900.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>29.96</b>	
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b>-272.03</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>92.18</b>	<b>-109.91</b>	<b>11,320.91</b>	<b>\$27,458,225.58</b>	<b>16,192.75</b>	<b>-7.60</b>	<b>93,219.10</b>	<b>\$70,291,655.70</b>	<b>16,493.53</b>	<b>3,945.62</b>	<b>140,774.55</b>		

The totals in this report reflect fiscal year acres acquired minus fiscal year acres disposed. Disposed acres may result from lease expirations or from land-for-land exchanges (e.g., if we exchanged a 1000-acre tract acquired in a prior fiscal year for a different 1000-acre tract, this report would reflect an increase of 0 acres).

To conserve space, this report also summarizes FY WPA acquisitions by wetland management district. For the full list of FY WPA acquisitions by county, download the online appendix from the Service's Land Reports page <[www.fws.gov/refuges/land/LandReport.html](http://www.fws.gov/refuges/land/LandReport.html)>.

**Table Footnotes**

- ADMIN Administrative Site
- CA Conservation Area
- COORD Coordination Area
- NFH National Fish Hatchery
- NFWR National Fish and Wildlife Refuge
- NWFR National Wildlife and Fish Refuge
- NWR National Wildlife Refuge
- WMA Wildlife Management Area
- WMD Wetland Management District  
(manages waterfowl production areas within one or more counties)



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**About this report**

This publication, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Annual Report of Lands as of September 30, 2015 (formerly known as the Annual Report of Lands Under Control of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), is compiled annually by the National Wildlife Refuge System's Headquarters Division of Realty.

The Division of Realty is dedicated to acquiring the land base necessary to protect diverse natural communities as part of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

This report catalogs all lands conserved by the Service as part of the National Wildlife Refuge System, waterfowl production areas, marine national monuments and other submerged lands, coordination areas, and other administrative sites in federal Fiscal Year 2015 (October 1, 2014 – September 30, 2015). Some of these lands are cooperatively managed by other public entities.

A digital version of this and previous reports can be found at: [www.fws.gov/refuges/land/LandReport.html](http://www.fws.gov/refuges/land/LandReport.html).







U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
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August 2016

