

Conservation Design and Protected Lands: Where Does the National Wildlife Refuge System fit in

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The History of Refuge Planning

- New Refuges developed where threats or opportunities exist
- Guided by
 - Presidential Orders
 - Trust Species
 - Migratory birds
 - Inter-jurisdictional Fish
 - Marine Mammals
 - Federal T&E
 - Refuge authorizing legislations
 - Professional Judgment



Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge
Est. 1903

Refuge Improvement Act (1997)

PUBLIC LAW 105-57—OCT. 9, 1997

NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM
IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1997

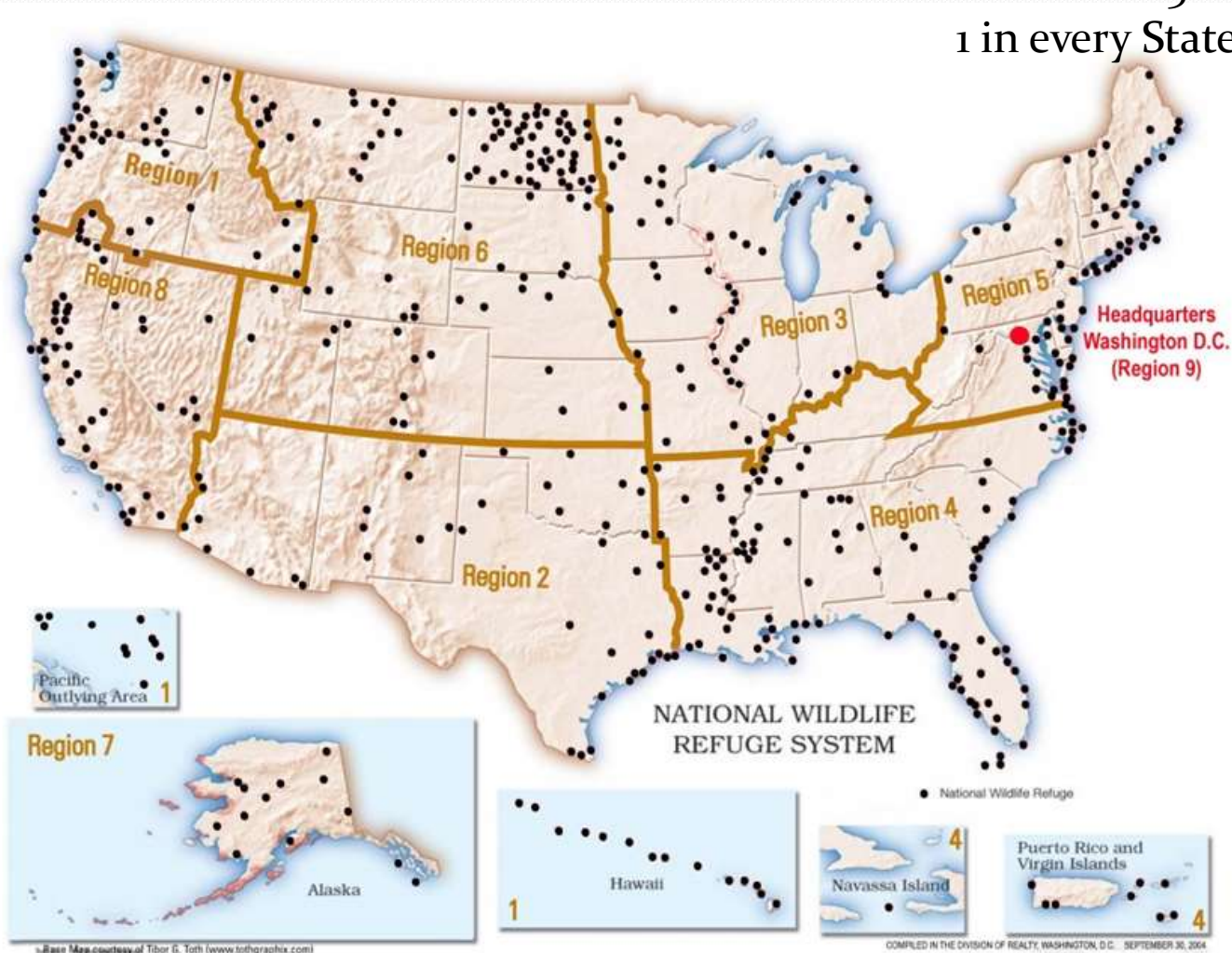
- National Wildlife Refuge System’s “Organic Act”
- Established Mission
- Required Comprehensive Conservation Plans

National Wildlife Refuge System Mission

“...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.”

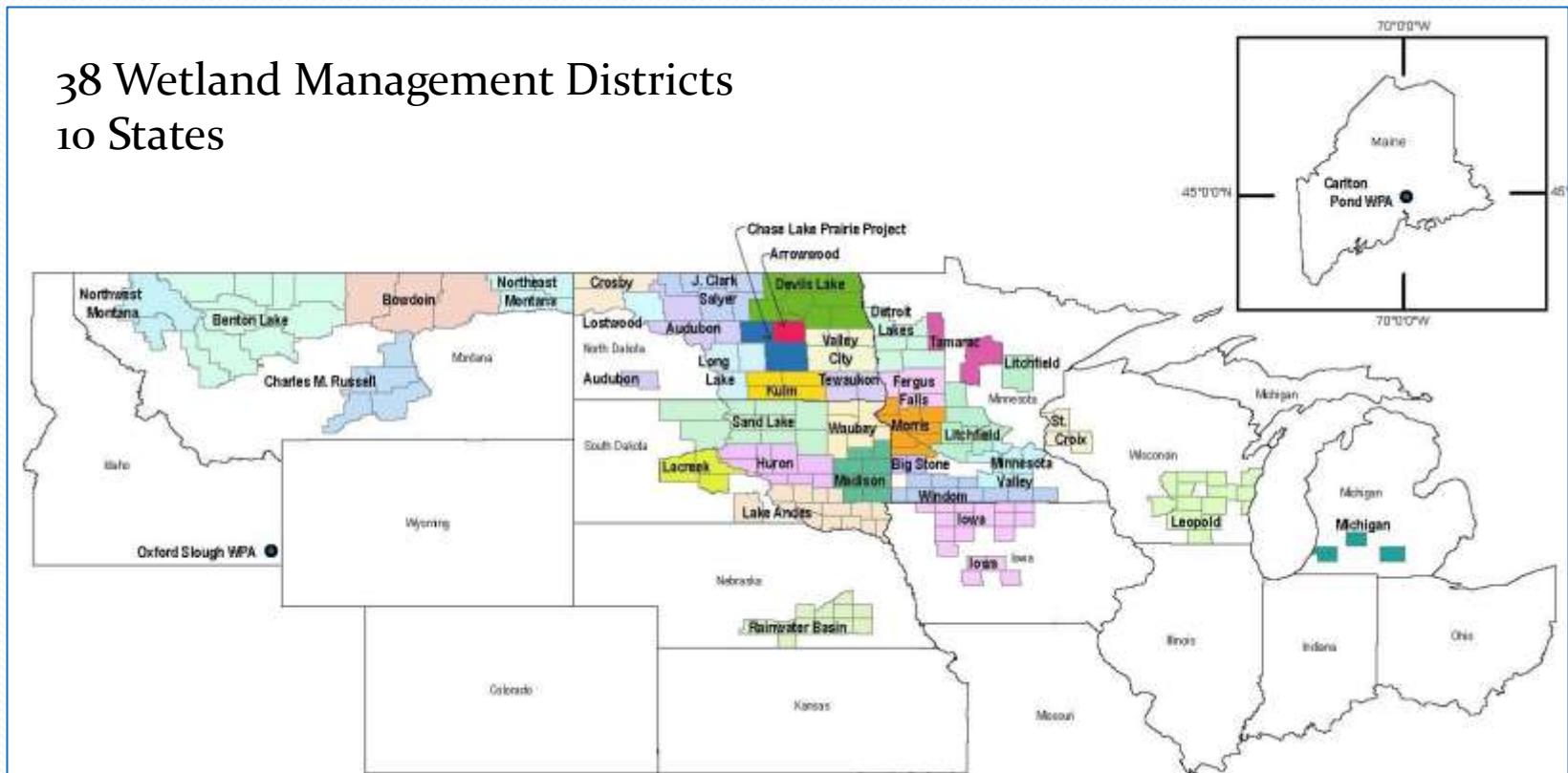
National Wildlife Refuges

More than 560 refuges
1 in every State



Wetland Management Districts

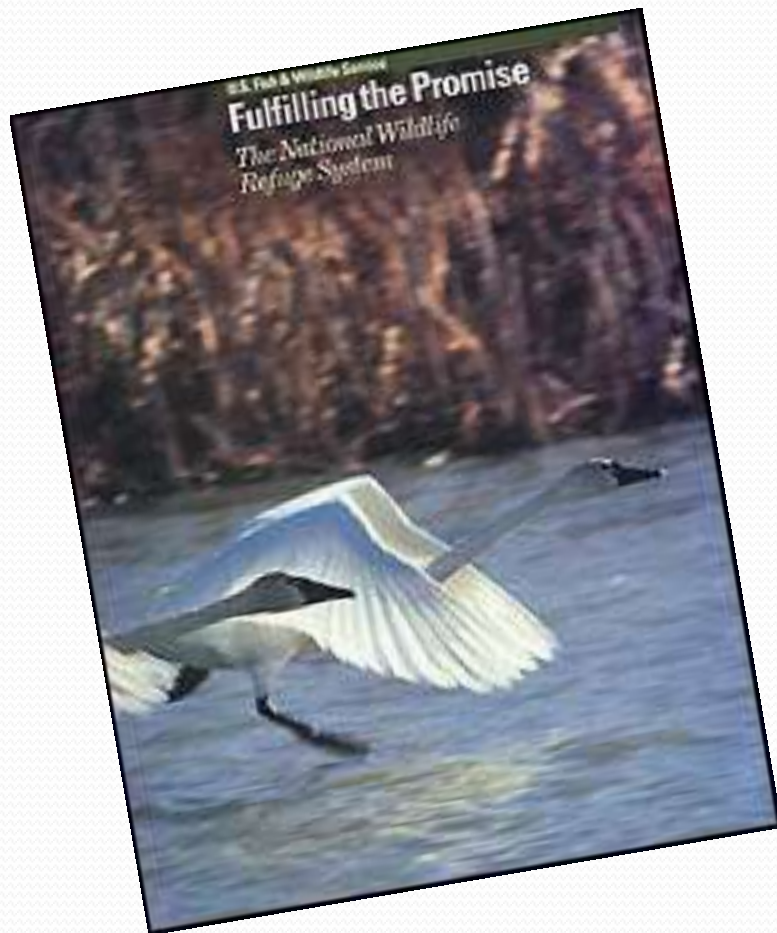
38 Wetland Management Districts
10 States



Purpose of CCPs

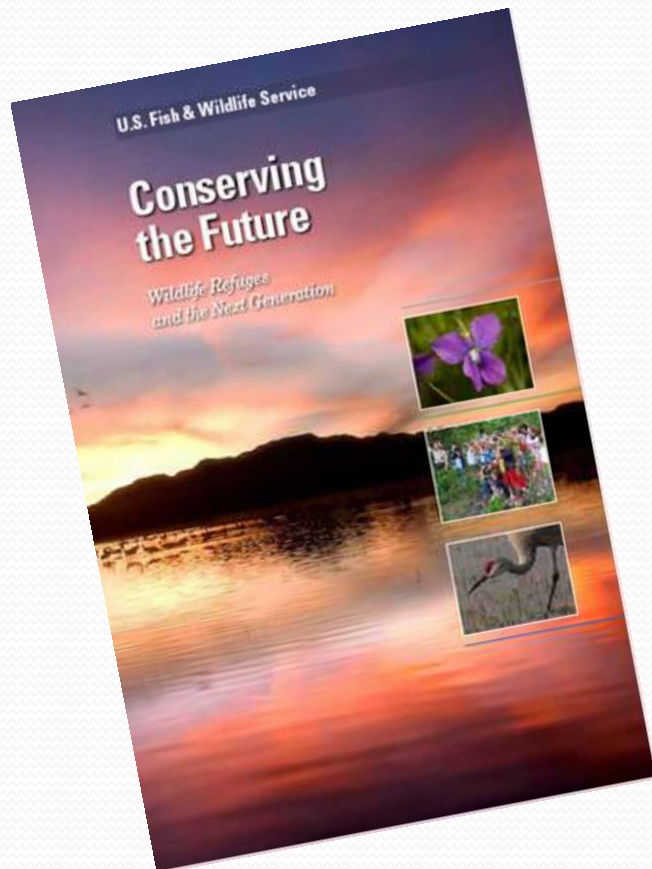
- describe the desired future conditions of a refuge
- provide long-range guidance and management direction to achieve refuge purposes
- maintain and, where appropriate, restore the ecological integrity of each refuge and the Refuge System;
- To encourage use of an ecosystem approach when we conduct refuge planning

Fulfilling the Promise (1999)



- Vision statements and 42 recommendations
 - Wildlife and Habitat
 - People
 - Leadership
- Planning and Directing the Growth of the Refuge System
 - to accomplish its mission
 - to contribute to ecosystem conservation of the United States
 - to complement state and other agency efforts

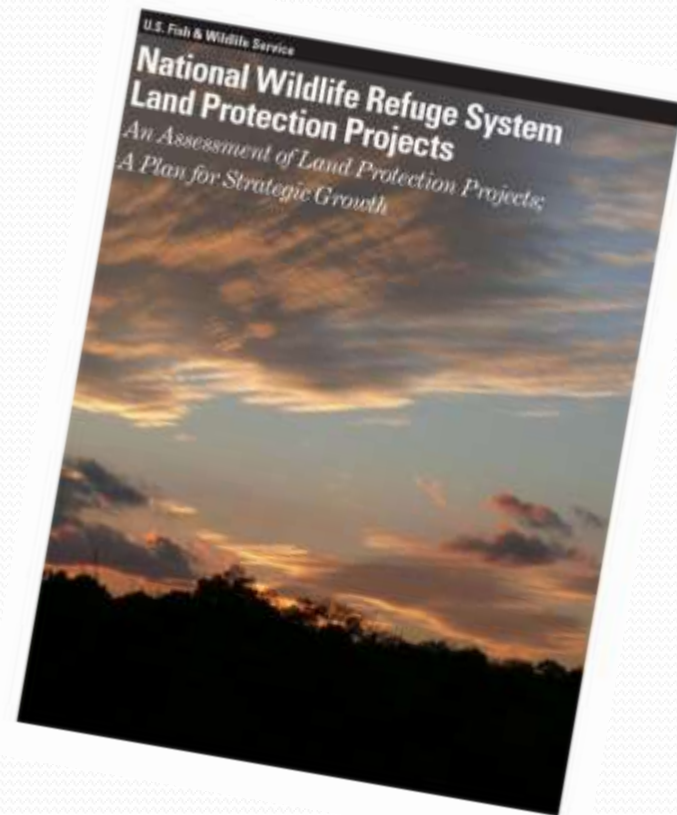
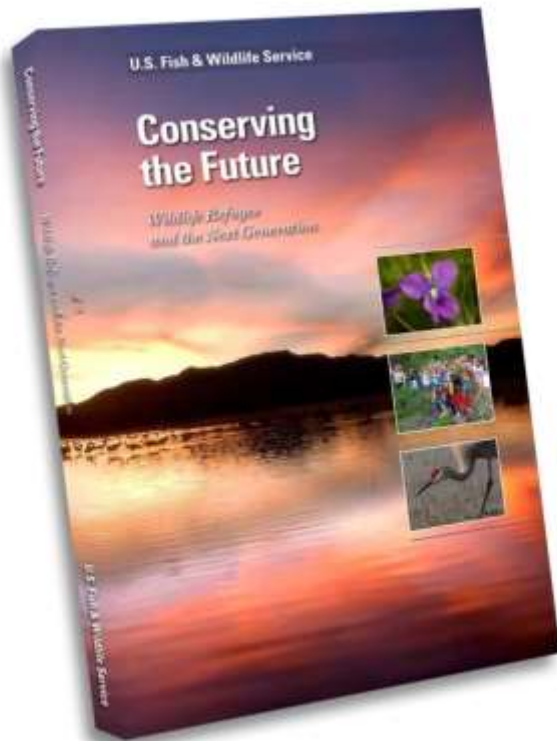
Conserving the Future (2011)



- Renewed Commitment to Improvement Act
- 24 recommendations
- 9 implementation teams
 - Strategic Growth
 - Planning
 - Scientific Excellence
 - Community Partnerships
 - Urban Wildlife Refuge Initiative
 - Communications
 - Hunting, Fishing, and Outdoor Recreation
 - Interpretation and Education
 - Leadership Development Council

Conserving the Future (2011)

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

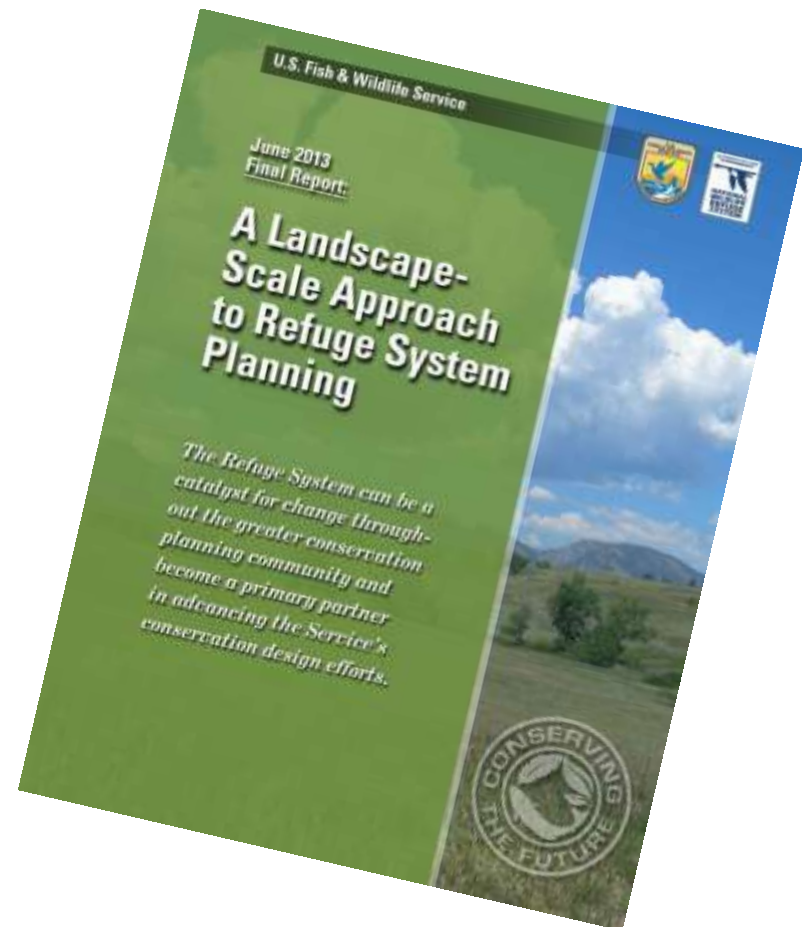
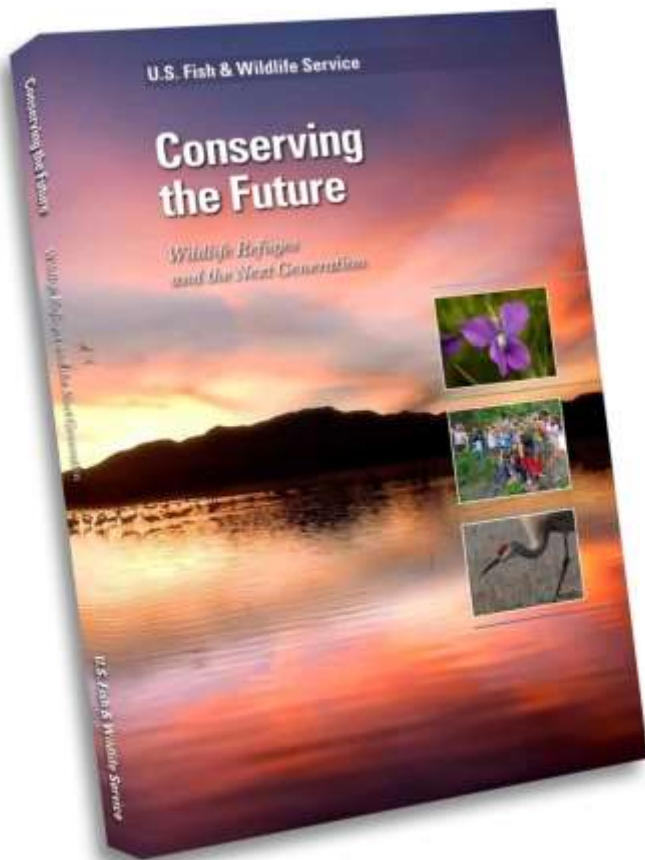


Strategic Growth Approach

(soon to be policy)

- Purpose: to ensure that the best choices are made when adding lands and waters to the Refuge System
- The growth of the Refuge System will be **guided by the following priorities:**
 1. Recovery of threatened and endangered species
 2. Implementation of the *North American Waterfowl Management Plan*
 3. Conservation of migratory birds of special concern

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



Comprehensive Conservation Plans

- Ensure each unit of the NWRS is managed to fulfill the purpose(s) for which it was established
- Direct future management of a unit of the NWRS
 - explicitly recognize States as partners
 - Support of State Wildlife Action Plans
 - improve the condition of habitats and benefit wildlife
- The next generation of CCPs will focus on:
 - individual Refuge/WMD actions that contribute to larger, landscape-level goals identified through the **Landscape Conservation Design** process

Landscape Conservation Design

- Covers a large geographic area that has many habitats, conditions and human uses
- Landscape Conservation Design (LCD) ensures that refuge-level actions contribute to a landscape-level vision
- Provides the opportunity to create a recipe for functional landscapes
- Will utilize adaptive management - focusing on learning and adapting, through partnerships of managers, scientists and other stakeholders who collaborate on how to create and maintain sustainable ecosystems

The Fence

WE CALL IT A "FENCE"! KEEPS OUT THE GIRAFFES AND THE LIONS AND THE ELEPHANTS AND THE ...



8000 BC



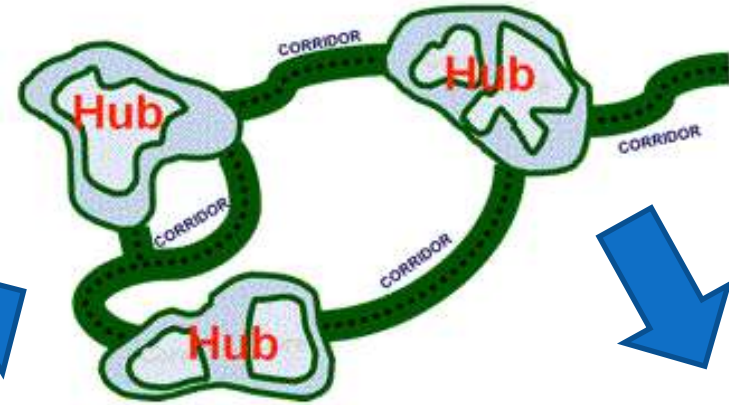
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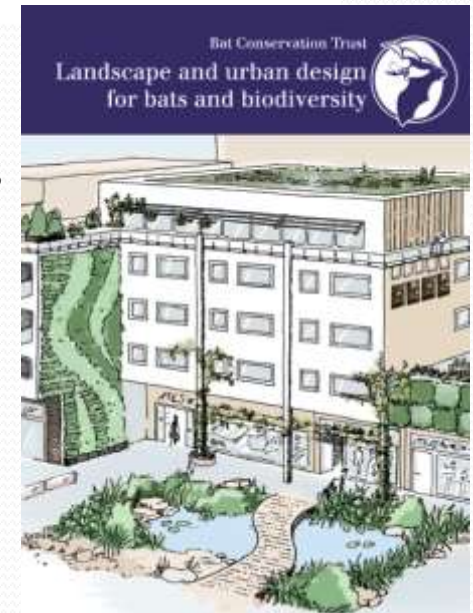
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WE CALL IT A "WILDLIFE PRESERVE"! KEEPS IN THE GIRAFFES AND THE LIONS AND THE ELEPHANTS AND ...



Larger Reserves
Multi-partner
Connecting Reserves

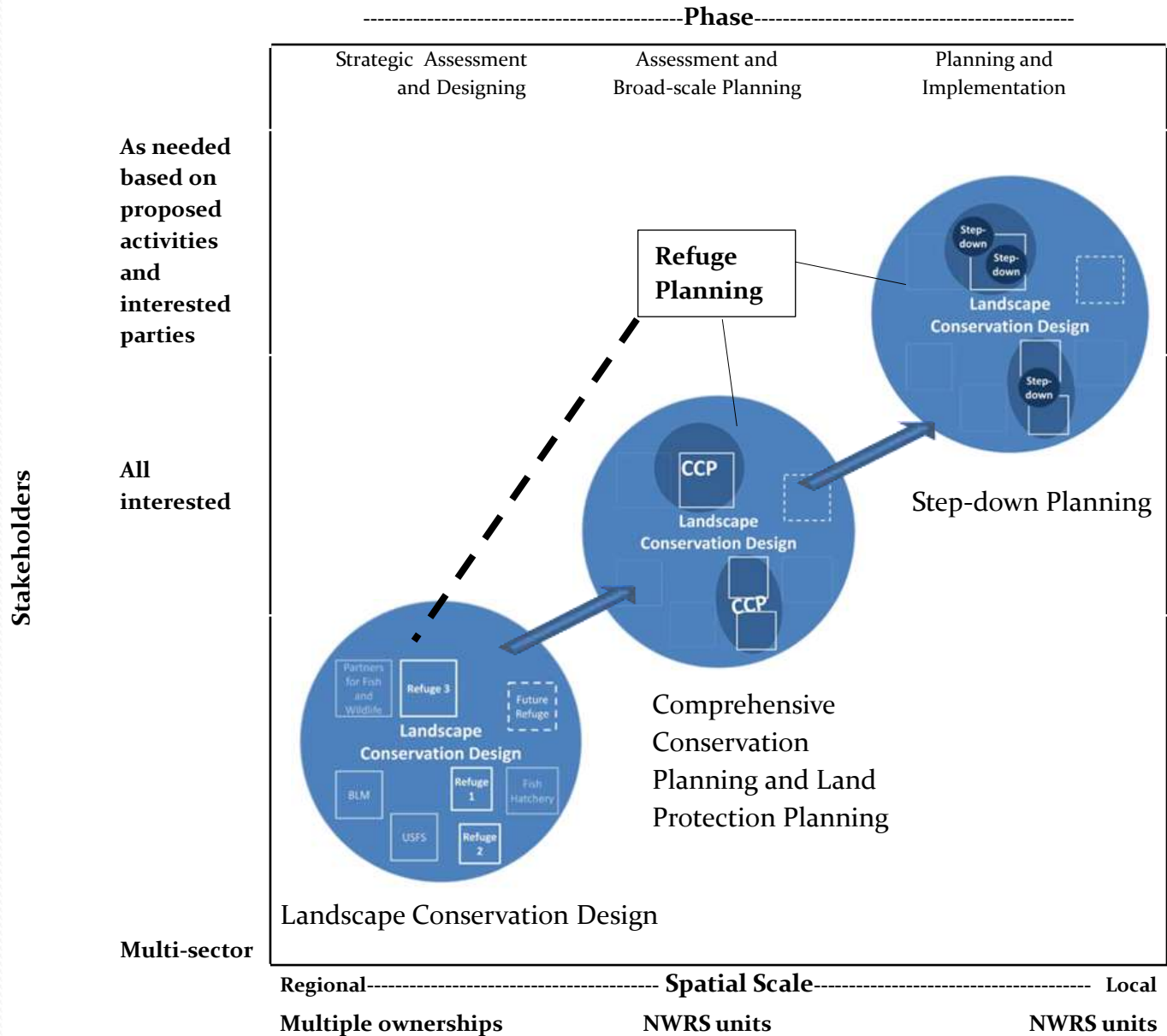


Multi-sector
No fences
Working landscapes

LCDs

- Definition: a partnership-driven conservation strategy that identifies desired future conditions and management prescriptions at multiple scales across jurisdictions
- To the extent feasible, all refuges within the geographic area covered by a single LCD would be covered under a single CCP. When multiple CCPs are needed within an LCD, they would be developed simultaneously

Relationship of Refuge Planning to LCD



We can't do it without you!

The foundation of this approach is the LCD

Each LCD describes the partners' individual and collective goals for that landscape along with shared commitments for implementation and monitoring



Mission of USFWS

Working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

Questions?

