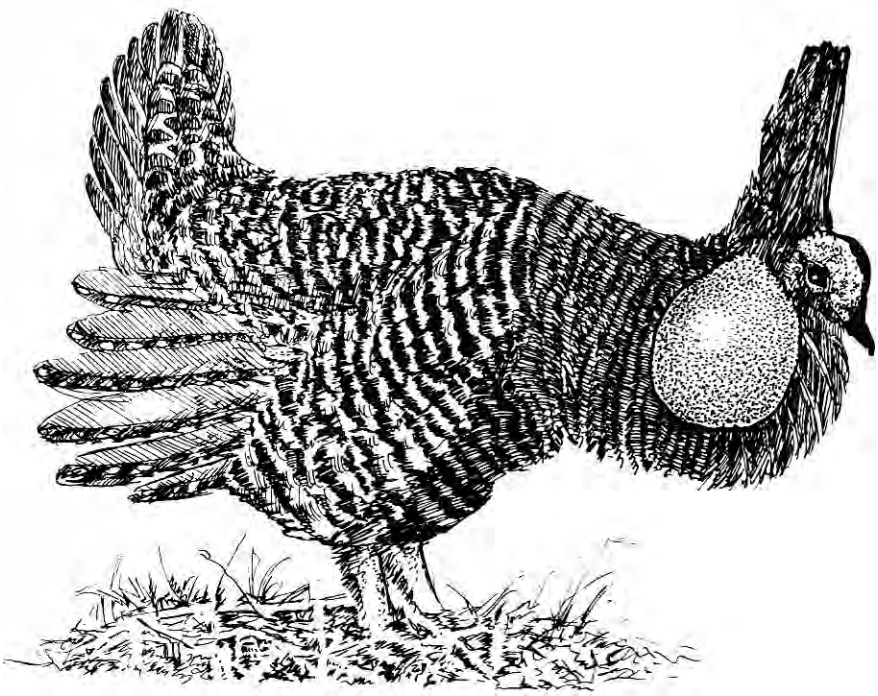
GLOSSARY



Accessible facilities: Structures accessible for most people with disabilities without assistance; facilities that meet Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards, and Americans with Disabilities Act Standards.

Adaptive management: The rigorous application of management, research, and monitoring to gain information and experience necessary to assess and modify management activities. A process that uses feedback from research, monitoring, and evaluation of management actions to support or modify objectives and strategies at all planning levels.

Alternatives: Different sets of objectives and strategies or means of achieving refuge purposes and goals, helping fulfill the Refuge System mission, and resolving issues. A reasonable way to fix an identified problem or satisfy a stated need (40 CFR 1500.2 [cf. "management alternative"]).

Animal Unit Year: The amount required to sustain the standard animal for one year.

Appropriate use: A proposed or existing use on a refuge that is a wildlife-dependent recreational use as identified in the 1997 Refuge System Improvement Act (hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation) or a use that contributes to the fulfillment of refuge purpose(s), the Refuge System mission, or goals or objectives described in a refuge management plan approved after October 9, 1997.

Approved acquisition boundary: A project boundary that the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service approves upon completion of the planning and environmental compliance process. An approved acquisition boundary only designates those lands that the Service has authority to acquire or manage through various agreements. The approval of an acquisition boundary does not grant the Service jurisdiction or control over lands within the approved boundary. Lands do not become part of the National Wildlife Refuge System until the Service buys them or they are placed under an agreement that provides for their management as part of the System.

Best management practices: Land management practices that produce desired results (e.g., best management practices for herbicide application, grazing etc.).

Biological diversity: The variety of life and its processes, including the variety of living organisms, the genetic differences among them, and communities and ecosystems in which they occur.

Biological integrity: Biotic composition, structure, and functioning at genetic, organism, and community levels comparable with historic conditions, including the natural biological processes that shape genomes, organisms, and communities.

Biotic community: A set of plants, animals, and microorganisms occupying an area interacting directly or indirectly with each other and their physical environment.

Breeding habitat: Habitat used by animals during the breeding season.

Candidate species: Species for which we have sufficient information on file about their biological vulnerability and threats to propose listing them.

Compatible use: A wildlife-dependent recreational use or any other proposed or existing use on a refuge that will not materially interfere with or detract from the purposes of the refuge or the National Wildlife Refuge System mission.

Comprehensive Conservation Plan: A document that describes the desired future conditions of a refuge or planning unit and provides long-range guidance and management direction to achieve the purposes of the refuge; helps fulfill the mission of the Refuge System; maintains and, where appropriate, restores the ecological integrity of each refuge and the Refuge System; helps achieve the goals of the National Wilderness Preservation System; and meets other mandates.

Concern: *"see issue"*

Connectivity: Community occurrences and reserves that have permeable boundaries and thus are subject to inflows and outflows from the surrounding landscape. Connectivity in the selection and design of nature reserves relates to the ability of species to move across the landscape to meet basic habitat requirements. Natural connecting features within the ecoregion may include river channels, habitat corridors, ridgelines, or migratory pathways.

Conservation: Managing natural resources to prevent loss or waste (Management actions may include preservation, restoration, and enhancement.).

Conservation easement: A non-possessory interest in real property owned by another imposing limitations or affirmative obligations with the purpose of returning or protecting the property's conservation values.

Conservation status: Assessment of the status of ecological processes and of the viability of species or populations in an ecoregion.

Cooperative agreement: A legal instrument reflecting a relationship between the Federal government and a recipient when the principle purpose is to fund a project to support or stimulate activities that are not for the direct benefit or use of the Federal government but instead for a public purpose in which the government participates substantially.

Cultural resources: The remains of sites, structures, or objects used by people in the past.

Desired future condition: The qualities of an ecosystem or its components that an organization seeks to develop through its decisions and actions.

Disturbance: Any relatively discrete event in time that disrupts ecosystem, community, or population structure and changes resources, substrate availability, or the physical environment.

Ecological integrity: The relative intactness of biotic and abiotic components and their interrelated structure and function within a given ecosystem.

Ecoregion: A territory defined by a combination of biological, social, and geographic criteria, rather than geopolitical considerations; generally, a system of related, interconnected ecosystems.

Ecosystem: Dynamic and interrelating complex of plant and animal communities and their associated non-living environment.

Ecosystem approach: A strategy or plan to protect and/or restore the natural function, structure, and species composition of an ecosystem, recognizing that all components are interrelated.

Ecosystem management: Management of an ecosystem that includes all ecological, social, and economic components, which make up and/or that affect the whole of the system.

Endangered species: A plant or animal species listed under the Endangered Species Act that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Environmental assessment: A systematic analysis to determine if proposed Federal actions would result in a "significant effect on the quality of the human environment," thereby requiring either the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) or a determination of a "Finding of No Significant Impact."

Environmental education: Curriculum-based education aimed at producing a citizenry that is knowledgeable about the biophysical environment and its associated problems, aware of how to help solve those problems, and motivated to work toward solving them.

Exotic: A non-native plant or animal species introduced intentionally or unintentionally to the ecosystem under consideration.

Fauna: All animal life associated with a given habitat, country, area, or period.

Federal land: Public land owned by the Federal government, including national forests, national parks, and national wildlife refuges.

Federal-listed species: A species listed either as endangered, threatened, or a species at risk (formerly, a "candidate species") under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended.

Federal trust species: Important fish and wildlife resources that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is specifically mandated to protect, including migratory birds, threatened species, endangered species, inter-jurisdictional fish, marine mammals, and other species of concern.

Fee-title acquisition: The acquisition of most or all of the rights to a tract of land; a total transfer of property rights with the formal conveyance of a title. While a fee-title acquisition involves most rights to a property, certain rights may be reserved or not purchased, including water rights, mineral rights, or use reservation (e.g., the ability to continue using the land for a specified time period, such as the remainder of the owner's life).

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI): Supported by an environmental assessment, a document that briefly presents why a Federal action will have no significant effect on the human environment, and for which an environmental impact statement, therefore, will not be prepared (40 CFR 1508.13).

Fire regime: The characteristic frequency, intensity, and spatial distribution of natural fires within a given ecoregion or habitat.

Flora: All the plants found in a particular place.

Floodplain: Flat or nearly flat land that may be submerged by floodwaters; a plain built up or in the process of being built up by stream deposition.

Flyway: Any one of several established migration routes of birds.

Focal species: A species that is indicative of particular conditions in a system (ranging from natural to degraded) and used as a surrogate measure for other species of particular conditions. An element of biodiversity selected as a focus for conservation planning or action. The two principal types of targets in planning projects are species and ecological communities.

Fragmentation: The disruption of extensive habitats into isolated and small patches. Fragmentation has two negative components for biota: the loss of total habitat area and the creation of smaller, more isolated patches of habitat.

Geographic information system (GIS): A computerized system to compile, store, analyze, and display geographically referenced information (e.g., GIS can overlay multiple sets of information on the distribution of a variety of biological and physical features).

Goal: Descriptive, open-ended, and often broad statement of desired future conditions that conveys a purpose but does not define measurable units.

Guild or species guild: An aggregation or group of species that tend to use the same kinds of resources for feeding or reproduction in a similar manner. Species guilds are useful in helping focus wildlife and habitat management efforts or in environmental impact studies.

Habitat fragmentation: The breaking up of a specific habitat into smaller, unconnected areas.

Habitat conservation: Protecting an animal or plant habitat to ensure that the use of that habitat by the animal or plant is not altered or reduced.

Habitat: The place or type of site where species and species assemblages are typically found and/or successfully reproduce. (An organism's habitat must provide all of the basic requirements for life, and should be free of harmful contaminants.)

Historic conditions: The composition, structure, and functioning of ecosystems resulting from natural processes that we believe, based on sound professional judgment, were present prior to substantial human-related changes to the landscape.

Hydrology: The science of waters of the Earth: their occurrences, distributions, and circulations; their physical and chemical properties; and their reactions with the environment, including living beings.

Interpretive facilities: Structures that provide information about an event, place, or thing by a one or more means: printed, audiovisual, or multimedia materials (e.g., kiosks that offer printed materials and audiovisuals, signs, and trail heads).

Interpretive materials: Any tool used to provide or clarify information, explain events or things, or increase awareness and understanding of the events or things (e.g., printed materials such as brochures, maps, or curriculum materials; audio-visual materials such as video and audio tapes, films, or slides; and interactive multimedia materials such as CD-ROMs or other computer technology).

Invasive plant species: A non-native plant to the ecosystem that lacks natural controls and tends to aggressively dominate the plant community, often forming extensive monocultures. Invasive species generally reduce the diversity and health of ecosystems when they become dominant.

Issue: Any unsettled matter that requires management decision, e.g., an initiative, opportunity, resource management problem, threat to the resources of the unit, conflict in uses, public concern, or the presence of an undesirable resource condition.

Land protection plan (LPP): A document that identifies and prioritizes lands for potential Service acquisition from willing sellers and describes other methods of providing protection.

Limiting factor: An environmental limitation that prevents further population growth.

Mima mound: a term used for low, flattened, circular to oval, domelike, natural mounds. Mima mounds also occur within landscapes where a permanent water table impedes drainage, creating waterlogged soil conditions for prolonged periods.

Mission statement: A succinct statement of the purpose for which the unit was established; its reason for being.

Mitigation: Actions to compensate for the negative effects of a particular project (e.g., wetland mitigation usually restores or enhances a previously damaged wetland or creates a new wetland).

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA): Requires all Federal agencies to examine the environmental impacts of their actions, incorporate environmental information, and use public participation in planning and implementing environmental actions (Federal agencies must integrate NEPA with other planning requirements, and prepare appropriate NEPA documents to facilitate better environmental decision-making [cf. 40 CFR 1500]).

National wildlife refuge: A designated area of land or water or an interest in land or water within the Refuge System, such as refuges, wildlife management areas, waterfowl production areas, and other areas under Service jurisdiction for the protection and conservation of fish, wildlife, and plant resources. A complete listing of all units of the Refuge System may be found in the current "Annual Report of Lands under Control of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service."

National Wildlife Refuge System: All lands, waters and interests therein administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as wildlife refuges, wildlife ranges, wildlife management areas, waterfowl production areas, and other areas for the protection and conservation of fish, wildlife, and plant resources.

Native: A species that historically occurred in a particular ecosystem.

Native plant: A plant that has grown in the region since the last glaciation and occurred before European settlement.

Natural disturbance event: Any natural event that significantly alters the structure, composition, or dynamics of a natural community (e.g., floods, fires, storms).

Notice of Intent: An announcement we publish in the *Federal Register* that we will prepare and review an environmental impact statement (40 CFR 1508.22).

Objective: A concise statement of what we want to achieve, how much we want to achieve, when and where we want to achieve it, and who is responsible for the work. Objectives derive from goals and provide the basis for determining strategies, monitoring refuge accomplishments, and evaluating the success of strategies. Objectives should be attainable, time-specific, and measureable.

Partnership: A contract or agreement among two or more individuals, groups of individuals, organizations, or agencies, in which each agrees to furnish a part of the capital or some service in kind (e.g., labor) for a mutually beneficial enterprise.

Population: An interbreeding group of plants or animals. Also refers to the entire group of organisms of one species.

Prairie: An extensive area of flat or rolling grassland.

Prescribed fire: The application of fire to wildland fuels, either by natural or intentional ignition, to achieve identified land use objectives (FWS Manual 621 FW 1.7).

Priority public use: Wildlife-dependent recreational uses involving hunting, fishing wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation, which receive priority consideration in refuge planning and management. Priority public uses were designated by the Refuge System Administration Act, as amended.

Priority species: Wildlife or plant species that include Federal trust species such as migratory birds, threatened species, endangered species, inter-jursdictional fish, marine mammals, and other species of concern. Priority species also include rare, declining, or species of management concern that are on lists maintained by natural heritage programs, State wildlife agencies, other Federal agencies, or professional, academic, and scientific societies, and those mentioned in landscape-level or other conservation plans.

Private land: Land owned by a private individual, group or nongovernment organization.

Public involvement: Offering an opportunity to interested individuals and organizations potentially affected by actions or policies to become informed and provide input. Public input is thoroughly studied and given thoughtful consideration in shaping decisions about managing refuges.

Public uses: Normally refers to the six priority public uses (hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation) but may include other permitted special uses.

Purposes of the Refuge: "The purposes specified in or derived from the law, proclamation, Executive order, agreement, public land order, donation document, or administrative memorandum establishing, authorizing, or expanding a refuge, refuge unit, or refuge subunit." (601 FW 1)

Ranchette: a small-scale ranch, typically of only a few acres.

Refuge lands: Lands in which the Service holds full interest in fee title or partial interest (e.g., an easement).

Refuge Operating Needs System (RONS): A national database that contains the unfunded operational needs of each refuge. Projects are required to implement approved plans and meet goals, objectives, and legal mandates.

Restoration: Management of a disturbed or degraded habitat that results in the recovery of its original state (e.g., restoration may involve planting native grasses and forbs, removing shrubs, prescribed burning, or reestablishing habitat for native plants and animals on degraded grassland).

Riparian: Of or relating to land lying immediately adjacent to a water body and having specific characteristics of that area, such as riparian vegetation. A stream bank is an example of a riparian area.

Scoping: A process for identifying the "scope of issues" to be addressed in planning refuge activities. Involved in the scoping process are Federal, State, local agencies, private organizations, and individuals.

Sound professional judgment: A finding, determination, or decision that is consistent with principles of

sound fish and wildlife management and administration, available science and resources, and adherence to the requirements of the Refuge Administration Act and other appropriate laws.

Species: The basic category of biological classification intended to designate a single kind of animal or plant. Any variation among the individuals may be regarded as not affecting the essential sameness that distinguishes them from all other organisms.

Stakeholders: Those agencies, organizations, groups, and individuals of the public having an interest or stake in an organization's program and that may be affected by its implementation.

Step-down management plan: A plan that provides specific guidance on management subjects (e.g., habitat, public use, fire, safety) or groups of related subjects. It describes strategies and implementation schedules for meeting CCP goals and objectives.

Strategy: A specific action, tool, technique, or combination of actions, tools, and techniques used to meet unit objectives.

Threatened species: A plant or animal species listed under the Endangered Species Act that is likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future.

Trust species: (*See Federal trust species*).

Vision statement: A concise statement of what the planning unit should be, or what is planned to be accomplished, based primarily upon the Refuge System mission and specific refuge purposes and other mandates. The vision statement for the refuge should be linked to the mission of the Refuge System, the purpose(s) of the refuge, the maintenance or restoration of the ecological integrity of each refuge and the Refuge System, and other mandates.

Wetland: Areas such as lakes, marshes, ponds, swamps, or streams that are inundated by surface or groundwater long enough to support plants and animals that require saturated or seasonally saturated soils.

Wildfire: Unplanned ignition of a wildland fire (such as a fire caused by lightning, volcanoes, unauthorized and accidental human-caused fires) and escaped prescribed fires.

Wildland fire: Every wildland fire is either a wildfire or a prescribed fire (FWS Manual 621 FW 1.3). A general term describing any non-structure fire that occurs in the wildland.

Wildlife-dependent recreational use: "A use of a refuge involving hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, or environmental education and interpretation." (605 FW 1) These are the six priority public uses of the Refuge System Administration Act, as amended. Wildlife-dependent recreational uses, other than the six priority public uses, are those that depend on the presence of wildlife. Other uses are also considered in the preparation of refuge CCPs; however, the six priority public uses always will take precedence.

Wildlife management: Manipulating wildlife populations, either directly by regulating the numbers, ages, and sex ratios harvested, or indirectly by manipulating habitat conditions. Wildlife management is not always to increase populations (e.g., wildlife damage control).

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADA	**Americans with Disabilities Act**
APC	Attwater's prairie-chicken
APCNWR	Attwater Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge
ARPA	Archeological Resources Protection Act
AUY	Animal Unit Year
BCR	Bird Conservation Region
CAP	Contaminant Assessment Process
CCP	Comprehensive Conservation Plan
CD	Compatibility Determinations
CPCI	Coastal Prairie Conservation Initiative
CO_2	Carbon dioxide
EA	Environmental Assessment
EE	Environmental Education
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EQIP	Environmental Quality Incentives Program
EO	Executive Order
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FM	Farm-to-Market (State secondary road)
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
FR	Federal Register
FRWC	Fossil Rim Wildlife Center
FTE	Full-time equivalent
GCP&M	Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes
GIS	Geographic Information System
GIWW	Gulf Intracoastal Waterway
GLCI	Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative
GPC	Greater prairie-chicken
GS	General Schedule (pay rate schedule for certain Federal positions)

IPCC	International Panel on Climate Change
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KPC	Katy Prairie Conservancy
LCC	Landscape Conservation Cooperative
LCRA	Lower Colorado River Authority
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding (Agreements)
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
N	Nitrogen
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NABCI	North American Bird Conservation Initiative
NADP	National Atmospheric Deposition Program
NAWMP	North American Waterfowl Management Plan
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NGOs	Nongovernmental Organizations
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NNL	National Natural Landmark
NO_2	Nitrogen dioxide
NOI	Notice of Intent
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service (U.S. Department of Agriculture)
NVCS	National Vegetation Classification System
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge
NWRC	National Wildlife Refuge Complex
NWRS, Refuge System	National Wildlife Refuge System
O&M	Operation & Maintenance
PIF	Partners in Flight
RC&D	Resource Conservation and Development Area
RHPO	Regional Historic Preservation Officer

RIFA	Red Imported Fire Ant
RNA	Research Natural Area
RONS	Refuge Operating Needs System
RRP	Refuge Roads Program
SAMMS	Service Asset Maintenance Management System
SCA	Student Conservation Association
SHC	Strategic Habitat Conservation
SUP	Special Use Permit
T&E	Threatened and Endangered Species
TCEQ	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
TCPP	Texas City Prairie Preserve
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TPWD	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
UNESCO	United National Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USGS	United States Geological Survey
USFWS, Service	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
WG	Wage Grade Schedule (pay rate schedule for certain Federal positions)
WO	Washington Office (referring to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)
WSA	Wilderness Study Area
WWF	World Wildlife Fund
YCC	Youth Conservation Corps

[This page intentionally left blank.]