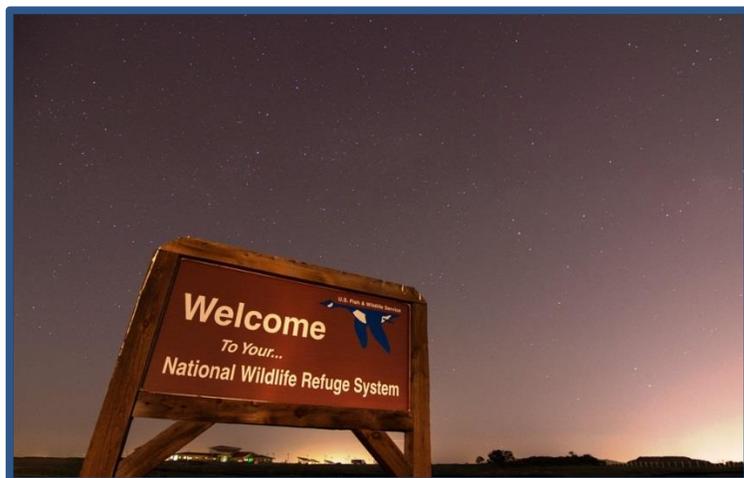
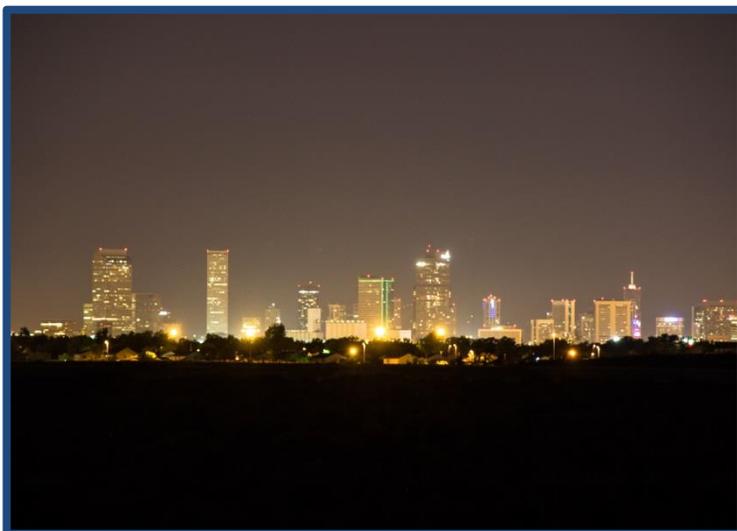
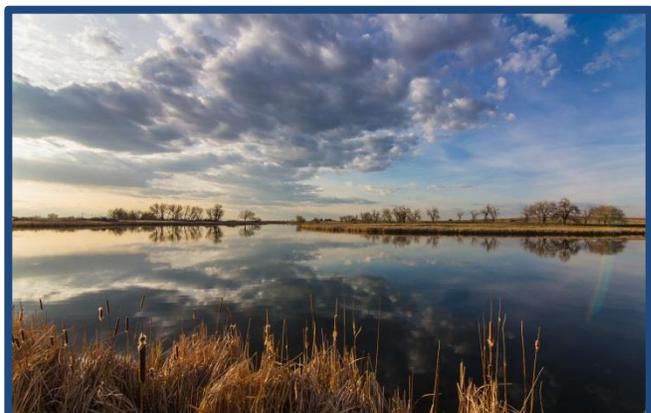


# Comment Period: Now through September 20, 2013

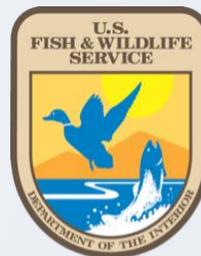
Please [sign-up](#) or [sign-in](#) to the social network to view and comment on this draft product. Learn more about the social network and how it works [here](#).

We encourage members to leave comments, edits, and suggestions in the comment section of the [Urban Wildlife Refuge Initiative Group](#) within the social network.

You may also e-mail your comments to [conservingthefuture@fws.gov](mailto:conservingthefuture@fws.gov).



**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
National Wildlife Refuge System  
Draft Urban Standards of Excellence**



# STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE FOR URBAN NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES

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## INTRODUCTION

*Conserving the Future: Wildlife Refuges and the Next Generation* sets out an ambitious plan to enhance the relevance of the National Wildlife Refuge System (System) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) to a rapidly changing America. In particular, it recognizes the importance of building a connected conservation constituency to the future of the System and to conserving natural resources. To build a representative and nationwide constituency, it also recognizes the pressing need to connect with ever growing populations in urban areas. To this end, the *Conserving the Future* document contains a specific recommendation:

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

The goal of the Urban Wildlife Refuge Initiative is to engage urban communities in wildlife conservation in partnership with the Service. Excellence may be achieved through seven standards that serve as a framework for collaboration between the Service and urban communities on and off Service lands:

- 1. CONNECT URBAN PEOPLE WITH NATURE VIA STEPPING STONES OF ENGAGEMENT**
- 2. BUILD PARTNERSHIPS**
- 3. BE A COMMUNITY ASSET**
- 4. ENSURE ADEQUATE LONG-TERM RESOURCES**
- 5. PROVIDE EQUITABLE ACCESS**
- 6. ENSURE THAT VISITORS FEEL SAFE AND WELCOME**
- 7. WALK THE SUSTAINABILITY WALK**

These standards, developed with input from urban refuge managers, Service staff, and local and national partners from across the country, support the initiative’s goal and the mission of the Service to conserve wildlife for the continuing benefit of the American people.

The approach to excellence for urban national wildlife refuges must be as flexible and unique as the communities the refuges serve. The Service must strive to understand both human environments and natural environments in order to understand the expectations of the urban community. The Service must strive to provide programs and leadership on conservation initiatives and projects that are relevant to the community as they conserve wildlife and habitats. Service staff, volunteers, and partners must engage urban communities and make meaningful connections to wildlife, especially in communities where opportunities to learn about and enjoy nature and wildlife are limited. This may start by building awareness, then fostering deeper understanding, followed by growing participation through programs that bring more people from the urban world into the larger conservation community.

Urban refuges are great places to build a broader conservation constituency, but the challenge is far too big for any one agency or organization to tackle alone. The Urban Wildlife Refuge Initiative

recognizes the importance of embracing traditional and new partnerships and collaborations. A variety of entities whose interests may be conservation, education, human health, or other subjects ultimately can help achieve conservation of wildlife, plants, and their habitats that are essential to maintaining a healthy planet for people.

## **USING THE STANDARDS**

- The term “urban refuge” is used throughout these standards. However, readers should be mindful that these standards apply not only to Service lands in urban areas, but also, to the greatest extent possible, to all urban projects where the Service is a partner.
- Each urban refuge or partnership is unique. As such, a range of strategies and evaluation tools are provided to choose from.
- The objectives for each standard set Service expectations for urban refuges to plan for the future, to measure success, and to take advantage of the extraordinary opportunities to build a conservation constituency with the urban public.
- These standards are designed to complement other *Conserving the Future* recommendations and step-down plans. Visit [www.americaswildlife.org](http://www.americaswildlife.org) to reference other plans, particularly the Friends Mentoring Action Plan; Strategic Plan for Volunteers, Friends Organizations, and Community Partners; Environmental Education Strategic Plan; Interpretation Strategic Plan; and Strategic Communications Plan.
- To keep the Standards of Excellence current and relevant, they will be reviewed and updated by the Refuge System at a minimum of every 5 years.

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### **STANDARD 1:**

#### **CONNECT URBAN PEOPLE WITH NATURE VIA STEPPING STONES OF ENGAGEMENT**

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##### **(S1) BIG-PICTURE QUESTIONS:**

- Is the Service consistently engaging with community members who reflect a broad diversity of the local urban area? (Are we consistently reaching the “whole community?”)
- Is the Service providing a spectrum of engagement that includes multidisciplinary opportunities for “nature novices” through more, in-depth adventurous programs?
- Is the Service helping urban residents find, recognize, and care for natural environments within their own community and beyond?

##### **(S1) INTRODUCTION:**

To garner and retain broad support and participation in the conservation of natural resources, the Service must reach out and connect with a broad diversity of residents. We must provide opportunities for urban residents to find, appreciate, and care for nature in their own cities and beyond.

This standard reflects the heart of the Urban Wildlife Refuge Initiative. Standards 2 through 7 are supporting standards that help accomplish “Standard 1: Connecting Urban People with Nature Via Stepping Stones of Engagement.”

**(S1) IMPLEMENTATION:**

**UNDERSTANDING THE URBAN AUDIENCE**

**GOAL 1.1** The Service takes the diversity and characteristics of the urban community members into consideration when engaging with an urban audience (define diversity through the lenses of ethnicity, culture, language, economic status, religion, age, social status, education, etc.).

**Objective:** By 20XX, and every five years thereafter, conduct an analysis of the demographic characteristics (ethnicity, culture, language, economic status, religion, age, social status, education, etc.) of the urban community within a 25-mile radius of the refuge.

**Metric:** Has an analysis been completed by 20XX, and on a five-year rotation thereafter?

**Objective:** Meet annually with a minimum of five community leaders/groups representing diversity reflected in demographic analysis to determine the unique needs of the urban community members.

**Metric:** Number of leaders/groups met with annually.

**Metric:** At least 75% of the diverse groups identified in the demographic analysis are represented.

**Objective:** Each urban refuge staff member shall attend a minimum of 10 hours of annual training that, based on the findings of the demographic analysis, includes content on diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural awareness.

**Metric:** Percentage of refuge staff meeting annual training target of 10 hours.

**STRATEGIES**

- Use a variety of interdisciplinary tools to research and understand the demographics of the community including: U.S. Census Bureau reports; state Department of Education Annual Report Cards, demographic and socio-economic resources from local officials, information from local media, local chambers of commerce, non-profit organizations serving under-represented audiences, and academic research by universities on the local urban community's issues, needs, and desires.
- Conduct Visitor Satisfaction Survey and compare the distribution of demographics of the refuge visitors to the makeup of the local community as detailed in U.S. Census Bureau reports; determine if refuge visitors reflect the diversity of the community.
- Provide cultural awareness training for staff and effective teaching/communication methods.
- Develop training/details for staff to work/mentor with experts in the urban community.
- Convene a diverse advisory group representing community leaders to seek input to understand barriers to connecting urban audiences to nature, to identify community needs and conservation values, and develop strategies for working with local constituencies and target audiences. Advisors may include, but are not limited to, health care providers, community leaders, educators, faith-based organizations, organizations serving at-risk youth, organizations representing specific cultures/ethnicities and others that define the community's diversity.

## PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT WITH NATURE

**GOAL 1.2** Provide programs that raise awareness of the Service mission and share how the conservation of natural resources is important to the local urban community.

**Objective:** By 20XX, 100% of refuge programs delivered include information about the Service mission.

**Metric:** Percentage of programs offered that include info on Service mission.

**Objective:** By 20XX, at least 50% of refuge programs delivered demonstrate how the conservation of natural resources benefits the local urban community.

**Metric:** Percentage of programs offered that demonstrate how the conservation of natural resources benefits the local urban community.

**GOAL 1.3** Provide multiple points of entry by developing programs targeted for audiences of different comfort and skill levels.

**Objective:** By 20XX, urban refuge program participants have options to attend at least two entry-level programs, two mid-level programs, and two in-depth programs at the urban refuge or with partners in the community.

**Metric:** Number of programs offered at entry-level, mid-level, and in-depth programs.

**Objective:** By 20XX, the above programs offered to the urban community are consistently attended at 80% capacity with at least 50% of participants from targeted communities.

**Metric:** Percentage of programs attended at 80% capacity.

**Metric:** Percentage attendance by targeted communities.

**GOAL 1.4** Participants in targeted Service programs represent a broad demographic of the urban community.

**Objective:** By 20XX, at least 20% of refuge outreach/education programs have been revised to meet the needs of urban community members as described by the analysis of current demographic characteristics from Goal 1.1.

**Metric:** % of programs revised.

**Objective:** Based on the demographic analysis, increase the degree to which the demographic of urban refuge program participants/visitors aligns with the local urban community.

**Metric:** Number of programs provided to organizations with memberships reflecting the local community, or other metrics applicable in context.

**Metric:** % of participating students served who are enrolled in free and reduced lunch programs.

**Metric:** % ethnic makeup of student participants served, as reported by school districts in state Department of Education annual reports.

**Objective:** Every X years, use the Visitor Demographic Survey (in development), to analyze the demographic of participants in urban refuge programs.

**Metric:** Degree in which urban refuge program participants reflect the demographic of the urban community.

#### **STRATEGIES**

- Where possible, the Service will provide resources to community organizations that conduct place-based conservation education programs. Examples include, but are not limited to, teacher training and curriculum development to support existing education standards; educational and field supplies such as binoculars, field guides, journals and other simple materials; expertise; matching funds for grants and partnerships; and schoolyard habitats.
- Include a continuum of nature experiences for students and urban residents that moves from awareness to engagement. Student experiences will grow over the school year and the student's school career. Encourage repeat visitation and participation. Examples include: building nature play areas in the community; bringing live wildlife programs to schools and civic events; leading tours in nearby natural places to increase comfort with local wildlife species.
- Develop more in-depth and "adventurous" programs to build nature confidence for urban residents. Examples include: night walks, overnight camp trips, week-long summer camps.
- Participate in alternative outdoor experiential programs that incorporate the arts. Examples include nature journaling and drawing, ceramics and sculpture, painting, photography and film, music, dance, and theater. Ensure activities are compatible when conducted on refuges.
- Highlight the value of wildlife that lives in urban areas, and foster connections between wildlife and urban residents. Stress that wildlife is not just found in faraway places. Programs will include entry-level experiences to create awareness of the outdoors and wildlife.
- Utilize materials and standards developed by other *Conserving the Future* Implementation Teams (i.e., communications, environmental education and interpretation), as well as tools from the North American Association for Environmental Education, the National Association for Interpretation, and other professional organizations.

#### **ENGAGING URBAN RESIDENTS IN CONSERVATION WORK**

**GOAL 1.5** Engage the community's diverse audiences in meaningful conservation projects on refuges and in communities.

**Objective:** By 20XX, 100% of on-refuge volunteer projects/programs are advertised to the urban community's diverse audience through targeted outreach.

**Metric:** Percentage of volunteer projects/programs are advertised to diverse urban audiences.

**Metric:** Percentage of urban community members attending programs as a result of targeted outreach.

**Objective:** By 20XX, annually conduct or participate in 3 off-refuge conservation projects in the urban community in partnership with local urban organizations.

**Metric:** Number of annual conservation projects conducted or participated in.

### **Strategies**

- Incorporate Service and System messages in all programs.
- When conducting conservation projects, ask participants how they learned of the opportunity.
- Host or assist with work projects/tours/cleanup projects/restoration of natural infrastructure that benefit the urban community.
- Assist urban communities in identifying local natural areas that can be monitored, cared for, restored, or visited as urban “nature places.” Encourage urban residents to promote and complete projects within their community.
- Provide resources, curriculum, guidance, and technical assistance as needed to local community groups. For example, develop a tool bank (shovels, wheelbarrows, rakes, etc.) that can be on loan to community groups for conservation projects.
- Conduct workshops to teach educators and other community leaders how to successfully conduct conservation projects in urban landscapes. Projects can range from on-the-ground restoration to leading conservation education programs.
- Develop outreach materials and activities to address landscape-level conservation issues and challenges that affect urban residents’ health. Offer simple and practical ways people can assist in conservation efforts. Examples of outreach include the value of pollinators for native landscapes and urban gardens; the threats of invasive species to food/crops; interactions with wildlife in urban neighborhoods; and the importance of water and air quality.

### **(S1) BACKGROUND:**

Academic research and many organizations recognize an increasing disconnect between people – especially younger generations – and the natural world. In addition, American society is more ethnically and socially diverse and increasingly more urban, with 80% of Americans living in urban or suburban areas (2010 U.S. Census data). Nature seems to be, or is, farther away from the majority of Americans than ever before and is harder to access for a multitude of reasons. The bottom line is that people generally have fewer experiences in nature.

These changes may be a detriment to physical and mental health. They may also contribute to a lessened understanding and awareness of our role in the natural environment. If people are not conscious of these interdependent connections, the Service will not be successful at gaining broad support of and assistance with conservation efforts. It is critical to provide an array of opportunities that link diverse urban residents with the natural environment for the benefit of wildlife, people and the natural areas that remain. The key to this effort is giving all urban people increased opportunities for meaningful experiences in nature, starting in early childhood to prepare youth to face future environmental challenges.

While the Service has traditionally provided quality nature-based experiences through environmental education, interpretation, wildlife observation and photography, fishing and hunting, we have never defined how to provide these experiences to urban audiences. Many of our visitors to rural refuges already have some experience and comfort with nature. They may have acquired this through traditions such as farming, ranching, hunting, fishing, hiking, or birding. However, many potential urban refuge visitors, or those participating in nature programs we can offer in urban areas, may lack nature-based skills and have a fear of the unknown. It is imperative that we make our programs relevant to the lives of urban audiences and provide multiple points of entry and a wide variety of nature-based experiences and opportunities. We must begin by dispelling/managing fear of wildlife and wild places and then encourage participation in wildlife conservation. To do this, the Service must not rely solely on traditional program delivery. Rather we must understand the diverse perspectives, values, demographics, and cultures of urban communities and adapt our approach accordingly.

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## **STANDARD 2: BUILD PARTNERSHIPS**

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### **(S2) BIG-PICTURE QUESTIONS:**

- Does the Service staff know with whom to partner in order to achieve the conservation goals of the refuge and meet the mutual needs of the urban community?
- Once the “right” individuals/groups are identified, have they become our partners in wildlife conservation?
- Do the partnerships of the urban refuge collectively represent a complete picture of community strengths, characteristics, conditions, demographics, and resources?
- Is the Service an active and contributing member in these partnerships?

### **(S2) INTRODUCTION:**

To help build a society that values sustainability of resources and supports wildlife conservation, the Service needs to expand its presence within urban communities. To help us accomplish this, we seek partners and Friends to share resources, broaden our skills, and help us understand the challenges and opportunities of working in urban environments. We will utilize formal and informal partnerships with a variety of individuals and organizations within the urban community to achieve our common goals for healthy wildlife and healthy people.

### **(S2) IMPLEMENTATION:**

#### **WITH WHOM SHOULD WE PARTNER?**

**GOAL 2.1** Identify groups and individuals in the urban community with whom to partner to conserve more wildlife and accomplish conservation efforts previously unachievable.

**Objective:** By 20XX, consult various public, city and county government agencies (i.e. visitor and convention bureaus, urban planning and housing commission, human health services) to develop a complete list of educational institutions, groups, arts organizations, agencies, and industries that serve the urban community.

**Metric:** The list reflects the characteristics and demographics of the community.

**Strategies:**

- Develop a working knowledge of the proportion of groups providing services to the urban community. For example: education, health, art and entertainment, cultural, religious and spiritual, business, industry, environmental and natural resources, urban planning, other public services.
- Identify NEW and innovative groups as potential partners, with the goal of reaching previously underserved audiences (identified in Standard 1) within the community.

**Objective:** By 20XX, meet with at least 5 community leaders/groups to identify the needs of the urban community for land stewardship and wildlife conservation.

**Metric:** Number of leaders/groups involved in needs assessment.

**Metric:** Urban community needs assessment completed by 20XX.

**Strategies:**

- To seek common interests, become familiar with organizations working in urban areas and their mission.
- Identify liaison(s) – staff, Friends members, volunteers, partners or others – within the community to assist in developing relationships (until permanent point of contact is identified) and to facilitate the community needs assessment.
- Develop and conduct a community needs assessment related to land stewardship and wildlife conservation with partners.
- Ensure that partners engaged in the community needs assessment reflect the community.

**Objective:** By 20XX, identify at least four groups/organizations that represent the strengths, demographics, and resources of the urban community and can facilitate meeting the needs identified in the community needs assessment.

**Metric:** Number of community groups and organizations identified.

**Metric:** Groups and organizations reflect the community.

**Metric:** Groups/organizations can facilitate meeting identified needs.

**Strategies:**

- Identify all potential groups with whom to partner to conserve healthy habitats for wildlife and people.
- Seek assistance from key community leaders with capacity to catalyze partnerships to conserve healthy habitats for wildlife and people.
- Periodically revisit suite of community partners to ensure partners demonstrate the strengths, demographics, and resources of the urban community.

### **DEVELOPING PARTNERS**

**GOAL 2.2** Develop urban partnership(s) with identified groups and individuals for the purpose of wildlife conservation.

**Objective:** By 20XX, establish partnerships with at least four organizations/groups to address urban community conservation needs, based on the urban community needs assessment (Goal 2.1)

**Metric:** Number of established partnerships.

**Metric:** Partnership roles and responsibilities are identified.

**Metric:** Partnerships can facilitate meeting identified needs.

**Strategies:**

- Establish criteria for appropriate partnerships. Consider diverse partners that represent the social characteristics of the community.

### **EXPANDING PARTNERSHIPS**

**GOAL 2.3** Develop innovative partnerships that reflect a complete picture of the community strengths, characteristics, conditions, demographics, and resources of the urban community.

**Objective:** By 20XX, establish partnerships with four new organizations/groups to address conservation needs, based on the urban community needs assessment (Goal 2.1).

**Metric:** Number of established partnerships.

**Metric:** Partnership roles and responsibilities are identified.

**Strategies:**

- Within two years, identify gaps in the representation of the community in your current partnerships.
- Establish criteria for appropriate partnerships. Consider diverse partners that represent the social characteristics of the community; consider partnerships that resonate with the community.
- Periodically revisit suite of community partners to ensure partners demonstrate the strengths, demographics, and resources of the community.
- Join existing partnerships that will help facilitate the overall goals of the community and the Service.

- Participate in other community groups and find common ground that integrates a wildlife conservation message with the mission of the other organizations.

**Objective:** By 20XX, establish one multi-stakeholder partnership(s).

**Metric:** At least 75% of the diversity of groups identified in Goal 2.1 which serve the urban community are represented in the multi-stakeholder partnership.

**Metric:** Multi-stakeholder partnership is established.

**Strategies:**

- Work with partners and community representatives to understand the needs and perspectives of the urban community.
- Participate in other community groups and find ways to add value to those organizations.
- Meet with neighborhood and/or community representatives on a regular basis to build stable, long-term relationships.
- Invite community members to provide their perspective and input on our programs, wildlife management activities, and issues of concern.
- Invite community members to participate in multi-stakeholder partnership – aimed at addressing a large conservation need identified in community needs assessment.
- Revisit the community needs assessment with larger group of stakeholders.
- Include the full spectrum of diversity (culture, age, economic status, religion, etc.) in the community in partnership planning to gain the community’s perspective. Welcome input on programs, wildlife management activities, and issues of concern.

**MAINTAINING ACTIVE PARTNERSHIPS**

**GOAL 2.4** Maintain active, stable and long-term partnerships that support expanding wildlife conservation, including healthy habitats within the urban community.

**Objective:** By 20XX, establish urban partnership coordinator(s) for the station and identify responsibilities to continue partnership implementation.

**Metric:** Urban partnership coordinator(s) named and assigned responsibilities.

**Objective:** By 20XX, established partnerships are ongoing.

**Metric:** Number of partners meeting over three years with agenda, minutes and reporting schedules.

**Metric:** Number of quarterly or biannual meetings.

**Metric:** Number of annual reports.

**Strategies:**

- Define expectations and responsibilities of each partner in the relationship for formal and informal community partnerships. Anything that can be shared to help the

partnership achieve its purpose should be articulated – for example, how tools, equipment, materials, funds and ideas will be used.

- Regularly share information/reports with the community about ongoing projects, partnerships and outcomes.
- Collaborate with the community by providing resources and supporting mutual goals to build mutual trust.
- Show appreciation and gratitude to partners and volunteers through Service approved recognition. (Also see Strategic Plan for Volunteer and Partner Involvement.)

**(S2) BACKGROUND:**

Working with organizations, Friends groups and volunteers that strengthen our ability to spread the wildlife conservation message to new audiences will help implement programs that benefit the health and well-being of humans and wildlife.

Partnerships that are formalized – whether through funding agreements or memoranda of understanding – and operate under a written agreement that describes shared goals, objectives, roles and responsibilities between the community partner and the field station can increase the success of the partnership and the likelihood that it will last. However, not all partnerships can or should be formalized. Informal partnership efforts are encouraged and promoted. We need to remain flexible enough to participate in relationships as they evolve and deliver our conservation message and expertise in the most effective and helpful manner possible.

Because the Service mission allows us to work across jurisdictional boundaries and through local leadership changes, the Service has the capability to maintain commitment to people, partners and projects and sustain an urban presence over time. We want to establish relationships that transcend a charismatic leader or refuge manager to ensure partnership efforts are sustained. Relationships must be nurtured by multiple Service staff and supported so that the outcomes are sustainable and so that they foster wildlife conservation appreciation, participation, and action at the refuge or field station, and in the community.

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**STANDARD 3:  
BE A COMMUNITY ASSET**

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**(S3) BIG-PICTURE QUESTION:**

- Is the urban refuge providing resources and expertise to the urban community in a way that contributes to the well-being of the community and meets the mission of the Service?

**(S3) INTRODUCTION:**

To remain relevant to a growing population of urban Americans the Service must lend its support, skills, services, resources, and expertise in natural resource conservation to the members of that community. To thrive, the Service must be an asset to the urban community.

**(S3) IMPLEMENTATION:**

**PEOPLE AND EXPERTISE**

**GOAL 3.1** Urban refuge staff provides relevant services to the local community.

**Objective:** Given knowledge of the urban community members (Goal 1.1), all refuge staff provide outstanding customer service to local visitors.

**Metric:** Degree to which refuge staff members are acknowledged by community or managers as providing outstanding customer service.

**Objective:** By 20XX, include at least one Service mission-related community service activity in the performance plans of 100% refuge staff members.

**Metric:** Percentage of refuge staff members with community service activity(s) in performance plans

**Objective:** By 20XX, each refuge staff member provides at least two hours of mission-related community service annually.

**Metric:** Number of hours of mission-related community service provided annually by staff members.

**Objective:** By 20XX, all refuge staff members conduct outreach by participating in at least one community activity/event per year.

**Metric:** Percentage of staff conducting outreach at community activities/events.

**Metric:** Number of community activities/events participated in annually by staff.

**Objective:** By 20XX, develop incentive and/or recognition plan to encourage staff to engage with the community.

**Metric:** Is a plan developed and implemented?

**Strategies**

- Give staff members the training, tools, and support they need to provide quality service and be involved with the community.
- Offer staff members incentives (e.g. time-off awards, non-monetary awards, recognition) to provide superior customer service to community members.
- Engage with the community by providing sufficient staff time and sharing resources/expertise to support mutual goals.
- Support community-wide events. When appropriate, wear the Service uniform or "logowear."
- Provide staff members with funds for materials and resources that they can offer when working with the community.
- Act as a hub to share environmental and natural resource conservation-related information and services.
- Provide easily accessible information to the community about land conservation incentives, native wildlife and natural history of the local community, sustainability, greening of communities, schools, community and residential habitats.

## PHYSICAL STRUCTURES AND PLACES

**GOAL 3.2** Urban refuge facilities provide a venue for community activities to demonstrate that the refuge is an asset to the urban community.

**Objective:** Annually, allow communities to conduct a minimum of three compatible, non-traditional activities on refuge lands that support or promote the Service mission.

**Metric:** Annual number of non-traditional activities allowed/hosted.

**Objective:** By 20XX, revise outreach plans to include at least five specific actions for attracting new urban audiences to refuge lands and facilities.

**Metric:** Outreach plans are updated to include five or more specific strategies for increasing publicity about refuge facilities and sites for community activities.

### Strategies

- Make refuge lands and/or facilities available to provide a venue for community meetings and events regarding the urban environment and conservation.
- When revising outreach plans consider the following: Host a mobile donation blood bank on the refuge to demonstrate that the refuge cares about community health and offer healthy nature activities to visiting donors, providing information and/or materials to encourage them to return to the refuge; become a voting location for your local voting precinct and provide refuge information to encourage voters to come back and visit; allow youth group celebrations, such as an Eagle Scout ceremony for the community, for significant accomplishments where project was conservation based.
- Include urban refuge facilities and places on websites, in partner's brochures and in other community outreach publications, maps and locations as locations for appropriate community activities.

## AGENCY

**GOAL 3.3** Develop conservation-related projects and programs of mutual benefit that support the local economy.

**Objective:** By 20XX, implement means to demonstrate the revenue generated from recreational opportunities provided by urban refuges to local businesses and communities.

**Metric:** 75% of the local chambers of commerce and local government offices have access to information regarding the refuge's economic impact on the community.

**Objective:** By 20XX, provide at least 10 urban youth with volunteer leadership opportunities and/or paid internships related to natural resource conservation.

**Metric:** Number of urban youth recruited for volunteer and paid internship positions.

**Objective:** By 20XX, provide staff expertise to facilitate at least one community-based project of benefit to both the community and the refuge.

**Metric:** Number of projects underway with measurable economic benefit.

### Strategies:

- Communicate financial impact of refuges by referencing "[Banking on Nature](#)" report.

- Participate in local government planning meetings, advisory boards, urban green space planning, and in other civic activities to build capacity to achieve the goals of the Urban Wildlife Refuge Initiative.
- Seek opportunities to assist in community-based projects or initiatives where Service expertise or resources will add value to the project or initiative.
- Partner with educational institutions and other organizations to expose students and teachers to wildlife and natural resource conservation careers.
- Partner with educational institutions and other organizations to provide students with internship, volunteer, and youth leadership opportunities.
- Engage local businesses in conservation projects on or off the refuge.
- Refuge staff shares economic reports with members of chambers of commerce and other appropriate community venues.

**(S3) BACKGROUND:**

A community asset is anything that improves the quality of community life. It can be people, such as refuge staff providing time, expertise, and resources to the community. It can be a structure or place, such as a visitor center, wildlife viewing area, meeting room schoolyard habitat, or other open space. It can be an organization or agency, such as the Service, that provides jobs and supports the local economy.

The greater an asset the Service is to the community, the more likely it is that the Service will maintain its relevance. Being involved in community-based projects beyond refuge boundaries allows the Service to have an influential presence within the urban community. Generating revenue in the local economy and providing people, places, and services to our partners and community members garners appreciation and trust for the dedication, support, and unique expertise of the Service. Being a value-added partner increases cooperative efforts and collaboration to implement mutually beneficial programs aimed at wildlife conservation.

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**STANDARD 4:  
ENSURE ADEQUATE LONG-TERM RESOURCES**

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**(S4) BIG PICTURE QUESTION:**

- Does an individual urban refuge have adequate resources (staff, volunteer, partners, funds) to sustain a credible presence in the urban environment while meeting the Urban Wildlife Refuge Standards of Excellence?

**(S4) INTRODUCTION:**

Urban refuges and the partnership-based work of the Service need to have sufficient resources to make long-term commitments to achieve the mission of the Service, the System, and the local refuge and maintain a meaningful presence in urban communities.

**(S4) IMPLEMENTATION:**

**STAFFING**

**GOAL 4.1** Urban refuges are adequately staffed with permanent positions and supplemented with strategic partnerships that have expertise in urban refuge management, volunteer management, partnership building, communications/outreach, environmental education and interpretation and law enforcement.

**Objective:** By 20XX, all Service Regions adopt new Urban Refuge Manager Position Description (in development) for hiring at urban refuges.

**Metric:** Has the Region adopted the new position description?

**Objective:** By 20XX, 100% of all new urban refuge manager hires are filled using knowledge, skills and abilities defined in the Urban Refuge Manager Position Description (in development).

**Metric:** Percentage of urban refuge manager positions filled using the new position description?

**Objective:** Using the Urban Skill Set Worksheet (in development), within X years and every two years thereafter, conduct an analysis of refuge positions and strategic partnerships to identify expertise and needs and fill gaps in staffing.

**Metric:** Has a biennial analysis been completed and have needs been identified?

**Metric:** Are gaps filled?

**Objective:** By 20XX, update urban refuge organizational charts to integrate responsibilities of volunteer management, partnership building, communications/outreach, environmental education and interpretation and law enforcement.

**Metric:** Has the urban refuge organizational chart been updated?

**Objective:** By 20XX, ensure a minimum of one performance measure to welcome and orient urban visitors is included in all refuge personnel performance plans.

**Metric:** Percentage of performance plans that include welcome and orient urban visitors as a performance measure.

### **Strategies**

- Incorporate needed urban refuge skills into existing position descriptions, performance plans and annual work plans to meet skill sets.
- Invite detailees with urban refuge skill sets to assist refuge in conducting urban-focused projects.
- Partner with colleges and universities to identify programs and students that can assist with urban refuge programs and projects. Consider recruiting graduate and upper-level students who are working on capstone and thesis projects.

## **FUNDING**

**GOAL 4.2** Station, Regional and national level leadership obtain adequate funding for urban refuges to sustain and grow partnerships and programs important to the community and to maintain refuge visitor facilities to a high level of quality, as defined in Service policy 605 FW1.

**Objective:** Urban-related staffing, operations, and activities (within budget code 1263 Visitor Services) rank as a high priority to meet the Urban Wildlife Refuge Standards of Excellence and are funded at 100%.

**Metric:** Degree to which urban refuge organizational charts (Goal 4.1) are fulfilled.

**Metric:** Degree to which operational and maintenance base funding is provided to maintain high-quality visitor service facilities.

**Metric:** Degree to which deferred maintenance and new projects are considered high priority by Regions when allocating funds.

**Objective:** Work with Friends groups and partners to provide 20% to 50% of funding needed to sustain urban engagement projects/programs (i.e. above and beyond Service staff and facilities).

**Metric:** What percentage of urban refuge engagement programs/projects are accomplished with partner-contributed funds?

**Objective:** Annually work with a minimum of three Service programs (e.g., Fisheries, Ecological Services, Migratory Birds, NCTC, Refuges, and etc.) other than your own and/or other federal partners to accomplish urban projects/programs.

**Metric:** Number of other Service programs and/or federal partners.

### **Strategies**

- Seek partnerships, grants, corporate support, and other traditional and non-traditional sources of funds to leverage the work of urban conservation and the Service mission.
- Use *Visitor Standards: A Handbook for Evaluating Visitor Service Programs* to evaluate program and facility quality.
- Maintain Friends Partnership Agreements and/ or relevant Cooperative Agreements that allow our partners to fund-raise in support of the Urban Wildlife Refuge Standards of Excellence.
- Work with Friends groups to identify mutual funding needs and develop a plan to meet those needs.
- Apply for Service and government grants, such as Challenge Cost Share, Invasives with Volunteers, and Connecting People with Nature grants.
- Attend grant-writing and management workshops and trainings.

## **PLANNING**

**GOAL 4.3** Urban refuges consistently incorporate urban engagement into planning efforts.

**Objective:** By 20XX, identify gaps within current/active refuge management plans to ensure that urban refuge engagement and Urban Wildlife Refuge Standards of Excellence are addressed.

**Metric:** Have gaps been identified?

**Objective:** By 20XX, where feasible, append existing plans to reflect urban engagement and Urban Wildlife Refuge Standards of Excellence and implement actions into refuge operations.

**Metric:** Have appropriate plans been updated and actions incorporated into refuge operations?

**Objective:** Incorporate the Urban Wildlife Refuge Standards of Excellence at the goal level for new Comprehensive Conservation Plans and other relevant planning documents for urban refuges. (e.g. visitor services step-down plans, land protection plans, environmental assessments, habitat management plans).

**Metric:** Are Urban Wildlife Refuge Standards of Excellence incorporated into new plans?

**Objective:** Annually, or as needed, coordinate with local jurisdictions and stakeholders to ensure that urban refuge planning is complementary with other local land use planning efforts.

**Metric:** Number of projects coordinated annually with local jurisdictions and stakeholders.

### **Strategies**

- Incorporate the Urban Wildlife Refuge Standards of Excellence expectations into annual work plans and performance plans for urban refuge staff members.
- Recognize urban refuges as a weighted factor in the Service formula to determine land acquisition priorities.
- Attend community planning and council meetings to learn about local efforts and initiatives.
- Coordinate with partners and Friends groups to represent shared interests when participating in local land use planning efforts.

## **VOLUNTEERS, FRIENDS, AND YOUTH ENGAGEMENT**

**GOAL 4.4** Urban refuges have active Friends group(s), volunteer corps, and youth internships to help support the mission and goals of the urban refuge and its partners.

**Objective:** Using the Urban Skill Set Worksheet (in development), within X years and every two years thereafter, conduct an analysis of the refuge volunteer program, Friends groups, and youth internship opportunities to identify expertise and needs and fill gaps.

**Metric:** Has a biennial analysis been completed and have needs been identified?

**Metric:** Are gaps filled?

**Strategies**

- Maintain a well-trained volunteer corps that is managed by a refuge or partner organization volunteer coordinator.
- Work closely with Friends or other support groups that provide an entrée to community organizations, and engage community leaders.
- Hire local youth throughout the year through Student Conservation Association, Pathways, work-study programs and partnerships to build long-term relationships with the community.
- Utilize temporary hiring and school service learning opportunities to enhance capacity and work directly with youth to build bridges with the community.

**(S4) BACKGROUND:**

An urban national wildlife refuge presence, whether land or partnership based, is an integral part of the local community. To achieve this presence, an urban refuge must have adequate and stable funding to support outreach efforts, volunteer management, environmental education and interpretation. Funding to maintain refuge facilities is critical to maintaining a credible and stable presence in the urban environment. Urban refuges and their partnership-based work need an organizational and management structure (i.e., volunteer coordinator, environmental educators/interpreters, law enforcement) to address the issues of the urban environment, and to ensure that the Service presence reflects the unique needs of reaching urban audiences while meeting the Service mission.

Urban refuges are a conduit for long-term support of “off-refuge” projects and support of other organizations in the community. While these projects ideally would enhance conservation in the urban environment, urban refuges should consider a range of activities that further the Service mission and its relevance to the community. Examples include: providing grants for the development and enhancement of schoolyard habitat projects participating in youth programs or community events; providing input and technical assistance in urban planning for open spaces and aquatic habitats; and collaborating with local organizations that have similar conservation goals or have the potential to increase visitation and partnerships at the refuge. All of these activities require stable financial and staff resources. At the same time, urban refuges can leverage their resources with community partners to reach shared goals.

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**STANDARD 5:  
PROVIDE EQUITABLE ACCESS**

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**(S5) BIG PICTURE QUESTIONS:**

- Is the refuge accessible to all residents of the urban area?

- Does the refuge maintain an inclusive environment and atmosphere that is welcoming and culturally sensitive?

**(S5) INTRODUCTION:**

To engage diverse urban populations, refuges must be easily accessible to residents of local communities regardless of transportation, physical, or financial limitations. In addition, they must maintain an inclusive environment that is welcoming to all members of the urban community.

**(S5) IMPLEMENTATION:**

**TRAVELING TO THE URBAN REFUGE**

**GOAL 5.1** Barriers to traveling to the refuge and/or to off-site refuge programs are minimized.

**Objective:** By 20XX, conduct an analysis of currently available modes of transportation to and from the refuge within a 25 mile radius and identify gaps that could easily be filled (e.g., extending bike routes).

**Metric:** An analysis has been completed by 20XX.

**Metric:** All easily fillable gaps have been identified.

**Objective:** For each off-site program, identify potential transportation barriers.

**Metric:** Have barriers to accessing each off-site program been assessed?

**Objective:** By 20XX, implement strategies for on and off-site refuge programing that ease the burden of transportation, based on analyses.

**Metric:** A strategic plan for refuge programing has been developed by 20XX.

**Metric:** Has the plan been implemented?

**Objective:** By 20XX, identify X number of partners and stakeholder groups that may provide, or partner to provide, affordable multimodal transportation and way-finding systems to the refuge.

**Metric:** Number of partners and stakeholder groups identified.

**Objective:** By 20XX, work with the identified groups on projects to provide additional affordable transportation options and way-finding systems to and from the refuge.

**Metric:** Percentage of identified projects in process.

**Strategies**

- Identify diverse partners and stakeholders who may contribute to, or be impacted by, refuge transportation projects.
- Work with partners to deliver transportation projects.
- Work with Friends and community partners to secure transportation funding sources.
- Educate decision-makers about the benefits of providing access to natural areas.
- Take refuge programs into the community when residents have less access to transportation.
- Ensure that program timing eases the burden of transportation (e.g., all-day children’s programs, evening, or weekend programs).
- Encourage partnerships and linkages with other conservation and recreational spaces, such as greenways and water trails, through adequate way-finding and interpretive signage to extend experiences.

## PHYSICAL ACCESS

**GOAL 5.2** The urban refuge provides access and quality experiences to persons of all physical abilities.

**Objective:** By 20XX, ensure that the Service's Architectural Barriers Act standards are met in all the refuge's facilities.

**Metric:** Percentage of refuge facilities that meet the Service's Architectural Barriers Act standards.

**Objective:** Work with appropriate groups (e.g., Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired) to implement actions to provide higher quality experiences to persons with different physical abilities.

**Metric:** Number of action items implemented.

### Strategies

- Ensure staff is familiar with the Service's Architectural Barriers Act standards.
- Review and use other applicable guidelines that can extend the ability of the Service to provide high-quality experiences (e.g., Forest Service Outdoor Recreation Accessibility Guidelines).

## FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS

**GOAL 5.3** The refuge provides as many free and low-cost opportunities as possible for urban residents to engage in wildlife-dependent recreation and connect with nature.

**Objective:** Annually offer X number of free days and/or programs through the refuge or partners that can provide financial assistance.

**Metric:** Number of free days.

**Metric:** Number of free programs.

**Objective:** In collaboration with appropriate partners, by 20XX, the refuge has developed a program to provide scholarship to cover program fees and income-based reductions to low-income households.

**Metric:** Number of scholarships.

**Metric:** Number of income-based reductions.

### Strategies

- Where applicable, work with partners to provide income-based reductions and scholarships to fee programs.
- Work with partners that serve low-income households to identify populations and offer reduced fees for refuges.

## CULTURAL CONSTRAINTS

**GOAL 5.4** All members of the urban community feel welcome at the refuge.

**Objective:** Describe at least three ways to communicate and connect with the cultural groups in the urban community.

**Metric:** Percentage of staff that can describe at least three ways to communicate and connect with each cultural group in the community.

**Objective:** Identify and work with at least one key contact from each cultural community to build inroads with new audiences.

**Metric:** The refuge is working with at least one key contact from each community.

**Metric:** Are inroads to communities being built?

**Objective:** The refuge annually provides at least three culturally relevant programs aimed at target audiences in the community.

**Metric:** Number of culturally relevant programs provided.

**Objective:** The urban refuge recruits for 100% of all positions, including staff, volunteers, and youth employment in the community.

**Metric:** Percentage of positions recruited in local urban communities.

### **Strategies**

- Provide alternative-language programming, materials, and displays relevant to audiences.
- Require refuge staff members and partners to complete cultural competency training.
- Promote the Service and refuge in outlets that will reach target audiences.
- Develop a culture of respect and openness within the Service and a reputation for being trustworthy in the community.
- For open positions and volunteer opportunities, work to attract an applicant pool that reflects the local community's diversity.

### **(S5) BACKGROUND:**

Time spent in nature is vital to health and well-being, but in the built environments of urban areas, opportunities for individuals to connect with nature are often limited. Refuges near urban areas are an important asset to the communities that surround them; they provide places for experiences in nature, including wildlife viewing, recreation, learning new skills, relaxation and spiritual renewal. In addition, time spent outdoors is an important factor in inspiring people to care about the health of the natural world, fisheries, habitats, and biological diversity. Access to nature should be facilitated by refuges for individual benefits to be realized and to build a conservation constituency in the urban community.

Access to refuges for urban communities may be limited by practical constraints, such as transportation, physical, or financial challenges. It may also be limited by cultural constraints, such as language barriers, lack familiarity or trust in the agency, not feeling welcome, or a lack of diverse staff. Barriers to accessing refuges need to be reduced to the greatest extent possible if the Service is to remain relevant in our increasingly ethnically and culturally diverse, increasingly urban, society.

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## **STANDARD 6: ENSURE THAT VISITORS FEEL SAFE AND WELCOME**

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**(S6) BIG PICTURE QUESTIONS:**

- Is the Service providing a safe and welcoming experience for visitors from surrounding communities?
- Is the Service creating an environment to reduce the perception of danger in natural settings?

**(S6) INTRODUCTION:**

Before we can expect visitors to appreciate the wonders of urban refuges and wildlife, we must first address their very basic needs. Visitors must feel safe in their physical environment in order to facilitate their engagement and learning.

**(S6) IMPLEMENTATION:**

**IS THE SERVICE PREPARED?**

**GOAL 6.1** Communications and outreach strategies are implemented so that visitors view the urban refuge as being safe and welcoming.

**Objective:** By 20XX, determine at least five strategies/tools that address urban visitors' perceived dangers in natural settings.

**Metric:** Number of strategies/tools identified to address the urban visitors' perceived dangers in natural settings.

**Objective:** By 20XX, develop training materials on how to welcome and orient urban visitors to a natural area, based on the strategies/tools identified.

**Metric:** Were training materials developed and available for use?

**Metric:** Did the training materials incorporate the identified tools and strategies?

**Objective:** Annually, train all staff, and key volunteers on how to welcome and orient urban visitors to a natural area using the training materials developed.

**Metric:** Was training provided annually?

**Metric:** Percentage of staff trained.

**Metric:** Percentage of key volunteers trained.

**Metric:** Level 1 Evaluation (staff/volunteers' feedback).

**Objective:** At least every two years, train Friends group members and community partners on how to welcome urban visitors to a natural area using the training materials developed.

**Metric:** Percentage of Friends group members that attended training.

**Metric:** Percentage of community partners that attended training.

**Metric:** Was training provided at least every two years?

**Strategies**

- Post welcome signs and provide information in multiple languages, where appropriate.
- Provide staff members, volunteers, Friends groups and community partners with guidance and training to orient and greet urban visitors on-site.

**ARE WE PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES?**

**GOAL 6.2** All refuge visitors have the opportunity to participate in a refuge gateway experience designed to increase their level of comfort in a natural setting.

**Objective:** By 20XX, determine urban visitors' perceptions of danger in natural settings.

**Metric:** Were the visitors' perceptions of danger identified?

**Objective:** By 20XX, deliver at least one gateway experience that lessens the visitors' perception of danger in natural areas.

**Metric:** Number of gateway experiences developed.

**Metric:** Number of gateway experiences delivered.

**Metric:** Number of participants in the gateway experience(s).

**Metric:** Does each gateway experience address the identified perceptions of danger?

### **Strategies**

- Develop orientation materials (virtual or in person) that address how to prepare for a visit – how to dress, what to expect, what activities are available, what to bring. Consider photos/sounds of animals that visitors could expect (or not expect – vampire bats and tigers) to encounter; virtual tours of the refuge; information about real threats and how to handle them (e.g., poison oak, stinging nettle, biting insects, snakes); and FAQs dispelling common nature myths.
- Engage community groups to understand their perceptions and how to address their concerns.

## **FACILITIES/SERVICES**

**GOAL 6.3** Ensure that real threats are minimized through thoughtful design, adequate staffing and appropriate law enforcement.

**Objective:** Annually work with refuge and local law enforcement officials to assess and document potential crime/vandalism/danger concerns.

**Metric:** Has an assessment been completed and provided to refuge staff.

**Metric:** Has the assessment been completed annually?

**Objective:** Based on assessment, annually prioritize results by level of risk/urgency and provide/modify facilities or services to minimize threats.

**Metric:** Are the annual priorities accomplished?

### **Strategies**

- Proactively work in the community to dispel myths and encourage gateway visits.
- Design facilities to reflect what the local community is comfortable experiencing. Consider, where appropriate, solid bridges and paved trails as opposed to the rustic/weathered bridges and unpaved trails common at rural refuges.
- Maintain a high standard of facility maintenance to reduce risk of injury and abuse (e.g., vandalism).
- Design visitor facilities (e.g., buildings, trails, kiosks, parking lots, roads, observation platforms) with the urban environment in mind to minimize opportunities for criminal activity. Include adequate lighting in parking lots, on stairways, and on roads and at building entrances.

- Encourage community presence through trail rover or “refuge watch” volunteer programs (similar to neighborhood watch).
- Provide adequate law enforcement staff trained to engage with urban communities. Coordinate with local public safety jurisdictions, including fire departments, neighborhood watch organizations, police departments, and community groups.

**(S6) BACKGROUND:**

National wildlife refuges and other natural areas often are places of undiscovered beauty. Each year thousands of visitors experience these lands for the first time and are captivated by the wildlife and habitats. However, one barrier for some visitors is the perception that natural areas are dangerous. Communicating what to expect as clearly as possible and helping new visitors overcome real or perceived fears will ultimately make their visit a safe and rewarding experience.

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## **STANDARD 7: WALK THE SUSTAINABILITY WALK**

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**(S7) INTRODUCTION:**

Showcase sustainable use of resources to inspire conservation of healthy habitats for wildlife and people.

**(S7) BIG-PICTURE QUESTIONS:**

- Is the Service showcasing sustainable practices in overall site operations?
- Is the urban refuge working with partners to improve the efficiency of station operations (e.g., transportation agencies/providers)?
- Is the urban refuge offering opportunities for the community to engage in sustainability efforts on and off the refuge?
- Is the urban refuge promoting the benefits of nature for the wellness of people, as well as wildlife?

**(S7) IMPLEMENTATION:**

**PRACTICE SUSTAINABLE BEHAVIOR**

**GOAL 7.1** Promote sustainable practices such as energy efficiency, alternative energy use, minimal-to-zero waste, water conservation, and environmental management; and invest in quality, sustainable and locally sourced products.

**Objective:** By year 20XX, annually implement at least one new sustainable practice at the refuge by applying principles in [Service Manual Chapter 565 FW 1](#) (especially see exhibits 1 and 2) to the maximum extent practicable.

**Metric:** Number of new sustainable practices implemented.

**Objective:** By 20XX, at least half of urban refuges complete the [Climate Leadership in Refuges \(CLIR\) Tool Analysis](#) and use the information to plan and execute more sustainable programs.

**Metric:** Number of Service offices that complete the CLIR tool analysis.

**Metric:** Number of Service offices executing sustainable programs, based on the analysis (e.g., work with partners to expand travel choices to the stations).

**Strategies:**

- Use the [Climate Leadership in Refuges \(CLIR\) Tool](#) to account for and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve sustainability at the refuge, and to communicate with partners, visitors, the community and other stakeholders about the importance of sustainability and taking action on climate change.
- Incorporate wildlife-friendly design elements in facilities and infrastructure, such as bird-friendly windows, wildlife crossings at roadways, and habitat management.
- The [Organizational Environmental Management System \(EMS\)](#) is a framework for implementing programs, policy and guidance that incorporate sustainability into all of the Service's operations. While EMS currently is limited to 66 field stations, it will be fully implemented Service-wide on October 1, 2013. Through EMS, the Service is committed to:
  - Demonstrating leadership in all aspects of sustainability.
  - Putting forth sustainability guidance and policy.
  - Communicating our success to stakeholders.
  - Establishing and reviewing sustainability objectives and targets;
  - Reducing waste and preventing pollution.
  - Meeting or exceeding all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations.
  - Continually improving our Organizational EMS to improve our overall sustainability performance.
- Strive for a zero-waste program, which includes demonstrations and outreach materials that encourage these behaviors in the community.
- Utilize best practices for stormwater and graywater management, and install water efficient fixtures.

**ENGAGE WITH OTHERS IN SUSTAINABILITY**

**GOAL 7.2** Engage with community partners using a holistic approach to promote the health and well-being of people and the sustainability of natural resources.

**Objective:** Annually conduct or participate in at least three sustainability projects with the local community that contribute to the mental, physical, spiritual, and social health of those involved.

**Metric:** Number of projects conducted or participated in annually.

**Strategies:**

- Partner with wellness programs that integrate nature, such as the [Nature Prescription Initiative](#), a tool designed to help medical providers encourage patients to go outside, or offer programs like those of the National Park Service’s “[Healthy Parks Healthy People US.](#)”
- Offer incentives for staff members, visitors, and volunteers who walk, bike, take alternative transportation, or utilize fuel-efficient/hybrid/electric personal or government vehicles in refuge programs. Example incentives include prime parking spaces and public transit subsidy benefits.

**EDUCATE OTHERS IN SUSTAINABILITY**

**GOAL 7.3** Provide educational opportunities for the community to observe and participate in sustainability actions on the refuge and in the community.

**Objective:** Annually, conduct or participate in at least three educational programs where the local community can learn about and adopt sustainable practices.

**Metric:** Number of projects conducted or participated in annually.

**Metric:** Number of visitors who receive information about sustainability and tips for managing their greenhouse-gas footprint.

**Strategies**

- Use CLIR to provide visitors with information about sustainability and tips for managing their greenhouse-gas footprint.
- Use CLIR to work with stakeholders to share information about our greenhouse gas emission monitoring, reduction, and success.
- Develop a Sustainability Walking Tour, via social media, on site, or in the community.
- Provide a variety of demonstrations of sustainability projects and practices, such as wildlife crossings or stormwater projects, on lands and in facilities that may be incorporated into community projects.
- Incorporate sustainability into existing communications, environmental education and interpretation programs.

**INSPIRE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES**

**GOAL 7.4** Inspire community members to adopt sustainable practices by using those undertaken by staff members, interns, volunteers, partners and Friends as examples.

**Objective:** By 20XX, all staff members, Friends and volunteers can communicate about refuge sustainability efforts.

**Metric:** Percentage of staff, Friends and volunteers that can effectively communicate refuge sustainability efforts.

**Objective:** By 20XX, disseminate outreach materials to communicate Service sustainability efforts.

**Metric:** Are outreach materials disseminated to the community?

### **Strategies**

- Utilize the Service's Ambassador training program model to train all staff members, volunteers, Friends and partners to be knowledgeable about sustainability efforts.
- Develop communications material on the sustainable land management and construction practices employed by individual field sites.

### **(S7) BACKGROUND:**

Sustainability is "improving the quality of human life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems" ([IUCN - The World Conservation Union, United Nations Environment Programme, World Wide Fund for Nature](#)). As leaders in conservation and trustees of our Nation's natural resources, the Service should set the standard for sustainable use of these resources, energy conservation, and promotion of biological diversity. Sustainability will be achieved through the day-to-day decisions and actions of Service employees, Friends, volunteers, partners, and the greater community, as well as by refuge land management actions. Our consistent example will generate a positive ripple effect throughout the community and environmental landscape, which in the long-term will contribute to the mental, physical, spiritual, and social health of those involved.