

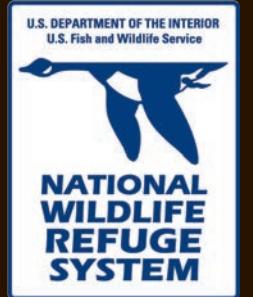
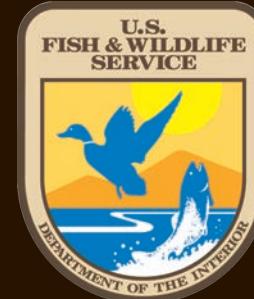
# ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

## COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION PLAN/ EIS

DRAFT PLAN/EIS REVIEW, PUBLIC MEETING  
JUNE 2015



U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

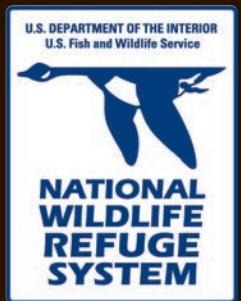
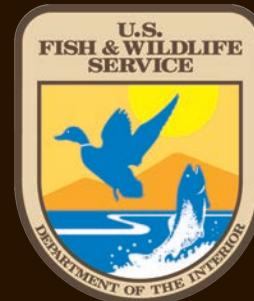


# U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE (USFWS)

**The USFWS manages three national wildlife refuges in Denver including Rocky Flats, Two Ponds and the Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWRs. We manage these lands for fish and wildlife and priority wildlife-dependant recreation.**

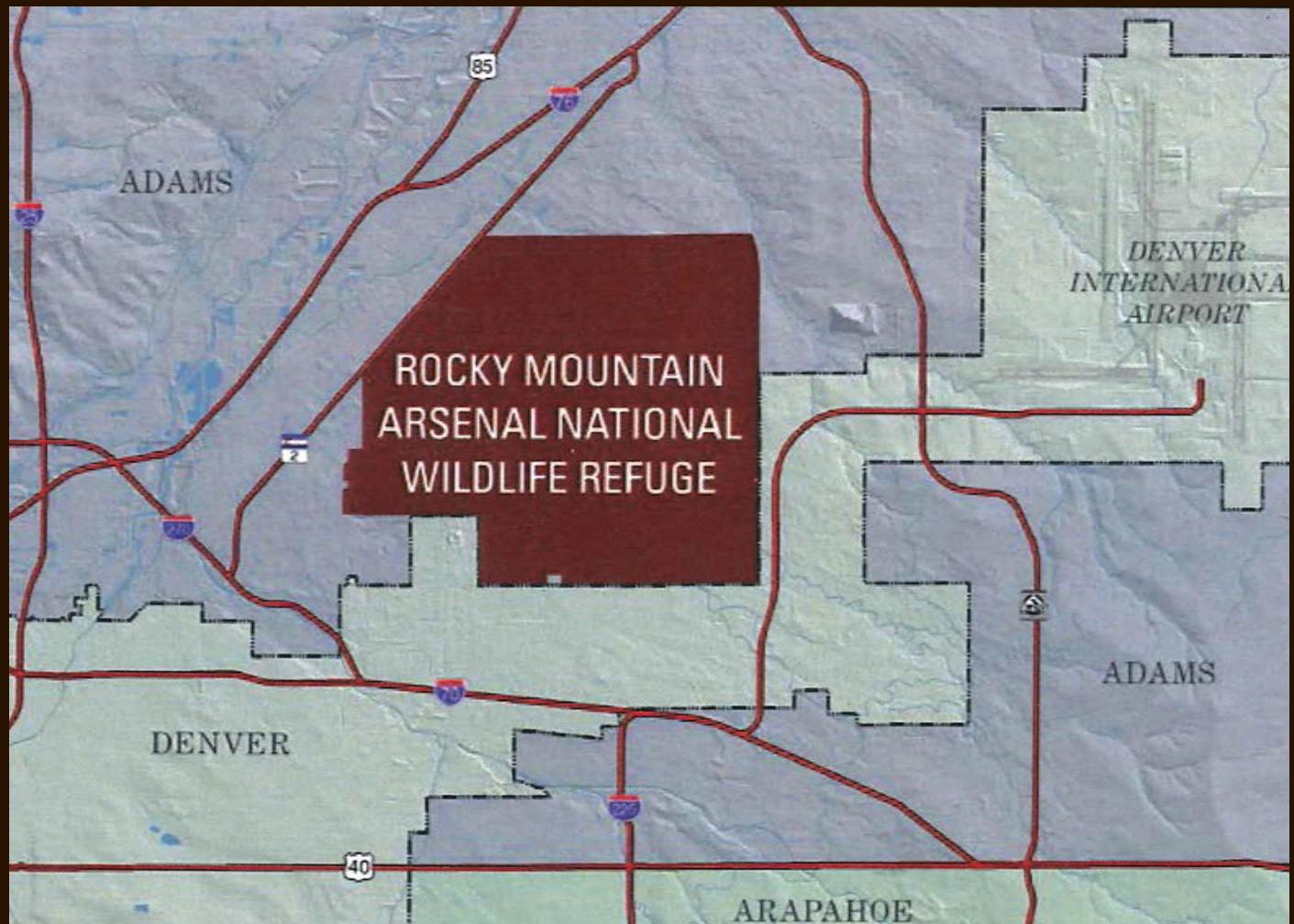


The Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR was established in 1992 and is 15,988-acres.



# THE CCP PROVIDES DIRECTION FOR THE FUTURE MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL NWR

The last plan for the Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR was developed in 1996 and it is time for a revision.



# SIGNIFICANT SCOPING ISSUES

**In Summer 2013, the Service asked the public and stakeholders for input. This is what we heard and what the CCP/EIS addresses:**

- **Connect people to nature** at the RMA NWR.
- **Improve promotions** and conduct **more outreach** about the RMA NWR
- Set **clear expectations** about what a wildlife refuge is, does and offers.
- Maintain the **sense of retreat** from the surrounding urban setting.
- **Collaborate with partners** to improve environmental education opportunities on and off the refuge.
- Interpret the **site's history**.
- **Improve and expand visitor facilities and programming** (e.g., more trails and signs, enhanced interpretive media, more environmental education, greater outreach).
- **Improve access and transportation systems** (e.g., more biking opportunities, additional entry points, expanded wildlife drive, neighborhood connections).

# COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION PLAN PROCESS



ALT A: NO ACTION

ALT B: TRADITIONAL  
REFUGE

ALT C: URBAN REFUGE

ALT D: GATEWAY REFUGE

# DRAFT PLAN: ALTERNATIVES

**Some alts meet the Service's mission, the refuge's purposes, the CCP Vision and Goals, and other policies better than others. All proposed public or economic uses have to be compatible with the refuge's purpose.**



**In the final CCP/EIS, we could revise the proposed action and take elements from other alternatives in developing the final preferred alternative.**

# ALTERNATIVE A: NO ACTION

**Under the “No Action” alternative, current management of the RMA NWR would be maintained.**



**Visitor services programs and facilities would remain the same and current habitat and wildlife management would be maintained. No changes to infrastructure, access communications or partnerships.**

## Alternative A Highlights

-  Wildlife and Habitat Management
-  Partnerships
-  Infrastructure and Operations
-  Access and Transportation

REFUGE  
OPERATIONS AND  
HEADQUARTERS

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC  
WHILE ON GUIDED TOURS

**BUCKLEY ROAD TRAIL  
THROUGH EXPANDED  
DIA BISON RANGE**

**REGIONAL TRAILS  
PARTNERSHIPS WITH  
OTHER AGENCIES**

**POSSIBLE BY  
RANGE EXPANSION**

# U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

# ALTERNATIVE B: TRADITIONAL REFUGE

**This alternative focuses on providing traditional refuge visitor uses and conveying the importance of conservation, wildlife protection, and the National Wildlife Refuge System.**



**Access to the refuge remains more restricted than the other alternatives and wildlife-dependent recreation, as well as, community outreach are minimally expanded.**

## Alternative B Highlights

-  **Wildlife and Habitat Management**
-  **Partnerships**
-  **Infrastructure and Operations**
-  **Access and Transportation**  
(White dot indicates new entrance)

REFUGE  
OPERATIONS AND  
HEADQUARTERS

#### IMPROVE AESTHETICS OF PUBLIC ENTRANCES

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC  
WHILE ON GUIDED TOURS

 RE-INTRODUCTION OF

BUCKLEY ROAD TRAIL  
THROUGH EXPANDED  
DIA BISON RANGE  
IS ABANDONED

**POSSIBLE BIOME  
RANGE EXPANSION**

**RESTORE FIRST CREEK TO ORIGINAL CHANNEL  
AND INVENTORY/SUSTAIN RIPARIAN HABITAT**

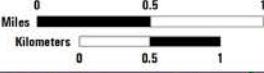
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TERNSHIPS WITH  
ER AGENCIES  
MUNICIPALITIES

AND MUNICIPALITIES  
INCLUDING  
ROCKY MOUNTAIN GREENWAY

**SET BACK WILDLIFE FENCE 200° FOR AESTHETICS AND  
TO ENSURE PROPER GROWTH AND REPRODUCTION**

#### 56TH AVENUE RECONSTRUCTION



# ALTERNATIVE C: URBAN REFUGE

**The emphasis of this alternative is to increase the visibility of the refuge within the Denver metropolitan region and to welcome many more non-traditional refuge visitors to the RMA NWR.**



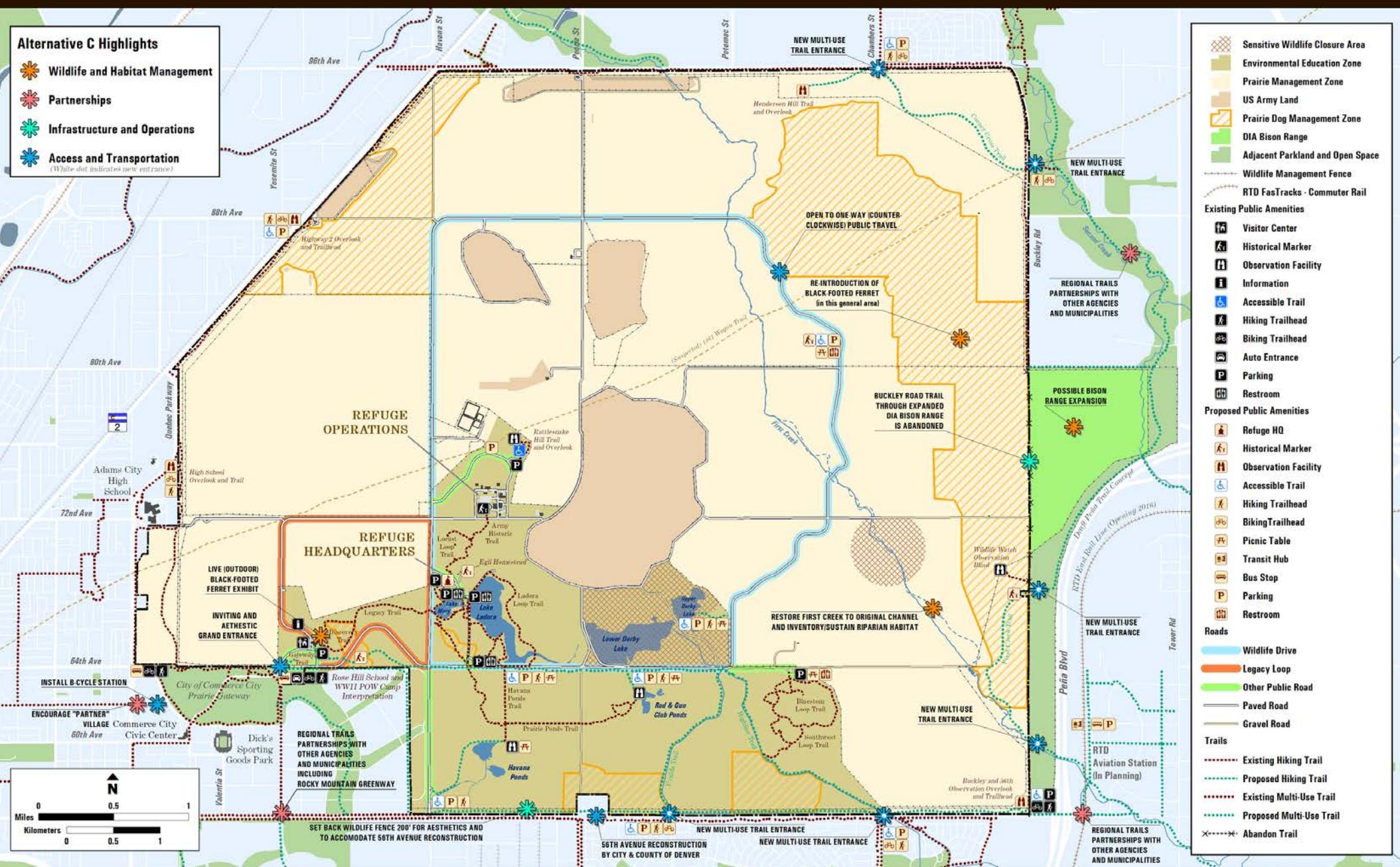
**Through expanded visitor services programs and “Big 6” wildlife-dependent recreation, the introduction of other appropriate uses, an abundance of instructional programming, and widespread outreach, the Service endeavors to connect more people with nature and wildlife.**

**The refuge is made far more accessible to neighboring communities with the opening of additional access points and the development of enhanced transportation systems.**



### Alternative C Highlights

-  **Wildlife and Habitat Management**
-  **Partnerships**
-  **Infrastructure and Operations**
-  **Access and Transportation**  
(White dot indicates new entrance)



# ALTERNATIVE D: GATEWAY REFUGE

Under this alternative the Service engages with conservation groups and commercial ventures (e.g., concessionaires, outfitters) to substantially increase programming and visitor uses on the refuge.

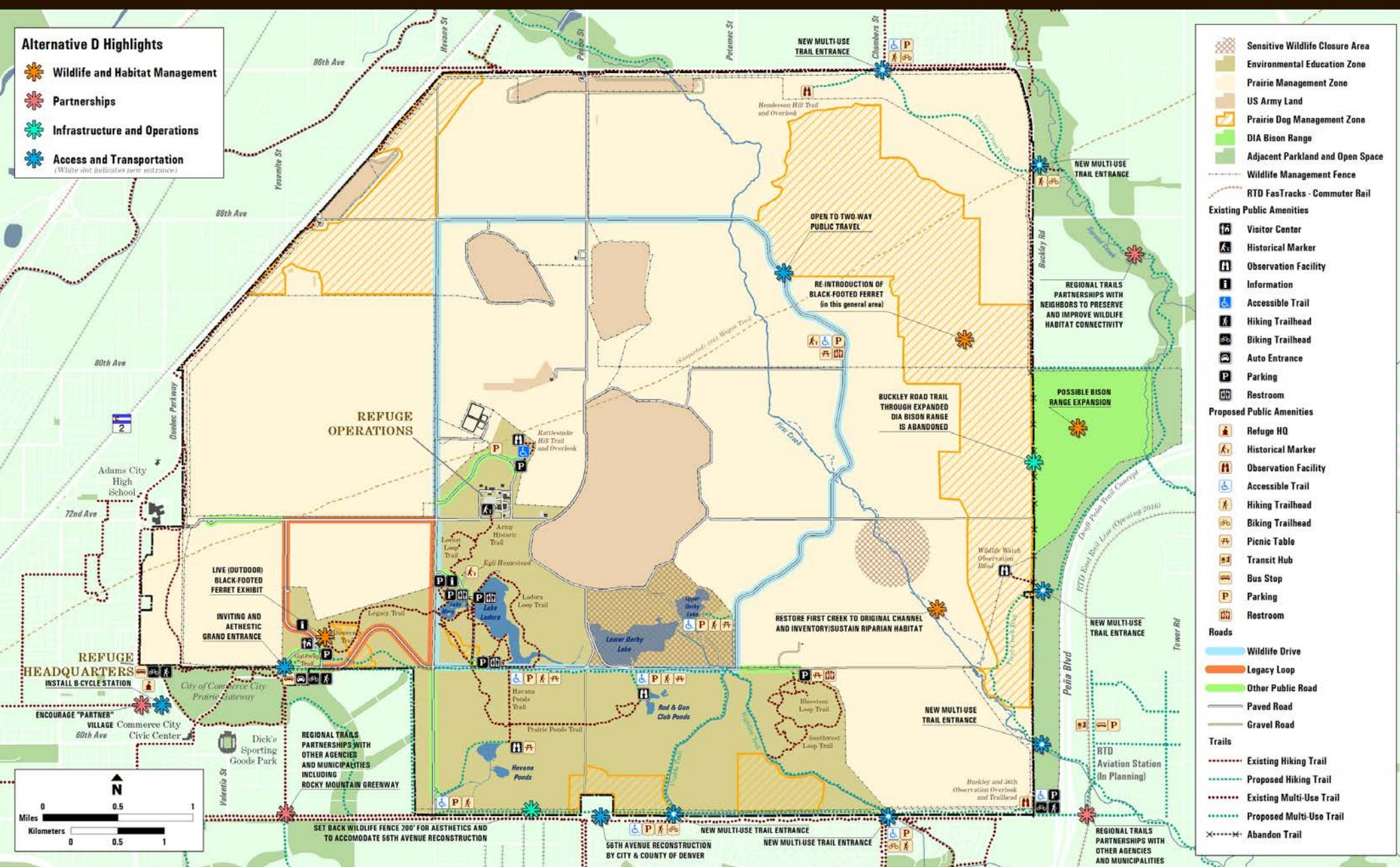


The RMA NWR is connected physically and thematically with public lands throughout the state and the nation's refuge system. Through expanded partnerships, commercial activity, and more interpreted cultural resources on the refuge, the Service appeals to the broadest range of visitors including nature enthusiasts, wildlife-dependent recreationalists, and history buffs.

Like Alt C, the refuge is made more accessible to neighboring communities with the opening of additional access points and an enhanced transportation system.

## Alternative D Highlights

-  **Wildlife and Habitat Management**
-  **Partnerships**
-  **Infrastructure and Operations**
-  **Access and Transportation**  
(White dot indicates new entrance)



# DRAFT PLAN: ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

**The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) includes an analysis of the effects of implementing the four alternatives.**

*The following impact topics are addressed in the plan:*

- Geology and soil
- Water resources
- Air quality
- Climate
- Night sky
- Soundscapes
- Habitat

- Wildlife
- Hunting & Fishing
- Wildlife Observation & Photography
- Environmental Education & Interpretation
- Cultural and Historical Resources
- Access & Transportation
- Socioeconomic Environment



# THE PROPOSED ACTION

**Following the analysis, the Service selected  
Alternative C: Urban Refuge as the proposed action.**

**Alternative C best meets  
the purposes, vision and  
goals for the refuge and  
follows the Service's  
Urban Refuge Initiative.**



# ALTERNATIVE C: URBAN REFUGE

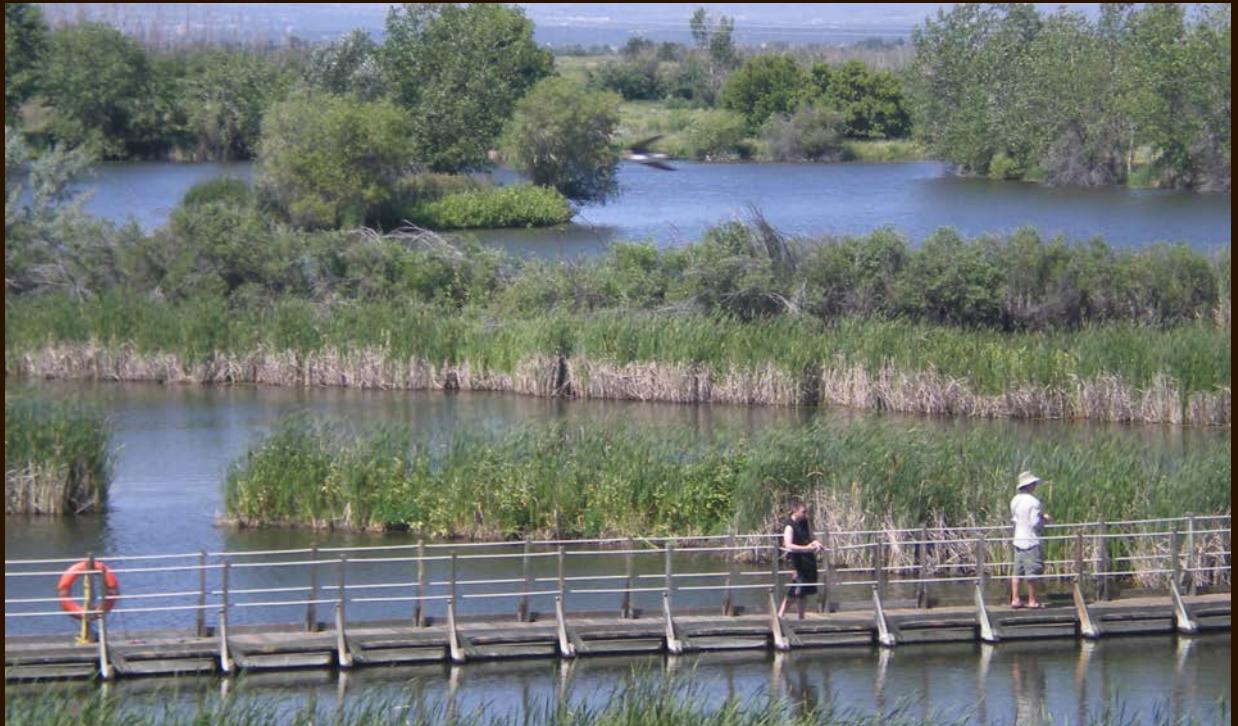
## Key aspects of Alt C include:

- Developing the first CCP in the Refuge System based on the **Urban Refuge Initiative**;
- **Reintroducing** the endangered Black-footed ferret and other native species;
- **Connecting** the refuge to the Rocky Mountain Greenway Trail Network;
- **Co-managing adjacent private lands** for wildlife with land-management partners;
- **Significantly expanding compatible, wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities**, infrastructure and facilities to appeal to a broader range of visitors and connect urban residents with local natural habitats and wildlife;

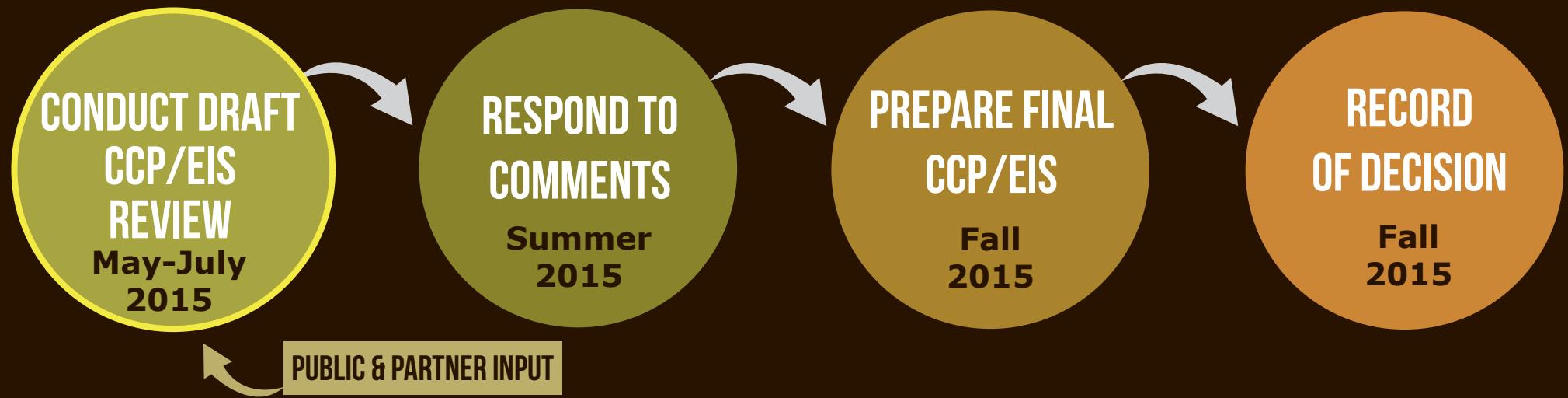


# ALTERNATIVE C (CONTINUED)

- Create **additional pedestrian access points** to connect the refuge to local and regional communities and trails;
- **Work with partners to cross-promote** the refuge and its programs, and with neighboring communities to develop a “**Partner’s Village**”, and with RTD to promote **bike-sharing** and programs to facilitate public access to the refuge;
- Develop a **new, more inviting refuge entrance** and fencing alignment;
- Seek ways to enhance and significantly **improve the refuge’s transportation systems and facilities**.



# NEXT STEPS



# NEXT STEPS: IMPLEMENTATION

We strive to implement the CCP over the 15-year time horizon as opportunities arise.

If there is a conflict between implementation and our core purposes, wildlife will take precedent.

The plan will be evaluated periodically and revised as needed.



# COLLECTING PUBLIC COMMENT

The draft comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) and environmental impact statement (EIS) is out for public review for a 60-day comment period.

**The Service will be collecting comments until: July 6th**

**There are MULTIPLE way to comment on the CCP/EIS:**

- **Take a few minutes to comment tonight** (in person, on a flip chart)
- **Fill out a comment form**
- **Email a comment:** bernardo\_garza@fws.gov
- **Mail in a comment:** Division of Refuge Planning, 134 Union Blvd, Ste. 300, Lakewood, CO, 80228

**[http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/co\\_rkm.php](http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/co_rkm.php)**