Realizing the Potential of the National Wildlife Refuge System As a Tool for Protecting Ecosystem Services
National Wildlife Refuges and Ecosystem Service Protection

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substituting for

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National Wildlife Refuge Association

• Assists the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with establishing new National Wildlife Refuges and expanding existing National Wildlife Refuges

• Advocates for National Wildlife Refuges, issues, and funding
Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge – first National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1903 in Florida by President Theodore Roosevelt to protect breeding wading birds from hunters.

Continuously expanding to currently include 600 National Wildlife Refuges throughout the United States and its territories.
National Wildlife Refuge System
Mission Statement

“The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.”
National Wildlife Refuge recreational activities worth > $542.8m/yr ($2007)

- Hiking
- Fishing
- Hunting
- Birding
- Wildlife Viewing
- Ecotourism

- Wildlife Habitat
- Fresh Water Supply
- Carbon Sequestration
- Flood Protection
- Nutrient Removal
National Wildlife Refuges and Ecosystem Services in Florida

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photobee1.blogspot.com

Floridabirdingtrail.com

floridawildlifeviewing.com

birdorable.com
Greater Everglades Strategic Habitat Conservation Initiative

Three Phases

1 Everglades Headwaters
2 Fisheating Creek
3 Panther Expansion
Everglades Headwaters NWR

Two Components

- **Conservation Focal Area** – 130,000 acres Considered for Acquisition

- **Conservation Partnership Area** – 1.1 million acres Considered for Easements
Wildlife Habitat (Biodiversity)

Everglades Headwaters NWR

- Expand Corridors and Connectivity
- Protect Habitat for 204 Threatened, Endangered, & Candidate Species
- Maintain Species’ Genetic Diversity
Water
• Freshwater Supply for 8.5 million on both coasts
• Aquifer Recharge
• Flood protection
• Nutrient removal
• Downstream Estuary Fisheries
Everglades Headwaters NWR

Climate Change

• Mitigation – Carbon and Other Compound Sequestration

• Adaptation – Wildlife and Plants Migrate North and Upslope
Everglades Headwaters NWR

Other Ecosystem Services

• Cultural – Rural FL Lifestyle since 1521
• Recreation
• Pollination
• Aesthetic
• Spiritual
• Legacy
• Option