

Restoring Our Refuges: A Plan for Hawaii



The 1,200-mile-long Papahānaumokuāke Marine National Monument, which encompasses the Pacific Remote Islands National Wildlife Refuge Complex and the Hawaiian Islands Refuge, is partially managed by the Refuge System. That's no simple matter. Most of the Monument is accessible only by ocean-going vessels. It's costly to ship the staff, field camp supplies, materials and equipment needed to conserve, manage and restore the 14 million seabirds, 23 endangered or threatened species, 7,000 known marine species and 141 archeological resources.



Budget shortfalls could force **Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge**, one of the most popular spots for Hawaiian visitors and residents, to abolish interpretive and education programs for the public.



Magnificent Frigatebirds on Johnston Island NWR, Hawaii

The National Wildlife Refuge System struggles to meet its wildlife conservation mission

In Hawaii alone, 106 mission-critical projects sit on the shelf.

Hawaii is home to spectacular natural resources including 9 National Wildlife Refuges, which provide essential habitat for scores of at-risk plants and animals found no where else in the world. Hawaii refuges protect a great diversity of ecosystems, including rainforests, coral reefs and atolls, coastal freshwater ponds, and rocky cliffs that provide habitat for endangered and threatened species including numerous birds, the Hawaiian Monk Seal and Green Sea Turtle.

In 2008, more than 830 thousand visitors enjoyed hiking, birding, wildlife photography, environmental education, and hunting and fishing on Hawaii refuges.

Yet, national wildlife refuges in Hawaii may not be able to continue protecting wildlife and offering world-class recreation. Hawaii wildlife refuges are saddled with deferred operations and maintenance projects that exceed \$290 million.

Today, the state's wildlife refuges need at least 87 additional positions. Those include 38 wildlife biologists, 15 guides and educators, and 21 essential maintenance and enforcement personnel. Without these people, Hawaii refuges will fall further behind in meeting the demand.

What's the solution? CARE recommends \$514 million for the Refuge System's FY 2010 Operations and Maintenance budget and an increase to at least \$765 million by FY 2013

About C.A.R.E.

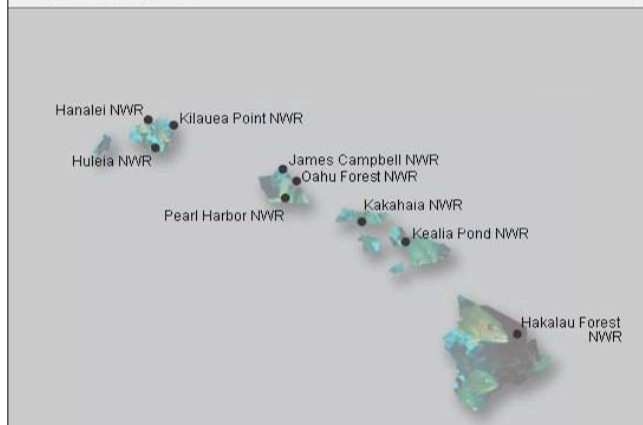
The Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement is a diverse coalition of 22 conservation, recreation, sporting, and scientific organizations with more than 14 million members and supporters across the United States. CARE has been working since 1995 to help the National Wildlife Refuge System fight a serious funding crisis.

American Birding Association
American Fisheries Society
American Sportfishing Association
Assateague Coastal Trust
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Defenders of Wildlife
Ducks Unlimited
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Izaak Walton League of America
National Audubon Society
National Rifle Association of America
National Wildlife Federation
National Wildlife Refuge Association
Safari Club International
The Corps Network
The Nature Conservancy
The Wilderness Society
The Wildlife Society
Trout Unlimited
U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance
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[www.FundRefuges.org/CARE/
CareHome.html](http://www.FundRefuges.org/CARE/CareHome.html)

Hawaii



Saddled with declining purchasing power and a \$3.5 billion backlog of deferred operations and maintenance projects, the National Wildlife Refuge System is in a financial vise.

The Refuge System needs an annual increase of \$15 million in its operations budget just to keep pace with inflation and demand. The Refuge System welcomed more than 41.2 million visitors in 2008, up from 33 million in 1998.

National Wildlife Refuges are undeniable economic engines. According to the *Banking on Nature* report from the FWS:

- Spending by visitors to refuges generated more than \$1.7 billion of sales nationwide, created 27,000 jobs in local communities and added \$543 million in employment income. These economic data do not include Alaska or Pacific island refuges, which together generate millions of annual visitors.
- At *Kealia Pond National Wildlife Refuge* in Hawaii, for every dollar appropriated to the refuge budget, \$16.12 are generated in expenditures to the local economy. Visitor spending totaled \$16 million, generating 142 local jobs, \$4.1 million in employment income and \$2.2 million in total tax revenue.

Yet, according to Management Systems International, a respected business consultant, the Refuge System has seen its real purchasing power decline by 11 percent between fiscal years 2003 and 2008.

The Government Accountability Office found that with continuing funding constraints and an expanding list of challenges, it may be difficult to maintain the Refuge System as envisioned in law – “where the biological integrity, diversity, and environmental health of the Refuge System are maintained; priority visitor services are provided; and the strategic growth of the system is continued.”

There is a solution to safeguard the world’s finest network of public lands dedicated to wildlife conservation: \$514 million in FY 2010 for the National Wildlife Refuge System and an increase to at least \$765 million by FY 2013 – steps that will restore operational quality and begin to chip away at the deferred operations and maintenance backlog.