

# **CARE**

## **Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement**

The Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement (CARE) was created in 1995 as a loose coalition of diverse organizations concerned about the ability of National Wildlife Refuges to fulfill their missions. In order to unite the group and focus our collective efforts, the core of CARE's concern was, and still remains, the correcting the inadequate funding for the operations and maintenance of National Wildlife Refuges. In order to guide our deliberations and maintain our focus, CARE drafted the following core principles:

### ***Principles:***

National Wildlife Refuges must be staffed and funded adequately to (1) conserve and manage habitats and wildlife in order to fulfill their overall mission, and (2) provide opportunities for mission-compatible fish- and wildlife dependent education and recreation.

At current funding and staffing levels, many critically important biological and management actions are not possible on refuges.

Ways must be systematically explored to recover costs (user fees), manage more efficiently, attract cost-sharing, find new funding and, overall, improve the management capability of refuges.

### ***Role of CARE members***

Members of CARE recognize both the inadequacy of existing funds to operate and maintain the National Wildlife Refuge System and biological, recreational and economic consequences that this lack of funding has on the refuge system and its surrounding communities. We, therefore, propose to accomplish the following goals, in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:

- to increase public and Congressional awareness of the value, contributions and needs of the National Wildlife Refuge System;

- to mobilize organization members and supporters to assist refuge personnel with necessary maintenance and operational responsibilities, and to develop community-based refuge support programs;

to identify alternative funding strategies, such as cost-reduction, cost-reallocation and cost recovery measures;

to explore and implement funding sources, such as cost-sharing initiatives with the private sector;  
to secure, in the long term, funding necessary to fulfill the missions of individual refuges and the Refuge System overall ; and

to develop and publicize an action plan that identifies (1) specific funding needs of the refuge system and (2) strategic actions that may be implemented to achieve CARE's goals.

***Role of CARE Supporters***

Supporters of the CARE coalition endorse the principles and goals of CARE and work on local and regional levels to promote these principles and goals. CARE supporters are listed by name on certain publications and letters, but are not full members of the CARE group. The CARE coalition may use the name of the supporting group on documents and publications at their discretion.

*If your group would like to support CARE's principles and goals and be listed as a supporter of the CARE coalition, please sign and return to the address listed below.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Group

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Contact name, phone number and email address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature and Title of Authorized Group Representative

Please return to:

Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement (CARE)

c/o National Wildlife Refuge Association

1010 Wisconsin Ave., NW Suite 200

Washington, DC 20007

If you have any questions about CARE or it's mission, please contact Debbie Harwood at 202-333-9075.