



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Our mission is to work with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife & plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

We are a bureau within the Department of the Interior.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the oldest federal conservation agency, tracing its lineage back to 1871, and the only agency in the federal government whose primary responsibility is management of fish and wildlife for the American public. The Service helps ensure a healthy environment for people by providing opportunities for Americans to enjoy the outdoors and our shared natural heritage.

Objectives

- Assist in the development and application of an environmental stewardship ethic for our society, based on ecological principles, scientific knowledge of fish and wildlife, and a sense of moral responsibility.
- Guide the conservation, development, and management of the Nation's fish and wildlife resources.
- Administer a national program to provide the public opportunities to understand, appreciate, and wisely use fish and wildlife resources.

Here are a few of the ways we try to meet our mission

- Enforce federal wildlife laws
- Protect endangered species Manage migratory birds
- Restore nationally significant fisheries
- Conserve and restore wildlife habitat such as wetlands
- Help foreign governments with their international conservation efforts
- Distribute hundreds of millions of dollars, through our Wildlife Sport Fish and Restoration program, in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to State fish and wildlife agencies

Resources

- We manage the National Wildlife Refuge System with more than 560 National Wildlife Refuges as well as small wetlands and other special management areas encompassing more than 150 million acres. Under the Fisheries program we also operate over 70 National Fish Hatcheries and 65 fishery resource offices. The Ecological Services program has 86 field stations across all 50 states.
- The vast majority of fish and wildlife habitat is on non-federal lands. Voluntary habitat protection and restoration programs like the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program and the Coastal Program and other partnership programs are the primary ways we deliver habitat conservation on public and private lands.
- The Service employs approximately 9,000 people at facilities across the U.S. The Service is a decentralized organization with a headquarters office in Washington, D.C., with regional and field offices across the country. Our organizational chart shows structure and also provides information on senior management.

Creation of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and explanation of our Statutory Authority and Functions

A 1940 reorganization plan (54 Stat. 1232) in the Department of the Interior consolidated the Bureau of Fisheries and the Bureau of Biological Survey into one agency to be known as the Fish and Wildlife Service. The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife was created as a part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the Department of the Interior on November 6, 1956, by the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 (70 Stat. 1119). That act was amended on July 1, 1974, by Public Law 93-271 (88 Stat. 92) to, among other purposes, abolish the position of Commissioner of Fish and Wildlife and designate the Bureau as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



Bureaus

The U.S. Department of the Interior is a Cabinet-level agency that manages America's vast natural and cultural resources. Our department employs some 70,000 people, including expert scientists and resource-management professionals, in ten technical bureaus:

- ❖ Bureau of Indian Affairs
- ❖ Bureau of Indian Education
- ❖ Bureau of Land Management
- ❖ Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
- ❖ Bureau of Reclamation
- ❖ Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement
- ❖ National Park Service
- ❖ Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement
- ❖ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- ❖ U.S. Geological Survey

In addition to our ten bureaus, there are a number of offices that fall under the Office of the Secretary, the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget, Solicitor's Office and Office of the Inspector General.