The Fisheries Program

Fish and Wildlife Management Assistance Program

CONSERVING AMERICA'S fisheries

America's fish and other aquatic resources are among the richest and most diverse in the world.

America's aquatic resources, and the recreational, commercial and subsistence opportunities they support, have helped further our Nation's growth by providing enormous ecological, social and economic benefits.

In 2001 alone, recreational fishing revenue contributed more than $40 billion to the national economy. Although fisheries management has achieved some notable successes, stresses such as the introduction of invasive species, habitat loss and overfishing are degrading the quality of these resources.

A growing number of fish species continue to decline at alarming rates. Almost 400 aquatic species either have or need special protection in some part of their natural or historic range. Several species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act, including some populations of salmon, sturgeon and native trout, were once important for recreational, subsistence and commercial uses.

Recovery efforts have brought several species closer to being delisted, or downlisted from endangered to threatened. Success stories such as the recovery of Atlantic striped bass and the Apache trout give us hope and illustrate the value of cooperative approaches to fisheries management in the future.

The Fish and Wildlife Management Assistance Program works with States, Tribes, other Federal agencies, foreign governments and the private sector to foster sound science and collaborative management. One of our greatest strengths is our ability to work across geographic, political and international borders to craft coalitions, partnerships and solutions.

Conservationists and fisheries managers look to us to assist in achieving aquatic resource restoration goals, knowing that healthy ecosystems yield multiple economic benefits by providing increased hunting, fishing and wildlife watching opportunities. These recreational pastimes translate into real economic benefits for communities, supported by responsible and effective management of our nation's fish and wildlife resources.

Fish and Wildlife Management Assistance Roles and Responsibilities

- Assess population condition of fish and other aquatic species, and wildlife.
- Assess condition of habitat (aquatic and terrestrial), and conduct inventory of fish passage barriers.
- Lead and/or coordinate planning recovery, restoration, or management of fish, other aquatic species, and wildlife.
- Restore aquatic habitats (instream and wetland), and restore fish passage through the removal of barriers.
- Preventing and controlling aquatic nuisance species introductions.
- Manage subsistence fisheries in Alaska.
- Manage marine mammals.

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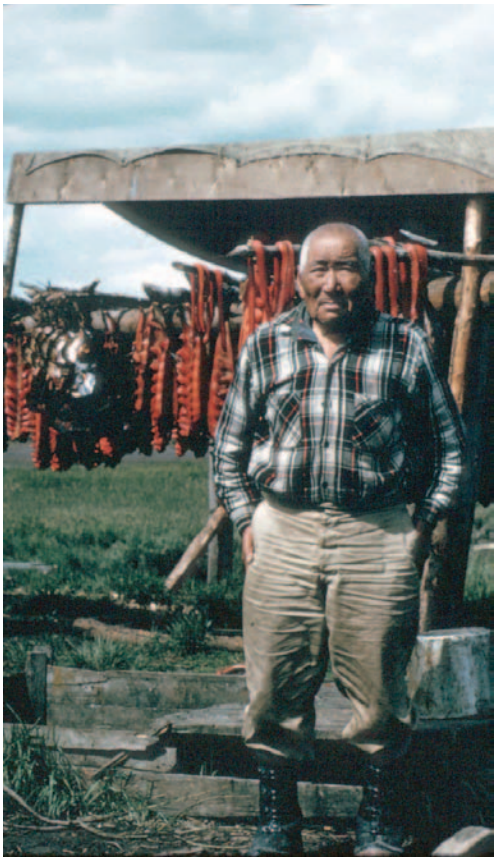

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