

056 FW 1  
*Climate Change Action*

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## OVERVIEW

**1.1 What is the purpose of this chapter?** This chapter:

**A.** Describes the overall U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) policy and staff responsibilities in response to climate change, and

**B.** Establishes the Climate Change Action Program as the Service's lead source for guiding employees as they respond to climate change impacts on biodiversity and infrastructure.

**1.2 What is the scope of this chapter?** This chapter applies to all Service programs, Regions, offices, and other organizational units.

**1.3 What are the authorities for this chapter?**

**A.** Coastal Barrier Resources Act ([16 U.S.C. 3501-3510](#)).

**B.** Endangered Species Act (ESA) ([16 U.S.C. 1531-1543](#)).

**C.** Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act ([16 U.S.C. 777-777k](#)).

**D.** Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act ([16 U.S.C. 669-669l](#)).

**E.** Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 ([16 U.S.C. 742a-742j](#)).

**F.** Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1934 ([16 U.S.C. 661-667e](#)).

**G.** Marine Mammal Protection Act ([16 U.S.C. 1361-1407](#)).

**H.** Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 ([16 U.S.C. 703-711](#)).

**I.** National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended ([42 U.S.C. 4321-4347](#)).

**J.** National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 ([16 U.S.C. 668dd-668ee](#)).

**1.4 What terms do you need to know to understand this chapter?** Following are terms you need to know to understand this chapter. For the definitions of additional terms related to climate change, see the Climate Change Action Program glossary, which is available on the [Service SharePoint site](#).

**A. Adaptation** means adjustment in natural or human systems to a new or changing environment that exploits beneficial opportunities or moderates negative effects. (Definition from the 4<sup>th</sup> National Climate Assessment.)

**B. Climate Change Action Program** is a framework, easily modified and updated as necessary, that serves as the Service's approach for climate action (see the [Climate Change Action Program](#) document).

**C. Climate mitigation** refers to measures taken to reduce the amount and speed of future climate change by reducing emissions of heat-trapping gases or removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. (Definition from the 4<sup>th</sup> National Climate Assessment.)

## OVERALL POLICY

**1.5 What is the Service's overall policy for climate change action?**

**A.** To achieve our mission and properly manage the natural and physical assets we are charged with administering, it is Service policy to plan for and take actions, based on the best available science, in response to reasonably foreseeable future conditions, including the effects of climate change.

**B.** To successfully implement this policy, and consistent with other policies, such as [565 FW 1](#), Implementing Sustainable Practices, Service employees must focus on the following seven elements of the Climate Change Action Program:

- (1) Implementing climate adaptation action;
- (2) Providing supporting climate science information;
- (3) Developing and implementing climate adaptation strategies at multiple landscape scales;
- (4) Working with our partners to address climate impacts;
- (5) Enhancing climate mitigation efforts, including energy efficiency and biological carbon sequestration;
- (6) Providing supporting policy, guidance, and regulations; and
- (7) Providing the needed capacity and resources to secure the Service vision for climate change action.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

**1.6 What responsibilities do Service employees have for implementing the climate change action policy?** See Table 1-1.

**Table 1-1: Responsibilities for Climate Change Action Policy and Program**

These employees...	Are responsible for...
<b>A. Director</b>	<p>(1) Ensuring that the Service has climate policies and programs in place that are consistent with the Department of the Interior's (Department) policy;</p> <p>(2) Ensuring that the Directorate implements measures to respond to climate change and its effects;</p> <p>(3) Assigning employees with appropriate technical and partnership skills to serve on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) The Service's Climate Change Action Program working groups;</li> <li>(b) The Department's and other agencies' climate change work groups and committees; and</li> <li>(c) Working groups of other organizations addressing climate change, including States, Tribes, and underrepresented communities; and</li> </ul> <p>(4) Coordinating with other Departmental heads of bureaus and offices to ensure a cross-agency, integrated approach to implementing effective and efficient climate change measures.</p>
<b>B. Assistant Director, Science Applications</b>	<p>(1) Developing policy and guidance on climate change and keeping it current;</p> <p>(2) Leading, coordinating, and updating the Climate Change Action Program;</p> <p>(3) Working with the Directorate, other Service leadership, and the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) to ensure managers and employees have the necessary scientific knowledge, tools, and training and are aware of the latest policies, strategies, and best practices to address climate change;</p> <p>(4) Assisting with requests from Regions and programs for specialized technical support on climate change action;</p> <p>(5) Representing the Service in interagency climate efforts, as appropriate; and</p> <p>(6) Monitoring the Service's actions toward meeting the Climate Change Action Program's goals.</p>
<b>C. Director, NCTC</b>	<p>(1) Where appropriate, incorporating climate change principles into existing courses; and</p> <p>(2) Developing new courses focused on supporting Service efforts to respond to climate change.</p>

These employees...	Are responsible for...
<b>D. Directorate members</b>	<p>(1) Ensuring that their staff implement the Department's climate policies, this policy, including the actions in subsections 1.6D(2)-(9) below, other related Service policies, such as <a href="#">565 FW 1</a>, and the Service's Climate Change Action Program;</p> <p>(2) Reviewing and updating existing decision-making processes, planning processes and documents (e.g., recovery plans, comprehensive conservation plans, migratory bird plans, fish passage designs), guidance documents, and activities for which they are responsible to more fully integrate climate change action;</p> <p>(3) Supporting the work of the Climate Change Action Program, which includes assigning employees who have appropriate technical or partnership skills to that work;</p> <p>(4) Ensuring climate change training is available to all employees who implement or otherwise engage in resource and facility management activities for the Service and identifying or developing training as needed;</p> <p>(5) Providing executive level representation on steering committees for landscape-scale conservation and on stakeholder advisory committees for the U.S. Geological Survey Climate Adaptation Science Centers, as appropriate;</p> <p>(6) Addressing the vulnerability of Service infrastructure and facilities as they may be affected by climate change, including seeking expert local and regional assistance and partnering with the General Services Administration (GSA), as appropriate;</p> <p>(7) Working to reduce the Service's carbon footprint through purchases, infrastructure design and maintenance, energy conservation, renewable energy, and other operations (e.g., fleet management);</p> <p>(8) For those financial assistance programs they oversee, while considering the implementing authorities and the Service's role in administration and oversight, determining how they can incorporate climate action policies into awards; and</p> <p>(9) Promoting adaptive and flexible approaches to climate change.</p>
<b>E. Project Leaders, Managers, and Supervisors</b>	<p>(1) Ensuring that they and the employees for which they are responsible:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(a) Become familiar with and contribute to implementing the Department's climate change policies, this policy, including the actions in <a href="#">subsections 1.6D(2)-(9)</a>, other related Service policies, such as <a href="#">565 FW 1</a>, and the Service's Climate Change Action Program; and</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(b) Work with partners, as appropriate, to reach the goals of these policies;</p> <p>(2) Implementing these policies while performing their duties;</p> <p>(3) Encouraging employees to take climate change training relevant to their work; and</p> <p>(4) When appropriate, including climate change action in Employee Performance and Appraisal Plans (EPAPs).</p>
<b>F. Employees</b>	<p>(1) Becoming familiar with and contributing to implementing the Department's climate change policies, this policy, including the actions in <a href="#">subsections 1.6D(2)-(9)</a>, other related Service policies, such as <a href="#">565 FW 1</a>, and the Service's Climate Change Action Program;</p> <p>(2) Ensuring consistent application of tools, resources, policy, and guidance within their job responsibilities to address current and future climate impacts;</p> <p>(3) Working with partners, as appropriate, to reach the goals of these policies; and</p> <p>(4) Taking climate change training relevant to their work.</p>

*For more information about this policy, contact the Science Applications program. For more information about this website, contact [Krista Bibb](#) in the Policy and Regulations Branch (PRB).*

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