United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Washington, D.C. 20240

DIRECTOR'S ORDER NO. 115

Subject: Credit Hours

Sec. 1 **What is the purpose of this Order?** This Order establishes Fish and Wildlife Service policy concerning credit hours and amends 226 FW 1, Hours of Duty, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual.

Sec. 2 **What is our authority for taking this action?** Title 5, U.S. Code, Section 6122 authorizes the use of flexible schedules, including the accumulation of credit hours to reduce the length of a workday or workweek.

Sec. 3 **To whom does this Order apply?** This policy applies to all employees on flexible work schedules except that members of the Senior Executive Service may not earn credit hours.

Sec. 4 **What are credit hours?** Hours worked by an employee on a flexible schedule that are in excess of the employee's basic work requirement and that the employee elects to work in order to vary the length of a workday or workweek.

Sec. 5 **What approvals do I need before I can earn and use credit hours?**

a. Regional Directors and Assistant Directors will establish and terminate the use of credit hours within their areas of jurisdiction. They may redelegate this responsibility as they deem necessary.

b. Supervisors will review and approve/disapprove employees' requests to earn credit hours and to use credit hours earned.

Sec. 6 **How are credit hours different from overtime hours?** You elect to work credit hours; they are not officially ordered. In addition, once your supervisor approves your request to earn credit hours, you do not have to obtain approval each time. However, your supervisor may require you to inform him or her of what you are working on while earning credit hours.

Sec. 7 **When can I earn credit hours?** With prior supervisory approval, you may generally earn credit hours during the work hours of 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. However, you may earn credit hours on Saturday or Sunday if your supervisor includes these days in your tour of duty. Your supervisor may add these days to your tour of duty strictly for the purpose of earning credit hours, and he/she may limit the amount of hours that you can earn on these days.

Sec. 8 **What is the maximum amount of credit hours that I can earn?** You may earn up to 2 credit hours per workday or 8 credit hours per non-workday. If you are a part-time employee, you may earn a maximum of one-fourth of the hours in your biweekly work schedule.

Sec. 9 **How many credit hours can I carry over from one pay period to another?** If you are a full-time employee, you may carry over a maximum of 24 credit hours from one biweekly pay period to the succeeding biweekly pay period. If you are a part-time employee, you may carry over credit hours equal to one-fourth of your biweekly work requirement. You will automatically forfeit any hours in excess of these amounts.

Sec. 10 **When may I use my credit hours?** You may use accumulated credit hours on the same day, for another workday or workweek, or during another biweekly pay period. Use credit hours in one-fourth hour increments. You may not use credit hours in advance of earning them, and your supervisor must approve your use of credit hours in advance.

Sec. 11 **What are some inappropriate uses of credit hours?** During travel, training, or offsite work, your supervisor may remove you from a flexible work schedule. You may not earn credit hours while:

a. On official travel, because travel in connection with Government work is not voluntary in nature.

b. In training or on jury duty, because you do not elect to work these hours.

Sec. 12 **May I be paid premium pay for credit hours?** You may not use credit hours to create or increase entitlement to overtime pay. Credit hours must always be part of your non-overtime basic work requirement. You may not be paid overtime pay, Sunday premium pay, or holiday premium pay for credit hours. Sunday premium pay may be paid only when you actually work on Sunday, with the exception of paid leave and excused absence, and then only when permitted by law. Holiday premium pay may be paid only when you actually work on a holiday.

Sec. 13 **Do I lose my accumulated credit hours if I change work schedules or leave the Service?** If you change from a flexible work schedule or separate from the Service, you will be paid for any accumulated credit hours at your current rate of pay. Therefore, supervisors must attempt to have employees use credit hours prior to a work schedule change or separation.

Sec. 14 **When is this Order effective?** This Order is effective immediately. We will incorporate its contents into 226 FW 1 of the Fish and Wildlife Service Manual. This Order will expire on September 30, 2000, unless it is amended, superseded, or revoked.

Marshall P. Jones
DIRECTOR

Date: July 27, 1999