

## National Conservation Training Center

National Conservation Training Center	2004 Actual	2005 Enacted	Uncontrollable & Related Changes (+/-)	Program Changes (+/-)	2006 Budget Request	Change from 2005 (+/-)
Operations \$(000)	15,747	16,050	+267	+879	17,196	+1,146
Maintenance \$(000)	1,025	1,008		-375	633	-375
CAM \$(000)	[285]	[7]			[7]	
FTE	114	117		0	117	0
<b>Total, National Conservation Training Center</b>						
	16,772	17,058	+267	+504	17,829	+771
FTE	114	117		0	117	0

### Program Overview

The National Conservation Training Center is the training facility of the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), providing training for Service employees. NCTC also provides training to other conservation professionals from DOI and other federal, state and local governments, not-for-profit conservation organizations, private landowners and the business community on a reimbursable basis. This partnership approach to training also builds a cooperative approach to resource conservation between the Service and these various sectors. Training for Service employees is tied directly to mission accomplishment, ensuring that the "workforce has the job-related knowledge, competencies, and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals" as outlined in the DOI Strategic Plan. Overall, NCTC provides approximately 200 courses and additional distance learning-based programs each year, each tied directly to mission accomplishment.

By providing these skills to Service employees, NCTC training programs also assist the Service in accomplishing all of the other goals of the draft DOI strategic plan. For example, training with partners in watershed restoration helps employees accomplish DOI resource protection goals cooperatively with others, leveraging the resources and expertise of all involved. Courses in environmental education and public use enhance employee abilities to accomplish DOI recreation goals while engaging the public as partners in resource conservation. Courses in statistics, sampling design and data analysis ensures scientific integrity and leadership, better serving communities and the American people.

NCTC courses are taught and attended by Service employees, other DOI employees and management officials, professionals and executives from other federal and state agencies, corporations and not-for-profit organizations and private landowners. In this way, NCTC programs also advance the Secretary's 4-C's of communication, consultation and cooperation, in service of conservation, by demonstrating in the classroom the approach expected of Service employees in mission-accomplishment and by building the relationships with these partners to carry out the conservation work in the field.

Course participants evaluate every NCTC course and courses are subsequently modified to better address customer needs. NCTC courses are consistently rated as excellent, additionally, managers have reported that they are comfortable sending their employees to NCTC for training because of the reputation that has been developed for consistently high quality training that results in improved performance on the job. NCTC is currently expanding the use of evaluations that are sent to course

participants and their managers six months after the training is completed to measure on-the-job impacts of the training in mission accomplishment. NCTC continues to expand a sophisticated ROI (Return On Investment) study select course efforts, a best management practice in the private sector.

To ensure that the workforce “has the job-related knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals”, the Service has mandated that every employee participate in 40 hours of training and continuous learning each year. This is an investment that will pay dividends in mission accomplishment. To ensure that training is tied directly to mission accomplishment, every Service employee must have an IDP (individual development plan), developed in consultation with the supervisor and tied to mission and performance improvement.

Training courses selected are tied to Service-wide workforce planning analysis of competencies required for mission accomplishment. To close competency gaps, NCTC implements training to address needs identified in the Service’s Human Capital Plan. Additionally, training and development profiles in that plan will document what employees must do in order to advance in their career and describe the competencies and training requirements for each position. NCTC bases course development activities on these mission-driven priorities.

The National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, and The Conservation Fund have all placed staff at NCTC to coordinate training efforts. NCTC outreach education efforts are aimed at reaching out to the public as partners in resource conservation. The NCTC also provides strong support to regional offices and field stations in a wide range of outreach activities and products.

### **2004 Program Performance Accomplishments**

- The NCTC conducted approximately 200 courses at the Shepherdstown campus and at locations around the country, serving more than 4,300 students. A total of 560 events were hosted at the NCTC, serving more than 17,000 people.
- The Service completed the third section of the Advanced Leadership Program and conducted two sections of the Stepping Up to Leadership Program.
- During FY04 the NCTC implemented its 'evaluation system' that assesses training delivered to Service employees in accordance with the 5-level model proposed by GAO as a 'best practice'. The Service is already meeting evaluation benchmarks as set by GAO for Levels 1-3. We have also begun implementing Levels 4 and 5. A level 1-5 evaluation conducted in 2004 revealed a significant return on investment for the Stepping Up To Leadership class (for mid-level managers). Using that pilot as a model, additional courses are scheduled for five level evaluations in 2005 and NCTC is targeting 2006 to be fully compliant with the GAO 'best practice' in all five levels of training evaluation.

### **2005 Planned Program Performance**

- Approximately 200 courses, serving more than 4,300 participants, will be offered in FY 2005 at the Shepherdstown campus and at various locations around the country for students from the Service, and a variety of other government, non-profit and business organizations.
- The Service will develop, as part of the Service Workforce Planning process, training and development profiles for 3 major line program career fields of the Service and integrate the curriculum competencies in the service's Learning Management System and the associated

course offerings identified therein to meet the intent and purpose of the Director's mandatory 40 hour continuous learning policy and in support of supervisor employee discussions taking place to achieve Service-wide compliance with the mandatory individual development plan requirement.

- Continue distance learning offerings, including web-based delivery methods, and the continuation of video and broadcast-based technologies to get needed training to conservation professionals around the country and educational programs to teachers and school children.
- Commence migration to the new DOI/SERVICE Learning Management System. This system will allow Service employees and other NCTC participants to search for and register for courses online, and will help the Service manage the new mandatory training policy.
- Develop public outreach education and extension education materials to reach learners in schools, youth groups such as 4H and Scouts, and adults, with objective, science-based information and educational materials. Work with at least 10 education partners in developing new educational materials and programs that support the work and mission of the Service.

### Justification of 2006 Program Changes

Subactivity	2006 Budget Request	Program Change (+/-)
Operations	17,189	+879
Maintenance	633	-375
<b>Total, NCTC</b>	<b>17,829</b>	<b>+504</b>

The FY 2006 budget request for the National Conservation Training Center is \$17,829 a net program increase of \$504,000 from the 2005 enacted level

### Operations: Mission-Related Training (+\$881,000)

The Service's Workforce Plan identified specific competency and workforce gaps and issues that may impede the Service from achieving its mission goals and objectives. The Plan revealed the need for developing and maintaining scientific competencies and a need for leadership development and partnership skills throughout the Service. To help address this, an increase of \$700,000 for direct mission related training is requested. These funds will be used exclusively to increase both the numbers and diversity of offerings in direct mission related training consistent with the Department's strategic direction, the Secretary's 4 C's, and the President's Management Agenda in three key areas, scientific excellence, partnerships, and leadership.

#### *"Scientific Excellence" --Strengthening Science Based Outcomes: Adaptive Management Principles and Structured Decision Making Approaches (+\$300,000)*

Funding would be used to develop an enhanced suite of courses that serve to respond to the Secretary's vision of improving science, as articulated in the Critical Competencies – Stronger Science section of the Department Strategic Plan. The goal of these new courses will be to increase use of decision analysis and integration of adaptive management strategies in natural resource issue resolution. The NCTC will work with the Secretary's lead-science bureau, the USGS, in developing and delivering adaptive management principles in our science based curricula to build employee competencies and further strengthen the ongoing science partnership efforts between the Service and USGS.

***Developing field managers to lead people and build partnerships - Project Leader Training Academy (+ \$200,000)***

This proposed curriculum will be designed to raise awareness, provide tools, teach processes and build networks between 25 new Service project leaders each year who have been traditionally trained in the natural resource sciences. The new Project Leader Training Academy will provide project leaders, who are the “face of the Service” to the public and local communities, with the necessary skill and competencies to work cooperatively with others to meet resource management objectives and also enable them to think strategically and lead their staff with a business oriented approach in accomplishing project management, setting goals and measuring results.

Funding would be used to develop a performance and change oriented curricula in response to the direction articulated in the President’s Management Agenda, the Office of Management Budget, and the Department’s Strategic Plan. The new course would serve to increase competencies of field project leaders to effectively initiate, implement, and manage systems change to achieve measurable performance improvement objectives, to inspire and lead staff and to increase partnerships and a collaborative approach to resource conservation.

***Resolving Competing Natural Resource Demands Through Partnerships (+ \$200,000)***

As highlighted in the Department Strategic Plan; “we must forge an integrated enterprise approach to pursuing [its] mission.” Many natural resource issues involve desired outcomes from diverse bureau perspectives that are seemingly juxtaposed or even competing: water for livelihood and economic viability versus species protection and supportive habitat; habitat conservation versus mineral or gas extraction. Beyond Departmental boundaries, other Federal agency mandates may appear to conflict with Departmental mandates, goals, and objectives, such as species protection versus military training and preparedness. Collaboration and partnerships are the common language that can unite these interests and build synergistic solutions.

Funding would be used to develop and execute new courses that will provide Service employees and other natural resource professionals with tools and process approaches, structured around the Secretary’s “4-Cs”, to bridge differences and find common ground to optimize decision outcomes in what initially are framed as seemingly intractable and competing natural resource issues.

***Training Delivery Efficiencies/Distance Learning (+\$181,000)***

Although most of the training courses and education programs are appropriately delivered in the classroom, on a refuge, or on private lands, this venue is not always accessible to Service professionals and other target audiences. This “face-to-face” training, workshop and educational programming is supplemented and enhanced through the use of “distance learning” – satellite, web-based and correspondence-based programming. Distance learning lends itself well as a stand-alone format for some courses, “town meetings”, conservation lectures and interactive field trips for students, but more often as a “blended-learning” format to enhance and complement class-room delivered training.

In order to reach more staff and improve performance of our workforce, to further e-government goals and to effectively implement the DOI Strategic plan, the Fish and Wildlife Service must improve and increase the use of technological delivery systems.

Funds will be used to:

- Partner with other agencies, academic institutions and non-government and private sector organizations to provide 10 additional satellite programming events to conservation professionals and educators on current issues and topics. This would allow for the expansion

of the "Conservation in Action" broadcast series to include selected land grant universities and state fish and wildlife agencies.

- Expand the number of web-based training sessions by 15, and increase the number of participants for web-based training to 40 per session.
- Enhance the internet “presence” for NCTC’s distance learning programs, ensuring the right audiences are notified at the right time of offerings.

**Maintenance (-\$370,000)**

The request includes a decrease of \$370,000 for maintenance activities at the NCTC. Because of the scope of the facilities, annual maintenance is necessary to keep the campus in a safe and proper condition and prevent project backlogs and more costly emergency repairs. Presently the NCTC monitors campus infrastructure condition and prepares an annual list of projects that are prioritized and addressed as funding permits. There are several categories of projects, including building exterior repairs, HVAC, plumbing and electrical repairs and replacements, building interior repairs and replacements, and road and trail upkeep. The Service will continue to provide maintenance activities to the highest priorities.

**Vehicle Reduction (-\$7,000)**

The 2006 budget proposes a reduction of \$5,000 in the NCTC maintenance program and \$2,000 in the operations budget to recognize expected savings to be achieved through improved fleet management within the Service and across the Department of Interior.

**Program Performance Summary**

DOI Strategic Goal: Management Excellence							
End Outcome Goal: Workforce has job-related knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals.							
End Outcome Measures N/A	FY 2002 Actual	FY 2003 Actual	FY 2004 Plan	FY 2005 Plan	FY 2006 Plan	Change in Performance 2005 to Planned 2006	Long- term Target (2008)
Intermediate Outcome Strategy: Human Capital Management							
Service Output Measures	FY 2002 Actual	FY 2003 Actual	FY 2004 Plan	FY 2005 Plan	FY 2006 Plan	Change in Performance 2005 to Planned 2006	Long- term Target (2008)
Human Capital Implementation							
Number of New Project Leaders Trained	—	—	—	—	25	+25	75
Number of Professionals Trained in Partnerships	35	52	100	100	200	+ 100	1100
Number of SERVICE Professionals Trained: "Scientific Excellence"	—	—	—	—	200	+200	1000
Number of Distance Learning Deliveries	40	55	70	70	120	+50	360