

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Coastal Program

Strategic Vision





“The Coastal Program is a critical partner in habitat restoration—providing technical expertise and financial assistance for restoration planning, design, implementation, and monitoring. Their invaluable support enables effective conservation of our nation’s habitats, helping to ensure sustainable coastal ecosystems and communities.”

—JEFF BENOIT, RESTORE AMERICA’S ESTUARIES

Who We Are

The **Coastal Program** is a voluntary, partnership-based U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) program that delivers technical and financial assistance for habitat conservation in coastal watersheds and marine ecosystems. As the Service's coastal experts, we strive to be the best partner to communities to ensure a thriving and resilient future for coastal habitats, wildlife, and people.

We develop tools and resources designed to help managers, practitioners, and communities carry out habitat conservation actions. We improve and protect habitat on both public and private lands, which is important in coastal areas where there is often a mosaic of landowner types. Ecosystems do not recognize different landowners; therefore, our ability to work on all lands allows us to deliver landscape conservation and maintain habitat connectivity and continuity.

Locally based field staff work with diverse partners—federal, tribal, state, and local agencies; conservation organizations; and private landowners. Through these partnerships, we deliver on-the-ground habitat conservation that supports the Service's mission. Our conservation approach seeks to understand the threats to habitat and to address the underlying causes while addressing the ecological, economic, and social needs of communities.



G. WILSON (USFWS VOLUNTEER)

Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge, WV

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's 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.



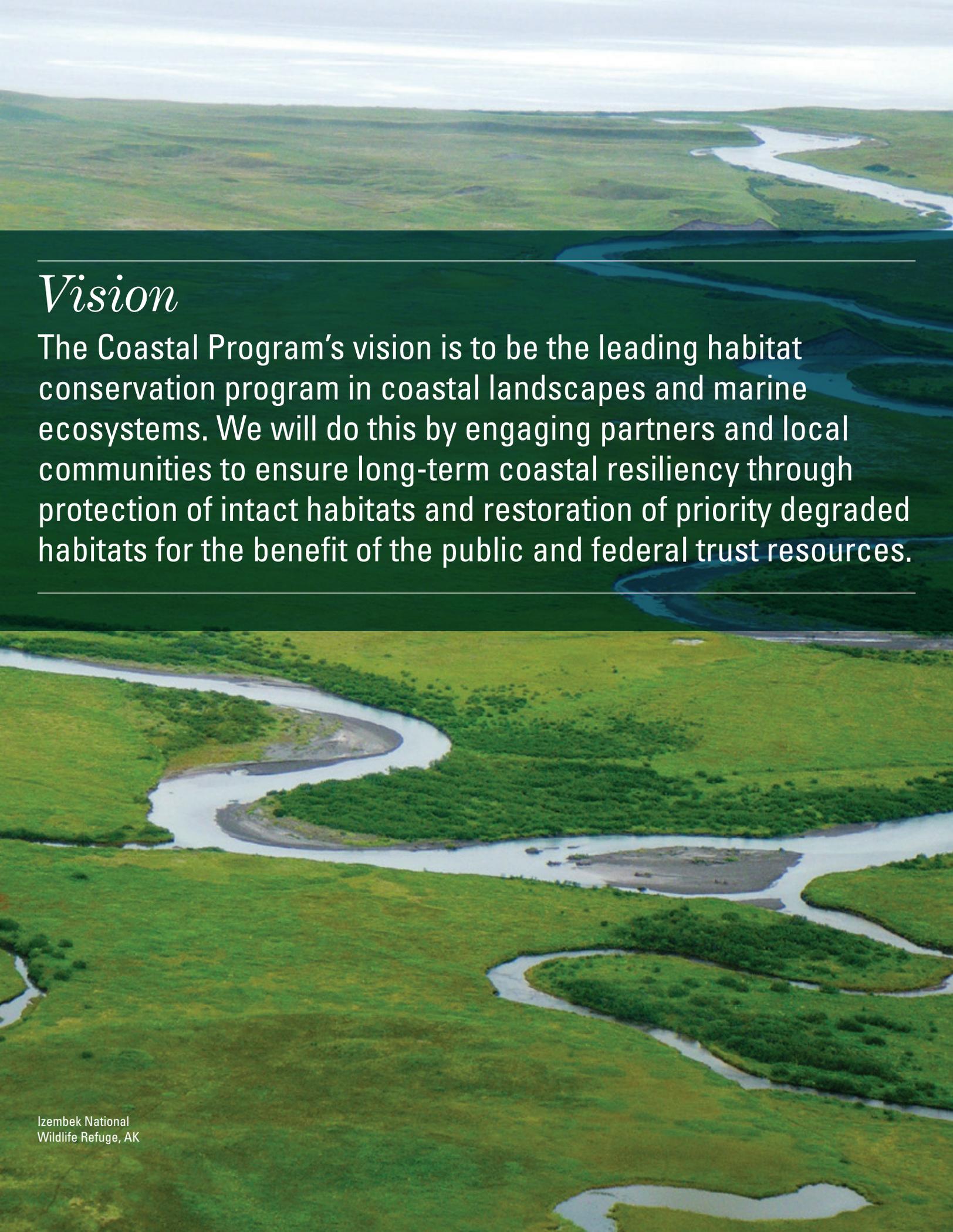
USFWS

Nanticoke River, MD

COASTAL PROGRAM HISTORY

The Coastal Program was established in 1985, as the Bay/Estuary Program, in response to development and pollution in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The Chesapeake Bay is the nation's largest estuary, and it faces the full range of environmental, economic, and social challenges encountered by most estuaries.

The early success of the Bay/Estuary Program demonstrated that using field staff to build partnerships and deliver landscape-scale conservation was an effective model for restoring and protecting coastal habitats. In 1991, the Service began replicating the program in other major estuaries, and it eventually evolved into the Coastal Ecosystems Program. Today, known simply as the Coastal Program, we are active along all U.S. coasts, in the Great Lakes, and U.S. Territories. Our conservation responsibilities also include marine ecosystems such as coral reefs and Service-managed marine resources.

An aerial photograph showing a wide, winding river that meanders through a vast, flat, green landscape. The river is light blue-grey, contrasting with the vibrant green of the surrounding land. The horizon is visible in the distance under a pale, overcast sky. The overall scene is one of a remote, natural coastal or wetland environment.

Vision

The Coastal Program's vision is to be the leading habitat conservation program in coastal landscapes and marine ecosystems. We will do this by engaging partners and local communities to ensure long-term coastal resiliency through protection of intact habitats and restoration of priority degraded habitats for the benefit of the public and federal trust resources.

The Importance of Coastal Habitats

Coastal and marine habitats are highly dynamic and diverse regions of enormous ecological complexity and significance. They provide valuable breeding, nursery, staging, and resting areas, as well as corridors for migrating fish, mammals, birds, and other species. Many federal trust species depend on coastal ecosystems for all or part of their life cycle. Coastal habitats support nearly 45 percent of the federally listed species (including 75 percent of the listed mammals and birds), over 75 percent of the commer-

cial fish harvest, and 30 percent of North America's wintering waterfowl. Forty percent of the country's National Wildlife Refuges contain coastal areas. The Service also manages more than 750 million acres of marine habitat.

While coastal counties comprise only 17 percent of the contiguous United States, they are home to more than half the human population in the United States. These areas also support many of the outdoor activities people

love to enjoy, such as hunting, fishing, hiking, and boating. The development with more people living along the coast is a stressor on coastal ecosystems, which is exacerbated by sea-level rise, erosion, and saltwater intrusion. The Coastal Program is one of the Service's most effective ways to address these challenges by engaging partners and sharing resources to achieve long-term resiliency for coastal ecosystems.



“By working with the Coastal Program, Ducks Unlimited has restored and protected many acres of important habitat for migratory waterfowl, as well as other native wildlife in the Great Lakes region. These conservation projects have also

benefited hunters, anglers, wildlife watchers, and anyone who cherishes the invaluable natural resources of the Great Lakes.”

—JASON HILL, DUCKS UNLIMITED

FEDERAL TRUST RESOURCES

Federal trust species (e.g., endangered species, migratory birds, and interjurisdictional fish) and Service-managed lands and waters, including Marine National Monuments.

COASTAL PROGRAM MISSION

The Coastal Program's mission is to achieve voluntary habitat conservation by providing technical and financial assistance, in collaboration with partners, for the benefit of federal trust species.

Strategic Plan

In 2006, the Coastal Program began a strategic planning process to ensure that we continually allocate our resources toward habitats and priorities with the greatest need. The planning process resulted in a three-part strategic plan that we update every five years:

- The *Vision Document* presents the vision and goals of the Coastal Program.
- The *Regional Work Plans* present each Region's geographic focus areas (i.e., priorities) and conservation objectives.
- The *National Summary Document* reports on the Regions' previous five-year accomplishments and summarizes the Regions' conservation objectives for the next five years.

Headquarters, Regional and field staff, and our conservation partners work collaboratively to develop the strategic plan.

HIGHLIGHT PROJECT

Strategic Planning Process in California and Nevada



In California and Nevada, the Coastal Program prioritized ecoregions for conservation in their regional work plan.

Although each Region developed their own planning process, all Regions used a landscape-scale approach to prepare their Regional Work Plans that reflect Service priorities and include shared conservation objectives among partners. For example, in California and Nevada, we prioritized ecoregions, established conservation objectives, and developed conservation measures within the priority ecoregions.

We developed landscape-scale priorities and objectives in collaboration with other Service programs, state agencies, tribes, and other conservation partners. Some of the programs and partners included the National Wildlife Refuge System, Endangered Species Program, Migratory Bird Joint Ventures, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, California State Coastal Conservancy, and the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation. The priorities and objectives also reflect input from Service staff who have first-hand knowledge of the local environment, political and economic issues, and other challenges to habitat conservation.

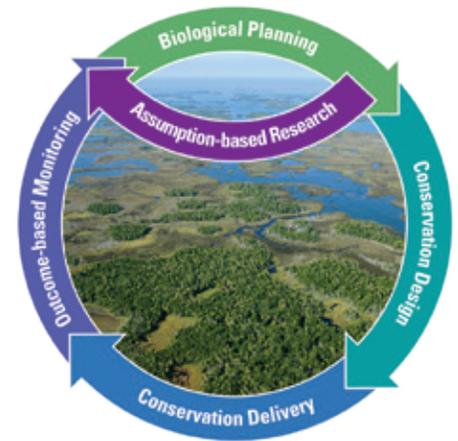
We prepared an operational plan for each ecoregion that integrates aspects of landscape conservation design—combining geospatial data with ecological information to ensure that we achieve our specific biological objectives or outcomes. The operational plans will help us to deliver habitat conservation, effectively engage partners, and efficiently use our technical and financial resources to maximize benefits to federal trust resources. The operational plans are compiled into a regional work plan.

Strategic Habitat Conservation

The Coastal Program uses the Strategic Habitat Conservation (SHC) framework to plan, implement, and evaluate our conservation actions. This approach ensures that our projects are based on the best available scientific information, designed to address changing environmental conditions, and delivered in an efficient and effective manner.

At a programmatic level, we use SHC to make decisions regarding where and how to deliver habitat conservation and allocate resources to achieve specific biological and ecological outcomes. SHC ensures that our conservation actions maximize our contribution to the Service's mission.

STRATEGIC HABITAT CONSERVATION FRAMEWORK



- 1. Biological Planning.** The Coastal Program works with partners to establish shared conservation and biological objectives and identify limiting factors affecting our shared conservation goals.
- 2. Assumption-driven Research.** The Coastal Program uses evidence-based assumptions to conduct conservation planning and refine future conservation actions.
- 3. Conservation Design.** The Coastal Program creates tools and resources that can better inform habitat conservation and improve the planning, and delivery of habitat restoration and protection projects.
- 4. Program Delivery.** The Coastal Program works with diverse partners to implement, landscape-scaled, habitat conservation.
- 5. Outcome-based Monitoring.** The Coastal Program evaluates the effectiveness of our conservation actions in reaching specific ecological/biological objectives, which improves future conservation planning and delivery.



J. CULPEPPER (USFWS)

The Coastal Program is restoring and protecting longleaf pine ecosystems for the benefit of federal trust species, including the red-cockaded woodpecker and the Mississippi Sandhill crane.

WHAT IS AN ECOREGION?

An ecoregion is an area of land or water that contains distinct climate, geology, and other characteristics, and that influences the ecosystem and the associated plants and animals.

At the project level, we work with partners to plan, design, and deliver habitat conservation, which includes building partner expertise and implementing habitat improvement and protection projects. We monitor and evaluate our projects so that we can refine our assistance, improve on our successes, and ultimately achieve our conservation objectives.

Guiding Principles

The Coastal Program's vision is based on four guiding principles, originally presented in the Coastal Ecosystems Program Prospectus, which served as the initial justification and operational guidance for the program.

1 Integrating Service programs and priorities. The Coastal Program serves as a catalyst for integrating Service programs, priorities, and resources for the conservation of federal trust species in coastal watersheds.

2 Bringing the Service's mission and biological expertise to communities. The Coastal Program's extensive network of conservation partners gives the Service the unique opportunity to connect and engage coastal communities. We have the technical expertise necessary to help communities implement landscape-scale habitat conservation.

3 Developing partnerships for habitat conservation. The Coastal Program develops partnerships that facilitate conservation planning and design and the delivery of habitat conservation projects. Partnerships allow us to leverage our technical and financial resources to maximize the benefits to the public and federal trust species.

4 Engaging the American public to promote informed conservation stewardship. The Coastal Program promotes habitat conservation stewardship through outreach and education to key audiences, including decision-makers, restoration practitioners, and conservation organizations. These outreach and education efforts are part of a comprehensive approach that works together with habitat management, improvement, and protection projects to deliver landscape-scale habitat conservation.



K. POLLOCK (USFWS)

The Coastal Program supports the Service's responsibilities for managing Marine National Monuments.



R. KOHLEY (USFWS)

The Coastal Program worked with American Bird Conservancy, Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, and many others to translocate the federally endangered Nihoa millerbird to Laysan Island to create a second population and reduce the millerbird's risk of extinction.

Goals

At the start of the original strategic planning process, the Coastal Program collaborated with other Service programs and more than 400 partners and stakeholders to identify factors that influence our performance and delivery of habitat conservation. The most important factors are our:

- technical expertise,
- ability to adapt to changing conservation needs,
- responsiveness to our partners' needs,
- ability to leverage resources and build capacity among partners, and our
- commitment to on-the-ground habitat conservation.

We used these factors to develop goals that reflect the core values of our program, support our mission, and ensure that we remain innovative and effective.

1 Conserve habitat. The Coastal Program conserves priority coastal and marine habitats to increase or maintain federal trust species populations and achieve long-term resiliency for coastal ecosystems.

2 Broaden and strengthen partnerships. The Coastal Program delivers conservation through voluntary partnerships that allow us to leverage resources and to maximize benefits to federal trust resources.

3 Improve information sharing and communication. The Coastal Program shares information with our partners and others to improve the delivery of habitat conservation.

4 Enhance our workforce. The Coastal Program strives to improve the technical expertise of our staff to achieve the best conservation outcomes.

5 Increase accountability. The Coastal Program evaluates and reports on the effectiveness, efficiency, and financial integrity of our habitat conservation actions to ensure the integrity and accountability of the program.



The Coastal Program works with partners to restore and protect coastal and marine habitats such as marine debris removal projects that benefit the federally endangered Hawaiian monk seal.

Goals

Habitat conservation (Goal 1) reflects the singular purpose of the Coastal Program. The other goals (Goals 2–5) support and ensure the effective and efficient delivery of our primary goal.

Every five years, the Coastal Program re-evaluates the appropriateness and relevance of our goals. Based on our conservation accomplishments, and the Service's current and developing

priorities, we believe that the same goals presented in the previous strategic plan are still relevant and appropriate.

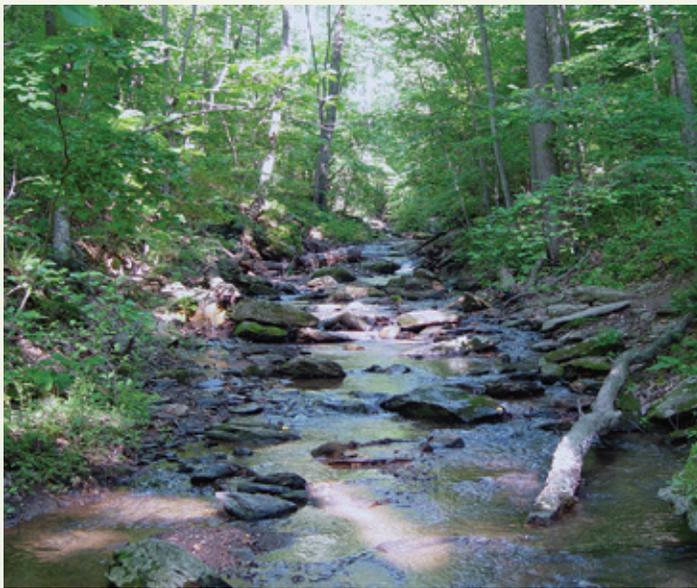
HIGHLIGHT PROJECT

Stream Habitat Conservation

Development and land use changes affect our nation's rivers and streams. Stream degradation is evident in watersheds with as little as 10 percent impervious surfaces. These changes often result in the loss of aquatic and riparian habitat for fish and wildlife due to accelerated erosion, sedimentation, and excessive pollutants and nutrients. These impacts can also result in property loss and damage to infrastructure, such as road crossings and utilities.

In response to these growing threats to streams, the Coastal Program developed stream assessment and restoration expertise that promotes a watershed, function-based approach to habitat conservation and focuses on three areas of assistance: 1) providing technical assistance, 2) developing education and training courses, and 3) constructing restoration demonstration projects.

By focusing on these three areas, we can share our expertise with partners, enhance the performance of our workforce and the conservation community, and improve the science and delivery of habitat restoration. This approach allows us to have a broader impact on landscape-scale habitat conservation and the needs of communities. For example, we estimate that participants from the stream assessment course will cumulatively use their training on 60 restoration projects and 30 miles of stream annually. Many of these projects also protect infrastructure and private property, improving public safety.



M. SECRIST (USFWS)

There is a growing need among local communities to conserve stream habitat.



M. SECRIST (USFWS)

The Coastal Program has developed several stream restoration courses to support stream conservation among local communities and practitioners.

GOAL 1

Habitat Conservation

The Coastal Program delivers habitat conservation through technical assistance, habitat improvement, and protection projects.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance is the cornerstone of the Coastal Program's conservation approach. Technical assistance consists of planning and design activities, which include:

- conducting habitat assessments,
- providing conservation recommendations,
- building partner expertise, and
- developing resources that supports habitat restoration and protection.

The Coastal Program collaborates with academic institutions and other partners to develop conservation tools and resources. By creating and evaluating these tools and resources, we can better help the conservation community by facilitating conservation design, refining conservation planning and policies, and improving the science of restoration.

We bring a strategic focus to conservation priorities by engaging and helping communities and partners. Our technical assistance also allows us to have a broader impact on habitat conservation. Providing better information to resource managers and restoration practitioners enables them to make more informed regulatory, management, and conservation decisions.

HIGHLIGHT PROJECT

Gulf of Mexico Restoration

The Deepwater Horizon oil spill caused significant ecological and economic impacts to the Gulf Coast region. The restoration of the Gulf of Mexico is one of the most complex and comprehensive conservation actions ever undertaken, requiring coordination among the five states (i.e., Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas), multiple federal agencies, and hundreds of local governments, non-governmental organizations, and citizens.



M. MURRAY (USEFWS)

The Coastal Program participated with the natural resource damage assessment and wildlife recovery for the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

charged with developing a restoration strategy. We are also providing critical links among partners who are implementing landscape-scale habitat conservation in the Gulf of Mexico watershed.

The Coastal Program was instrumental in the development of the Service's Vision for a Healthy Gulf of Mexico Watershed, which articulates our science-based conservation priorities in the watershed. The Vision for a Healthy Gulf of Mexico Watershed also serves as a catalyst for coordinating restoration efforts among the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force, a partnership of federal and state agencies

GOAL 1

Habitat Improvement and Protection

The Coastal Program improves and protects priority coastal habitats to increase or maintain populations of federal trust species. Habitat improvement involves the restoration, enhancement, maintenance, or establishment of ecological function(s) or condition(s) of an area to deliver biological outcomes for the benefit of these species.

Habitat protection involves:

- long-term safeguarding of habitat conditions and functions for federal trust species,
- facilitating community support, and
- preparing conservation plans.

For the next five years, the Coastal Program will continue to work with our traditional partners, while seeking to develop new partnerships. We will work with these partners to deliver habitat conservation that support Service priorities, including hunting and fishing, species recovery, pollinators, and urban conservation in priority regions and landscapes such as the Gulf of Mexico and the Great Lakes.

HIGHLIGHT PROJECT

Recovering Species in Maine



Roseate tern

USFWS

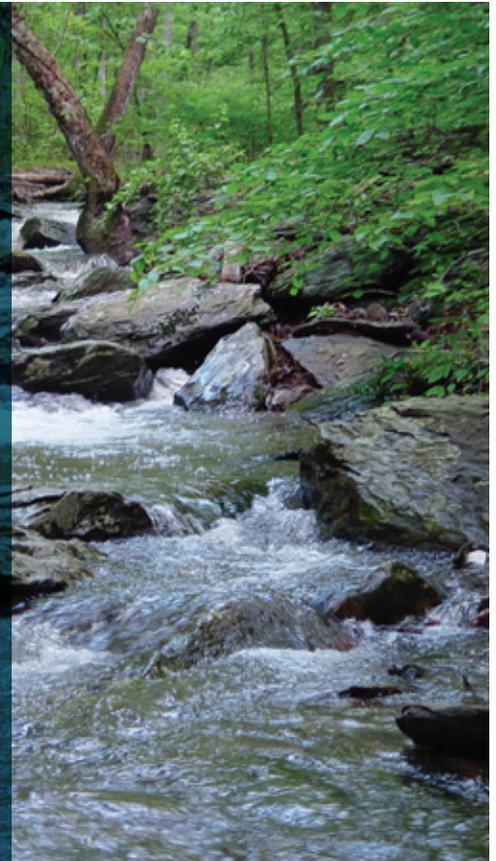
In Maine, the Coastal Program is working with the National Audubon Society, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, and the Maine Coastal Islands National Wildlife Refuge to restore island-nesting habitat for the roseate terns—a federally endangered species. We are also working with land trusts and others to protect nesting habitat so that terns and other seabirds will always have nesting sites.

We provided technical and financial assistance to conserve nesting sites, including geospatial information system planning and project support. We are also monitoring the restored nesting sites to evaluate the success of our conservation.

“The Maryland Department of Natural Resources worked closely with the Coastal Program to acquire funds from the National Coastal Wetland Conservation Grant Program. Along with other partners, we have established a highly successful partnership that is leading efforts to conserve coastal landscapes in Maryland.”

—TOM MCCARTHY, MARYLAND
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

M. SECRET (USFWS)



Hunting Creek, MD

HIGHLIGHT PROJECT

Partnering with Tribes in Alaska



C. JOHNSON

Mat-Su landscape

For many years, the Coastal Program has been working with the Great Land Trust, Alaska Department of Natural Resources, and Eklutna, Inc. (one of the largest private landowners in Alaska) to protect priority habitat in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (Mat-Su) in southcentral Alaska. The Mat-Su is home to five species of Pacific salmon that rely on habitat connectivity between freshwater and marine habitats. Pacific salmon are ecologically, culturally, and economically important to the people of Alaska.

The Mat-Su is also one of the most populous and rapidly growing regions of Alaska, putting stress on many salmon stocks. Impacts from land use changes have caused Alaska to designate several Mat-Su salmon as Stocks of Management Concern. It is vital to conserve fish and wildlife habitats in the Mat-Su, including coastal estuaries and stream habitats, while balancing the economic and cultural needs of the Native Village of Eklutna. Our technical assistance to protect lands in the Mat-Su includes prioritizing lands for protection, gaining landowner support through outreach, and offering long-term management and restoration recommendations to landowners.



“The Coastal Program has been instrumental

to Great Land Trust’s success in strategically prioritizing and implementing conservation projects in southcentral Alaska. These projects have led to the conservation of over 45,000 acres of critical habitat.”

—ELLEN KAZARY, GREAT LAND TRUST

GOAL 2

Partnerships

Protecting and restoring coastal ecosystems requires the Coastal Program to work with a diverse group of partners. Our large network of partners allows us to serve as a leader in conservation planning and design, and is a catalyst for habitat improvement and protection projects. This network allows us to connect and engage with local communities, promote our priorities and objectives, pursue goals and objectives beyond our reach, and synergistically add to the time, talents, and resources of others.

Our partners include federal, tribal, state and local agencies; non-governmental organizations; foundations; joint ventures; land trusts; academic institutions; private corporations; and individual landowners. We develop partnerships to conserve habitat on a landscape-scale and leverage resources and expertise to achieve conservation objectives efficiently and effectively.

For the next five years, the Coastal Program will maintain existing partnerships and establish new ones that support priority habitat conservation, build partner expertise, and leverage technical and financial resources.



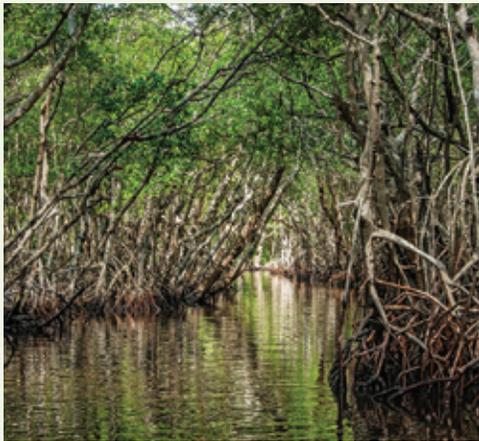
“The Coastal Program shares our vision and recognizes

that conservation partnerships are critical to restoring island ecosystems and native species through the removal of invasive species. They know that healthy islands are also vital to ensuring healthy marine environments and protecting threatened and endangered species in North America and around the world.”

—GREGG HOWALD, ISLAND CONSERVATION

HIGHLIGHT PROJECT

Blue Carbon Workshops



A. GIMPERT (FLICKR)

Coastal habitats can store up to 50 times more carbon than other habitats.

The Coastal Program, working with Restore America’s Estuaries, supported a series of regional workshops on coastal habitat conservation and carbon sequestration. The workshops were designed to educate federal, state and local planners, land managers, and restoration practitioners about the environmental and economic benefits of protecting and restoring tidal wetlands, which can be highly effective at sequestering carbon.

GOAL 3

Information Sharing and Communication

Because the Coastal Program depends on voluntary participation, outreach and education are critical to gaining community and building partnerships. Communication builds trust that fosters a shared sense of stewardship and strengthens the conservation community.

Sharing information broadens our impact on conservation as we reach those who are responsible for regulating, managing, and implementing habitat conservation. We also communicate within the Service and among other federal agencies to share our expertise and facilitate collaboration.

We communicate in a variety of ways, such as one-on-one discussions with partners, planning meetings, scientific conferences, training courses, news media, social media, and online forums. Expanding our digital media communication is crucial for connecting with our increasingly tech-savvy audience. These communication efforts build and empower a community of conservation champions. We will continue to improve our messaging and the ways we sharing our story.

For the next five years, the Coastal Program will pursue better platforms and methods of sharing information to improve the science and delivery of habitat conservation, which will include facilitating training courses and

workshops. We will also pursue more compelling methods to promote our program, engage communities in conservation, and connect the public with America's amazing and important coastal ecosystems.

HIGHLIGHT PROJECT



TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

In Texas, ranchers worked with the Coastal Program, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and others to restore more than 6,400 acres and protected more than 2,000 acres of coastal habitat, including coastal prairies—one of the rarest habitats along the Gulf of Mexico. The project also used technical and financial assistance from the Farm Bill's Wetland Reserve Easement Program and the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program.

Supporting Farms and other Working Lands

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides billions of dollars annually for habitat conservation on agricultural and forestry lands. These funds are delivered under the Farm Bill conservation programs, such as the Environmental Quality Incentive Program and Wetland Reserve Easements.

The Coastal Program works with farmers and others to enhance the productivity of their working lands and improve fish and wildlife habitat. To support this effort and increase access to these programs, we prepared a brochure in coordination with USDA that translates the grant requirement into plain language and presents Coastal Program and Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program project examples.

The well-received brochure was distributed by Coastal Program and other Service field staff, as well as partners like the Land Trust Alliance, Partners for Conservation, and Restore America's Estuaries. The brochure was also shared with other federal agencies, including the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

GOAL 4

Workforce

The Coastal Program is committed to ensuring that our staff make science-based decisions, are innovative and results-focused, act with integrity, and seek creative solutions. We strive to improve the technical expertise of our staff, which is key to the success of our habitat conservation. We recognize our staff are one of our most valuable assets.

Our workforce development efforts come in many forms—knowledge of scientific conservation resources, access to state-of-the-art conservation tools, and training in the latest restoration techniques. We share our expertise with our partners, while leveraging our partners’ capacities to achieve shared conservation objectives.

For the next five years, the Coastal Program will continue to develop the technical expertise of our staff so they may lead the way in habitat conservation. We will provide access to the latest resources, tools, technologies, and training so our staff can make informed decisions (e.g., landscape conservation design) and deliver successful habitat conservation efficiently and effectively.



S. HENRY (USFWS)

The Coastal Program works with youth through the Service’s Urban Wildlife Conservation Program to promote community conservation and stewardship.



“The Coastal Program is a great partner that helps us to plan, design, and build outstanding wetland restoration and protection projects. Whenever a project runs into challenges, I can turn to them to help find creative solutions. They always keep the goal of conserving our habitat resources foremost, and go the extra mile to ensure the delivery of successful habitat conservation projects.”

—JOEL GERWEIN, CALIFORNIA STATE COASTAL CONSERVANCY

GOAL 5

Accountability

Accountability is essential in public service. The Coastal Program diligently evaluates and reports on our conservation accomplishments and uses enterprise data systems to do this consistently across Regions.

We recognize the importance of project monitoring to evaluate our contribution to specific conservation objectives, assess restoration methodologies, improve the science of restoration, and identify opportunities for adaptive management. We must monitor our conservation projects to ensure that they are properly designed and constructed, and have achieved their conservation objectives. The scope of monitoring varies depending on the goals and objectives of the project.

Currently, we evaluate the success of our habitat conservation projects by measuring habitat parameters. For example, we may conclude that a wetland restoration project is successful if the site has the appropriate hydrology, soils, and vegetation. This monitoring approach is based on the premise that if we restore high quality habitat in the appropriate location, targeted plants and animals will use them. However, evaluating our conservation actions increasingly involves demonstrating biological outcomes.

The Coastal Program worked with The Peregrine Fund and Nueces County to install nest structures for the federally endangered Northern Aplomado falcon on Padre Island, Texas.



USFWS

Monitoring the outcomes of our conservation actions is crucial to achieving the mission of the Service and the Coastal Program. When staff and funds are available, we incorporate ecological and biological monitoring into the scopes of our projects. When resources are not available, we seek partnerships, especially with science-based programs or academic institutions, to support

monitoring and evaluation of projects.

For the next five years, the Coastal Program will continue to track our habitat conservation accomplishments and evaluate our work. We will expand our efforts to link our project objectives to biological outcomes for federal trust species, which includes developing a monitoring strategy for each Region.



“The Coastal Program’s technical and financial support has been incredibly helpful to the Bad River Tribe and our efforts to protect critical habitat for the federally endangered piping plover in the Great Lakes region.”

—LACEY HILL KASTERN, BAD RIVER BAND OF LAKE SUPERIOR CHIPPEWA

Conclusion

This Vision document serves as an introduction to the Coastal Program’s Strategic Plan, which also includes Regional Work Plans and a National Summary. Our Regional Work Plans articulate the specific actions for delivering habitat conservation over a five-year period.

When the current strategic plan expires, we will prepare the National Summary, which includes an evaluation of our performance under our previous strategic plan and establishes the objectives for our next plan. Documents that comprise our strategic plan are “living documents” that are revised to reflect changing priorities and resources at the national and regional levels.

PROJECT MONITORING STRATEGY

Each Region must develop a strategy that will describe how the Coastal Program will monitor our conservation projects and activities to determine if we are being successful. The strategy may include technical resources for developing monitoring plans, potential partners to help with monitoring, and funding sources to support monitoring.

HIGHLIGHT PROJECT

Community-Based Habitat Restoration



ALICE TERRY

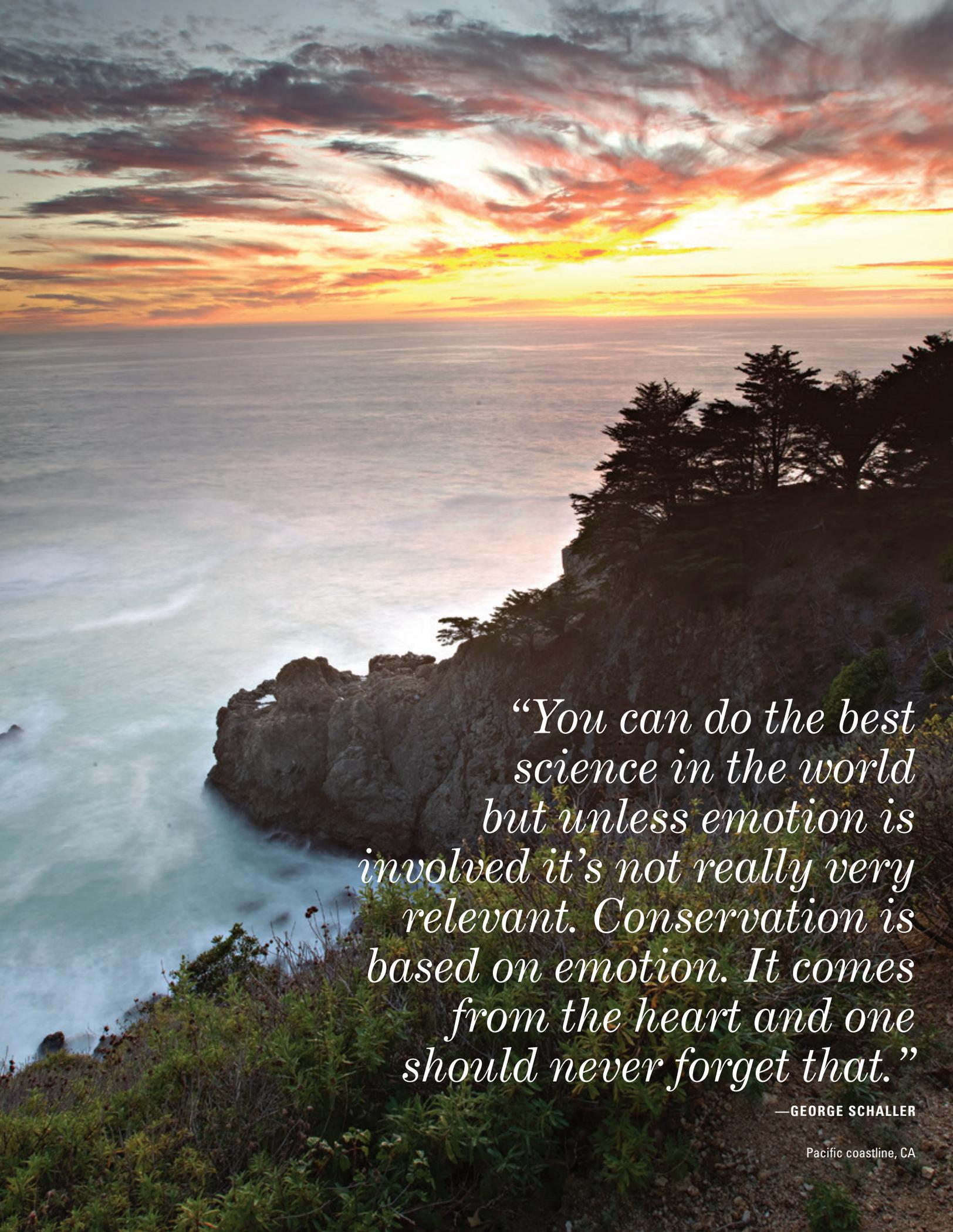
Local families helping to remove invasive plants and plant native vegetation during a volunteer workday at Kahuku Point.

planting native vegetation. The community is also ensuring that recreational access and cultural traditions are incorporated into the conservation of Kahuku Point. The restoration involves installing predator-proof fencing to protect seabird-nesting habitat from invasive cats, mongooses, and rats. The continuing restoration has been a success, with Laysan albatross and other seabirds nesting in the restored habitats.

The Coastal Program, North Shore Community Land Trust, Hawai‘i Division of Fish and Wildlife, Hawai‘i Marine Animal Response, and Turtle Bay Resort are working with the local community to restore habitat for the Laysan albatross and other seabirds at Kalaeokauna‘oa (Kahuku Point) on O‘ahu. The restoration also benefits several federally endangered species, including the Hawaiian monk seal, green sea turtle, and the yellow-faced bee and complements conservation efforts at the nearby James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge.

The Coastal Program is leading efforts to evaluate habitat conditions, research restoration techniques, and develop conservation recommendations. We are also building capacity among partners by training the land trust and other partners to lead restoration efforts.

The partnership organizes regular volunteer events that involve removing invasive plants and marine debris and



“You can do the best science in the world but unless emotion is involved it’s not really very relevant. Conservation is based on emotion. It comes from the heart and one should never forget that.”

—GEORGE SCHALLER

Pacific coastline, CA

Learn more about the conservation science and heart of the Coastal Program at fws.gov/coastal



Cover: Oregon Coastal Refuge Complex, OR
P. PEARSALL (USFWS)

