

## Partners Honored for Fostering Common Understanding of Climate Change Impacts

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in collaboration with the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) and several other conservation partners, have been honored for their collective efforts to build a common understanding of climate change impacts to species and ecosystems.

In ceremonies held Wednesday, Sept. 21, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar presented the partners with a [2011 Partners in Conservation Award](#) for their development of a guidebook called, "[Scanning the Conservation Horizon, A Guide to Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment](#)." The peer-reviewed guide provides conservation professionals and natural resource managers with a consistent framework for assessing vulnerability to climate change, thus providing information that is crucial for crafting effective strategies to prepare for and cope with the effects of rapid climate change on the nation's fish, wildlife, and natural habitats.

"The group of experts who collaboratively developed this guide have given the conservation community a powerful tool to help support climate adaptation efforts aimed at ensuring the sustainability of our natural resources," said Nancy Green, a climate scientist for the Service's Endangered Species program and a principal organizer of the effort. "Working in partnership with experts to identify methods for assessing species and habitat vulnerability to climate change and other stressors was one of the initial priorities of the Service's [Strategic Plan for Responding to Accelerating Climate Change](#)."

The guide was prepared by an expert workgroup convened by the National Wildlife Federation in collaboration with the Service and was edited by Patty Glick, Bruce Stein, and Naomi Edelson of the Federation. It is already being used across Department of the Interior (DOI) bureaus and by partners in [Landscape Conservation Cooperatives](#) to guide vulnerability assessments to help facilitate a more strategic focus for conservation planning and actions in the face of a changing climate.

"The impacts of climate change can exacerbate existing stresses on our natural systems," said Stein, director of climate change adaptation for the Federation. "Understanding these interactions is critical to determining an effective approach to protecting land, water, and wildlife."

The effects of climate change are increasingly apparent, from drowned coastal marshes and drying prairie potholes to melting glaciers. These climate-driven changes already are beginning to profoundly affect conservation of fish, wildlife and plants, as well as the habitats on which they depend. Preparing for and coping with the effects of climate change—an endeavor referred to as climate change adaptation—is emerging as the overarching framework for conservation and natural resource management.

Jay Slack, director of the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC), said the Center's new Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments Course is based on the guidebook. "We want to bring diverse conservation partners together around a common, science-based framework for addressing climate impacts," Slack said, adding that the course is being offered at various locations around the country. For more information, visit <http://nctc.fws.gov/>

View NWF's [news release](#) on the award

View the [Executive Summary](#)

View the full guide: [www.nwf.org/vulnerabilityguide](http://www.nwf.org/vulnerabilityguide)

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is to work with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov)

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