2011

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mission

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working 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 http://www.fws.gov.

MIDWEST REGION

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Introduction to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

An Overview

Quick Facts

- 550 National Wildlife Refuges
- 37 Wetland Management Districts
- 7,000 Waterfowl Production Areas
- 150 million acres of fish and wildlife habitat
- 81 Ecological Services field stations
- 69 National Fish Hatcheries
- 63 Fish and Wildlife Conservation Offices
- 7,500 employees

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

The vast majority of fish and wildlife habitat is on lands not owned by the federal government. Given that roughly 70% of the nation is owned and administered by state and local governments, tribes, corporations, and families, it is clear why conservation efforts on non-federal lands are of such great importance.

The Service could not achieve its mission without partnering with state and local governments, non-profit organizations, businesses, and private citizens. Programs such as Partners for Fish and Wildlife, Partners in Flight, the Coastal Program, and partnership activities with individuals are the primary mechanisms for assisting in voluntary habitat restoration on non-Service lands and fostering conservation practices throughout the Region.

2008 Federal Duck Stamp Winner by Joshua Spies

The Service manages the 150 million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System that consists of 550 national wildlife refuges, 7,000 waterfowl production areas, and other special management areas. The Service also carries out its mission through the 81 ecological services field stations, 69 national fish hatcheries, and 63 fish and wildlife conservation offices located nationwide.

The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores fish and wildlife habitat such as wetlands, administers the Endangered Species Act, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. The Service also administers a number of grant programs that promote the restoration of fish, wildlife, and their habitat on tribal and private lands.

The Service oversees the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration program that distributes federal excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state natural resource agencies. This program is a cornerstone of the nation's wildlife management efforts; funding fish and wildlife restoration, boating access, hunter education, shooting ranges and related projects across America.

Approximately 7,500 people are employed by the Service at facilities across the United States. It is a decentralized organization with headquarters in Washington, D.C., eight geographic regional offices, and nearly 700 field units.

Working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people...

Midwest Region Highlights

Quick Facts

- Employment: Roughly 1,200 permanent employees
- Acres Managed: 1.3 million
- 1.7 million acres of wildlife habitat acquired by states through the Division of Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration's federal grant program
- The Fiscal Year 2010 budget for regional Service activities totaled $532 million (including federal grants to states and other non-federal partners)
- More than 7 million people visited refuges throughout the Midwest Region to hunt, fish, participate in interpretive programs, and view wildlife in 2010
- 50 comprehensive conservation plans (CCPs) have been completed for national wildlife refuges in the region since 1997
- The Partners Program coordinated restoration or enhancement of over 8,400 upland acres and over 5,600 acres of wetlands, removed 4 fish barriers, and carried out almost 90 miles of streambank/riparian restoration in Fiscal Year 2010
- Through 2009, 68 threatened and endangered species and 11 candidate species were identified in the Midwest Region

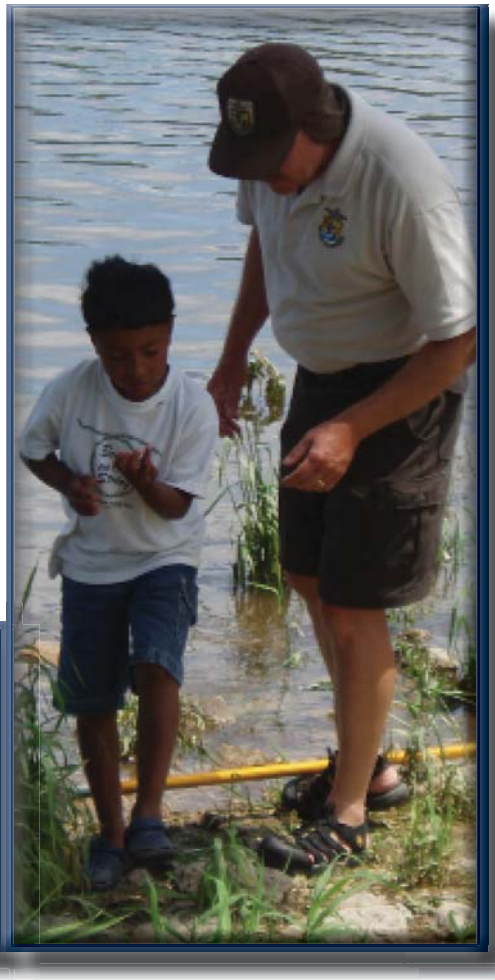
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service established the Midwest Region (Region 3) in 1973. The region is composed of eight states – Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The region is highly diverse from an ecological perspective as it encompasses tallgrass prairie and potholes, agricultural lands, northern and temperate forests, a large section of the Mississippi River drainage basin, and four of the five Great Lakes. The region is headquartered just outside of Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Regional Priorities

- To promote partnerships offering innovative opportunities to enhance the Region's fish and wildlife resources
- To provide healthy fish and wildlife trust species populations and habitats to support them
- To provide the public with quality hunting, fishing, wildlife watching, and other wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities on Service lands
- To provide an organization dedicated to employee excellence, reflecting the nation's rich diversity, and providing quality service to and decision-making for the resources for which the Service has trust responsibility (migratory birds, threatened and endangered species, interjurisdictional fish)

Regional Programs and Offices

- 54 National Wildlife Refuges
- 12 Wetland Management Districts
- More than 300,000 acres in waterfowl production areas
- 6 National Fish Hatcheries
- 6 National Fish and Wildlife Conservation Offices
- 2 Biological Stations
- 8 Private Lands Offices
- 9 Ecological Services Offices
- 18 Law Enforcement Offices



Midwest Regional Office

Overview of Regional Programs

Regional Programs

- National Wildlife Refuge System
- Ecological Services
- Fisheries
- Migratory Birds
- Science Applications
- Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration
- Law Enforcement
- Budget and Administration
- External Affairs

Midwest Regional Office

Purpose

The Regional Office provides a central headquarters to facilitate partnership, administrative, budgetary, operational, personnel and policy execution between the national office in Washington, D.C., and field offices located throughout the region.

Organization

The Region is managed by the Regional Director with the assistance of a Deputy Regional Director, seven Program Assistant Regional Directors (Budget and Administration, Ecological Services, External Affairs, Fisheries, Migratory Birds and State Programs, Science Applications, the National Wildlife Refuge System), and a Special Agent in Charge of Law Enforcement.

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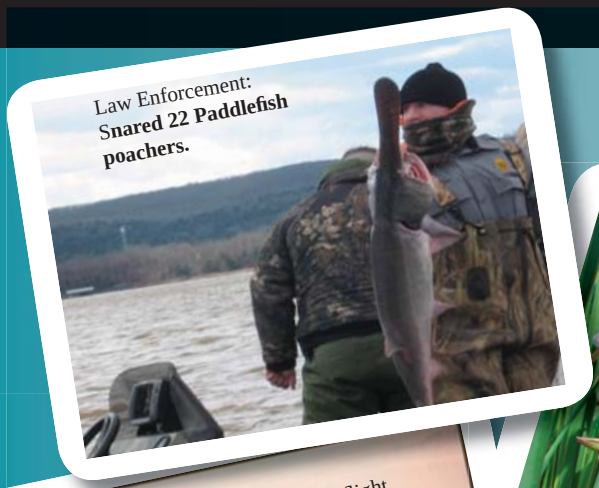
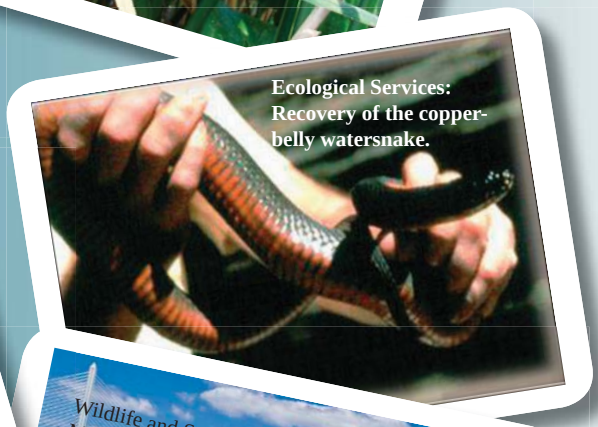
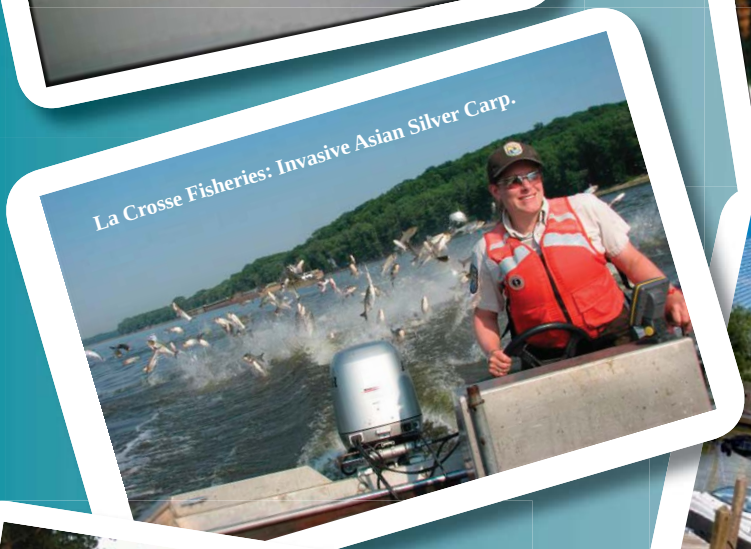
Midwest Region Map


Law Enforcement:
Snared 22 Paddlefish poachers.

National Wildlife Refuge System: Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge.

Migratory Birds: Whooping Cranes take flight.


Ecological Services: Recovery of the copper-belly watersnake.


La Crosse Fisheries: Invasive Asian Silver Carp.

Wildlife and Sport Fish Recreation: Glass City Marina, Toledo, Ohio.

Migratory Birds Joint Venture Office: Barb Pardo with Charlie Wooley.

External Affairs: Native American Program.

National Wildlife Refuge System

An Overview

Quick Facts

- All Midwest Region national wildlife refuges are special places where the Service and its partners work to restore, protect and manage habitat for America's fish and wildlife resources
- 54 National Wildlife Refuges
- 12 Wetland Management Districts
- Eight Private Lands Offices
- Nearly 1.3 million acres of habitat managed
- Nearly 7.5 million people visited a national wildlife refuge or wetland management district in the Midwest Region during 2009
- Midwest regional refuge system acres by state :

-Illinois - 127,942

-Indiana - 65,429

-Iowa - 110,018

-Michigan - 118,484

-Minnesota - 490,073

-Missouri - 61,315

-Ohio - 9,091

-Wisconsin - 182,229

-Totals - 1,168,620

Successes and Challenges

- Thirty-one Midwest refuges, wetland management districts and fish hatcheries hosted a Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) crew in 2010, representing a 29% increase over the number of stations (24) that hosted a YCC crew in 2009. Field stations hired 137 YCC enrollees, representing a 17% increase over 2009 enrollment (117).

- Field stations hired an additional 166 youths through 15 partner organizations, including friends groups, state agencies and academic institutions. This represented a 66% increase over 2009 youth employed (66) through partnerships.

- The National Wildlife Refuge System employed 24 Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) employees in the Midwest Region during FY 2010. This was the largest number of SCEP employees in any region.

- The Division of Realty acquired 8,826 acres at a cost of $14.8 million in FY 2010. The Division also acquired 1,979 acres in seven land donations and 6,690 acres from federal-to-federal transfer of lands from the Dept. of the Army. In total, Realty acquired roughly 17,495 acres in FY 2010. To acquire these lands, Realty used a combination of monies from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, North American Wetland Conservation Act funds, and monies contributed by state and non-government organizations.

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Ecological Services

An Overview

Quick Facts

- Ecological Services (ES) administers the federal Endangered Species Act. There are 68 plants and animals in the Region that are federally endangered or threatened

- The program helps to prevent contaminanation and to restore contaminanted habitats both on- and off-Service lands. With the area's dependence on industry, the Midwest Region seeks to prevent contamination, minimize impacts, and restore trust resources affected by myriad contaminants, such as mercury and PCBs, and new, emerging contaminants

- ES ensures fish and wildlife are considered by federal and other regulatory agencies during planning and construction of renewable energy projects, roads, bridges, dams and other projects

- The program monitors the extent and status of the nation's wetlands

- ES staff are located in the Regional Office and eight field offices in seven states

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Successes and Challenges

Through the Chicago Ecological Services Field Office (ESFO), the Service is an active member of "Chicago Wilderness," a coalition of more than 170 partners seeking to conserve open space, biodiversity and natural resources of the region.

The Environmental Contaminants Program has sought and secured funding from polluters to restore contaminated habitats on the Fox River, Saginaw Bay and Grand Calumet River, and other aquatic ecosystems.

Through the Great Lakes Coastal Program, the Midwest Region works with partners to restore and protect coastal resources, enhance fish passage and control exotic invasive species around the Great Lakes.

With state and federal partners, the ES program works to propagate, translocate, and reintroduce the endangered Higgins eye, a freshwater mussel. These efforts were needed to save the species after the devastating zebra mussel introductions to the Upper Mississippi in the 1990's.

Through re-licensing of hydroelectric dams, the division works to restore freshwater mussel populations and fish passage for species like the lake sturgeon and paddlefish.

Through efforts by the ES program, working with states, tribes and non-government partners, the population of gray wolves in the Western Great Lakes has reached recovery goals.

For more than 10 years, ES has worked with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to seek solutions to challenges concerning natural resources of the Upper Mississippi River and the navigation industry.

With the area's dependence on industry, the Midwest Region must minimize impacts and restore trust resources affected by myriad contaminants, such as mercury and PCBs as well as contaminated runoff from the Region's abundant agricultural land.

Biologists are working with partners in federal, state and private organizations to determine the cause of white-nose syndrome, an ailment that is killing hundreds of thousands of bats in the Northeast and threatens to spread to the Midwest, home of significant numbers of bats, including federally endangered species.

Invasive species and declining water quality in Midwest rivers and streams has taken a toll on freshwater mussels, a key indicator of water quality.

Fisheries

An Overview

Quick Facts

• The Service's Midwest Region Fisheries Program works with partners to conserve, protect and restore populations of fish and other aquatic species at self-sustaining levels for the benefit of the American public

• According to the 2006 National Survey on Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife Recreation, 30 million U.S. residents 16 years or older went fishing and spent $42.2 billion on fishing related expenditures, accounting for 35% of all wildlife-related recreation purchases

• In 2010, 94,800 people visited Midwest Region Fisheries field stations, including six national fish hatcheries, six fish and wildlife conservation offices, two sea lamprey control biological stations and one fish health center

• Fisheries staff represented the program at more than 460 aquatic and educational activities

• A total of 422 volunteers contributed 14,133 hours to support the Service's mission

Successes and Challenges

The Midwest Region's National Fish Hatchery System propagated and stocked approximately 17 million fish and 23 million fish eggs, in support of restoration and recovery plans for native species of fish including lake trout, brook trout, lake sturgeon and walleye.

All hatchery fish populations are assessed for certifiable fish pathogens prior to distribution.

The Region's hatcheries propagated and stocked approximately 1.5 million native mussels, including two federally endangered species - Higgins' eye pearlymussel and winged mapleleaf mussel. These two mussel species and pallid sturgeon are propagated in support of approved recovery plans under the Endangered Species Act.

Fish and Wildlife Conservation Offices (FWCO) conduct approximately 80 habitat assessments annually. In 2010, FWCOs worked with the Partners for Fish and Wildlife and Coastal programs to restore 92.9 miles of stream and shoreline habitat. FWCOs conducted surveys for early detection of aquatic invasive species, and the Midwest Region's Fisheries Program provided $13,488,864 in grants to support approved Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plans for the 8 Midwest Region states and the St. Croix River. Tribal technical assistance is also a priority for FWCOs. FWCOs provide technical assistance in the form of fishery surveys, habitat restoration, and invasive species management.

In 2010, appropriations through the Fish Passage Program and the EPA's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative provided nearly $2,867,000 for on-the-ground habitat restoration projects which reconnected 1,012 stream miles and removed 32 barriers to fish passage in the Midwest Region. Along with more than $9.2 million in partnership matching funds, the Fish Passage Program will support 34 projects in Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Indiana.

The Sea Lamprey Control program works with the Great Lakes Fishery Commission and partners to control populations of invasive sea lampreys in the Great Lakes to protect the fishery and related economic activities in the basin (an estimated annual benefit of $7 billion/year to the region). In 2010, 78 sites in Great Lakes tributaries with established sea lamprey populations were treated, personnel surveyed and determined the extent of sea lamprey larval infestations at 370 sites, and operated and maintained 30 barriers to block spawning runs of adult sea lampreys. In support of future management actions, spawning-phase sea lamprey abundance was estimated in each of the five Great Lakes.

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Migratory Birds

An Overview

Quick Facts

• Oversees the conservation of about 450 species of migratory birds in Region 3, with the goals of maintaining and enhancing their populations and habitats

• 10 permanent Regional Office staff and 5 permanent staff at the Habitat and Population Evaluation Team (HAPET) office in Fergus Falls, MN

• Four international bird conservation plans - dealing with landbirds, waterfowl, shorebirds, and waterbirds - have been stepped down to the regional level

• Region 3 currently administers approximately 9,000 permits, and roughly 3,500 of these permits were issued in Fiscal Year 2009 alone

Successes and Challenges

• Region 3's Division of Migratory Birds has a small grants program that funded 25 bird monitoring, research, habitat conservation, and planning projects in FY 09. Partners cost-shared on nearly all of these projects.

• Region 3 has identified several declining bird species that are receiving priority attention. The Service works with partners to develop conservation plans that identify species' highest needs and targets funding to address the needs.

• Restoration of the Whooping Crane in eastern U.S. is an ongoing priority. The estimated size of the eastern migratory population is 79 birds.

• Region 3 is working closely with the Wildlife Management Institute and Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan in developing an Upper Great Lakes Woodcock and Young Forest Initiative.

• Worked to strengthen and expand regional, national, and international partnerships to achieve comprehensive bird conservation.

• Region 3 initiated a program to better coordinate bird monitoring activities among conservation agencies and organizations in the Midwest. Marshbird monitoring emerges as a high priority.

• Because of bald eagle population status and protections under the Bald Eagle/Golden Eagle Protection Act there are many activities that will require a disturbance permit once these are available.

• Wind power proposals have risen dramatically recently and the Division of Migratory Birds works closely with partners to make projects more bird-friendly.

• Double-crested cormorants cause conflicts because of their actual or perceived impacts on fish and vegetation. The Service has worked extensively with USDA Wildlife Services and state and tribal agencies to address cormorant problems.

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Science and Strategic Landscape Conservation

An Overview

Quick Facts

• There are five LCCs within the Midwest Region geographic boundary and our staff are active in them all.

• The Region plays a lead role in three of the LCCs: the Plains and Prairie Potholes (PPP), Upper Midwest and Great Lakes (UMGL), and the Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers (ETPBR) LCCs.

• The PPP and UMGL LCCs have received funding and have established steering and technical committees and are actively collaborating across the conservation community to identify applied science needs.

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• The PPP LCC is headquartered in Bismarck, ND (Rick Nelson, Coordinator: 701-250-4402).

• The UMGL LCC is headquartered in E. Lansing, MI (Craig Czarnecki, Coordinator: 517-351-8470).

• The ETPBR LCC is headquarted in McGregor, IA (Tim Yager, Acting Coordinator: 563-873-3423 X 12)

Successes and Challenges

• Our Nation's lands and natural resources are important to our quality of life and economy. The sustainability of native fish and wildlife depend on healthy landscapes.

• Natural resources are impacted by land use change and many threats to the sustainability of natural resources, including drought, fire, habitat fragmentation, contaminants, invasive species, and disease.

• The effects of a rapidly changing climate are compounding these stressors. The unprecedented pace and scale of these threats requires a more networked approach to conservation – holistic, collaborative, and grounded in science.

• These landscape-scale resource challenges transcend political and jurisdictional boundaries. No one individual public or private entity has all the conservation tools and capacities needed to address the suite of threats facing wildlife.

• The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is helping to establish Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCC) to leverage resources and increase science capacity to inform resource management decisions and actions. These LCCs are a network of self-directed partnerships working in unison to address stressors within and across landscapes.

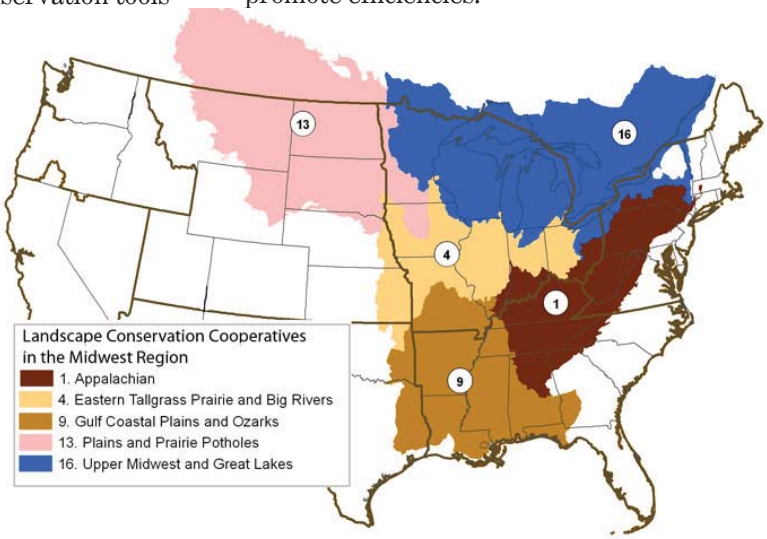
• Each LCC operates within a specific landscape—21 geographic areas in total. Partners include Federal, State, and local governments, Tribes, universities, NGOs, landowners, and other stakeholders.

• LCCs foster efficient and coordinated use of resources. They do so by jointly identifying science and management priorities, enabling each partner to play a coordinated role and promote efficiencies.

• LCCs build upon existing science and conservation efforts - such as fish habitat partnerships, migratory bird joint ventures, and other natural and cultural resource partnerships - by providing scientific support and linkages to an expanded array of conservation partners.

• Collectively, the LCCs form a national network of land, water, wildlife, and cultural resource managers, scientists, and interested public and private organizations—within the U.S. and across our international borders—that share a common need for scientific information and interest in conservation.

• LCCs will not have new management authority; all partners in LCCs will retain their original jurisdiction, with State, Federal, tribal, and other entities continuing to manage natural resources under their current authorities.



Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs

An Overview

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Goals and Services Provided

• Efficiently deliver grant funding to eight states under 11 different grant programs including Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration (established 1937), Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration (established 1955) and State Wildlife Grants (established 2000)

• Ensure the integrity of the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration program by:

--Reviewing grant applications for completeness of environmental compliance, eligibility and substantiality

--Monitoring state implementation of grants in the field

--Providing technical assistance to states

--Monitoring fiscal systems

--Managing program land records and land use

• Maintain partnerships with all eight states at the staff level through the Governors' offices

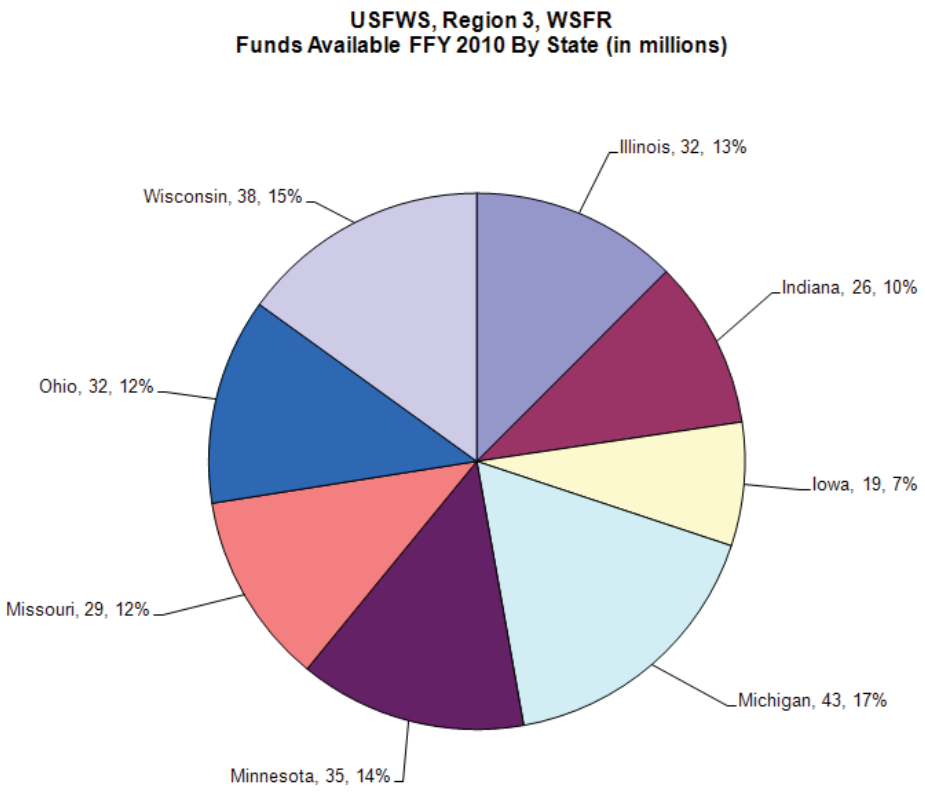
• Increase the number of acres and stream miles of restored sport fish and wildlife habitat, plus boat access points

• Increase opportunities for hunting, angling and motor boating for the public including people with disabilities

• Increase the number of youth and adults who receive hunter safety education and aquatic resource education

• Provide draft policy, draft policy review, and data support to the Washington Office.

FY 2010 Allocation - Region ($253.9 million)



Division of Bird Habitat Conservation

An Overview

Quick Facts

- Provides coordination and science staff assistance to two Region 3 joint ventures: Prairie Pothole Joint Venture (established 1987) and Upper Mississippi River & Great Lakes Region Joint Venture (established 1993)

- Nine permanent staff

Goals and Services Provided

- Deliver the full spectrum of bird conservation through regionally based, biologically driven, landscape-oriented partnerships.

- Develop bird conservation planning and decision tools for partners in 10 states, in a landscape-based, population-driven context.

- Provide technical assistance to applicants and grantees of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) habitat grant programs.

- Coordinate partnership development, habitat implementation, and research and monitoring activities for bird conservation in the Region 3 joint venture areas.

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Law Enforcement

An Overview

Quick Facts

• The Midwest Region's Office of Law Enforcement (LE) includes special agents and wildlife inspectors who work to help fulfill our nation's commitment to global wildlife conservation

• LE staff work with other federal, state and tribal agencies to disrupt regional, national and internationally devastating threats to wildlife resources, such as the illegal wildlife trade and habitat destruction

• There are 19 LE offices located across the Region, including 28 special agents stationed throughout the region and 11 wildlife inspectors stationed at international entry points in Chicago, Detroit, Port Huron and Minneapolis

Successes and Challenges

• In 2009 special agents completed a successful investigation of the illegal smuggling of ivory from Africa, through Canada and into Ohio. The smuggler, a native of Africa, was extradited from Canada to the U.S. and sentenced to 60 months in prison and given a $100,000 fine.

• In 2009 special agents completed a multi-year international endangered species smuggling investigation that resulted in the conviction of two individuals. The case involved the illegal smuggling and commercialization of more than 5,000 pieces of wildlife illegally imported from Asia to Minnesota. Many of the wildlife pieces were from internationally endangered species such as Asian elephant and clouded leopard.

• In early 2009 special agents completed a multi-year investigation into the illegal killing of paddlefish for their eggs, which was then turned into caviar. The investigation resulted in a 12 month conviction and a more than $30,000 fine. To help ensure paddlefish populations are not damaged from commercial exploitation, they are protected as a CITES, Appendix II species.

• In 2009, wildlife inspectors in the Midwest Region cleared 6,500 wildlife shipments valued at nearly $20 million. Working closely with U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents, Service wildlife inspectors also interdicted 500 shipments that contained illegal wildlife products.

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External Affairs

An Overview

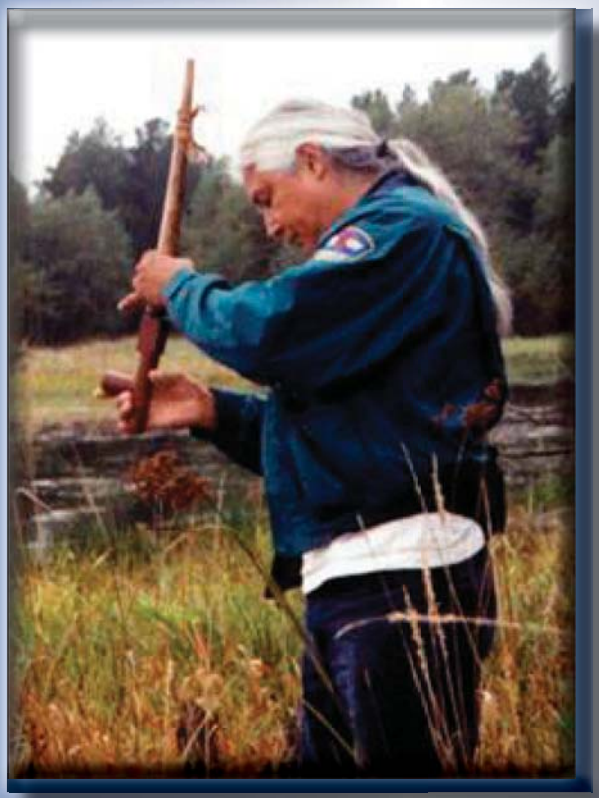
Quick Facts

- Nine permanent staff
- Provides outreach support to all Service programs
- Provides advice and technical support involving public affairs, congressional affairs, Native American affairs, inter-agency communications, interactive media, internal communications, and all related products and strategies
- Responsible for the development, improvement and control of programs and policies related to outreach and related activities

Objectives and Challenges

- Pro-actively develops public affairs, information and outreach strategies to enable a better understanding of agency programs and issues by Service employees, state agency and non-profit partners, congressional offices, tribes, members of the media, and the general public.
- Integrates unique Service messages for external and internal audiences related to Service programs, ecosystems, and partnerships.
- Develop online, interactive presence for both external and internal audiences, using the latest technologies to streamline processes and increase public understanding, support, and participation in conservation.
- Ecosystems, fish and wildlife populations, and the forces that promote and threaten their existence in a constant state of flux.

The dynamic nature of natural systems creates challenges to communicate current and projected ecological trends.



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Illinois Service Overview

Quick Facts

• The Service has approximately 10The Service has approximately 100 permanent employees in Illinois

• The Fiscal Year 2010 Resource Management budget for Service activities in Illinois totaled approximately $11.7 million

• There are 10 National Wildlife Refuges in Illinois total approximately 128,000 acres

• In 2010, nearly 1.3 million people visited National Wildlife Refuges in Illinois to hunt, fish, participate in interpretive programs, and view wildlife

Habitat Types and Ecosystems

Illinois' non-agricultural landscape contains six major habitats: prairies, forests, rivers and streams, wetlands and lakes. Each ecosystem type provides habitats for a diverse number of plants and animals, including federally-listed threatened and endangered species. Premier examples include the Cache River's cypress tupelo swamps and the hardwood forests in southern Illinois; the concentration of marshes, native prairie remnants, and the Lake Michigan coastline of the Chicago region; and the diverse and extensive habitats of the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers.

Conservation Priorities and Successes

Through cooperative multi-partner initiatives that the FWS has been leaders in, there have been major successes in the restoration of the Upper Mississippi River and the Chicago Region. In the last 20 years, approximately 80,000 acres of habitat have been restored on the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers, but additional challenges remain. In the Chicago Region, over 7,000 acres of wetland and associated uplands have been restored through partnerships with local landowning agencies. Conservation priorities here include restoration of wet prairies and marshes that support declining bird populations and endangered species.

Conservation Challenges

The major challenge in Illinois is to reduce fish and wildlife habitat loss, degradation, and fragmentation of fish and wildlife habitat in all Illinois ecosystems. For example, 99.99 percent of Illinois' native prairie has disappeared, and 18 species of plants, animals and insects have been extirpated, while 127 additional species are listed as endangered or threatened by the state. Invasive species also threaten all of the major natural community types throughout the state. In the Chicago Region, urban and suburban development is a primary threat. To address this challenge the Service and its many partners in Illinois continue to work together for short and long term solutions. Major tools include the provision of natural resource planning assistance to federal, state and local governments; contaminants investigations and remediation; and endangered species consultations and recovery planning.

Indiana Service Overview

Quick Facts

- The Service has approximately 36 permanent employees in Indiana
- The Fiscal Year 2010 Resource Management budget for Service activities in Indiana totaled approximately $5.1 million
- Three national wildlife refuges in Indiana total 65,000 acres
- In 2010, nearly 204,000 people visited national wildlife refuges in Indiana to hunt, fish, participate in interpretive programs, and view wildlife

Habitat Types and Ecosystems

Indiana has a wide diversity of habitats; from the globally rare dune and swale areas formed on the southern shore of Lake Michigan to the cypress tree swamps along the floodplain of the Ohio River.

Other areas of interest include: the lakes region in the northeast, formed by receding glaciers; the agriculturally rich center of the state that was formed by glacial outwash; and the forested hills of south-central Indiana that were spared from glacial scour and includes the biologically rich karst region.

The Wabash River runs nearly the entire length of the state and is the longest free flowing river east of the Mississippi. Along with its major tributaries, the Wabash River system supports the Midwest's most diverse freshwater mussel population.

Conservation Priorities and Successes

Priorities focus on the protection and restoration of fish and wildlife habitats. Indiana has the national lead for recovery of the federally endangered Indiana bat, whose range includes 20 eastern states. Service recovery efforts have proven successful as there have been documented population increases over the last 6 years.

The Service's environmental contaminants program in Indiana is very active in the Natural Resources Damage Assessment arena, resulting in several million dollars being used to repair and replace degraded natural habitats.

The Service's Partners for Fish & Wildlife Program has been very successful and has restored thousands of acres of wetlands, forests and prairies throughout the state.

Conservation Challenges

White -nose syndrome (WNS) is a malady that is killing thousands of bats in the north-east portion of the country, and it is rapidly spreading west. Significant efforts are underway to stop or slow the spread of WNS to prevent it from reaching areas that support several endangered species of bats.

Many of Indiana's streams and rivers have been altered or have degraded water quality, resulting in once common species becoming rare. It is a difficult challenge to maintain and improve stream systems while still allowing for industrial, agricultural, and recreational use.

Iowa Service Overview

Quick Facts

- The Service has approximately 63 permanent employees in Iowa
- The Fiscal Year 2010 Resource Management budget for Service activities in Iowa totaled approximately $7.87 million
- Seven national wildlife refuges and one wetland management district in Iowa total more than 110,000 acres
- In 2010, nearly 2 million people visited national wildlife refuges in Iowa to hunt, fish, participate in interpretive programs, and view wildlife
- Boyer Chute National Wildlife Refuge, one of the first Missouri River restoration refuges after the 1993 historic floods, focuses on tallgrass prairie restoration and Missouri River floodplain wetlands restoration

Habitat Types and Ecosystems

Iowa is known as the "land between two rivers" with the Mississippi and Missouri rivers on the east and west borders, respectively. The interior of Iowa has over 19,000 miles of rivers and streams with 87 coldwater streams in the northeast driftless area – limestone bluffs along the Mississippi River that missed the scouring action of the last glaciers. Twenty-five of the largest interior streams extend over 3,500 miles and each is fed by numerous tributaries. These streams flow through what was once a vast tallgrass prairie that covered 85 percent of Iowa. The largest prairie remnant can be found in the Loess Hills in western Iowa. Today, 92 percent of Iowa's land is used for agriculture.

Conservation Priorities and Successes

Over 25,000 acres of prairie pothole and floodplain wetland habitat has been restored and protected since the late 1980s through Iowa Prairie Pothole Joint Venture and private lands restorations. Partnerships with Iowa Department of Natural Resources and Natural Resource Conservation Service have improved riparian habitats, diversified grasslands and pastures, and generally improved habitats for fish and wildlife.

Recovery efforts to protect endangered and threatened species have included the restoration of oxbows in Topeka shiner Critical Habitat in partnership with private landowners and Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation; purchase of lands by the Fish and Wildlife Service in cooperation with Iowa DNR and county conservation boards to protect eastern and western prairie fringed orchids; and restoration of endangered mussels along the Upper Mississippi River and its tributaries.

Conservation Challenges

In times of economic challenge it is important to keep progressing toward a diverse natural landscape that can continue to serve the needs of agriculture, energy production and ecological communities. Non-point source runoff containing fertilizers must be reduced. Agricultural programs that support wildlife habitat on private lands need continued support. Prime natural resource areas, such as the driftless area and prairie streams inhabited by Topeka shiners, require buffers for protection. Backwater restorations on the Mississippi River should continue while landscape projects work to control sedimentation.

Michigan Service Overview

Quick Facts

- 202 permanent employees in Michigan
- The Fiscal Year 2010 Resource Management budget for Service activities in Michigan totaled approximately $11.5 million
- Seven national wildlife refuges and one Wetland Management District in Michigan total more than 118,000 acres
- In 2010, roughly 129,000 people visited national wildlife refuges in Michigan to hunt, fish, participate in interpretive programs, and view wildlife
- Three national fish hatcheries provide lake trout for Michigan's great lakes waters and public opportunities for environmental education

Habitat Types and Ecosystems

Occupying a central position in the heart of the Great Lakes, the State of Michigan features two peninsulas and stretches from Isle Royale in the northwestern margins of Lake Superior to the shores of western Lake Erie. With approximately 3,288 miles of shoreline and 40,000 square miles of the state covered with water, Michigan ranks as the second wettest state, behind Alaska.

As a result, a rich diversity of freshwater aquatic habitats join a variety of upland landcover to produce the foundation of Great Lakes fish and wildlife biodiversity.

Conservation Priorities & Successes

Conservation priorities are detailed in the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act:

- Restoring and maintaining self-sustaining fish and wildlife resources.
- Minimizing the impacts of contaminants on fish and wildlife resources.
- Protecting, maintaining, and restoring fish and wildlife habitat, including the enhancement and creation of wetlands.
- Stopping illegal activities adversely impacting fishery and wildlife resources.
- Restoring threatened and endangered species to viable, self-sustaining levels.
- Protecting, managing, and conserving migratory birds.
- Progress in the recovery of imperiled species continues, with Kirtland's warbler populations reaching the highest numbers in decades and the recovery of bald eagle and gray wolf.

Restoration of wetlands and important coastal areas joins the removal of fish barriers and other fragmenting features of the landscape to allow fish and wildlife to move and occupy new habitats.

Conservation Challenges

Habitat loss and fragmentation continue to limit restoration of healthy populations of fish and wildlife species. Invasive species also impede progress with restoration activities. Toxic chemicals, both traditional and novel, continue to impact fish and wildlife. Finally, climate change adds an urgency factor as FWS works with partners to determine potential impacts and responses.

Minnesota Service Overview

Quick Facts

- The Service employs 473 people in Minnesota, and about half of those are at the Regional Office at Ft. Snelling.
- The Fiscal Year 2010 Resource Management budget for Service activities in Minnesota totaled $64.86 million
- 13 National Wildlife Refuges totaling more than 216,000 acres
- Eight Wetland Management Districts totaling more than 273,000 acres
- In 2010, more than 1.6 million people visited national wildlife refuges and wetland districts in Minnesota to hunt, fish, participate in interpretive programs and view wildlife

Habitat Types and Ecosystems

Minnesota is famous for its more than 10,000 lakes, and thousands of these lakes lie within deep, pristine boreal forests where wolves, moose, and Canada lynx roam their shores. Thousands more Minnesota lakes and ponds form the prairie pothole region, with its unparalleled waterfowl, prairie butterflies and birds, and the national treasure known as tallgrass prairie. Lake Superior's north shore defines rugged and wild for many Minnesotans, and Lake Itasca serves as the headwaters of the mighty Mississippi River. Other great rivers – the St. Croix, the Minnesota, and the St. Louis – enrich the state with their diversity of aquatic life, and beautiful shorelines. Minnesota is an ecological crossroads where open-country elk graze on prairie parklands, and glacial relic snails and plants cling to chilly, unglaciated slopes.

Conservation Priorities & Successes

With over 1300 nesting pairs of bald eagles and over 3000 gray wolves, Minnesota is proud of its contribution to the recovery of these iconic symbols of American wildness. Preservation of the prairie potholes and native prairies remains an urgent priority, and previous successes in that region are a source of pride to the Service.

The Service remains focused and committed to conserving the state's great rivers and lakes. The staff work daily to restore native mussels in the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers, and to restore polluted bays in the St. Louis River estuary. The Service works closely with developers of alternative energy sources such as ethanol, wind, or biofuel, to minimize impacts to wildlife while promoting development of renewable energies.

Conservation Challenges

As in other Midwest states, invasive species pose a significant barrier to conservation of native species. Zebra mussels encrust and kill mussels in great numbers, and degrade valuable mussel habitat. Suburbanization near large and mid-size cities in Minnesota continues to fragment natural landscapes and disrupt wildlife corridors. Minnesota continues to lose prairie and prairie wetlands to the plow, as new markets emerge for grain. Lakeshore development and forestland fragmentation continues, as large land holdings in Northern Minnesota are converted from timber production to real estate development.

Missouri Service Overview

Quick Facts

- The Service employs approximately 92 people in Missouri
- The Fiscal Year 2010 Resource Management budget for Service activities in Missouri totaled $8.45 million
- Ten national wildlife refuges in Missouri total more than 60,831 acres
- In 2010, more than 430,731 people visited national wildlife refuges in Missouri to hunt, fish, participate in interpretive programs and view wildlife

Habitat Types and Ecosystems

Situated at the ecological crossroads between the prairies of the great plains and the eastern deciduous forests, Missouri is a biologically diverse state. The Missouri and Mississippi rivers play a prominent role in the state's ecology. North of the Missouri River is the glaciated till plains, an area of intense agriculture with small remnants of the vast prairies that once there.

The Ozark Highlands occupy a large portion of the state south of the Missouri River. The Ozarks is one of the most biologically diverse regions in the United States, with over 200 endemic species. Within the Ozarks are vast areas of forests interspersed with savannas, prairies, and glades and a wide variety of streams, marshes, and fens. Most of the Ozarks is underlain by ancient limestone geology forming an extensive karst topography that contains over 6,000 caves and 1,100 springs. The majority of endangered species in Missouri occur in the Ozarks.

Conservation Priorities and Successes

The Service is working on multiple new energy projects involving wind power and major transcontinental oil and gas pipelines in northern Missouri. Collaborative efforts are underway with wind power companies to avoid and minimize the effects of this important form of renewable energy on migratory birds and bats. Two major gas pipelines and a large oil pipeline will be successfully completed on schedule due in large part to close coordination with the Service. Conservation measures for endangered species and migratory birds were successfully integrated into the design of these projects.

Priorities in the Ozarks will focus on the conservation of imperiled species and partnering with others to implement landscape conservation efforts to build biological resiliency into the most vulnerable Ozark ecosystems.

The Service will build on the successes achieved in the recovery of the gray bat and Missouri bladderpod through the development of diverse conservation partnerships.

A major priority in the Ozarks will be the conservation of endangered aquatic species (e.g., mussels, hellbender) and cave/karst dependent species (e.g., Ozark cavefish, Tumbling Creek Cavesnail, grotto sculpin).

Conservation Challenges

Effective conservation of Missouri's native fish, wildlife, and plant species requires abating the cumulative and synergistic effects of habitat loss and fragmentation, expanding invasive species, water quality degradation, and climate change while accommodating economic recovery. Developing scientific information and efficient and cost-effective restoration/management techniques to address these threats is a challenge. However, the greatest challenge involves providing technical and financial assistance to a greater number of conservation partners across the landscape, especially to private landowners, based on a common set of priorities and delivered through multi-faceted partnerships.

Ohio Service Overview

Quick Facts

- The Service employs 27 people in Ohio
- The Fiscal Year 2010 Resource Management budget for Service activities in Ohio totaled $2.8 million
- Three national wildlife refuges in Ohio total more than 9,000 acres
- In 2009, more than 176,000 people visited national wildlife refuges in Ohio to hunt, fish, participate in interpretive programs and view wildlife

Habitat Types and Ecosystems

Largely agricultural, the landscape of Ohio is also marked by forested areas and is bounded by Lake Erie to the north and the Ohio River to the east and south. Despite the presence of large cities and more than 11 million inhabitants, Ohio supports a diversity of wildlife, such as wild turkey, wetland species, white-tailed deer, shorebirds and waterfowl, bald eagles and songbirds. Ohio's landscape features five physiographic regions, each of them with its own geological profile and its distinct communities of plants and animals.

Conservation Priorities and Successes

- Recovery and protection of listed species, as well as restoration and protection of habitat which supports trust resources and listed species is a key priority for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) in Ohio.
- Development of partnerships across the state and region to achieve Service conservation goals remains a key priority.
- Development of landscape-level tools (such as Strategic Habitat Conservation, for example) which can greatly enhance the Service's efficiency in achieving conservation goals and greatly benefit conservation for listed species range wide.
- Facilitation of partnerships with the Great Lakes National Program Office (EPA) and the Ottawa Group (Potentially Responsible Parties) to restore the Ottawa River, remains a key priority in the state.
- Facilitation of partnerships with Rockies Express and others to develop conservation measures to conserve and restore habitat for migratory birds.
- Facilitation of partnerships with the WILDS (a non-profit conservation center) to recover the American Burying Beetle represents an important success story in the state of Ohio.

Conservation Challenges

- Evaluation of PCB's, as concentrations of PCB's recorded in the Ottawa are among the highest ever found in the Great Lakes basin. Addressing this issue remains a significant challenge.

The Service will work with the wind power industry and the state to develop guidelines to protect migratory birds, waterfowl and bats at wind power sites both on land and off shore.

The Service will continue to address declining numbers of mussels and the continued need for restoration of mussel habitat. The Service is actively engaged with partners to address these serious issues.

Wisconsin Service Overview

Quick Facts

- The Service has approximately 130 permanent employees in Wisconsin
- Fiscal Year 2010 Resource Management budget for Service activities in Wisconsin totaled approximately $19.2 million
- Eight national wildlife refuges and two wetland management districts in Wisconsin total more than 182,000 acres
- In 2009, more than 1.4 million people visited national wildlife refuges in Wisconsin to hunt, fish, participate in interpretive programs, and view wildlife

Habitat Types and Ecosystems

Wisconsin's landscape is defined by two of the World's most prominent freshwaters systems, the Great Lakes (Superior and Michigan) and the Mississippi River. Wisconsin is home to an abundant variety of habitat types, including northern forests, temperate hardwood forests, savannas, grasslands, wetlands, and others. The diversity of species and habitat types that were formed by these two ecosystem types provide Wisconsin with one of the most diverse mix of fish and wildlife in the United States. Historically, Lake Michigan supported the most productive fishery for native lake trout in the World.

Conservation Priorities & Successes

The restoration of lake trout is a prominent conservation priority in the Great Lakes. Most of the lake trout stocked in the Great Lakes are provided by the national fish hatcheries administered by the Service's Midwest Region. Through the Service's conservation efforts to stock lake trout, control sea lamprey abundance and the mortality they impose on lake trout, development of restoration strategies, and management of fishery harvest, lake trout have been declared restored in Lake Superior. Progress has been achieved in Lake Michigan but full restoration remains a significant challenge.

Other activities include the reintroduction of a migratory population of whooping cranes that return to breeding grounds in Wisconsin each spring now numbers over 80 cranes, and a nationally-recognized partnership that protects endangered Karner blue butterflies and other barrens and savannah wildlife on working lands across Central Wisconsin through a Statewide Habitat Conservation Plan. Furthermore, two endangered bird species, the Kirtland's warbler and the piping plover, are expanding into Wisconsin habitats.

Conservation Challenges

Invasive species continue to impede progress to native species restoration in Wisconsin. Continual introductions of new invasive species into the Great lakes, especially Lake Michigan, have disrupted the food web and challenges restoration efforts there for lake trout, lake herring, and yellow perch. Invasive plants threaten unique coastal wetland habitats. Restoration of long-lived species, like lake sturgeon, requires commitment to long-term habitat restoration and population assessment.

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2011 State Briefing Book

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