

NEWS *from the National Wildlife Refuge System*



For release: May 4, 1998
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DANIEL M. ASHE NAMED U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE'S ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR REFUGES AND WILDLIFE

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Jamie Rappaport Clark today announced she has selected Daniel M. Ashe as the agency's Assistant Director for Refuges and Wildlife. Ashe served as the Service's Assistant Director for External Affairs for the last 3 years.

In his new position, Ashe will direct some of the Service's most important and longstanding conservation programs: the 92-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, migratory bird conservation and management, land acquisition, and implementation of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act and the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.

"Dan Ashe has been a strong advocate and leader for several major Fish and Wildlife Service programs," said Director Clark. "He will bring passion and vision to the National Wildlife Refuge System and migratory bird conservation programs which have figured predominantly in the Fish and Wildlife Service and the entire history of conservation.

"Dan's unique experience working with a variety of partners, including sportsman's and conservation organizations, state agencies, and Congress, will bring a high degree of expertise to the Fish and Wildlife Service's Refuges and Wildlife programs. Dan has consistently demonstrated ability and energy to take on complicated issues involving refuge management, land acquisition, and migratory bird conservation," said Clark.

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In his position as Assistant Director for External Affairs, Ashe managed the Service's Congressional and public affairs, Native American and research coordination programs, the Federal Duck Stamp Program, the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council, and the nearly \$500-million Federal Aid in Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration programs.

In 1997, Ashe served as the Service's lead negotiator with Congress and conservation interests in developing comprehensive legislation governing management of the National Wildlife Refuge System. This effort led to enactment of the landmark National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997.

"I know Dan Ashe is the perfect choice for this position, having worked with him to craft the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act," said Dan Beard, Senior Vice President of the National Audubon Society. "Dan will ensure the Refuge System is a high priority for the Fish and Wildlife Service and work hard to increase awareness of it in Congress and with the public."

Ashe also played an instrumental role in other important efforts affecting the National Wildlife Refuge System, including solidification of the Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement, a coalition of sportsman's and conservation organizations focused on increasing funding for refuges, and the "Friends" Initiative, designed to strengthen and increase refuge community partnerships.

Ashe was a driving force behind the idea to offer states the option to select a Youth Waterfowling Day within the context of annual waterfowl hunting seasons. Offered in both the 1996-97 and 1997-98 seasons, 40 states have taken advantage of this option, providing young hunters and their parents or guardians a special day in the outdoors.

"State natural resource agencies appreciate Dan Ashe's efforts on behalf of foresighted endeavors such as Youth Waterfowling Day," said Max Peterson, Executive Vice President of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. "These special hunting days introduce youngsters to the wonders of the outdoors and, perhaps more importantly, instill the traditions that affect the future of conservation."

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Ashe is the son of William Ashe, a former Service deputy regional director.

“I feel as though I grew up with the National Wildlife Refuge System and migratory bird conservation,” said Ashe. “Some of my earliest and best childhood memories are accompanying my father to refuges in the Southeast, banding birds, fishing, hiking, and learning to love the outdoors.

“I am both honored and sobered to be entrusted with responsibility for such incredibly important conservation programs and the opportunity to work with some of the world’s most dedicated conservation professionals,” he said. “My work on the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act was some of the most gratifying of my career, and I look forward to helping implement that law to set the framework for managing wildlife refuges well into the next century.”

Prior to coming to the Service, Ashe worked in the United States Congress for 13 years, where he rose to Staff Director of the Subcommittee on Environment and Natural Resources, within the former House Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries. In that position, Ashe worked extensively on legislative and policy issues dealing with the Service and other federal conservation agencies.

In 1982, Ashe earned a Masters of Marine Affairs from the College of Ocean and Fisheries Sciences at the University of Washington in Seattle. His masters thesis, on wetland mitigation in estuarine ecosystems, was published in the Coastal Zone Management Journal in 1982. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biological Sciences from Florida State University in Tallahassee.

An avid waterfowler and tennis player, Ashe and his wife and two children reside in Silver Spring, Maryland.