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# News Release



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## U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Official Receives Highest Interior Department Honor

Don Weathers of West Linn, Oregon, has been honored by Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton for his leadership and exceptional accomplishments as the Assistant Regional Director for Budget and Administration in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Pacific Region.

In a February 2, 2005, ceremony in Washington, D.C., Weathers received the Department's Distinguished Service Award, the highest honor an employee can receive from the Department of the Interior. The award recognizes Weathers' accomplishments during his 24-year career in the Service's Pacific Regional Office in Portland, Oregon. He has worked in the natural resources field for 35 years, including a position in the Washington, D.C., headquarters, where he managed the agency's nationwide engineering and construction program.

Weathers was raised in the Midwest and graduated from Purdue University in Indiana.

During Weathers' tenure, the Pacific Region has grown to include 2,240 employees in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Nevada, California, Hawaii and the Pacific Trust Territories. The region has an annual budget of about \$550 million, for which Weathers has responsibility as the Chief Financial Officer.

Weathers is married to the former Kathy Conrad, daughter of Janet Conrad of Coos Bay, Oregon. They have four children: Sarah Remy of Portland; David Qualman of Rainier; Colby Weathers of Moscow, Idaho, and Blake Weathers, who is completing graduate studies in The Netherlands. They also have two grandchildren.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife 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 Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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