

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
INFORMATION AND EXPRESSION**

Information and Expression

Part 117 Communicating Scientific Information

Chapter 1 Policy Review Guidance for Scientific Publications

117 FW 1

1.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter:

A. Describes the requirements for employees publishing scientific information in any outlet, including Service reports, reports for other agencies, *Journal of Fish and Wildlife Management*, *North American Fauna*, and non-Service peer-review journals; and

B. Makes it clear that we do not review these scientific publications for policy purposes.

1.2 What is the policy? Our policy is that for scientific publications within the scope of this chapter, Service employees must:

A. Include a disclaimer on the publication (see section 1.4), and

B. Provide a copy of the draft publication to their supervisor to ensure the supervisor is aware of it. Supervisory policy review or approval is not implied or required.

1.3 What is the scope of this chapter? This chapter:

A. Applies to publishing scientific information anywhere if:

(1) An employee either writes it during official duty hours or writes it based primarily on knowledge he or she acquires during duty hours, or

(2) The content of the article is based on scientific activities that the Service funded in whole or in part, includes the author's Service position title, or refers to the author's Service duty station in the author affiliations.

B. Does not apply to:

(1) Publishing personal expressions of information that do not include the author's Service position title or refer to the author's Service duty station in the author affiliations. These include:

(a) Articles and reports an employee writes on his or her own time that are not related to projects and activities the employee performs for the Service, and

(b) Letters, editorials, essays, or other documents an employee writes on his or her own time for reasons not related to Service work.

(2) Scientific information we publish as official Service positions or policy, such as findings in Federal Register notices, rulemakings, official reports from Program offices, Service Manual chapters, etc. These types of documents undergo extensive Service review for policy implications that we define elsewhere (e.g., 011 FW 2, Part 202, etc.).

1.4 Why do we require a disclaimer and what does it say?

A. We require that authors add a disclaimer because we do not specifically review the articles or reports for policy implications, and they may or may not represent the official views of the Service.

B. The disclaimer must say:

“The findings and conclusions in this article are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.”

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C. The disclaimer:

(1) Does not diminish the quality of the science that is being reported or the credentials of the authors. We can still use these articles and reports in legal processes and for developing official Service policy; and

(2) Will be automatically attached to all articles published in the [Journal of Fish and Wildlife Management and North American Fauna](#). When authors submit articles to these publications, they must confirm that they have read and understand this chapter, and that they have provided a copy of the article to their supervisor.

1.5 What happens if an employee doesn't include the disclaimer or provide a copy of an article to his or her supervisor? This chapter reflects the importance that we place on scientific publication and shows a high level of trust and faith in employee conduct. We consider failure to incorporate the disclaimer or provide articles to supervisors as a possible violation of our Scientific Code of Professional Conduct (see 212 FW 7.6).

/sgd/ James W. Kurth
ACTING DIRECTOR

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