

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

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Part 518 WSFR - Management

Chapter 8 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation

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8.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter describes the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation (Survey) and the process for conducting it.

8.2 What is the Survey? The Survey records data on fish- and wildlife-associated recreation from a sample of Americans. We have sponsored the Survey since 1955, usually at 5-year intervals.

A. We use the survey to collect information on the:

(1) Number of people who participated in fish- or wildlife-associated recreational activities;

(2) Days they spent on these activities;

(3) Number of trips they took for these activities;

(4) Amount of money they spent on different types of fishing, hunting, and wildlife-watching (wildlife-watching includes observing, photographing, and feeding fish or wildlife); and

(5) Demographic characteristics of participants.

B. If there are enough funds, the Service's Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) Program may recommend collection of data on other related topics after consulting with States and nongovernmental organizations and getting information collection approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Examples of other topics include catch-and-release information on sport fish, or the reasons why a licensed hunter or angler did not participate in hunting or fishing.

8.3 What is the Service's policy? Our policy is to ensure the availability of reliable information to help Federal and State agencies meet the needs of U.S. residents for fish- and wildlife-related recreation.

8.4 What are the authorities for the Survey?

A. Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 669 et seq.).

B. Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 777 et seq., except 777 e-1 and g-1).

C. Fish and Wildlife Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 742a, d-f).

D. The Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-408, Sections 113 and 122).

8.5 Who is responsible for the Survey program?

A. The **Director** approves the Service's grant proposal to conduct the Survey.

B. The **Assistant Director – WSFR** is responsible for overseeing the management of the Survey.

C. The **Chief, Division of Policy and Programs** oversees coordination and policies affecting the Survey.

D. The **Chief, National Survey Branch** coordinates the Survey. Coordination includes:

(1) Preparing project proposals, scopes of work, and budgets to request Federal and non-Federal funding for the Survey;

09/02/10

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Supersedes 902 FW 1 - 3, FWM 274, 09/27/96

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- (2) Coordinating with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (the Association), the State fish and wildlife agencies, other Federal agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and other Survey users to ensure it is useful, accurate, timely, and cost-effective;
- (3) Preparing information collection clearance packages, including draft Federal Register notices and a supporting statement to give the public an opportunity to review and comment on the information that we propose to collect in the Survey;
- (4) Developing specifications for the work of contractors or cooperating agencies;
- (5) Ensuring the Survey is successful, which includes monitoring the work of contractors;
- (6) Making the Survey reports available to the public;
- (7) Helping States, other Federal agencies, and nongovernmental organizations to use and analyze Survey data; and
- (8) Preparing and carrying out a plan for analyzing Survey data.

8.6 How do the Service and other organizations use the information we collect during the Survey?

A. The Service and State fish and wildlife agencies use the information collected from the Survey to:

- (1) Decide how to carry out their responsibility to preserve, restore, and enhance fish and wildlife resources to ensure their continual availability for the benefit of and enjoyment by the American people.
- (2) Determine the value of fish- and wildlife-associated recreation to the American people by documenting the number of participants and the time and money they spend on this recreation. These data show the economic impacts on State and national economies such as jobs, tax revenues, salaries, wages, and business owners' incomes.
 - (a) States use the data on average expenditures and visits to estimate economic impacts.
 - (b) We use the information to show the economic importance of our refuges, fish hatcheries, and grant programs.
 - (c) The Department of the Interior uses the information to show the economic benefits of fish- and wildlife-associated recreational use of areas that the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Bureau of Reclamation manage.
- (3) Help WSFR grant program recipients. Information from the Survey is available to grantees to help them develop plans, project proposals, and priorities. For example, in the Survey we calculate the ratio of resident saltwater and freshwater anglers for coastal States. States can use these calculations to allocate their Sport Fish Restoration program funds between marine and freshwater fishery projects, as required by law. They can also use Survey data to make comparisons and identify trends.
- (4) Estimate current and future demand for fish- and wildlife-associated recreation.
- (5) Prepare resource-development plans, environmental documents, and natural resource damage assessments for compliance with Federal laws, including the National Environmental Policy Act; the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act; the Oil Pollution Act; and the

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Clean Water Act. For example, we can use the data on the economic value of fish and wildlife resources for recreation as a basis for determining damages for oil spills.

(6) Evaluate the economic impacts of proposed legislation on fish- and wildlife-associated recreational resources.

(7) Develop policy for and manage fish and wildlife resources.

B. The Great Lakes Fishery Commission, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, American Sportfishing Association, Archery Trade Association, National Shooting Sports Foundation, and other organizations use Survey information for economic assessments, studies, evaluations, recruitment and retention efforts, communications, and planning. The Canadian Minister of the Environment and the Secretary of the Interior use Survey information to prepare the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.

C. Businesses in the fishing, hunting, and outdoor industry use the Survey information to plan strategies and identify trends to improve their services and reach more people.

8.7 What source of funds can the Service use for the Survey?

A. Subject to availability, we may use WSFR administrative funds to support the Survey, including the costs of gathering data related to wildlife-associated recreational uses other than hunting and fishing.

B. The Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act of 2000 allows us to award a grant from the Multistate Conservation Grant program for the Survey. We may award this type of grant to either ourselves (the Service) or a State or group of States if the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies recommends the project as a priority.

C. Since 2001, we have conducted the Survey using funds from a Multistate Conservation grant.

D. We may still seek funds from other sources within or outside the Service to carry out the Survey.

8.8 What are the procedures for conducting the National Survey? WSFR usually conducts the Survey every 5 years. Planning begins about 3 years before data collection to allow consultations with Survey users, get OMB's approval of the information we collect in the Survey, test new procedures or techniques, and enter into agreements or contracts. See Table 8-1.

Table 8-1: Procedures for Conducting the Survey	
Survey Procedure	Tasks
Survey Options (Year 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSFR develops Survey options, with input from Survey users, including information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Geographic level of data collection, ○ Topics, ○ Population coverage, ○ Survey methods, ○ Reliability, ○ Comparability with previous Surveys, and ○ Cost estimates.
Consulting with Survey Users (Year 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSFR: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sets up four regional technical committees that include State fish and wildlife agencies, and ○ Consults with representatives of industry, nongovernmental

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Table 8–1: Procedures for Conducting the Survey

Survey Procedure	Tasks
	organizations, and others who advise them on Survey content, design, accuracy, and data format.
OMB Approval (Year 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Paperwork Reduction Act requires that we get OMB's approval for information collection. The requirements for the information collection clearance package are in 5 CFR 1320 and 281 FW 4 and 5.
Conducting the Survey (Years 4-5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSFR: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prepares and administers agreements or contracts, or both, for data collection, analyses, and Survey reports and products; and ○ Monitors the work of the data collection agency or contractor to ensure that it conducts the Survey according to the terms of the agreement or contract. Monitoring includes reviewing Survey design, methods, questionnaires, and other materials; testing the Survey instruments; and observing training sessions, interviews, and other Survey procedures.
Completing the Survey (Year 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The data collection agency or contractor prepares reports (see section 8.9). • WSFR: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reviews the data collected in the Survey for accuracy and helps with editing and the preparation of tables; ○ Reviews and approves reports, tables, text, materials, and preliminary Survey information so that data are available as soon as possible; ○ Releases the Survey database on electronic media for further analysis; ○ Develops a plan for data analysis and produces or sponsors technical reports; and ○ Assists Survey users in analyzing the data and responding to information requests.

8.9 What are the products of the Survey, and how does the Service make them available?

A. Reports.

(1) WSFR and the data collection agency or contractor prepare preliminary and final national overview reports followed by preliminary and final overview reports on each of the 50 States. The reports include the information we describe in section 8.2A. Depending on funds available for the Survey, the reports may also include additional data specific to different categories of fishing, hunting, or wildlife-watching.

(2) WSFR also prepares technical reports based on Survey data that may include, among other topics:

- (a) Recruitment and retention of hunters and anglers,
- (b) Economic impacts of wildlife-watching,
- (c) Minority participation in fish- and wildlife-associated recreation, and
- (d) The net economic values of fish- and wildlife-associated recreation.

(3) WSFR publishes reports online or makes them available as printable documents on the WSFR Web site.

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B. Database. WSFR provides the Survey database on electronic media for further analyses by researchers, consultants, and other members of the public.

/sgd/ Gregory E. Siekaniec
ACTING DIRECTOR

Date: September 2, 2010