

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
MANAGEMENT OF NON-OWNED LANDS**

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OVERVIEW

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

A. Describes the [Coastal Program](#) (also referred to as “Program,” “we,” and “our”) and how we support the mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), and

B. Establishes the *Coastal Program Handbook* to guide Program employees and provide procedures for administering the Program and delivering habitat conservation under it.

2.2 What is the scope of this chapter? This chapter applies to all Service employees that administer the Coastal Program and implement habitat conservation using Program funds.

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2.3 What are the major authorities for this chapter?

- A. [Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956](#) (16 U.S.C. 742a-c and j).
- B. [Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act](#) (16 U.S.C. 661-666c).
- C. [National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act](#) (16 U.S.C. 668dd et seq.).

2.4 What terms do you need to know to understand this chapter?

A. Cooperative agreement. A legal document that transfers money or another asset between the Federal Government and another entity (e.g., State government, municipality, corporation, or individual) to carry out an action with a public purpose (e.g., restoration project). A cooperative agreement requires that both the Federal Government and the partner be substantially involved in the described action (see [section 2.4K](#)).

B. Ecosystem services. Benefits and resources (e.g., food and water, climate, and cultural heritage) received by people that are derived from the biotic and abiotic components and processes of the environment. Although it may be difficult to place a value on these services, they have many direct and indirect benefits to people.

C. Federal financial assistance. The transfer of a thing of value from a Federal agency to an eligible recipient to carry out a public purpose as authorized by U.S. law. An agency may provide financial assistance in many ways, including cooperative agreements, grants, direct appropriations, and transfers of property in place of money.

D. Federal trust resources. Federal trust species and Service-managed lands and waters, including marine national monuments.

E. Federal trust species. Migratory birds, species that are listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act, interjurisdictional fish, marine mammals, and other species of concern.

F. Geographic focus areas. Priority work areas identified in the Program's strategic plan and that integrate shared habitat conservation objectives among Service programs, partners, and stakeholders.

G. Habitat Information Tracking System (HabITS). A web-based accomplishment tracking system that integrates mapping capabilities (i.e., geographic information system). Staff can input and access information on habitat improvement projects in a geospatial context, as well as document technical assistance. We use the information in HabITS to guide Service and Program conservation efforts, evaluate workload and resource allocations, and make informed budget decisions. Employees can access HabITS through the Service's [Environmental Conservation Online System](#).

H. Private lands. Lands and interests in lands not owned by the Federal or a State government, including Tribal and Alaska Native Tribal lands; Hawaiian Home Lands; Tribal corporation lands; borough, county, and municipal lands; and lands owned by private landowners.

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I. Public lands. Lands and interests in lands owned in common by the Federal or a State government, including National Wildlife Refuges, National Forests, National Parks and Monuments, military bases, and State wildlife management areas and parks.

J. Real property. One, several, or all interests, benefits, and rights inherent in the ownership of a parcel of land or water. More information about real property is available in [520 FW 6](#), Real Property—Overview.

K. Substantial involvement. A level of engagement required when entering into a cooperative agreement. It is a relative concept, and it generally occurs when there is collaboration between the awarding agency and recipient in the management or performance of an activity or project. This collaboration is programmatic in nature and may provide benefits (e.g., technical expertise, specialized equipment, labor) that otherwise would be unavailable to the recipient. More information about substantial involvement is available on the Financial Assistance [website](#).

L. Voluntary habitat conservation. Any improvement or protection activity undertaken by partners that benefits Federal trust resources and is not required by law or regulation.

M. [www.grants.gov](#). A public website used to deliver, manage, coordinate, and account for Federal funding opportunities.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

2.5 What is the Coastal Program? Our mission is to achieve voluntary habitat conservation by providing technical and financial assistance, in collaboration with partners, for the benefit of Federal trust species. Working with partners, we deliver strategic habitat conservation by planning, designing, and implementing habitat improvement and protection projects. We carry out this mission by:

A. Collaborating with other Service programs; Federal, Tribal, State, and local agencies; non-governmental organizations; universities; corporations; communities; and private landowners. Through these partnerships we leverage our technical and financial assistance to maximize benefits to Federal trust resources.

B. Focusing our habitat conservation on priority coastal and marine habitats, including those in and along the Great Lakes and in U.S. Territories. We implement habitat conservation on both public and private lands, which allows the Program to deliver landscape-scale conservation and to promote habitat connectivity, continuity, and resiliency.

C. Ensuring that there is a local field presence that delivers habitat conservation efficiently and effectively. The expertise of our field staff allows them to maximize partnership opportunities and conservation benefits.

D. Increasing partner capacity to achieve shared conservation objectives. By building capacity among our partners, we have a broader impact on habitat conservation by promoting science-based conservation; refining conservation design, planning, and policies; and improving the science of restoration.

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2.6 What are the priorities for the Coastal Program? The Program is guided by a three-part strategic plan:

- A. The [Strategic Vision](#) presents the goals of the Coastal Program.
- B. The *Regional Work Plans* include each Region's geographic focus areas (i.e., priorities) and conservation objectives. The Regional Program Coordinators revise the work plans every 5 years.
- C. The *National Summary* reports on the Regions' previous 5-year accomplishments and summarizes the Regions' conservation objectives for the next 5 years.

2.7 What are the goals for the Coastal Program?

A. The Program has five goals that define how we will achieve our mission:

- (1) Conserve habitat,
- (2) Broaden and strengthen partnerships,
- (3) Improve information sharing and communication,
- (4) Support our workforce, and
- (5) Enhance accountability.

B. More information about the goals is in our *Strategic Vision*.

2.8 How does the Coastal Program develop geographic focus areas?

A. Each Region has the authority to develop its own process for establishing and delineating geographic focus areas; however, all Regions must use a landscape-scale approach that integrates Department of the Interior and Service priorities and shared conservation objectives among partners.

B. Geographic focus areas ensure that we allocate our resources to habitats and priorities with the greatest need. Although we concentrate our resources in these focus areas, we may deliver habitat conservation outside of the areas if the projects are of high conservation value.

2.9 How does the Coastal Program integrate Strategic Habitat Conservation?

A. [Strategic Habitat Conservation](#) (SHC) is a framework the Service uses to deliver landscape-scale, adaptive habitat management. This framework ensures that we plan, implement, and evaluate our adaptive conservation actions. It ensures that we use the best available scientific information to deliver conservation in an efficient and effective manner.

B. At a programmatic level, we use SHC to make decisions regarding where and how to deliver habitat conservation and to allocate resources to achieve specific biological and ecological outcomes. The SHC process is often informed by input and resources from partners. SHC ensures

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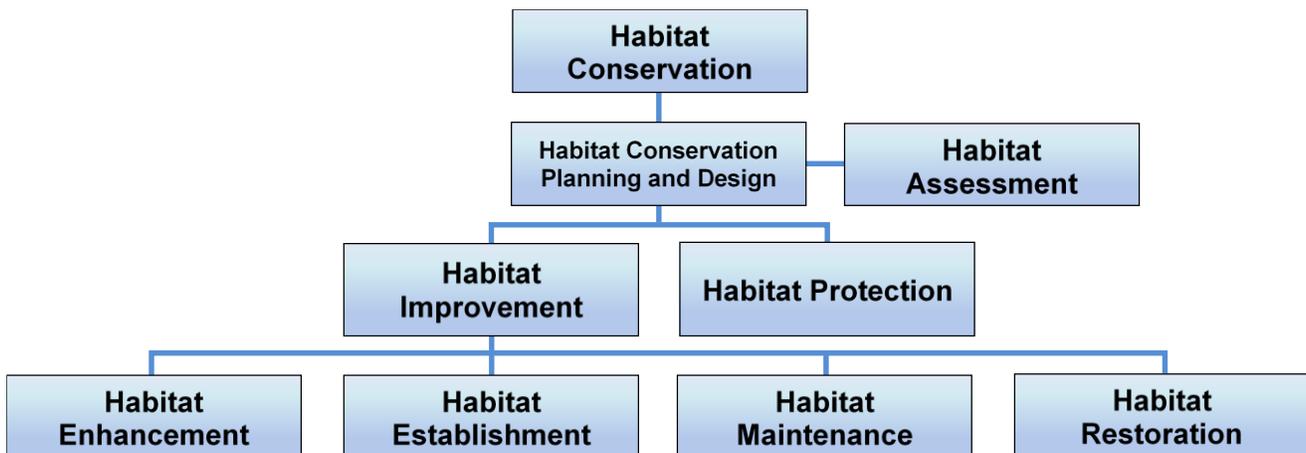
that we base our conservation actions on sound science and we address changing conservation challenges and ecological conditions.

C. At the project level, we work with partners to plan, design, and implement habitat conservation. By monitoring and evaluating our conservation activities, we can refine our assistance, improve on our successes, and ensure we ultimately achieve our conservation objectives.

HABITAT CONSERVATION OVERVIEW

2.10 What is habitat conservation? Habitat conservation includes projects and activities that assess, enhance, establish, maintain, protect, or restore the ecological function and integrity of an area for the benefit of Federal trust resources. We deliver habitat conservation through technical and financial assistance, planning and design, and implementation of habitat improvement and protection projects. Specific types of activities and projects may vary among Regions and geographic focus areas because of the wide variety of habitats and species, ecological threats, and available conservation resources in these areas. Figure 1-1 illustrates how the Program categorizes habitat conservation projects and activities. Sections 2.10A through C define and discuss the elements in the figure in more detail.

Figure 1-1. Habitat conservation diagram



A. Habitat conservation planning and design.

(1) Habitat conservation planning and design is the process of developing strategies, identifying tools, and planning projects to support terrestrial and aquatic (e.g., freshwater and marine) habitat conservation. Planning and design activities can support a broader conservation goal or lead to a conservation project. We provide planning and design capacity to partners and stakeholders as technical assistance. More information about technical assistance is in [section 2.11](#).

(2) Habitat assessment is part of habitat conservation planning and design. It is the evaluation of an area of land or water, or both, as habitat for a species, population, or community. Habitat assessments can contribute to conservation planning (e.g., land use decisions) or lead to a habitat improvement or protection project.

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B. Habitat improvement. Habitat improvement involves the enhancement, establishment, maintenance, or restoration of ecological function(s) or condition(s) of an area. These projects strive to improve habitats to achieve desired biological outcomes. The term “habitat improvement” attempts to capture all of the on-the-ground projects that we implement for conservation. The types of habitat improvement projects include:

(1) *Habitat enhancement:* The manipulation of the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics to improve the ecological function(s) or change the successional stage of an area that will provide additional benefits to Federal trust and other priority species.

(2) *Habitat establishment:* The manipulation of existing physical, chemical, or biological characteristics to create habitat conditions that did not previously exist in an area. We will not implement establishment projects that adversely affect habitats that are important to Federal trust or other priority species or displace a habitat unless we can demonstrate that the project will not negatively affect Federal trust and other priority species or a unique habitat.

(3) *Habitat maintenance:* The periodic manipulation of existing physical, chemical, or biological characteristics required to keep an area in a condition that benefits Federal trust and other priority species.

(4) *Habitat restoration:* The manipulation of the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics of an area with the goal of returning self-sustaining, natural/historical ecological function(s) and integrity that have been degraded or lost. For each restoration project, we will attempt to restore as many of the natural/historical ecologic conditions as practical.

C. Habitat protection. Habitat protection is a long-term, voluntary action (e.g., fee title property purchase, conservation easement, land use designation, or reservation of water) to safeguard habitat conditions and functions that Federal trust and other priority species need during their various life stages.

2.11 What is technical assistance?

A. Technical assistance consists of planning, design, and evaluation activities that support habitat conservation, whether or not it leads directly to a specific habitat improvement or protection project. Technical assistance is one way that we can establish substantial involvement in a habitat conservation project.

B. We provide technical assistance to other Service programs and partners to achieve shared conservation objectives. By providing technical assistance, we have a broader impact on conservation by informing resource managers, restoration practitioners, and others who are responsible for regulating, managing, and implementing habitat conservation. Technical assistance may include, but is not limited to:

(1) Providing decision-support for conservation and guidance for policies,

(2) Conducting ecological surveys,

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- (3) Designing and reviewing habitat restoration and management plans,
- (4) Evaluating and improving conservation practices,
- (5) Assisting with grant applications for conservation projects,
- (6) Supervising project construction, and
- (7) Monitoring and evaluating restoration projects.

RESPONSIBILITIES

2.12 How is the Coastal Program organized?

A. Headquarters. The Program is administered by the Director; the Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS); the Chief, Division of Natural Resources and Conservation Planning; the Chief, Branch of Habitat Restoration; and the National Coastal Program Team Lead. Administration of the Program is also coordinated with the Assistant Director, Ecological Services, because of how the Regions administer the Program.

B. Regional Offices. The Program is administered by the Regional Directors, Assistant Regional Directors, and Regional Coordinators. In some Regions, the Program is administered under the Assistant Regional Director for Ecological Services, and in others under the Assistant Regional Directors for the NWRS.

C. Field Offices. The Program is administered by Project Leaders, Coastal Program Managers, and field staff. For field offices that do not have a Coastal Program Manager, the Project Leader has the responsibility of administering the Program.

2.13 What are the specific employee responsibilities for implementing the Coastal Program?
See Table 2-1.

Table 2-1: Responsibilities for the Coastal Program

These employees...	Are responsible for...
A. Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Ensuring the Program has the resources necessary to fulfill the mission of the Service, (2) Approving Program policies, (3) Ensuring that the Program has adequate oversight at a national level, and (4) Approving National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program projects.

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These employees...	Are responsible for...
B. Chief, NWRS in coordination with the Assistant Director – Ecological Services	<p>(1) Ensuring the Program has the resources necessary to fulfill the mission of the Service,</p> <p>(2) Administering the Program at a national level, and</p> <p>(3) Overseeing Program policy and budget formulation and allocation.</p>
C. Chief, Division of Natural Resources and Conservation Planning	<p>(1) Ensuring the Program has the resources necessary to fulfill the mission of the Service,</p> <p>(2) Implementing the Program at a national level, and</p> <p>(3) Reviewing Program policies and budget formulation.</p>
D. Chief, Branch of Habitat Restoration and National Coastal Program Team Lead	<p>(1) Developing national policy and guidance to administer and implement the Program. This includes reviewing our chapter and handbook at least every other year to ensure it is current and updating it as necessary;</p> <p>(2) Managing the Program at a national level, which includes developing budget requests and allocations, overseeing HabITS development, and reporting program accomplishments;</p> <p>(3) Monitoring the implementation of the Program to ensure compliance and integrity;</p> <p>(4) Maintaining financial assistance training and ensuring that Program staff follow financial assistance policies;</p> <p>(5) Coordinating resolution of programmatic issues elevated to Headquarters from the Regions;</p> <p>(6) Representing the Program and the Service in technical committees, working groups, and public forums;</p> <p>(7) Leading the development and delivery of certain Service conservation programs and initiatives, such as the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program;</p> <p>(8) Supporting the management of Marine National Monuments, including policy development and review;</p> <p>(9) Coordinating the management of the NWRS’s coastal and marine resources at a national level, which includes developing policies and partnerships that protect the natural and cultural resources in coastal and marine ecosystems;</p>

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These employees...	Are responsible for...
	<p>(10) Supporting national communication and outreach efforts to promote the Program; and</p> <p>(11) Developing and managing national partnerships and coordinating activities related to the Program.</p>
E. Regional Directors and Assistant Regional Directors	<p>(1) Administering the Program within their Regions,</p> <p>(2) Designating Program Regional Coordinators for their Regions,</p> <p>(3) Allocating and executing Regional budgets, and</p> <p>(4) Developing and implementing national and Regional priorities.</p>
F. Program Regional Coordinators	<p>(1) Providing direction to Coastal Program Managers, Project Leaders, and field staff on Program policy and guidance;</p> <p>(2) Managing the Program at a Regional level, which includes preparing budget recommendations, developing program capacity, participating in HabITS development, and preparing strategic plans and habitat improvement monitoring strategies;</p> <p>(3) Monitoring the implementation of the Program to ensure compliance and funding fidelity by the Regional and field offices;</p> <p>(4) Coordinating resolution of programmatic issues elevated to the Regional office from the field offices;</p> <p>(5) Maintaining financial assistance training and ensuring that Program staff follow financial assistance policies;</p> <p>(6) Participating in technical committees and workgroups;</p> <p>(7) Assisting with the development and delivery of Service conservation programs and initiatives, such as the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program;</p> <p>(8) Supporting national and Regional communication and outreach efforts to promote the Program;</p> <p>(9) Developing and managing Regional partnerships and aligning program activities with Service priorities; and</p> <p>(10) Overseeing Regional accomplishment reporting and resolving any</p>

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These employees...	Are responsible for...
	reporting issues.
G. Program Managers or Project Leaders (Field Offices)	<p>(1) Managing the Program at the field level, which includes developing program capacity and participating in the development of strategic plans;</p> <p>(2) Monitoring the implementation of the Program to ensure compliance and integrity and funding fidelity in their offices;</p> <p>(3) Facilitating and implementing habitat conservation in accordance with Program policies and strategic plans, with concurrence from the field office staff and other appropriate authorities;</p> <p>(4) Maintaining financial assistance training and ensuring that Program staff follow financial assistance policies;</p> <p>(5) Coordinating resolution of programmatic issues raised by field staff;</p> <p>(6) Participating in technical committees and workgroups, such as Regional or local conservation workgroups or watershed organizations;</p> <p>(7) Assisting with the development and delivery of Service conservation programs and initiatives, such as the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program;</p> <p>(8) Supporting national, Regional, and field communication and outreach efforts to promote the Program;</p> <p>(9) Developing and managing field level partnerships that facilitate habitat conservation projects; and</p> <p>(10) Overseeing field office accomplishment reporting and resolving any reporting issues.</p>
H. Program Managers and Field Staff (Field Offices)	<p>(1) Selecting, designing, and implementing habitat conservation projects and activities in accordance with Program policies and strategic plans, with concurrence from the managers in their chain of command;</p> <p>(2) Providing technical and financial assistance to partners who want to implement a habitat improvement project that benefits Federal trust species;</p> <p>(3) Providing additional technical capacity to partners, including the planning and designing of habitat conservation projects;</p> <p>(4) Maintaining financial assistance training and ensuring that Program</p>

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These employees...	Are responsible for...
	<p>staff follow financial assistance policies;</p> <p>(5) Serving as Project Officers for cooperative and other financial assistance agreements, and ensuring staff and partners fulfill the responsibilities identified in the agreements;</p> <p>(6) Ensuring substantial involvement when the Program enters into a cooperative agreement;</p> <p>(7) Monitoring habitat improvement projects to ensure that they achieve their biological and structural intent and landowner objectives;</p> <p>(8) Supporting national, Regional, and field communication and outreach efforts to promote the Program;</p> <p>(9) Developing and managing community partnerships that facilitate habitat conservation projects and actions;</p> <p>(10) Participating in technical committees and workgroups, such as Regional or local conservation workgroups or watershed organizations;</p> <p>(11) Assisting with the development and delivery of Service conservation programs and initiatives, such as the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, and Regional restoration initiatives; and</p> <p>(12) Entering technical assistance and habitat improvement accomplishments into HabITS, and ensuring accurate documentation of Service investments, field staff contributions, and project conservation benefits.</p>

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

2.14 How does the Service implement the Coastal Program?

A. Conservation collaboration. Whenever possible and appropriate, staff should coordinate Program activities with other Federal, Tribal, State, and local government agencies and non-governmental organizations to leverage conservation resources and maximize benefits to Federal trust resources.

B. Cost-effectiveness. Cost-effectiveness or return on investment compares a project’s resource investment (i.e., technical and financial contributions) to its conservation benefits. We should attempt to maximize the return on investment for conservation projects and activities. Other conservation

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benefits may include ecosystem services, community outreach and education, and Department of the Interior and Service priorities.

C. Federal trust resources or other priority species. Program conservation projects and activities must benefit Federal trust resources or priority species.

D. International habitat conservation. Under the Compacts of Free Association with the United States and similar agreements, we may provide technical and financial assistance to other countries, such as the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.

E. Landscape-scale conservation. Effective habitat conservation requires the ability to address community and conservation demands throughout an entire watershed or ecosystem. We should seek to collaborate with partners to deliver landscape-scale conservation and to maintain habitat connectivity and continuity by working on private and public lands and marine resources.

F. Leveraging resources. A strength of the Program is our ability to develop partnerships that enable us to leverage technical and financial resources with partners. We should seek partnership opportunities that improve the delivery and effectiveness of our conservation projects and activities.

G. Public funding opportunity. We may provide Federal financial assistance to other Federal, Tribal, State, and local government agencies; non-governmental organizations; universities; corporations; private landowners; and other partners. Headquarters staff must post an annual Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) on Grants.gov, as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act. The NOFO serves as a national announcement under which the Coastal Program can enter into financial assistance agreements with partners. The announcement provides general information on funding levels, funding eligibility, project selection criteria, and project development. We must comply with Service policies on cooperative agreements and Federal financial assistance in [Parts 515 and 516](#) of the Service Manual.

H. Public and private land conservation. We deliver habitat conservation on both public and private lands, which is especially important because land ownership in coastal areas is often a mosaic of public and private entities. It also allows us to complement NWRS Comprehensive Conservation Plans because habitat conservation projects can take place on and adjacent to National Wildlife Refuges.

I. Sound scientific principles. Conservation projects and activities, including the development of innovative approaches and techniques, must be based on sound scientific principles.

J. Substantial Federal involvement. We must be substantially involved (see [section 2.4K](#)) in projects and activities that receive Program financial assistance through a cooperative agreement.

2.15 What are the requirements and limitations for Coastal Program funds?

A. Administrative expenses. Program office administrative expenditures should be proportional and limited to the time spent on specific activities necessary to support the Program.

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B. Administrative overhead. The national, Regional, and field offices should maintain a reasonable overhead percentage to maximize funds available to field staff for the delivery of conservation projects and activities.

C. Voluntary property purchases and conservation easements.

(1) We must not use Program funds for property purchases where legal title or interest is vested with the Service or another Federal agency. In addition, staff must not use Program funds to lease interests in real property or to make rental or other land use incentive payments to landowners.

(2) We can provide technical assistance for voluntary property purchases, which includes assessing habitats, prioritizing purchases, preparing management plans, and landowner outreach.

(3) We can also provide financial assistance for planning (e.g., landowner outreach and management plans) and costs of conveyance (e.g., boundary surveys, title searches, and property appraisals) for third-party property purchases and conservation easements.

D. Financial assistance agreements.

(1) We have broad authority to enter into financial assistance agreements with Tribal governments and Native corporations, State and local agencies, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, corporations, private landowners, and other partners to deliver conservation projects and activities that benefit Federal trust species and their habitats. We provide financial assistance primarily through cooperative agreements.

(2) More information about financial assistance agreements is on the Financial Assistance [website](#), or contact your Regional [Financial Assistance office](#).

E. Mitigation. We must not use Program funds to generate compensatory or other mitigation credits under any Federal or State regulatory program. Staff may use Program funds to implement conservation projects that complement mitigation projects. Staff:

(1) May participate in planning and designing mitigation projects to maximize the overall conservation benefits and incorporate Service priorities,

(2) May assist with the administration of mitigation recovery efforts, and

(3) Must avoid any assistance that would subsidize environmental degradation.

F. Program funding fidelity. Regional Directors and others responsible for administering the Program are accountable for ensuring that Program funds are spent only on the administration and implementation of the Program as this chapter, the *Coastal Program Handbook*, and any Program guidance describe.

2.16 How does the Coastal Program select habitat conservation projects and activities?

A. Program managers and field staff are responsible for identifying and selecting habitat conservation projects and activities, with concurrence from the Project Leader or other appropriate

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authority. Since requests for technical and financial assistance often exceed our available resources, it is important that our projects and activities maximize our return on investment.

B. Staff should give greater consideration to projects and activities that meet any of the conservation selection criteria in Table 2-2. The criteria are not presented in order of priority.

Table 2-2: Conservation Selection Criteria

Coastal Program Conservation Selection Criteria
<p>(1) <i>Departmental and Service priorities.</i> Priorities and initiatives as identified by the Secretary of the Interior and the Service Director.</p>
<p>(2) <i>Coastal resiliency.</i> Conservation projects and activities that help wildlife and communities adapt to and recover from changing environmental conditions. Using a watershed or ecosystem conservation approach, our projects and activities can address the causes of the habitat degradation, and provide long-term solutions and habitat resiliency.</p>
<p>(3) <i>Habitat continuity and connectivity.</i> Conservation projects and activities that restore priority habitats, reduce habitat fragmentation, establish conservation buffers, and provide habitat corridors for Federal trust and other priority species.</p>
<p>(4) <i>Proximity to Service-managed lands and marine resources.</i> Conservation projects and activities that complement conservation practices on National Wildlife Refuges, or on public or private lands near refuges, including National Parks, National Forests, and other Federal and State land holdings.</p>
<p>(5) <i>Regional strategic plans and priorities.</i> Conservation projects and activities that are located in geographic focus areas identified in Regional Strategic Plans, or that support Region-specific priorities. Field staff may still implement priority conservation activities or projects outside of these focus areas.</p>
<p>(6) <i>Federal trust resources or other priority species.</i> Conservation projects and activities that improve habitat for Federal trust resources, candidate species, species proposed for listing, State-listed species, priority species (e.g., focal or surrogate species), or at-risk species.</p>

C. Regional and field offices may develop additional selection criteria that address specific Regional and local conservation priorities.

2.17 What are the compliance requirements for the Coastal Program?

A. Federal, State, and local regulatory compliance. Projects and activities must comply with applicable Federal laws, policies, and regulations. They must also comply with Tribal, State, and local laws, policies, and regulations, as long as those laws, policies, and regulations do not conflict with or are not preempted by Federal laws or regulations. Although the responsibility for regulatory compliance may rest with a project partner, Service staff still must ensure that conservation projects and activities comply with applicable laws and regulations before implementing the project.

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B. Service policies and guidance. Projects and activities must comply with Service Directives (i.e., Service Manual, Director's Orders, policy memorandums, and handbooks) and other program guidance, as applicable.

2.18 How does the Coastal Program evaluate the success of our habitat conservation projects?

A. We recognize the importance of monitoring habitat conservation projects because it allows us to evaluate our contributions to conservation goals, assess restoration methods, improve the science of restoration, and identify opportunities for adaptive management.

B. Program Regional Coordinators must develop a Regional project monitoring strategy that will serve as a guide to conduct various types of monitoring and identify resources/partners available to help field staff.

C. We perform several types of monitoring, including compliance, project objective, and biological monitoring. The scope and intensity of this monitoring varies depending on the project type, project objectives, and available resources.

/sgd/ Stephen Guertin
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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